

## **SALT Church**

**Romans 1:1-7**

***“Two Sentences”***

July 6, 2025

**“The Greatest Book Ever Written”**

### **Intro:**

Many times, I have taught out of Romans but never have I taught the book of Romans.

- Many times, I have looked at this mountain of a book and thought how could anyone fully understand all that it contains.
- In a previous pastorate I had a commentary from John Calvin.
  - There was a book for every New Testament book except for Revelation and Romans.
    - As far as I know John Calvin never wrote a commentary on the book of Revelation.
    - The commentary for the book of Romans is four books long (Thousands of pages).
    - John MacArthur’s commentary on Romans is contained in two books totaling 940 pages of information.
  - As a result, I walked away from that mountain choosing to climb other mountains that I thought were easier to climb.
    - The book of Romans is huge in its content.
  - Keep in mind I have taught the book of Revelation twice.
    - I felt like it was an easier climb than Romans.
- But as we finished the gospel of John it became clear that the book of Romans was our next series.

- We took a break from the New Testament and learned about Jonah
- It took us four weeks to cover four chapters, we will not be able to keep that pace in Romans.
  - Last week Pastor Devin covered one verse (Romans 1:1)
    - There are 433 verses in Romans by my calculations (throwing in a few holidays) we should finish Romans March 25, 2034. (nine years)
      - I will be 2 weeks from age 64 and my oldest grandson a teenager.
        - So, we better get started lest it cost us a few more years!

## Recap:

Pastor Devin taught us last week:

- Paul, who was named Saul, was a very educated Pharisee.
- His name change came when he received his ministry to the gentiles.
  - Saul is a Hebrew name.
  - Paul is a Greek or gentile name.
- Paul's conversion was very dramatic.
  - He was an enemy of both Christ, and the new faith called Christianity.
  - He led a mob of Jews to kill one of their own just because he proclaimed the gospel of Jesus Christ. (Stephen)
  - The book of Acts and Paul himself records that he had been sent to arrest any Jew that was proclaiming Jesus is as the Messiah.
    - He clearly saw this new faith as a false religion from Satan.

- At the height of Paul's anger and frustration Jesus dramatically saves Paul from himself and sin.
  - It's an amazing story of amazing grace.
    - Paul hates Jesus and anyone who would be called Christian.
    - ***Jesus loves Paul in spite of his hatred and calls him to be his own.***
      - Paul was not looking for Jesus, the truth, nor did he ever desire to be saved.
      - Paul stands as the shining example of "God can save whoever He wants."

**At that point Paul begins a journey that will have him beaten to the point of death several times.**

- Shipwrecked spending a day and a night floating at sea
- Beaten with rods and whips
- Stoned and his body thrown out of the city gates because they thought he was dead.
  - All for the gospel and Jesus Christ that he once hated.

**Paul's ministry would be huge, and it continues today as we read what the Holy Spirit spoke through him so long ago.**

- In Paul's brief life he managed to write 13 books of the New Testament, more books (letters) than any other New Testament writer.
- He is only second to Luke in the amount or content of words written.

- I should also mention that Luke would become Paul's personal doctor and fellow minister in Christ traveling on many missionary journeys together.
  - Thus it is no surprise that these two men would be able to write so much content that we know as the New Testament.

**When Paul writes the letter to the Roman church, he has become a seasoned minister, missionary, evangelist, and pastor.**

- He writes this letter from a place called Corinth.
  - A place and a church that we know a lot about.
  - A church that was incredibly messed up.
  - Paul will spend a year and a half with the church in Corinth.
    - Correcting doctrine and theology as well as establishing church leadership and church discipline.

**The letter to the Roman church is written with eager anticipation as Paul longs to visit Rome on his way to Spain.**

***One of the advantages of writing a book or a letter is knowing where you want it to end.***

- Paul begins his letter to the church in Rome with two sentences that are basically everything that he will expound on in the rest of his letter.
- With this foreknowledge I will attempt to keep this in mind as we work through these two sentences.

- In other words, today be an overview of what the coming months will hold should the Lord allow.

