

“Why Should Anyone Listen to Me?” – Paul’s introduction to the book of Romans

May 5, 2024

Text: Romans 1:1-7 (NASB): “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 are also 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.”

I. Brief Background of the Book of Romans

1. **Who:** Paul; trained as a Pharisee under Gamaliel; Roman citizen and called as apostle to the Gentiles (Acts 9)
2. **To Whom:** The church in Rome; both Jews and Gentiles; perhaps est. by Jewish believers from Pentecost (Acts 2:10)
3. **When:** Written ~56AD, when Nero was emperor (AD 54-68), from Corinth near the end of 3rd missionary journey
4. **Where:** Rome - Capital and most important city in the Roman empire, center of the “known” world
5. **Why:** Unlike many epistles that were written to deal with specific issues, Romans appears to be written as a comprehensive “manual of the gospel” – perhaps to provide instruction for the church in the absence of direct apostolic discipleship
6. **What:** Primary theme is the Gospel of Christ Jesus, and Christ’s redemption by grace through faith (1:16-17, 3:34)

II. Introduction to Paul’s Introduction to the book of Romans

1. The longest introduction of any of his epistles (17 verses)
2. Paul knew several in Rome (chapter 16), but had never served there (1:13) → perhaps why he wrote a longer intro
3. The introduction makes a strong case that believers should listen to the Epistle to the Romans
4. We can learn from Paul’s example in our role as ministers of the gospel – “Why should anyone listen to me?”

III. Main Points: “Why Should Anyone Listen to Me?”

1. **Because of Paul’s C_____** (1a) → Paul was a committed, true believer; he had integrity.
 - a. What does it mean to be a bondservant, a slave, a “doulos” of Christ Jesus? → Romans 6:15-23
 - Romans 6:17-18, - “having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness”
 - Salvation results in a changed life, a life of obedience: Romans 6:1, “How shall we who died to sin still live in it?”
 - If our life has not changed, there is a problem with our confession: I John 2:4, “The one who says, ‘I have come to know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”

NOTE: Presenting ourselves as a “liar” is not a good way to get people to listen...
 - b. Application – Questions to ask ourselves:
 - Am I a true believer? Have I recognized my sin; repented; placed my faith in Christ, and confessed Him as Lord?
 - Am I a bondservant of Christ Jesus? Do I walk in integrity so that my message is consistent with my actions?
2. **Because of Paul’s C_____** (1b) – Paul was writing with authority granted him by Jesus
 - a. What is an apostle?
 - Designated by Jesus and personally trained by Him to speak for Him and guide the establishment of the church
 - Every book of the New Testament was written by an apostle, or was overseen and endorsed by an apostle
 - b. Paul’s authority came from his apostleship. Where do we derive authority for our message?
 - Authority in our words comes (only) from the authority of the Bible. (II Timothy 3:16 – “inspired by God”)
 - Our words concerning the gospel only carry authority if consistent with God’s Word – we need to weigh our words and those of others (Acts 17:11b, “examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so.” Also 2 Peter 1:20)
 - c. Application:
 - Am I consistent in presenting God’s Word accurately and faithfully – without obscuring it with personal opinions?
 - Am I examining messages received to verify they are consistent with God’s Word?
3. **Because of Paul’s C_____** (1c) – Paul was speaking the truth, the good news of God!
 - a. ALL believers are “commissioned” to share the “gospel of God”
 - Matthew 28:19-20a, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you;”
 - b. Application
 - Am I being obedient to Jesus’ command to reach the lost, create disciples, and teach them to obey Christ’s commands?
 - Am I studying the Bible enough to be equipped to reach the lost and build up believers? (I Peter 3:15; 2 Timothy 2:15)

NOTE: Paul's message of the gospel was being delivered to two broad groups with distinctly different outlooks to the world:
(1) The Jews – who knew of Jehovah already from the Old Testament
(2) The Gentiles – Those excluded from the covenants of Israel, most of whom did not have a concept of the one true God

3a. **Why should the Jews listen to the “content” of the Gospel?** (v 2-4)

- a. **Because it is the C_____ of God's promises** (v2)
 - Paul was not establishing a “new religion.” The Messiah was clearly foretold in the Old Testament (“Holy Scriptures”)
 - Genesis 3:15 – “seed” of Adam; Genesis 12:1-3 – Abraham – “in you all the families of the earth will be blessed;” Many more (Psalm 22; Isaiah 53; Micah 5:2)
- b. **Because Jesus meets the physical C_____ of the Messiah.** (v3)
 - Jesus was fully man (born in the flesh) → was a historical (real) person
 - The Jews expected the Messiah (the Christ) to be a descendant of David (Isaiah 11:1, “Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse;” Jeremiah 23:5, “I will raise up for David a righteous Branch;”)
 - Jesus meets the criteria for the Messiah being a descendant of David – both on his mother's side (Mary) (Luke 3:23-38) and on his stepfather's Joseph's side (Matt. 1:1-17)

