



The Book of Romans, Chapter 1

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When Paul wrote his letter to the Romans he was:

- **Writing to a church which he had never been.**
- **Writing to a church which he did not know personally.**
- **Writing to a church which was situated in the greatest city in the greatest empire in the world at the time.**

Because of that he chose his words and thoughts with the greatest care.

Romans 1:1-7, “Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated (set apart) unto the gospel of God,² (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,)³ Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;⁴ And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:⁵ By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name:⁶ Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:⁷ To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Paul begins by giving his own credentials:

- **He calls himself a slave/servant (doulos) of Jesus Christ.**

The word slave brings two backgrounds of thought:

1. **Paul’s favorite title for Jesus is LORD (kurios).**

- ✓ **“Kurios” describes someone who has undisputed possession of a person or thing.**
- ✓ **It means master or owner in the most absolute sense.**
- ✓ **The opposite of LORD (kurios) is slave (doulos).**
- ✓ **Paul thought of himself as the slave of Jesus Christ, his Master and his Lord. He belonged to Jesus.**

2. **In the Old Testament it is the regular word to describe the great men of God.**

- ✓ **Moses was the doulos of the Lord (Joshua 1:2)**
- ✓ **Joshua was the doulos of God (Joshua 24:29)**

- ✓ *The proudest title of the prophets, the title which distinguished them from other men, was that they were the slaves of God (Amos 3:7; Jeremiah 7:25).*

SO THEN, THE SLAVE/SERVANT OF JESUS CHRIST DESCRIBES AT ONE AND THE SAME TIME THE OBLIGATION OF A GREAT LOVE....AND THE HONOR OF A GREAT OFFICE.

- *He calls himself as “Called to be an apostle.”*

In the Old Testament the great men were men who heard and answered the call of God.

- ✓ *Abraham heard the call of God (Genesis 12:1-3)*
- ✓ *Moses answered God’s call (Exodus 3:10)*
- ✓ *Jeremiah and Isaiah were prophets because, almost against their will, they were compelled to listen to and to answer the call of God (Jeremiah 1:4,5; Isaiah 6:8,9)*
- ✓ *Paul...never thought of himself as a man who had aspired to an honor; he thought of himself as a man who had been given a task.*
- ✓ *Jesus said to his apostles, “You do not choose me, but I chose you,” (John 15:16)*

PAUL DID NOT THINK OF LIFE IN TERMS OF WHAT HE WANTED TO DO, BUT IN TERMS OF WHAT GOD MEANT HIM TO DO.

- *He describes himself as “set apart to serve the good news of God (the gospel).*

He was conscious of a double setting apart in his life.

Twice in his life this very same word (aphorozein) is used of him.

1. *He was set apart by God.*

- ✓ *For the task he was to do even before he was born (Galatians 1:15)*
- ✓ *Sent into this world to do some definite thing. For every man God has a plan; no man’s life is purposeless.*

2. *He was set apart by men..*

- ✓ *When the Holy Spirit told the leaders of the Church at Antioch to separate him and Barnabas for the special mission to the Gentiles (Acts 13:2)*

PAUL WAS CONSCIOUS OF HAVING A TASK TO DO FOR GOD AND FOR THE CHURCH OF GOD.

- *He describes himself as being set apart...and having received two things:*

1. *Grace...always describes some gift which is absolutely free and absolutely unearned. Paul saw that salvation depended not on what man’s effort could do, but on what God’s love had done. All was of grace, free and undeserved.*
2. *A task...to be an apostle to the Gentiles. Paul knew himself to be chosen not for special honor, but for special responsibility.*

CHRISTIANITY ALWAYS SEPARATES US...BUT, IT SEPARATES US NOT FOR PRIVILEGE AND SELF-GLORY AND PRIDE, BUT FOR SERVICE AND HUMILITY AND LOVE FOR ALL MEN.

This gospel message Paul preached....and vigorously proclaimed was:

- A gospel of the Incarnation.
Jesus was really and truly a man. He became what we are, to make us what he is. Paul....preached not about a legendary figure in an imaginary story...not a demi-god, half god and half man. He preached of one who was really and truly one with the men he came to save.
- A gospel of the Resurrection.
Jesus' uniqueness is guaranteed forever by the fact of the Resurrection. The others are dead and gone, and have left a memory. Jesus lives on and gives us a presence, still mighty with power.

And....We get to participate....we are called by God....set apart:

- **To all in this world...who are:**

- ✓ loved by God
- ✓ called to be saints
- ✓ Have a Heavenly Father...children of the most high God.

GRACE AND PEACE TO YOU.....YOU ARE SPECIAL!

Romans 1:8–15, “First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.⁹ For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;¹⁰ Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you.¹¹ For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established;¹² That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.¹³ Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.¹⁴ I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise.¹⁵ So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

Paul's love for the church is showing at its fullest here...because Paul's heart was throbbing with the love for the Church he had never seen.

Paul's problem in writing the letter:

1. **He had never been in Rome;**
2. **He had no share in founding the Roman Church.**

Paul had to make them feel that:

- ✓ **He was not trespassing on their first knowledge and response to the Scriptures (He did not want them to think he was coming to their church to change their basic learning of the Gospel);**
- ✓ **Interfering where he had no right to intervene;**
- ✓ **The barriers of strangeness and suspicion were not necessary.**

How did Paul do that?

- **With wisdom and love combined, began his message with a compliment. “I thank God for that Christian faith of yours which all the world knew.”**
- **He “constantly” prayed for them....even though he did not know them.**
- **Paul, in his humility, was always ready to receive as well as to give.**

Together we learn...

He at first said, “I long to see you that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong.” But...he turned it around and said, “that is...that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith.”

Paul did not want to make them feel that he was “lording his great wisdom of God on them”....but, that the Christian faith is an encouraging faith...whereby we help and grow with each other. Paul knew that he could receive as much as he could give.

It takes humility to teach as it takes humility to learn.

- **Paul’s message...his friendship...his obligation was to the:**

- ✓ Wise and simple
- ✓ Cultured and uncultured
- ✓ Lettered and unlettered (the educated and the uneducated)
- ✓ World!

And...it was his ambition some day to deliver that message in Rome, too.

Romans 1: 16,17, “¹⁶For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. ¹⁷For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”

Paul states his theme....his theme as a gospel “good news” preacher...and qualifies it.

He states, resonates, and elates the foundational truths he preaches. They are considered the 3 great Pauline watchwords:

1. **The Concept of SALVATION... Justified by the BLOOD, Romans 5:9**
2. **The Concept of FAITH**

Total acceptance and absolute trust

- *Knowing at “Gut Level” that God is!*
- *Willing to be Receptive, hear and agree, and yielding completely.*

3. **The Concept of JUSTIFICATION**

God treats a person who believes in Jesus Christ just as though he/she had never sinned.

Justification is not based on what we feel....or how we feel. It is how “God Feels Toward Us.” His concept of justification is based on a penalty already paid for ...for you, the sinner, a penalty that was paid for in blood. You are a citizen of the kingdom of God....paid for by the one that paid the great price.... Paid for in blood...Paid for by giving of his life.

The greatest privilege we have is to have Jesus as our mediator...have Jesus as our soldier who paid the great price for us...

Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.