

December 5 Answers

- 1) Paul's letter to Rome expressed his desire to visit the church and share in their ministry, and it sought their **support** for his future missionary work in **Spain**. Paul also wanted the Romans to understand the **gospel** which he preached, and he carefully explained God's plan to save both Jews and Gentiles alike through **faith** in Jesus Christ (Rom 1:16). He began by affirming that the Gentiles were justly condemned as sinners, for "although they knew God, they did not **honor** him as God or give **thanks** to him" (Rom 1:21). This teaches us that there are no "innocent" people in the world, for **everyone** becomes aware of God's existence. This means that man-made religions (which are forms of **idolatry**) are not the result of man's search for truth, but rather the result of man's **rejection** of God! Paul continued by saying that the Jews were also accountable for their sin, for there is no **partiality** with God. There were advantages and privileges to being a Jew, yes, but with those privileges came the **responsibility** to uphold and obey God's commands. This teaches us that we cannot rely on our church **attendance** or religious upbringing to make us right with God. Paul concluded this section with the statement: "Both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, as it is written: '**None** is righteous, no, not one'" (Rom 3:9–10). If "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," how can we be justified and righteous before God? "Through faith in Jesus Christ...for...all...are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith" (Rom 3:22–25). Paul supported his claim by appealing to **Abraham**, that timeless example of salvation by grace through faith. Abraham was justified by **faith**, not works; by **grace**, not Law; by **divine** power, not human effort.