

THE ROMAN CALLING | ROMANS 1:1-7 | Pastor Mark Bofill | 08/04/2024

* I. Called to Apostleship (1-4) | II. Called by Grace (5a) | III. Called of Jesus (5b-6) | IV. Called to be Saints (7)

INTRO: A young farmer, standing in his field, observed a **peculiar cloud formation**. The clouds formed the letters: **G, P, and C**, of which **he interpreted as a CALLING from God: GO-PREACH-CHRIST!** – So, the farmer rushed to the deacons of his church and **insisted that he has been “CALLED TO PREACH.”** – Respectful of his zeal, they invited him to fill the pulpit the following week. – That Sunday... **the sermon** was long, tedious, and practically incoherent. When it finally ended, the leaders sat in stunned silence! But finally, a matured deacon mutters to the would-be preacher, *"Seems to me that the clouds were saying 'GO-PLANT-CORN!'"* (A Corny Joke!)

...The **concept of a CALL from God** is one of the most contemplative themes in the Bible. The Bible is filled with stories about **calls to men and women** who, when summoned to service, went out and marked their generation. In this study the word **CALLED** is mentioned three times, so I have entitled this sermon... **THE ROMAN CALLING | Romans 1:1-7 ***

I. CALLED TO APOSTLESHIP (1-4) – Paul opens his letter with the usual salutation and greeting, which is longer than most (**tt. Rom 1:1-7**)

A. Paul Introduces HIMSELF (1a,b) – Because Paul did not establish the church at Rome, he *introduces himself* with an elaboration as to who he is by listing his credentials.

1. **Paul:** Greek: *Paulous*, lit. means *“small or little.”*
2. **Bondsman of Jesus Christ** – Greek: *doulos*, *“a slave.”* – Originally **the lowest term in the scale of servitude**, came also to mean *“one who gives himself up to the will of another,”* e.g., (**1 Cor 7:22-23; Rom 6:17,20**), and became the most common and general word for *“servant”*
 - a. The idea behind *Doulos* is *“complete and utter devotion”* (**Ex 21:5-6**) – e.g., *Awl/Earring*
 - b. In calling himself a *“bondslave of Jesus Christ,”* Paul infers **(1)** that, he had been formerly a **“bondslave” of Satan**, and **(2)** that, having been bought by Christ; **he was now a willing slave, bound to his new Master (Rom 6:22).**

P/A – In all of these instances, the term *servant* carries the idea of **humble nobility**. Being God’s servant is an honorable position. The question for us is then... **Who do you serve?**

B. Paul’s Calling (1c) – Paul was **CALLED**. – Greek: *kletos*; derived from the root *kaleo*, *“call,”* and is used with a personal object, *“to call anyone, invite, summon,”* (e.g., *laborers*, **Matt 20:8; and servants 25:14**) – It is used particularly of the Divine Call to partake of the blessings of redemption, e.g., (**Rom 8:30; 1 Cor 1:9; 1 Thess 2:12; Heb 9:15**) *Many called but few are chosen!*

1. **Paul was CALLED to be an APOSTLE**, who was a delegate, messenger, one *“sent forth”* with Orders. – (**Acts 1:21–22**) states that **for a man to be an apostle**, he had to have been a member of the disciples from the beginning, and to have been an eyewitness of Christ's resurrection. – The new testament apostle resembled the Old Testament prophet, who was called and sent by Yahweh.

- (1 Cor 15:8) tells us that Paul was an apostle, called later by Jesus Christ, as “one born out of due time” and he was entrusted with a mission, which is denoted by the next phrase...

2. Paul was **SEPARATED** – The Greek: **aphorizo**: means “to mark off by bounds” (**apo**, “from,” **horizo**, “to determine;” **horos**, “a limit”), “to separate.” – In a good sense, it means to appoint or set-apart for a purpose as we see here. – In particular, Paul...

3. Paul’s separation was **TO the Gospel of God** – The Greek: **euangelion**; originally denoted a reward for good tidings; later, the idea of reward dropped, and the word stood for “the Good News” itself. – The English word “gospel,” i.e. “good news,” is the equivalent of **euangelion**.

