



DAY *by* DAY SERIES

# DAY *by* DAY THROUGH THE BIBLE

*The Writings of Paul*

ALLEN J. HUTH

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## FOREWORD

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The Apostle Paul's journey was one uniquely reserved for him. Jesus appeared to the man known as Saul on the road to Damascus, telling him how he would suffer and calling him to share the good news of the gospel with the Gentiles. Saul's name was changed to Paul, and he immediately became effective at using the Old Testament to convince people of Christ. He spent three years in the wilderness, as God revealed the mystery of the gospel to him. God sends him on missionary journeys, planting churches throughout Asia Minor and into southern Europe.

Imagine the opportunity to eat dinner with Paul – what he could share with you as he reflected on his walk with the Lord! Paul's theme in that discussion likely would be reflected in his words as recorded in Philippians 3:8, *"Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ."*

Rather than having dinner with Paul, what might you learn if you walked day-by-day with Paul, learning from him and reflecting on what he learned and how it applies to your life? Through this workbook written by Allen J. Huth, you can do just that.

More than twenty years ago, Allen followed a call God placed on his heart, starting a nonprofit corporation known as the Ezra Project. The mission of the Ezra Project is stated very simply – "Connecting God's people to God's Word, by encouraging Christians to engage in the Bible daily." In pursuit of that mission, Allen has written *"Day by Day through the Bible: The Writings of Paul"*. Allen takes a chapter each day of the writings of Paul, sharing insight he gained in his life when he read from God's Word daily, and he takes you deeper into the meaning and impact these verses can have in your life.

My prayer for you, as you follow through the daily study, is God's Word will come alive in your life, your understanding of the mystery of the gospel will be strengthened, and you, too, will grow to a place of counting all things as rubbish when compared to the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus as your Lord.

—***Daniel J. Heighway***  
*Executive Director*  
The Gideons International

# PREFACE

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*The Writings of Paul* is a workbook of daily devotions in the thirteen books and epistles attributed to Paul in the New Testament:

- Romans
- 1 and 2 Corinthians
- Galatians
- Ephesians
- Philippians
- Colossians
- 1 and 2 Thessalonians
- 1 and 2 Timothy
- Titus
- Philemon

Done day by day, it will cover eight-seven days. There is much to be gleaned from the writings of Paul, which make up the majority of the New Testament.

Comments on Bible passages, life applications, and prayers are based on the audio daily devotion, ADDBIBLE, a free app that can be heard daily on your smartphone or tablet. The scripture verses in the daily readings are drawn from the English Standard Version (ESV) unless otherwise noted.

ADDBIBLE was recorded using written records from thirty-five years of my personal Bible reading journals. I started reading the Bible at fifteen years old and started journaling my quiet times in 1983. I have been blessed “*exceedingly abundantly*” (Eph. 3:20) by what God has revealed to me in His Word.

I count it an awesome privilege to share insights from my personal journals including personal stories of how God’s Word has specifically impacted my life and short prayers we can pray together, all in 10-15 minutes per day.

This workbook is one of a series of *Day by Day Through the Bible: The Writings of* . . . daily devotions featuring other Biblical authors like Solomon, John, the Minor Prophets, and more. Access them all by visiting [ezraproject.net](http://ezraproject.net).

May God richly bless you as you enjoy a portion of God's Word each and every day.

Abiding in the Word,

— ***Allen J. Huth***  
*President*  
The Ezra Project

Thanks Gwynne Olson, Ezra Project Operations Manager, for your labor of love, pouring over every word, quote, and punctuation of the *Day by Day Through the Bible* series! Teamwork indeed!

## ABOUT PAUL<sup>1</sup>

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*“And the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul . . . And Saul approved of his execution . . . But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison.” (Acts 7:58, 8:1, 3).* Those verses introduce the great apostle Paul in the holy scriptures.

He next appears on the road to Damascus in Acts 9:3-8:

*Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?” And he said, “Who are you, Lord?” And he said, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.” The men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. Saul rose from the ground, and although his eyes were opened, he saw nothing. So they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus.*

Jesus Himself confronted Saul and changed his life forever!

