



**Theology 101  
Romans  
The Plan of Redemption  
Romans 1:1-7**

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Welcome to Romans. Martin Luther calls this book, “the daily bread of the soul.” Feast on! (The Navigators 2009, 14)

The central theme of this letter is the gospel and can be summed up by the phrase Paul quotes from Habakkuk 2:4 that has led millions to Christ.



Romans 1:17

“For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written: “BUT THE RIGHTEOUS ONE WILL LIVE BY FAITH.”” (NASB 2020)

The letter’s central theme is the gospel that is the same for Jew and Gentile alike, a gospel emphasizing dependence on God’s initiative rather than weak human power (1:16–17). In Romans, Paul argues that Jews cannot boast that their law keeping or election makes them superior to Gentile believers; God produces true righteousness not by ethnic identity or human observance of regulations, but by the transformed life of a new humanity empowered directly by him. (Keener 2009, 16)

We have now arrived at the book of Romans. It is 57 AD and Paul is on his second trip to Corinth and still visiting Corinth (Acts 20:3). He is preparing to return to Jerusalem and is already picking up hints that he might be a bit longer getting to Rome than he wants it to be.

He has never been to Rome and has decided that is to be the next destination. "Christians had been there for several years. We do not know how the church began in Rome. Most likely it started sometime shortly after Pentecost when new believers returned home and started to spread the gospel (Acts 2:10–11).

Paul understood the importance and influence of a strong church in Rome. He wanted to strengthen the existing work in that place initially through the letter and secondly by visiting them (1:8–15; 15:14–33). For this reason Paul methodically and systematically outlined the foundational meaning of salvation in Jesus Christ, the foundation of Christianity. He described the human condition, the meaning of the gospel, God’s plan for men and women, God’s purpose for Israel, and the responsibilities of the Christian life and ministry. (Dockery 1998, 541)

This book is theology. I am confident that by the time I reach the end of this book, I will have offended just about everyone. In fact, Paul’s attack on shibboleths in just the first chapter, will indeed water our eyes. By the way, that is a term used by Jephthah to detect those who were from Ephraim from those who were not. In other words, since they could not correctly pronounce the word, they were proven to be phonies and were put to death.

Paul is all about the genuine versus the fake and he will go into extreme detail in Romans to show what the genuine faith in Christ looks like.

Judges 12:5–6

“And the Gileadites took control of the crossing places of the Jordan opposite Ephraim. And it happened whenever any of the survivors of Ephraim said, “Let me cross over,” that the men of Gilead would say to him, “Are you an Ephraimite?” If he said, “No,” then they would say to him, “Just say, ‘Shibboleth.’” But he said, “Sibboleth,” for he was not prepared to pronounce it correctly. Then they seized him and slaughtered him at the crossing places of the Jordan. So at that time forty-two thousand from Ephraim fell.” (NASB 2020)

In other words, no phonies by the time we get done. Romans has a tendency to do that in the life of those who read and study it.

In May of 1738, a failed minister and missionary reluctantly went to a small Bible study where someone read aloud from Martin Luther’s Commentary on Romans. As the failed missionary said later: “While he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for my salvation, and an assurance was given me that he had taken my sins away, even mine.” John Wesley was saved that night in London. (Guzik 2013, Ro 1)



To outline this book, we could go crazy and come up with page after page of detail. I want to keep it simple and surrounding the theme of the book.

1. Introduction and theme 1:1-17
2. Fallen man and God's wrath 1:18-3:20
3. Righteousness by faith 3:21-4:25
4. God's righteousness explained 5:1-8:39
5. God's faithfulness explained 9:1-11:36
6. How to do life in His righteousness 12:1-15:13
7. Conclusion and personal greetings 15:14-16:27

Yes, this is indeed a letter, a really long one. In a day and age where the average letter was around 295 words to 2530 words. Paul, who without Romans, averages 2495 words, hits book length with Romans with 7114 words. He dictated this letter so, "given the cost of papyrus and of the labor required (though Tertius, a believer, might have donated his services), one scholar estimates the cost of Romans at 20.68 denarii, which he calculates as roughly \$2275 in recent US currency. In other words, Paul did not simply offer this project as an afterthought; Romans is a carefully premeditated work. (Keener 2009, 1)

Paul did not write this like we dash out text messages and emails.

Only the best for his Lord and Savior. And the text is seriously packed with truth.

Let's dig in.

Romans 1:1-7

**"Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus**, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, who was declared the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles in behalf of His name, among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ; 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." (NASB 2020)

Right at the very beginning, Paul wants those he is writing to to know just who he is. They have never met him before. He simply uses his name and the term, *doulos*. The word means Paul "being under someone's total control, slavish, servile, subject." (Arndt, et al. 2000, 259)

Writing to a city where most likely over half of the citizens were slaves, Paul is identifying that he too is under the control of another, Jesus Christ. Paul, being a Jew, using this term of himself is not unusual.