- In the NT it denotes the “good tidings” of the Kingdom of God and of **salvation through Christ, to be received by faith**, on the basis of Jesus’ expiatory death, His burial, His resurrection, and ascension, (cf., Acts 15:7; 20:24; 1 Pet 4:17). *The Gospel is GOOD NEWS, not just good advice!*
- Paul refers to the gospel using different terms. He called it the ‘Gospel of God’ (1d) because God is the author, he also called it the ‘Gospel of his Son,’ (9) because Jesus is the substance. And in (v. 16) Paul refers to the Gospel as ‘The Power of God.’

P/A – **Paul did not appoint himself to this task**, He was **Called by God** to this important life mission. **Knowing his calling** (i.e., what Christ called him to), **helped him to be more effective in his life mission**. (Not wondering, or wandering, nor meandering...but purpose in life!) Christ has a mission for you too!

After introducing himself...

C. Paul Introduces **GOD’S PROMISES (2-4)** – Which also added weight to his Authority as an Apostle. He mentions first that...

1. God **PROMISED the Gospel (2a)** – Using both oral and written testimonies to His divine work:

- a. God used “**Prophets**” to **proclaim** His promises (2b) – (cf. Heb 1:1-3; 1 Pet 1:10)
- b. God used the “**Holy Scriptures**” to **record** His promises (2c) – **The Bible is His revelation to us and for us**, both the OT and the NT. – (2 Tim 3:15b) tells us that, “*The Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*”

Paul also spoke of ...

2. God’s Promises **CONCERNING His Son (3)** – I like Guzik’s comment on this, “*This is the center of Paul’s gospel, the “sun” that everything else orbits around. The center of Christianity is not a teaching or a moral system, it is a Person: Jesus Christ.*” – **The fact that Jesus was...**

- a. “**BORN of the Seed of David**” (3a), speaks of **His Davidic Lineage** (as foretold – Isa 9:7)
- b. “**BORN according to the flesh**” (3b), speaks of **His Incarnation** (as foretold – Isa 7:14). “*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth*” (John 1:14)
- c. “**DECLARED the Son of God**” (4a) – This was confirmed in (Matt 3:17) “*And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”*”

- Jesus Christ had **POWER** according to the **“Spirit of Holiness” (4b)** *He too was Set-Apart!*
- Jesus’ **POWER** was **DEMONSTRATED** *“by the resurrection from the dead” (4c)* – Paul wanted the Romans to know that **his task** in sharing the Good News was **to preach that Jesus**, in accord with the ancient scriptures, was **the resurrected human/divine Savior!**

CLOSING POINT: *God’s Promises through the scriptures was that His Son would fulfill all of God’s promises, and that He would set people free from their sins (Isa 61:1-3; tt. Luke 4:18-19)*

II. CALLED BY GRACE (5a) – God’s provision for all believers is THROUGH HIS SON!

Paul now makes clear that ...

A. A Believer can Receive “Grace & Apostleship” through Jesus (5a) – This grace is the **unmerited favor** which God shows toward guilty sinners. – This is the book’s first reference to the most crucial part of the gospel message: **Salvation is a gift from God**, which is **APART** from any human effort of achievement. – Notice that **Grace and Apostleship** were given to Paul and the church by Jesus Christ, **to encourage obedience to the faith...**

B. A Believer can be “Obedient to the Faith” (5b) – **True Saving Faith** always brings about obedience to the will of the Father, (Matt 7:21-22) *“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven”*

C. A Believer’s Faith should be “A Witness to All Nations” (5c) – Gospel begins with **GO!** – Our faith should be **so evident to the world**, that ALL would know that **we are soldiers of Jesus Christ!**

- *A friend was in front of me coming out of church one day, and the pastor was standing at the door as always to shake hands. – He grabbed my friend by the hand and pulled him aside. The Pastor said to him, “You need to join the Army of the Lord!” My friend replied, “I’m already in the Army of the Lord, Pastor.” The Pastor questioned, “How come I don’t see you except at Christmas and Easter?” – He whispered back, “I’m in the secret service!” (Shh!)*

D. A Believer’s Faith will “Bring glory to Jesus’ name” (5d) – **Does your faith in Jesus cause others to glorify Jesus?** *The world should look at us and it should cause them to Wonder...not Wander!*

III. CALLED BY JESUS (5b,6) – “Faith among all nations for His name, among whom you also are the CALLED of Jesus Christ” – This is simply God’s effectual call of sinners for salvation!