Paul the Apostle, originally named Saul of Tarsus, was born about 4 B.C. in Tarsus. Though not one of the original twelve disciples of Jesus, he became one of the leaders of the first generation of Christians. Some consider Paul to be the most important person after Jesus in the history of Christianity. His surviving letters have had enormous influence on subsequent Christianity and secure his place as one of the greatest religious leaders of all time.

Paul was a Greek-speaking Jew from Asia Minor. His birthplace, Tarsus, was a major city in eastern Cilicia, a region that had been made part of the Roman province

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<sup>1</sup> Much of About Paul was adapted from information found in Britannica.

of Syria by the time of Paul's adulthood. Although the exact date of his birth is unknown, he was active as a missionary in the 40s and 50s of the first century. From this, it may be inferred that he was born about the same time as Jesus, or a little later. He was converted to faith in Jesus Christ about 33 A.D., and he died, probably in Rome, about 62–64 A.D.

His trade, tent making, which he continued to practice after his conversion to Christianity, helps explain important aspects of his apostleship. He could travel with a few leather-working tools and set up shop anywhere. His letters were written in common Greek, rather than in elegant literary Greek, illustrating Paul was a common man who made his living with his own hands, not an aristocrat.

Until about the midpoint of his life, Paul was a member of the Pharisees. Pharisees believed in life after death, which was one of Paul's deepest convictions. Pharisees were very careful students of the Hebrew Bible, and Paul was able to quote extensively from the Greek translation. By his own account, Paul was the best Jew and the best Pharisee of his generation (Phil. 3:4–6; Gal. 1:13–14), though he claimed to be the least apostle of Christ (2 Cor. 11:22–3; 1 Cor. 15:9–10) and attributed his successes to the grace of God.

Paul spent much of the first half of his life persecuting the Christian movement, an activity to which he refers several times. Paul's persecutions involved traveling from synagogue to synagogue urging the punishment of Jews who accepted Jesus as the Messiah.

After his Damascus Road encounter with Jesus, he went into Arabia. He then returned to Damascus, and three years later he went to Jerusalem to become acquainted with the leading apostles there. Afterwards, he began his missionary trips to the west, preaching first in his native Syria and Cilicia. During the next twenty years, he established several churches in Asia Minor and at least three in Europe.

Of the twenty-seven books in the New Testament, thirteen are attributed to Paul, and approximately half of another, Acts, deals with Paul's life and works. Thus, about half of the New Testament stems from Paul and the people whom he influenced. Build your knowledge of Christianity and your faith in Jesus Christ as you dwell in *Day by Day Through the Bible: The Writings of Paul*.

# ROMANS 1

## *Without Excuse*

**T**oday, we begin the Book of Romans. Paul most likely wrote Romans from Corinth about 57 A.D. I call it the Ph.D. of the New Testament. Others call it the Christian Manifesto or the Constitution of Christianity. It is a high-level book of Christian thought.

The theme is the revelation of God's judging and saving righteousness in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Of all of Paul's writings, it is the fullest expression of Paul's theology, filled with lofty theological ideas and vocabulary.

Romans is the most complete teaching about God and our relationship to Him. What we will learn in Romans is summarized in my English Standard Version Study Bible introduction to the Book of Romans:

(Paul) addresses matters of interest for a church that includes both Jewish and Gentile Christians: (1) Can one be right with God through obeying the law? (2) What can be learned from Abraham, and is he the father of both Jewish and Gentile Christians? (3) What role does the law play with reference to sin? (4) What does the salvation of Gentiles indicate about the future of Israel as God's people? (5) Should Christians observe (Old Testament) food laws, and how should they relate to fellow believers on such matters? (p. 2151).



Dr. Woodrow Kroll is the former President of Back to the Bible. He put out an English Standard Version Bible, and in his introduction to Romans, he says, “Romans is a book to savor. To read slowly and carefully. Why? Because it presents an irrefutable argument for the world’s need for a savior and the eternal plan of the sovereign God to draw needy sinners to that Savior. You’ll probe the depth of the wisdom of God. This book will challenge your mind, strengthen your faith, and guide your Christian conduct.”

That makes you want to jump into Romans right now, so please read or listen to Romans 1.

