

Romans 1:1-7 Greetings, Paul's Calling, and the Gospel's Power

Overview of class - What you can expect

- Expository teaching of the text led by the teacher.
- Explanation of doctrine pertaining to this text.
- Explanation of different views on the text.
- Discussion questions
- Application for our lives
- Witty repartee from the teacher
- Lesson Handout

Overview of Romans

- Written by the Apostle Paul, around the year 57 AD, likely while he was in Corinth.
- Focus of Romans can be found in the first chapter in verse 17, The Righteous Shall Live By Faith.
- Main disputes found in Romans, we will dig into these as we get to them in our study.
 - Justification by faith
 - Protestant/Reformed view - Justified by Faith alone (Sola Fide)
 - Roman Catholic view - Justification requires faith, plus things we must do, sacraments, etc. Or as I call it, JBF+.
 - The "New Perspective on Paul" (NPP) - Paul's words on "works of the law" were not about personal merit but about the social and ethnic markers that defined Jewish identity. Paul is saying we should be inclusive.
 - Is the "wretched man" in chapter 7, a non-believer, believer, or something else?
 - Chapter 9: Predestination and election - Divine determinism (Calvinism), Human Freewill (Arminianism)
 - Chapter 9: God's Plan for Israel - Supersessionism (The church has permanently replaced Israel) vs. Covenant Continuity (God has an ongoing, separate plan for the nation of Israel)
 - Chapter 13: What level of Obedience or Submission we should have towards civil authorities.
 - Chapter 1: When Paul writes about homosexuality being a sin, is he talking about all homosexuality or just non-consensual?

¹Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ²which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, ³concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, ⁴who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake, ⁶among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ; ⁷to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Key Points in the text

- Paul cares far more about you understanding the Gospel than he does about you knowing about him.
- The Apostles were called by God to take the Gospel Call to the world.
- The Gospel is the Power of God unto salvation for all who have been called by Jesus

Text Study

¹Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, Let's explore this word Bond-Servent

What is a Bond-Servent?

Bond-Servent = Slave

- 1 Corinthians 9:16 For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I am under compulsion; for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel.
- Romans 6:17-18 But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

Bond-Servent in the OT = Willing servant

- Exodus 21:5-6 But if the slave plainly says, 'I love my master, my wife and my children; I will not go out as a free man,' then his master shall bring him to God, then he shall bring him to the door or the doorpost. And his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him permanently.

Bond-Servent in the NT = Total dedication to Christ, along with the acknowledgement that He has total authority over my life.

- Besides Paul we also see John, Peter, and James refer to Jesus as their master.

What is an Apostle?

Apostle defined - An ambassador who speaks on behalf of the king.

Requirements to be called an Apostle, as defined in Acts

- Walked with Jesus as a disciple during His earthly ministry.
- Was an eye-witness to the resurrection of Jesus.
- Was directly called by Jesus Himself (Most important)

Paul is an Apostle

- Paul walked with Jesus as a disciple: Galatians 1:11-12 For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.
- Paul was an eye-witness of the resurrection: See Galatians 1:11-2:10, See also Preparation of Paul article from TableTalk in this handout.
- Paul was called by Jesus Himself: See Acts 9 and verse 1 of our text as well as other epistles such as 1 Corinthians.

Apostolic Authority: Because they speak for the king, they are divinely inspired to speak true doctrine and we are to follow their teachings included in the Bible.

²which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, ³concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh,

This verse highlights that knowing the Old Testament and understanding its part in the gospel narrative is so important.

- Hebrews 1:1-3 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high

Paul is not saying that there are random texts in the OT that point to Jesus, he is saying that the entire body of the OT is about the promise of the coming savior.

⁴who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord,

- The promise of the Old Testament is fulfilled in Jesus.
- Jesus is our savior, we know that to be true because of His resurrection from the dead.
- This is the sign that the Pharisees asked for but never received because their eyes were blinded, as were Paul's prior to his rebirth.
- Like Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15 here Paul says without the resurrection there is not power, there is no Spirit, there is no savior.

Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake, ⁶among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ;

What does the statement "we have received grace" mean?