## **We pick up where we left off:**

### ***Romans 1:1-7***

#### ***1 Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ,***

- We learned last week that a bondservant is a different kind of servant.
  - Bondservants are servants who have been given their freedom by their master or owner.
  - Upon receiving their freedom, they freely choose to be bonded to their master forever.
    - In the Old Testament their ears were pierced as a sign to everyone that they had chosen to stay bound to their master.
- Bondservants love their master's and want to die in service to their masters.
  - This is Paul
    - This is every true Christian
      - And this is how Paul wanted us and the Romans to see him

#### ***called to be an apostle,***

- The word apostle can be a tricky thing
- It literally means sent.
  - And in that sense all Christians are apostles.
- But like most words there is another meaning.
  - The other meaning is appointed by God

- When Judas betrayed Jesus and left the group and later hung himself the other apostles came together in prayer to appoint someone to the vacant spot left open by Judas.
- There were qualifications that had to be met:

Acts 1:21-26 (Peter talking)

*<sup>21</sup> Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus was living among us, <sup>22</sup> beginning from John's baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection."*

*<sup>23</sup> So they nominated two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. <sup>24</sup> Then they prayed, "Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen <sup>25</sup> to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs." <sup>26</sup> Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the eleven apostles.*

The qualifications necessary for Apostleship are:

- **A man** who had been with them during Jesus' ministry
  - Meaning **a man** who had been personally discipled by Jesus
  - A witness to Jesus' miracles
  - A witness to the resurrection of Jesus from the dead

**Paul knew his apostleship was unique.**

- He was not there when Jesus began his ministry as far as we know.

- There is no doubt that Paul would have been familiar with Jesus and His teachings as Jesus was the most well-known teacher in Israel during His lifetime.
- Clearly, he had heard about Jesus' resurrection
- It is recorded in the book of Acts that Jesus revealed Himself to Paul on the Damascus Road.

But was Paul personally disciplined by Jesus?

- Galatians 1 implies that he was taught by Jesus for three years

### **Galatians 1:11-20 (Paul speaking)**

<sup>11</sup> I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is not of human origin. <sup>12</sup> I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.

<sup>13</sup> For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely I persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it. <sup>14</sup> I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers. <sup>15</sup> But when God, who set me apart from my mother's womb and called me by his grace, was pleased <sup>16</sup> to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, my immediate response was not to consult any human being. <sup>17</sup> I did not go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was, but I went into Arabia. Later I returned to Damascus.

<sup>18</sup> Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to get acquainted with Cephas and stayed with him fifteen days. <sup>19</sup> I saw none of the other apostles—only James, the Lord’s brother. <sup>20</sup> I assure you before God that what I am writing you is no lie.

So, we clearly see that Paul received his Apostleship differently but with the same qualifications.

### ***separated to the gospel of God***

I remember a day in a previous ministry where an older gentleman and his wife showed up in my office unannounced.

- They said they wanted to talk to me about something important.
  - Keep in mind that they were not members of the church that I pastored.
    - They were related to some of my people, and I knew them in passing.
    - I had no idea why they were there, but it was clear that the older gentleman was aggravated with me.
      - ***Apparently, it’s a gifting I have!***
    - They came because they said that I was teaching the wrong gospel.
      - They said I was teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ which was unto the Jews.
      - They said that I should be teaching Peter’s gospel which was for the gentiles.
    - I was a bit taken back.



- How bold do you have to be to show up to a church that you are not even a member of and proceed to tell the pastor of that church that he is preaching the wrong gospel.

I took a second to process what he was saying

- I prayed
  - The Holy Spirit brought Galatians 1 to my mind

### **Galatians 1:6-10**

<sup>6</sup>I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, **to a different gospel**, <sup>7</sup>which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert **the gospel of Christ**. <sup>8</sup> But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. <sup>9</sup> As we have said before, so now I say again, **if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed**.

<sup>10</sup> For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.

### **The true gospel of Jesus is always the same:**

- You're a sinner
- The wages of sin is death
- Without the shedding of blood there can be no forgiveness

- This was the purpose of the sacrificial system, to show us that sin causes death.
- Jesus died for all our sins
- Jesus was able to pay this high price for our sins because He is sinless and because He is God the Son.
- This knowledge is poured out by God Himself through grace
- His grace opens our eyes and our heart to believe in faith
  - So, it is by grace through faith that we are saved.
- The fruit of our salvation is a changed life:
  - It starts with a confession
  - It leads to repentance
  - Which creates a hunger and thirst for Jesus that will never be quenched.