## COMMENTS

In our devotions from the Book of Romans, I will use three of my personal Bible reading journals. One from the summer of 1994. The next from the summer of 2001, when I was reading both the Old and New Testaments. And the third from the fall of 2013, when I read Romans in about twenty days. I like to use my personal Bible reading journals from various decades. So here, we will have one from the '90s, the '00s, and the 0-teens. Let's get into Romans 1.

When I read Romans 1 in 1994, I was in Indianapolis at a Gideon International Convention. I wrote, “Paul was a prayer warrior, holding up those he had preached and witnessed to. He wanted to go to Rome, *‘that I may impart some spiritual gift to you . . . that is, that I may be encouraged together with you while among you’* (vv. 11-12 NASB). Then he changes his focus from what he can do for them to what they can do for each other.”

Next, I wrote, “Romans 1:16-32 is a great sermon for a non-believer. Don't be ashamed of the gospel. It is righteousness. There's also the wrath of God. All of us know about God from within and in creation, but we don't honor Him and give thanks, so our heart becomes darkened. We become fools. We worship the creature or creation, rather than the creator. And God lifts His hand of grace and gives us over

to our degrading passions and our depraved minds to do those things which are not proper.”

In 2001, I focused primarily on verse 18 (NASB), which says, “*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men*’. We forget this characteristic of God. To say everybody’s going to make it to heaven flies in the face of this verse.”

In the fall of 2013, I actually read half of this chapter on one day and half on a second day. As I share the journal entry from 2013, I think it is amazing how sometimes it is very similar to what I read and wrote almost twenty years before and then sometimes very different. I think I capture the essence of this chapter in my 2013 journal.

I quoted verse 8, “*First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world.*’ Paul wants to go to Rome to ‘impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you – that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith’ (vv. 11-12). Paul had a calling in his life to preach the gospel to Gentiles, Greeks, and Barbarians; lost people.

“What is my obligation? To connect God’s people to God’s Word through the Ezra Project, and to get Christians back into their Bibles and see lost people come to Jesus through the distribution of His Word by my membership in The Gideons International. I am not ashamed of the gospel. It is the power of salvation. Lord, help me share it even more. I live by faith more so every day as I age and experience God.”

I summarized the second half of Romans 1 by writing, “Paul gets right after it after his greeting and his expression of longing to visit Rome. He starts with the wrath of God directed to all who suppress the truth. What can be known about God’s plan for people? God is evidenced in His creation, so every human being must have an instinctive awareness of God. People exchange the glory of God to worship idols, so God gives us over to the lust of our hearts because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie. We cannot exchange the truth of God if we don’t know it. Homosexuality is not natural. One is not born in it, according to verses 26-27. The result of godlessness is sinful behavior.”

## DIGGING DEEPER

Right off the bat, Romans answers some of the most pressing questions we have in our day. First, what about people who “don’t know” about Jesus? Let’s see what Paul has to say about it:

*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse (vv. 18-20).*

Those verses answer that question. Everybody knows about God. Even if it is only through His creation, everybody knows. But I believe, also, it is internal. God has put an awareness of Himself in every human life. He reminds us we are without excuse. Then he goes on to say, “*Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things*” (vv. 22-23). In other words, human beings exchange the worship of the immortal God for the worship of manmade idols.

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**Romans 1 answers the  
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know Jesus?**

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God does not force us to worship Him. Paul goes on to say, “*Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator*” (vv. 24-25). Romans 1 answers the question, what about those who do not know Jesus? Everybody—God created everybody—to know Him through His own creation and an instinctive knowledge of God in each one of us.

The next question, which is sensitive in our culture today, probably always has been, is about homosexuality. Let's read what the Word of God says:

*For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error (vv. 26-27).*

No, I am not going to dwell on the issue of homosexuality. I think it is clear if you read the Word of God, the cultural argument that people are born this way, is just not a biblical position. I encourage you to grab your Bible and go back and look at Romans 1:26-27 yourself.

Romans 1 starts out with a bang. Paul gets right after it. He tells us, claiming to be wise, we become fools. And we exchanged the truth about God for a lie. Let's close Romans 1 with a prayer I wrote in my journal in 2013, "Forgiveness for exchanging truth for a lie, bring us back to biblical belief. Keep me from falling."