3b. **Why should Everyone listen – including Gentiles?** (v 5-6)

- a. **Because Jesus C_____ death!** (v4)
 - Jesus is fully God – as proven by his resurrection!
 - Jesus sacrifice was accepted – He fulfilled the law, brought about the reconciliation promised! I Corinthians 15:17-19
- b. **Because Jesus C_____ grace on believers** (v5a)
 - Note – We have received “grace,” but not apostleship. Paul received apostleship, and we received the benefit from the work of the apostles (the establishment of the church and the New Testament)
 - Grace – favor we do not deserve – unique to Christianity among world religions (Ephesians 2:8-9)
- c. **Because Jesus extended the Great C_____ to ALL the nations.** (v5b-6)
 - Application: Am I doing my part to share the gospel with all – regardless of their background?

4. **Because of Paul's C_____** (v7-15) Paul's expression of love for the Roman saints

- a. Verses 1:8-15 provide insight into several ways Paul expressed his love for the church in Rome
- b. Love for one another – both our neighbors, and fellow believers – is commanded throughout scripture
 - Leviticus 19:18; Matt 5:43, 19:19, 22:38; Mark 12:31-33; Luke 10:27; John 13:34, 15:17, 15:12, 13:35; Romans 12:10,13:8,10; Galatians 5:14; Philippians 2:4; I Thessalonians 4:9; James 2:8; 1 Peter 1:22, 3:8, 4:8; 1 John 4:11, 3:11, 4:7, 4:12, 3:23, 4:20; 2 John 1:5
- c. Absence of love indicates a problem with our relationship with Christ (I John 3:14)
- d. Application
 - Do I love others – both other believers and the lost (our “neighbors”) enough to share the gospel and make disciples?
 - Do I display my love through genuine concern, prayer, and actions to give credence to the gospel I present?
 - Looking at verses 8-15, what are specific ways Paul expressed his love and concern for those whom he wanted to reach?

IV. Application: “Why should we want people to listen?”

Romans 1:16-17, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.”

- The power is in the gospel – not in our cleverness, efforts, or skill
 - o Power to save from God's wrath deserved by our former sins (Romans 3:21-26)
 - o Power to save from slavery to sin in the present (Romans 6)
 - o Power to save from the presence of sin in the future (2 Peter 3:13, Rev. 21:1-7)
- Believers have an obligation to the lost (Romans 1:14-15) like the “watchman” of Ezekiel 33:1-9

Questions to ask ourselves:

- Am I “ashamed of the gospel” because I am not a believer?
- Am I “ashamed of the gospel” because I am ashamed of sin in my life / because I am not living a life of obedience to Christ?
- Am I “ashamed of the gospel” because I have not recognized my “calling” in the great commission?
- Am I “ashamed of the gospel” because I do not know God's truth well enough to share it with the lost or to build up believers?
- Am I “ashamed of the gospel” because I do not love others? Am I more concerned about “helping myself” than helping others?

Challenge: Examine our hearts, live for God as a workman that does not need to be ashamed. II Timothy 2:15, “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.”

TRUTH BIBLE CHURCH



FOLLOWERS OF JESUS SEEKING TO...

LOVE GOD SUPREMEPLY

Matthew 22:37-38 ³⁷ And He said to him, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND." ³⁸ "This is the great and foremost commandment.

SERVE PEOPLE SINCERELY

Matthew 22:39 ³⁹ "The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'

John 13:34-35 ³⁴ "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵ "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

REACH THE LOST URGENTLY

Matthew 28:19-20 ¹⁹ "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Romans 1:1–7

¹ "Paul, 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."





Why Should Anyone Listen to Me?