The word, as used by Paul, serves to describe a relation of absolute dependence in which the total commitment of the *δοῦλος* on the one side corresponds to the total claim of the *κύριος* on the other, being adequately grounded in the mere existence of the *κύριος* and not needing any particular religious or moral justification beyond this legal basis. (Rengstorf 1964-, 270)

Thinking this way, it means a very simple truth for us to understand today. If you have accepted Jesus Christ to be your savior, He is Lord (*kurios*) and as such, because He is Lord, we are His bondservants. For those who have rejected Jesus Christ as Savior, He is still Lord (*kurios*). That will never change, He is the creator He is God and as such He is Lord.

You either accept that and recognize it today, or at the Great White Throne judgment, realize that He has been and always will be Lord of all.



#### Philippians 2:5–11

“Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of man, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. **Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**” (ESV)

What else is wrapped up in this term, *doulos*. “The status of the Christian, on the other hand, is characterised by the fact that by the death of Jesus he is rescued from the *δουλεία* of powers which aimed to subjugate him and to separate him from God. Paul describes this liberation in terms of redemption.” (Rengstorf 1964-, 275)

Bob Dylan of all people summed this up perfectly.

In his song “Gotta Serve Somebody,” he outlines multiple relationships and jobs and positions but they all come back to the verse.

“But you’re going to have to serve somebody, yes indeed You’re going to have to serve somebody Well, it may be the devil or it may be the Lord But you’re going to have to serve somebody” (Dylan 1979)

Paul has entered into this relationship with Jesus Christ willingly and knowing that he has ceased to be a slave to sin, the law and essentially a slave to the old man, to now be a willing bond slave of Jesus Christ.

Under Jewish law, there were slaves. Both of those who were not of the nation of Israel as well as those who entered into slavery as the result of debt or some other reason and are of the nation of Israel. As result, there is the law of the bond servant.

#### Deuteronomy 15:12–17

“If your brother, a Hebrew man or a Hebrew woman, is sold to you, he shall serve you six years, and in the seventh year you shall let him go free from you. And when you let him go free from you, you shall not let him go empty-handed. You shall furnish him liberally out of your flock, out of your threshing floor, and out of your winepress. As the LORD your God has blessed you, you shall give to him. You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God redeemed you; therefore I command you this today. **But if he says to you, ‘I will not go out from you,’ because he loves you and your household, since he is well-off with you, then you shall take an awl, and put it through his ear into the door, and he shall be your slave forever.** And to your female slave you shall do the same.” (ESV)

Jesus was shown in the Old Testament to be a willing slave along these lines. He was a son but also the willing bond slave of the Father.

#### Psalms 40:6

“In sacrifice and offering you have not delighted, but **you have given me an open ear.** Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required.” (ESV)

#### Isaiah 50:5–7

“**The Lord GOD has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious; I turned not backward. I gave my back to those who strike, and my cheeks to those who pull out the beard; I hid not my face from disgrace and spitting.** But the Lord GOD helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame.” (ESV)



Jesus was the willing servant in perfect submission to the father and the picture used here in the Old Testament pointed back to the law of the bond servant.

As a follower of Jesus, Paul knows this picture. For us, we are "also to be a willing slave of God. The common New Testament word *doulos* describes this kind of slave. Hiebert says of *doulos*, "a slave, a bondservant, one who is in a permanent relation of servitude to another ... Among the Greeks, with their strong sense of personal freedom, the term carried a degrading connotation." He shall be your servant forever: Once agreeing to be a bond slave, that one was committed to their master forever. It was a permanent relationship. (Guzik, Deuteronomy, David Guzik's Commentaries on the Bible 2004, DT 15:16-18)

The net impact of this for us today, is just as Paul was a *doulos*, a bond slave of Jesus rather than being held to slavery to sin, we too now have the realization that Jesus Christ on the cross has set us free from the slavery we once had to sin and now we worship Him as our master and we are also willing bond slaves, servants of the most High God forever.

Romans 1:1

"Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, **called as an apostle**, set apart for the gospel of God," (NASB 2020)

Paul was dealing with a situation that we also see today, folks had begun to show up declaring themselves to be apostles, who were never called by the Lord. We have the same problems today. To be even eligible to be called as an apostle, you first must have seen the risen Christ, and then He is the one who calls.

Paul was not part of the original twelve disciples; he was not part of that inner group.