## *Prayer*

Father, as we head down the road of the Book of Romans, we pray for wisdom, knowledge, and understanding in this book I call the Ph.D. of Christianity, others have called the Christian Manifesto, and others the Constitution of Christianity. Give us wisdom, knowledge, and understanding in Your Word. We pray for it and ask for it, in Jesus' name. Amen.

## MY THOUGHTS

## ROMANS 2

### *Judge Not*

**R**omans 2 is about God's judgment. Do you pass judgment on others? Please read or listen to Romans 2.

#### COMMENTS

In 1992, when reading Romans 2, I realized it was a continuation of what we left off with in Romans 1. I wrote, "Don't judge one another." And then, "Very hard to do. God rightly judges those who practice the things of Romans 1."

Let's remind ourselves of how Romans 1 ended. Verses 29-31 said, *"They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless."* That is the list Paul is referring to in this first verse of chapter 2 when he

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**Virtue is not what we  
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but from our heart.**

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says, *"For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things."*

Your tendency, like mine, might be, wait a minute. I do not do those things. Well, let's look at a couple of those again. How about unrighteousness or covetousness? How about creating strife? Or what about gossiping? How about being boastful? What

about disobedience to parents? I do not know about you, but I could find myself guilty of many of those practices.

Back to my journal entry, “God renders to every man according to his deeds. Wrath or glory, honor and peace; our choice, based upon how we live. God judges our doing, the secrets of men.” I continued, “Not only know what’s right, but we must do what is right. Virtue is not what we demonstrate outwardly, but from our heart.”

In 2001, I had a one-line summary of Romans 2, “We are all caught up in sin, Jew or Gentile.”

In 2013, I wrote, “Be careful when judging others that I don’t practice the very same thing. And God’s kindness is meant to lead people to repentance. We may be judged by works, but not saved by them, according to verses 6-11.” Then I wrote, “Paul levels the playing field of Jews and Gentiles in verses 12-16. The law does not save. Behavior is the key. One can follow the precepts of the law, but never even know it exists. Yet, Jews, who have it and know the law, can be breaking it. Jews thought circumcision was a rite of passage, but Paul argues circumcision is a matter of the heart. Paul is saying being Jews or being Gentiles is not what matters. It’s our actions.”

## **DIGGING DEEPER**

I want to focus on the issue of judging others in this chapter. I know as a young Christian, an immature Christian, I was pretty good at this. I thought I had the corner on righteousness. I thought I knew the difference between good and evil. And so, I was pretty good at judging others, Christian or non-Christian.

I remember a particular incident when we were in a young married class in our church and one of the couples was struggling and the guy told me he was going to divorce his wife. I told him he could not do that; divorce is not biblical. That may be true, but what right did I have to jump in the middle of his marriage and decide what he could and could not do? We were friends and they did end up getting divorced, and my judgmental spirit really hurt our friendship for many, many years.

He moved out-of-state, and by the grace of God we got reconnected somehow, and our friendship was restored. And I am much less judgmental.

Maybe you too have had a judgmental spirit. I remind us both of this verse in chapter 2, “*We know that the judgment of God rightly falls on those who practice such things*” (v. 2). As I have grown in my Christianity and matured in my faith, I figured out I am going to let God be the judge.

To wrap up the discussion on judging others, the end of verse 16 also says, “*God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.*” I can only see the outward appearance, the outward actions of somebody. I cannot judge their hearts. I cannot judge the secrets of men.

## *Prayer*

**L**ord, I pray, confessing that yes, I have had a judgmental spirit much of my Christian life. Forgive me, Lord. Forgive me. And Lord help me to be way less judgmental now as I understand the Word and understand my faith in You much, much more.

I thank You that You do not judge just my outward stuff, but You know my heart. I also thank You for forgiving me when I fail You, either by judging someone else or by not living up to the Christian standards You want me to live by. But this chapter also reminds me I am not judged just by my works, I am judged by my trust and faith in Jesus Christ, who loves me and died for my sins. That is what is going to get me to heaven, not my deeds. Thank You, Jesus. Thank You for the gift of forgiveness at the cross. In Your name, we pray. Amen.



## MY THOUGHTS