Paul's Introduction to the Book of Romans

Brief Background to Romans

▶ Who? (Author) – Paul

- Former pharisee, student of Gamaliel, deeply trained in Jewish tradition and the Old Testament
- Miraculously saved on road to Damascus (Acts 9)
- Called to be apostle to the Gentiles

▶ To Whom? – The church (believers) at Rome

- Possibly established by Jewish believers converted at Pentecost
 - People mentioned in the crowd in Acts 2:10 included “visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes”
- Congregation made up of both Jewish and Gentile believers
 - Book of Romans talks extensively to both



Brief Background to Romans

- ▶ **When? – ~ A.D. 56**
 - Approximately 25 years after Christ's resurrection
 - Nero was emperor (A.D. 54–68)
 - Written from Corinth near the end of Paul's 3rd missionary journey
 - Just prior to Paul returning to Jerusalem with gifts for the needy
 - NOTE – Paul was arrested after returning to Jerusalem, eventually leading to his appeal to Caesar and eventual delivery to Rome
- ▶ **Where? – Rome**
 - Capital of the Roman Empire
 - Governmental and financial hub of the known world
- ▶ **Why? – Comprehensive “manual” of the gospel**
 - Perhaps – to provide detailed instruction in the absence of direct apostolic direction (unlike other epistles written to address specific issues)



Brief Background to Romans

▶ What? – The Gospel of God

- Primary theme is the Gospel of Christ Jesus, and Christ's redemption by grace through faith
- Key Verses:
 - Romans 1:16–17 “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.”
 - Romans 3:24 “being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;“

“The book of Romans “certainly is the best, most extensive, and most comprehensive exposition of the gospel anywhere in Scripture.”

(Norman Geisler, A Popular Survey of the New Testament, c2007, p127)

Introduction to the Introduction of Romans

1. The longest introduction of any of his epistles (17 verses)
2. Paul knew several in Rome (chapter 16), but had never served there (1:13), so many did not know him personally
 - Perhaps why he wrote a longer introduction
3. The introduction makes a strong case that believers should listen to the rest of the letter to the Romans
 - Paul's Character, Calling, Content, and Caring
4. We can learn from Paul's example in our role as ministers of the gospel – “Why should anyone listen to me?”

What can we learn from Paul that will help us carry out the Great Commission?

Outline – Why should anyone listen to me?

- ▶ Because of Paul's Character (1 a)
- ▶ Because of Paul's Calling (1 b)
- ▶ Because of Paul's Content (1 c – 6)
 - Jews should believe Paul's content
 - Because it is the Culmination of God's promises
 - Because Jesus meets the physical Criteria of the Messiah (Christ)
 - Gentiles should believe Paul's content
 - Because Jesus Conquered death!
 - Because Jesus Conferred grace on (all) believers
 - Because Jesus extended the Great Commission to all nations
- ▶ Because of Paul's Caring (7–15)

Why should anyone listen to me?

– Because of Paul's Character

Romans 1:1a, “Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus”

- ▶ “Bond-servant” = “*doulos*” = fully-owned slave
- ▶ “Christ” = Messiah = “Anointed One”, “Chosen one”
- ▶ “Jesus” = “Joshua” = “The Lord is Salvation” – Christ’s name

Why should anyone listen to me?

– Because of Paul's Character

- ▶ Romans 6 goes into detail about believer's "doulos" relationship with Christ Jesus

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."

Why should anyone listen to me?

– Because of Paul's Character

- ▶ True salvation results in a changed life of obedience

Romans 6:1, “What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?”

Why should anyone listen to me?

– Because of Paul's Character

- ▶ If our life has not changed, there is a problem with our confession

1 John 2:4, “The one who says, ‘I have come to know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”

NOTE – Presenting ourselves as a “liar” is not a good way to get people to listen to our message...

Why should anyone listen to me?

– Questions to ask ourselves of our Character:

- ▶ Am I a true believer?
 - Have I recognized my sin; repented; placed my faith in Christ, and confessed Him as Lord?
- ▶ Am I a bondservant of Christ Jesus?
 - Do I walk in integrity so that my message is consistent with my actions?

Why should anyone listen to me?

– Because of Paul's Calling

Romans 1:1b, “Called to be an apostle”

▶ What is an “apostle?”

- Designated by Jesus and personally trained by Him to speak for Him and guide the establishment of the church
- Every book of the New Testament was written by an apostle, or was overseen and endorsed by an apostle

Paul's apostleship was a declaration of authority

Why should anyone listen to me?

– Because of Paul's Calling

Romans 1:1b, "Called to be an apostle"

- ▶ Paul's authority as an apostle is sufficient reason to "listen"
- ▶ Example – Paul's apostleship is all he mentions in his introduction to the book of Ephesians:
 - ▶ "Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints who are at Ephesus..." Ephesians 1:1a

Why should anyone listen to me?

– Because of Paul's Calling

- ▶ Paul's authority came from his apostleship; where do we derive authority for our message?
- ▶ Authority in our words comes (only) from the authority of the Bible, God's Word
- ▶ II Timothy 3:16–17, "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."