But there was a second group of apostles, and the requirement for this group was to have seen the resurrected Messiah. Paul fulfilled this requirement, for he saw the resurrected Messiah on the Damascus Road. (Fruchtenbaum 1983, 11)

By the way, Barnabas was part of this group (Acts 14:14) as was James, the half brother of Jesus (Galatians 1:19). Only those who witnessed the resurrected Jesus, and that is only around 500 folks (1 Corinthians 15:6)

Requirements, witnessed the risen Christ, called by Him, and then there are also the attesting miracles as well. All that, would equal someone called to the office of Apostle. There are none called to that office today. You do not become an Apostle by declaring yourself one, getting a website, and then bullying churches to obey your pronouncements, all of which are recent developments.

Don Stewart writes the following, "with the sacred commissioning and responsibility that came with the office of an apostle, it is hard to imagine any person today claiming such an authoritative office. Anyone who does make a claim to have this particular office should immediately be looked upon with the greatest of suspicion.

Indeed, it seems audacious, if not almost blasphemous, for someone in our present-day to claim similar authority as the apostles of Jesus Christ. They received direct revelation from God, had seen the risen Christ, were specially commissioned by Him, and were responsible for composing the New Testament. There is nobody today who should be considered as equal with them. (Stewart n.d.)

That has not stopped proponents of the New Apostolic Reformation.



1 Corinthians 9:1–2

“Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? **Have I not seen Jesus our Lord?** Are you not my work in the Lord? If I am not an apostle to others, at least I am to you; for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.” (NASB 2020)

I do not want to get too deep into this rabbit hole. Suffice it to say, “the Bible does not support the NAR teaching that present-day apostles and prophets must govern the church. Nor does it support the teaching that they are revealing new truths the church needs for it to advance God’s kingdom, including new teachings and practices that will enable the church to become an end-time, miracle-working army.” (Geivett and Pivec 2014, 203)

Paul was called by the Lord to be an Apostle and to serve in that office. “By calling himself an apostle in Romans, Paul reminds his readers that he is writing as no mere ordinary man but rather as one who has been given a message that should be received by them as the very words of God. This also has a bearing on ourselves, for it tells us how we are to receive this book and benefit from it.” (Boice 1991-, 27-28)

By the way, all of us are called but we are not all called to do the same thing. Yes, we are all imagers of God, but in Christ, we are all part of His body.

I spent years thinking a calling was only applicable to work for the Lord. But then I learned that in Christ, anything I do for Him is a work for the Lord. I spent years called of the Lord to be a business executive for Him. Now my calling is that of a Pastor.

I am thankful that there are those who are called to be mechanics, air conditioning techs, and on and on. Jon Courson put it this way, “Whether you’re a baker, banker, mechanic, or cook, yours is an important calling because of the need for brothers and sisters to serve in all kinds of arenas and locations. Don’t think you’re missing God’s best if you’re not a missionary. If the Lord wants you selling insurance or pouring cement, be at peace about it and say, “Lord, if this is what You have for me, I’ll do it for Your glory. I’ll be salt and light as I labor here for You.” (Courson 2003, 865)

Whatever it is the Lord has you doing right now, He has called you there and yes, He may indeed be leading you to something else.

Colossians 3:17

“**Whatever you do in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus**, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.” (NASB 2020)

Christ’s calling for our lives is both general (as we obey the clear teachings of Scriptures) and specific. (Brown 2017, 182)

Ephesians 4:1

“Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, urge you to **walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called**,” (NASB 2020)

Point towards excellence on the behalf of the one we serve, the King.

Romans 1:1

“Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, **set apart for the gospel of God**,” (NASB 2020)

When we see that Paul says he is separated, it means, per Francis Schaeffer, two things. “Separation from and separation to. Separation from is easy to understand. Many things can keep us away from God,



and it is not possible to be separated to God unless we are separated from such things.” (Schaeffer 1998, 15)

Our problem today thought is we don't like the idea of separation.

We want the best of both worlds, yet Jesus wants to be number one on a list of one. The epitome of what separation really means is reflected by Moses for us as he relates what it is God said to him.

Leviticus 11:45

“For I am the LORD who brought you up from the land of Egypt, to be your God; **so you shall be holy, because I am holy.**” (NASB 2020)

When we come to Jesus Christ, we are separating ourselves from the world to follow Him and Him alone. Yes, there is indeed a cost associated with this decision. Jesus even recognized that.

Luke 9:57–62

“As they were walking along, someone said to Jesus, “I will follow you wherever you go.” But Jesus replied, “Foxes have dens to live in, and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place even to lay his head.” He said to another person, “Come, follow me.” The man agreed, but he said, “Lord, first let me return home and bury my father.” But Jesus told him, “Let the spiritually dead bury their own dead! Your duty is to go and preach about the Kingdom of God.” Another said, “Yes, Lord, I will follow you, but first let me say good-bye to my family.” But Jesus told him, “Anyone who puts a hand to the plow and then looks back is not fit for the Kingdom of God.”” (NLT)

The Bible teaches personal separation—the commitment of an individual believer to maintain a godly standard of behavior, separating from those who are living an ungodly lifestyle (1 Corinthians 5:11). (Got Questions Ministries 2014-2021)

We also are to separate ourselves from false teaching, false doctrine, yet at the same time warning and loving those who come from that background back into the flock.