- The Apostles are sinners like us, to be given the gift, privilege, and blessing to spread the gospel they had to receive grace, meaning they did not deserve to do this.

Let's dig into this phrase 'the obedience of faith'

- They are separate things, not a causal chain.
- We obey by believing, or to put it using the words of this text we obey by having faith.
- This is why we read in multiple places unbelievers are defined as those who do not obey the gospel (2 Thes 1:8, Rom 10:16). Furthermore, the bible commands all people to repent, so we start our Christian life by obeying His commands and repenting.
- Throughout our lives we continue to obey. Ongoing faith means ongoing obedience.
- James 2:26, For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead. Acts of obedience are the actual works that breathe life into what would otherwise be a dead faith.
- The obedience of faith means bowing the knee in trusting submission to Jesus the Lord, both at the start and throughout the Christian Life
- We are not saved by our acts of obedience but rather by Jesus having lived a life of complete obedience to the Father.

The phrase, 'For His name's sake', reminds us that bringing about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles is not for the apostles' glory, it is done to the glory of Jesus.

The phrase, 'Called of Jesus Christ'

- Called to belong to Jesus Christ
- Called by Jesus Christ
- 'Called' in, Romans is primarily used to denote a sovereign call of God.

⁷to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

- All believers are considered saints, not just some special group of people defined by what they do. God makes a person a saint by the process of regeneration.
- This standard greeting from Paul means so much to both the church in Rome or wherever the letter is going, but it also means a lot to us. As saints, we also receive this same grace and peace as we partake in the obedience of faith as we take the gospel to all people.

Application

- Do not neglect the reading of the Old Testament, lest you are ignorant of the complete story of redemption, and glory of God.
- Be encouraged to live a life of trusting submission to Jesus.
- Give glory to God that you have been called by Jesus to salvation, or pray to God that you be called to this glorious salvation.

Next Week's Lesson Prep/Preview

Text: Romans 1:8-17

Focus: Paul's Longing to Visit Rome, righteousness, and living by faith

Devotional: Habakkuk 1

The Preparation of Paul

Galatians 1:11–24

"I did not consult any man, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was, but I went immediately into Arabia and later returned to Damascus" (vv. 16–17).

Paul begins Galatians by saying that he was sent by Christ and the Father, and that the other church leaders agreed with him. In [Galatians 1:11–2:10](#), he expands on these two points.

He begins in verses 11 and 12 by saying that the Gospel he preached was not devised by human wisdom, nor had he received it from the other apostles; rather, he was taught it directly by Jesus Christ Himself. He continues by reminding them that he had been trained in and was fanatically devoted to the erroneous traditions of Judaism. When God called Paul on the Damascus road, he was commissioned to preach the Gospel of Christ.

Paul said that when Christ called him, he did not go to Jerusalem to receive instruction from the apostles. Rather, he retired into Arabia for a time and not until three years later did he go to Jerusalem. Even then, the only apostle he met was Peter, and the only other leader he met was James, the presiding elder of the Jerusalem church. It has often been remarked that Paul clearly implied that he spent three years being taught by Jesus Himself (1:12), either directly or (perhaps more likely) through the study of the Word. Thus, like the other apostles, Paul studied with Christ for three years before beginning his ministry (compare [Acts 1:21](#)).

Thus, Paul established for the Galatians that he received the Gospel by the same means as the other apostles—directly from Jesus. Fourteen years after his conversion, he had occasion to go to Jerusalem and there he met privately with the leaders, including the apostles Peter and John (2:1–10). He reports to the Galatians that they compared notes and found that there was absolutely no difference between what he had been teaching for eleven years in Antioch and what the apostles had been teaching in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria. There never had been a problem, nor was there one currently, between Paul's message and the teaching of the Jerusalem church.

The point Paul is making to the Galatians is that there has never been any question about the content of the Gospel. The same Christ taught Peter and Paul, and both men were in complete agreement.

Coram Deo

How likely is it that the acknowledged leaders of the church today could come to such unanimous theological agreement? It was no less difficult then, yet it was achieved. What would it require for such accord in our generation? Pray for the unity of Christ's church and the resulting peace that would ensue.