God's Words, not our words, carry authority

Why should anyone listen to me?

– Because of Paul's Calling

- ▶ Our words concerning the gospel only carry authority if consistent with God's Word
- ▶ We need to weigh our words and those of others
- ▶ Acts 17:11, “now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so.”

Why should anyone listen to me?

– Questions to ask ourselves of our Calling:

- ▶ Am I consistent in presenting God's Word accurately and faithfully – without obscuring it with personal opinions?
- ▶ Am I examining messages received to verify they are consistent with God's Word?

Am I presenting a message consistent with God's Word?

Why should anyone listen to me?

– Because of Paul’s Content

Romans 1:1c, “set apart for the gospel of God”

- ▶ “gospel” = good news
- ▶ Paul was “consumed” with the gospel
- ▶ ALL believers are “commissioned” to share the “gospel of God”
- ▶ Matthew 28:19–20a, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you;”

Why should anyone listen to me?

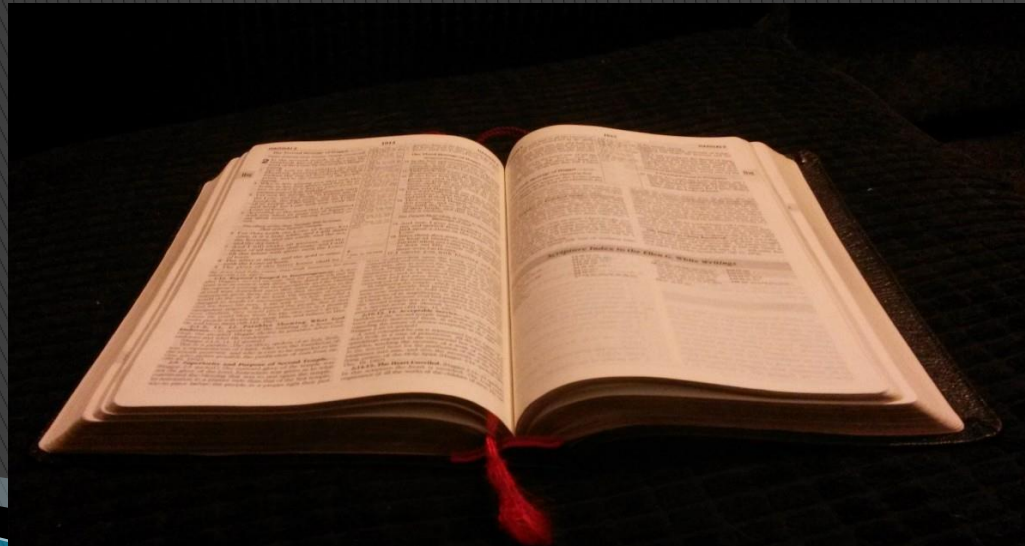
– Questions to ask ourselves of our Content:

- ▶ Am I being obedient to Jesus' command to reach the lost, create disciples, and teach them to obey Christ's commands?
- ▶ Am I studying the Bible enough to be equipped to reach the lost and build up believers? (1 Peter 3:15; 2 Timothy 2:15)
- ▶ 1 Peter 3:15, "But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;"

Why should anyone listen to me?

– Questions to ask ourselves of our Content:

- ▶ Am I studying the Bible enough to be equipped to reach the lost and build up believers? (1 Peter 3:15; 2 Timothy 2:15)
- ▶ 2 Timothy 2:15, “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.”



Paul's Audience – Two Groups

▶ Jewish Believers

- Familiar with Old Testament teachings, concepts of the law, character of God
- Had the advantage of having been "entrusted with the oracles of God" (Romans 3:2)

▶ Gentile Believers

- Excluded from the practice of Judaism prior to the establishment of the church
- Typically secular background (e.g. Ephesians 2:12, "having no hope and without God in the world")

Why should Jews listen to my content?

– Because it is the Culmination of God's promises

Romans 1:2, “which was promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures ”

- ▶ “which” = the gospel of God (v1)
- ▶ “prophets” = authors of the Old Testament
- ▶ “Holy Scriptures” = Inspired canon of Old Testament (as opposed to other popular Jewish religious writings)

Christianity does not establish a “new religion” – but rather accepts that Jesus fulfilled the law

Samples of God's Promises Concerning Christ, the Messiah in the Old Testament:

- Genesis 3:15 – Promise to Adam and Eve
 - “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel.”
- Genesis 12:3b – Promise to Abraham
 - “And in you all families of the earth will be blessed”
- Isaiah 53:3–12 – Prophecy of Jesus life and work
 - 53:12b “Because He poured out Himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet He Himself bore the sin of many, and interceded for the transgressors.”
- Psalm 22 – Prophecy of Jesus' death on the cross
 - 22:16b, “they pierced my hands and my feet.”

