

The entire book of Romans is a large chiasmic structure:

- A. Intro
- B. Body 1:8-18
- B' Body 1:19-16:23
- A' Concl

Romans 1:8-18 functions as shorthand notation reflecting St. Paul's rhetorical strategy for the main body of the letter:

Introduction (1:1-7)

- 1. Commendation of the Group - Praise (1:8)
- 2. Commission to the Gentiles - Petition (1:9-12)
- 3. Commission to the Gentiles - Product (1:13-15)
- 4. Commission to the Gentiles - Promotion (1:16a)
- 5. Communication of the Gospel – Proficiency (1:16b)
- 6. Communication of the Gospel - Provision (1:17)
- 7. Communication of the Gospel - Provocation (1:18)
- 7' Communication of the Gospel - Provocation (1:19-3:20)
- 6' Communication of the Gospel - Provision (3:21-8:39)
- 5' Communication of the Gospel - Proficiency (9:1-11:36)
Practical: 12:1-15:16
- 4' Commission to the Gentiles - Promotion (15:17-21)
- 3' Commission to the Gentiles - Product (15:22-29)
- 2' Commission to the Gentiles - Petition (15:30-33)

1' Commendation of the Group - Praise (16:1-23)

Conclusion (16:25-27)

Please forgive the alliteration. Here is a key to explain:

Provocation - God's judgment on sin provokes the need for the gospel

Provision - God's provision of righteousness (cf. note below)

Proficiency - The gospel is able to save all who believe, both Jew and Gentile

An inclusio device defines the praxis/practical section 12:1-3a to 15:14-16.

Paul administered the priestly service of the gospel like a priest with a Gentile offering.

Promotion - Paul boasted in the Gospel, boldly proclaiming it.

Product - Spiritual/material assistance 1:13-15 echoed in 15:22-29.

Petition - Prayer for visit

Praise - Commendation of Roman faith proclaimed throughout the world

In 1:17, God's righteousness is revealed "ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν." This phrase may be viewed as covering life in Christ from beginning to end. It also may reflect St. Paul's approach to delineating this concept from 3:21 through 8:39:

"From Faith"

Intro (3:21-26)

Argument (3:27-4:25)

Concl (5:1-11) Triad: faith, hope, and love

"For Faithfulness"

Intro (5:12-21)

Argument (6:1-8:11)

Concl (8:12-39) Triad: faith, hope, and love