

Romans – The City of Rome

1



Romans – Cultural background



2

- Romans - the power of the day, influence over the whole empire. - Adopted a lot of Greek culture
- Greeks - those brought up with Greek culture, largely unchanged by the Romans throughout the old Greek empire. Still very influential.
- Jews - barely tolerated by the Romans, only allowed to retain their culture because easier than trying to suppress it.
- Paul et al divided the world into Jews and non-Jews ie. "Gentiles" or sometimes "Greeks"

Romans – The Arguments 1



3

Rom 1:1-17.

- Introduction - greetings, the calling of God's people and his apostleship.
- Rom 1:18-32.
If we choose to not believe in God, we believe in anything and act accordingly.
- Sin = missing the mark, an offence to God

Romans – Religions



4

- Goddess Roma - worship of “Rome”, and by association, the Emperors
- Various cults - male and female prostitutes
- Artemis - virgin priestesses - power through magic arts
- Mystery religions - power through special knowledge held by cult members
- Judaism - interesting to many non-Jews

Romans – Philosophies



5

Sophists, true and false, good and bad, are simply matters of opinion.

- Plato - the separation of soul and body - world is an illusion
- Cynics - simple down-to-earth morality for a good life
- Stoics - intellectual - god is in everything - live in harmony with god by practising indifference.
- Epicureans - there is no god, or supernatural - pleasure the supreme goal of life

Romans – A confusing world!



6

- Multiple world views and beliefs, mixed up and highly varied
- Generally, people had a fear of the supernatural - protection came from their choice of gods and belief system
- Morality highly varied, but mostly promiscuous and uncontrolled

Romans – The Arguments 2



7

- Rom 2:1-3:31
We are all bad as each other, including the Jews
- Rom 4:1-25
So Jews have no more rights to grace than Gentiles
- Rom 5:1-11 - A summary of the last 4 Chapters -
While we were all still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans – The Arguments 3



8

- Rom 5:12-21

Because of our humanity we all face death; because of Jesus we all have the opportunity for eternal life

- Rom 6:1-23.

But there is no excuse for choosing to keep on sinning

- Rom 7:1-6

Because we have an obligation to God

Romans – The Arguments 4



- Rom 7:7-25

But I still seem unable to stop sinning.

- Rom 8:1-18

However there is a way forward through our relationship with Jesus

Rom 8:19-39

- God has a plan for us and will help us and protect us

Romans – The Arguments 5



10

- Rom 9:1-11:36

Paul's heart is broken for his own people, but he has hope for them.

- Rom 12:1-13:14

So how should we live for Jesus?

- Rom 14:1-23

There is Culture Clash so defer to each other

Romans – The Arguments 6



11

- Rom 15:1-13

The strong in faith should defer to the failings of the weak and not act to please themselves

- Rom 15:14-33

Epilogue - this mirrors the comments in Ch1.1-17

- Rom 16:1-27

Greetings to the people Paul knows in Rome

Romans – Conclusion



12

- No-one at all can meet God's standard of perfection
- Even when we try, we fail
- Neither our background nor our best is good enough
- Trusting in the sacrifice of Jesus is the only way to salvation, which is open to everyone.
- If we have put our trust in Him and change our mindset, He will help us in our spiritual journey.
- God expects us to serve each other and defer to each other.

Romans – The City of Rome

13