**That man and his wife left my office angry that day.**

My point is this:

The gospel of God is the same as the gospel of Jesus Christ.

- God the Father
- God the Son
- God the Holy Spirit
  - Are one and their message and there is only one message

**Back to Romans 1**

***1 Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ,  
called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God***

***2 which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures,***

- All the Old Testament and its prophets point to Jesus Christ
- Jesus is the common thread that runs through the entire Bible.

***3 concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord,***

- **This is a very important statement for Paul.**
- Jesus was and is the central issue for all of mankind especially the Jews.
- They knew the prophets promised a coming Messiah.
- They spoke about the Messiah's coming kingdom
- His sovereign rule
- Jerusalem as the capitol of the world
  - as the throne of the Messiah would be in their beloved city.
    - Israel would be the victors in the Messiahs reign
      - But what they refuse to see is the suffering and death of the Messiah.

**Paul continues.**

***who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh,***

- In the gospel of Matthew, he (through the power of the Holy Spirit) pens the lineage of Jesus.
- Through his legal father Joseph
- Through his earthly mother Mary

- Both originate with King David which was a divine promise from God that The Messiah would descend from David.

***4 and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness,***

Another way of saying this is “declared to be the Son of God through the power of the Holy Spirit”

- Paul is saying that the miracles that Jesus performed were empowered through the Holy Spirit.
- The miracles that Jesus did, and all the Apostles were empowered by the Holy Spirit for the purpose of declaring that Jesus is the Son of God.
- In short, the miracles validated the message.

***by the resurrection from the dead.***

- There are two very important things implied here:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> the Messiah had to die for there can be no resurrection without death.
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Jesus’ resurrection from the dead is the greatest miracle of them all.
    - Because He has had victory over death He stands alone as the only hope for a dying and broken world.
      - This is the gospel of Jesus Christ

***(side note) everything we have learned so far has been said in one sentence!***

***5 Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name,***

- This is the order of salvation

- Through God we receive grace
  - Grace is unwarranted favor and love
  - So, grace 1<sup>st</sup> then comes faith.
    - The Bible is so clear about this.
    - Paul understood this better than most for he was an enemy of Christ
      - He did not want Christ and was not looking for Jesus.
      - In fact, he wanted to rid the earth of Christ.
        - But God had other plans!

#### ***John 6:44***

***44 No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.***

**The Father drew Paul unto Jesus that day.**

- That is what grace looks like, it reaches out to its enemies and says you don't deserve my love, my forgiveness, but I am going to give it anyway!
- When Paul's eyes were opened on that day he cried out to the Lord and believed in Jesus.
  - That is what Faith looks like.
    - So, it is by grace through faith that we are saved.

***5 Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name,***

- Here is how it is designed to work.

- Once we received this grace and faith, we are discipled and sent.
- For this grace by faith in Jesus, is meant for the whole world to hear.
- It came 1<sup>st</sup> to the Jew and then to the rest of the world.

***6 among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ;***

- The word “called” is a powerful word.
- It implies that we are singled out.
- It implies that we have been selected for the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- It implies that He loved us so much that He saved us unto good works.
  - All of this will be developed more as we work our way through this wonderful book.

***7 To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints:***

- A few Wednesday nights ago we had a question and answer night.
- Tom asked me what I thought about the Pope appointing a young man who was dead to sainthood.
  - It is clear that the Catholic Church has a different idea as it relates to sainthood.
  - But what does the Bible say?
    - Romans 1:7 says that those that are beloved by God are saints.
      - Now in that one sentence we learn what qualifies someone for sainthood.
        - GOD’S LOVE!

**It is God’s love that saves you, not your works lest any man boast.**

- And although we still struggle with sin
- And although the evidence of our faith is a life of obedience and of good works driven by our love for the Father
  - The only thing that qualifies anyone for sainthood is God's grace, mercy, and love.

*Paul opens his next sentence with a reminder of the qualifications of sainthood, brotherhood, salvation, and our adoption into the family.*

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

In closing allow me to make this more personal for you SALT Church.

***“To all of you who are in Salt Church, you are loved of God, and you have been called to be saints of the most -high God.***

***Grace and peace have been poured out upon you from God, your Father and your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”***

***Don't ever forget this!***