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The Book of Romans, written by the Apostle Paul, addresses the teachings on the natural world, the importance of human identity, speaks on human relationships and culture and what is expected of us as Disciples in order to enforce God’s intent, God’s law in this world. Romans works as guidance for a life free of sin and helps us see that with God we are provided the opportunity to shape the world we are currently living in. The natural world; in Romans 1: 20, the Apostle Paul writes, “ For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.” He brought the world and the universe into existence, although not seen He promised us that everyone will know or hear of Him and it will be up to them to accept Him. The most intense expressions of God’s plans for the natural world can be found in Romans 8: 19-23, where the Apostle Paul addresses the present suffering and future glory of God’s creation.

Paul writes, “ For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.” This shows us God’s plan for humanity and shows us how this world is temporary. His plan is to reverse the damage of not just the fall of humanity but nature itself. Human identity can be found in knowing God. In Romans 5-6, Paul states that just how sin of the world entered through Adam, in this way we all became sinners, passing from generation to generation. Our identity lies in knowing who God is and more so knowing that where there is sin there is also the grace from God. This does not mean that we should keep on sinning so we can receive more of His grace but to become slaves to righteousness.

God send Jesus to pay the way to our salvation by offering himself as a sacrifice, so we must no longer let ourselves be molded by the sin of this world but let ourselves be made new through Christ. If there is something in our behavior or in our lives that does not belong of God then we must look to Jesus to justify, sanctify and glorify us (Romans 8: 30). Our human relationships are a challenge. Paul speaks on how; we abandon God’s way for human relationships. He shows through the example of sexual immorality just how we, have fallen far from God’s intent. Paul wrote letters to the Christians, providing teachings on many things to include this rather difficult subject for some. In two verses, he describes the evidence that we the people are departing from God’s ways, “ Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error (Romans 1: 26-27).”

He explains that yes we are free to abandon God’s order but for us not expect to receive his approval nor blessings. Because of who we are, sinners, God gave us over to sexual immorality, greed, gossip, homosexuality, envy, murder, slander, and all manners of the wicked (Romans 1: 26-31). Paul knew Christians in Rome were open to immorality, public and validated. This was normal as it continues to be in today’s society. Within our culture, the Epistle states that we are to be model citizens and support the laws set by God, this serves us a guide on how to not live sinfully and be a voice of God to others. Our culture is shaped by the view and behavior of the majority. Romans 3: 28-30 says, “ for we maintain that a person in justified by faith apart from the works of the law. Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of gentiles too?

Yes, Gentiles too, since there is only one God…” God does not just pour His grace over one race but anyone who is willing to accept Him and His commands. In Romans 8: 28, Paul concludes with the following encouragement, “ And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who[a] have been called according to his purpose.” We are all called to a purpose, God has predestined our lives and if we were to choose to follow Him, all in accordance, we would build a society under God’s law, the only law. Romans 1-8 reminds us that as Disciples of Christ we are to encourage one another to stand up and speak out against sin and reach out to those who are far from God. We are to set the way for the second coming; promote the word and continue to teach others about the word. As the Bible reminds us, judgment is near, and we must be prepared before the arrival of the Son of Man.