A. Jesus’s CALLS ALL Nation’s to Himself (5b), but not everyone will answer His Call (**Matt 22:14**).

B. ALL TRUE Believers are “CALLED” of Jesus (6) – C.S. Lewis said, *Jesus CALLS “...ALL men and women for their personal allegiance. He invites them to learn from Him, to obey his words and to identify themselves with His cause. **There can be no following without a previous forsaking. To follow Christ is to renounce all lesser loyalties.**”* – Paul is writing to **True Believers** so as to exhort them in the faith.

IV. CALLED TO BE SAINTS (7) – Paul now uses a **formal greeting** and goes on to impart a blessing to his readers. – *“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.”*

A. His Target... *“to all who are in Rome” (7a)* – In context, the **CHURCHES**, which were made up of believers in Jesus Christ, that **He CALLED UNTO HIMSELF (6)**. – The Greek word for **Church** is *ekklesia*, which is a compound of *ἐκ* (Out of - G1537) and a derivative of *καλέω* (Called - G2564). – In **(Matt 18:20)**, Jesus mentioned what a church is made up of, *“For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.”*

1. The Church, not just a Social Club! It is a fellowship comprised of Genuine Believers, who have essentially been **“called out”** of the world’s system that is hostile to God.

2. His Target...was also to remind them that they were “beloved of God” (7b) – Even though **God loves ALL**, **God has set His love specifically on His own.** – (Eph 2:4-5) *“But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved) ...,”*

3. He also reminds them that they were “Called To Be Saints” (7c) – **CALLED: Kletos** means **Invited** – The greek term for **Saints**, is *hagios. Set-Apart/Holy* – A **SAINT** is one **separated from the world** and **consecrated to God**; one holy by profession and by covenant; a believer in Christ (**Psalm 16:3; Rom 1:7; 8:27; Phil 1:1; Heb 6:10**).

- **C.H. Spurgeon** points out *“...that the words ‘to be’ are put in by the translators; but though they are supplied, they are not really necessary to the sense. **These believers in Rome were ‘called saints.’** – They were not called because they were saints; but **they became saints through that calling.**”*

B. His Targeted Blessings (7d) – Were presented with **“grace and peace”** – Also nicknamed **the Siamese Salutation** of the Apostle Paul. *The two differ greatly in their meaning...*

1. GRACE - Greek: *charis*; which is **Unmerited Favor**. – To be in favor with is to find "grace."

2. PEACE - Greek: *eirene*; which describes the position of **“peace, rest or quietness”** that we have because of Christ. – It identifies the reconciliation of the believer with God, having the benefit of tranquility, harmony and rest for the situations of life, (**Phil 4:6-7**) – The word also corresponds with the common **Heb. word shalom, which** primarily signifies *wholeness*. – The Application for us today would be to **QUESTION... Do you know this kind of PEACE?**

3. Notice Finally, THE SOURCE of the double blessing (7e) – **“from the Father and the Son”** – **It is only through the relationship of the Father and the Son that we can obtain grace and Peace!** – The Eternal Godhead is the Fountainhead from which these blessings flow!

CLOSING POINT: This **ROMAN CALLING** teaches us that **God CALLS LOST PEOPLE from everywhere to become Saints**, **“if” they would ONLY believe in the Gospel Truth**. – When we answer **GOD’S CALL**, we **RECEIVE...** and are to **ABIDE** in His abounding Grace and Peace. But that’s not all... God also desires to use us TO CALL OTHERS to Believe in Jesus Christ, so that they too, can experience His Grace and Peace!

P/A – **Have you answered God’s Call to become a SAINT?** Are you obedient to God, living as a saint should? – In closing, ***I invite you now to walk worthy of your calling! LET’S PRAY!***