Why should Jews listen to my content?

– Because Jesus meets the physical Criteria of the Messiah

Romans 1:3, “and was descended from David, according to the flesh ”

- ▶ Jesus was a “real” / historical person
 - NOT – a “concept” that can be molded into our image (“New Thought”)
- ▶ The Jews expected a Messiah from the line of David
 - Isaiah 11:1 “Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse;”
 - Jeremiah 23:5 “I will raise up for David a righteous Branch”

Why should Jews listen to my content?

– Because Jesus meets the physical Criteria of the Messiah

Romans 1:3, “and was descended from David, according to the flesh ”

- ▶ Jesus lineage to David is documented
 - On his step–father’s side: Matthew 1:1–17
 - NOTE – Since Jesus was “born of a virgin,” Joseph was not physically related – but his lineage removes opportunity for argument
 - On his Mother’s side: Luke 3:23–38

Why should Everyone listen to my content?

– Because Jesus Conquered death!

Romans 1:4, “and was declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord”

- “**Declared**” – comes from Greek word for “horizon” – means “to distinguish” – as in – clearly divided from the rest of humanity
- “**Son of God**” – having attributes and essence of God the Father; God Himself in human form
- “**with power**” – with the power attributed to God (some think – “declared powerfully”)



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Romans 1:4, “and was declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord”

- “according to the Spirit of holiness” – As confirmed by the Holy Spirit (some think – as confirmed by Jesus’ own holy nature)
- “by his resurrection from the dead” – Most significant demonstration of Jesus’ deity
- “Jesus Christ our Lord” – Jesus, the Messiah/Chosen One, our Lord/Master”



Why should Everyone listen to my content?

- Because Jesus Conquered death!
- ▶ Jesus is fully God – as proven by His resurrection!
- ▶ Jesus' sacrifice was accepted, He fulfilled the law, brought about the reconciliation promised!
- ▶ The most important event in the history of mankind
 - I Corinthians 15:17–19, “and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied”

Why should Everyone listen to my content?

- Because Jesus Conferred grace on believers

Romans 1:5a, “Through whom we received grace and apostleship”

- ▶ NOTE – We have received “grace,” Paul received “apostleship”
 - We do receive the benefits of the apostles (establishment of the church and the New Testament Scriptures)
- ▶ “Grace” – Favor we do not deserve – unique to Christianity
 - Ephesians 2:8–9, “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.”

Why should Everyone listen to my content?

- Because Jesus extended the Great Commission to ALL nations

Romans 1:5a, “to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name’s sake, among whom you also are the called of Christ Jesus.”

- ▶ “called” – in this case, those who have repented and believed, and have been “called to salvation” (as opposed to a “general” call for repentance)
- ▶ “obedience of Faith” – true faith always results in obedience
- ▶ Paul is reiterating his calling as apostle to the Gentiles

Why should anyone listen to me?

– Because of Paul's Caring

Romans 1:7, “To 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 ”

- ▶ This is the transition to a new section (8–15) where Paul expresses his caring, love, and concern for the Romans in multiple ways
- ▶ Love and concern → absolutely critical for getting the message of the Gospel across

Why should anyone listen to me?

– Because of Paul's Caring

- ▶ Love for one another – both neighbors (saved and unsaved) and other believers is commanded throughout scripture:
 - Leviticus 19:18; Matt 5:43, 19:19, 22:38; Mark 12:31–33; Luke 10:27; John 13:34, 15:17, 15:12, 13:35; Romans 12:10, 13:8, 10; Galatians 5:14; Philippians 2:4; I Thessalonians 4:9; James 2:8; 1 Peter 1:22, 3:8, 4:8; 1 John 4:11, 3:11, 4:7, 4:12, 3:23, 4:20; 2 John 1:5
- ▶ An absence of love for one another indicates a “problem” with our relationship with Christ:
 - 1 John 3:14, “We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death.”

SO WHAT?

Application



Why should we want people to listen?

Romans 1:16-17, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.”

- ***The power to save is in the Gospel – not in our cleverness, efforts, or skill***

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- Am I “ashamed of the gospel” because I am not a believer?
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- Am I “ashamed of the gospel” because I have not recognized my “calling” in the great commission?
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- Am I “ashamed of the gospel” because I do not love others? Am I more concerned about “helping myself” than helping others?

II Timothy 2:15, “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.”