Jude 17–23

“But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. They said to you, “In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions.” It is these who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit. But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. **And have mercy on those who doubt; save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh.**” (ESV)

Separation does not mean wearing black robes, chanting, hanging out with monks and never taking to anyone ever again. Separation does not mean becoming holier than thou, but I have met those who go there. What it means is this, when we come to Christ, and Paul is indeed our example on this, we should distance ourselves from evil and questionable things. And yes, you will not know what those are at the moment you are saved, but the Holy Spirit does indeed begin to clue you in. Something that never bothered you before, suddenly bothers you. That is most likely the Holy Spirit warning you.

We are to draw closer to Jesus and as we do so, the things of the flesh become less important.

Yes, being separate is indeed a struggle but Paul, in his letter to the church in Galatia, gave us some pointers.



Galatians 5:16–24

“But I say, **walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.** For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. **Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these.** I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. **But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control;** against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.” (ESV)

Paul will indeed have more to instruct us on the topic before we are done with this book.

Paul tells us what he has been set apart to, he has been set apart for the gospel (εὐαγγέλιον) euangelion of God. The word means “God’s good news to humans, good news as proclamation.” (Arndt, et al. 2000, 402)

This term was commonly used “in emperor worship during Paul’s day. Good events related to the emperor were declared as good news for the people. Paul wants to be clear what good news he is talking about! It is God’s good news for the world concerning his Son, Jesus. Do not forget that God is the source of the gospel. People did not make it up. It originates with God. We must not adjust it or edit it but proclaim it.” (Merida 2021, 10)

The good news Paul proclaims is just what the prophets announced (1:2; cf. 3:21; 16:26), hence Paul’s heavy use of Scripture in this letter focused on his gospel. (Keener 2009, 19)

Romans 1:1–2

“Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for **the gospel of God, which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures,**” (NASB 2020)

The gospel, the good news that Paul was set apart to was promised in the Old Testament. He is taking the red line that began back in Genesis 3 and is tying it to what it is he has been set apart to teach and preach. This is God’s plan of redemption for the human race.

Yes, he is indeed setting up those of us studying for what we are going to read later in the book. This was declared beforehand by the prophets.

Not only is redemption, the gospel, promised in the Old Testament in the prophets, but this promise of God, has been fulfilled and now stands as accomplished fact.

Romans 1:1–3

“Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which **He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh,**” (NASB 2020)

This gospel is not a new law. It is not a code of morals or ethics. It is not a creed to be accepted. It is not a system of religion to be adhered to. It is not good advice to be followed. **It is a divinely given message concerning a divine Person, the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord. This glorious Being is true Man, yet very God. He is the Branch that grew out of the root of David, therefore true Man. But He is also the Son of God, the virgin-born, who had no human father, and this His works of power demonstrate.** (Ironsides 1928, 21-22)



Paul knows that there are some who are reading the letter who will have knowledge of what the prophets teach. Here, he has tied all of it together to make it clear, if anyone still did not know, it is all about Jesus Christ and no one else. The gospel, the good news, is all about Jesus.

There are many today who want to redefine what the gospel is because, well saying it is all about Jesus, is offensive for those who are into pluralism and multiculturalism. But Jesus made it plain.

John 14:6

“Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.” (NASB 2020)

There is no other gospel. It is all about Jesus.

1 Corinthians 15:1–5

“Now I want to make clear for you, brothers and sisters, the gospel that I preached to you, that you received and on which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold firmly to the message I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I passed on to you as of first importance what I also received—that **Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day according to the scriptures**, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.” (NET 2nd ed.)

“He is the Son of God, and He is Jesus Christ our Lord. That is His wonderful name. We often hear today that we need the religion of Jesus. My friend, He had no religion. He didn’t need one—He is God. What we need today is to have a religion that is about Jesus, that surrounds Him, that is all about what He has done. Jesus Christ actually is God. He cannot worship; He is to be worshiped.” He is not a religion; He is a person and that is who we must know and must follow. (McGee 1997, 647)

He was born, as promised, of the lineage of David. His mother, Mary was of the Davidic line through Nathan (Luke 3:31) who was a son of David. Joseph, His stepfather since He was virgin born, is descended from Solomon (Matthew 1:6). It was Solomon’s line that was later cursed by God (Jeremiah 22:30) and Joseph was of that line, but he isn’t the father. Virgin born changed that. But because of the ruling of God involving the daughters of Zelophehad, it became traditional that the father of a family with no sons but in the same tribe, would adopt the son in law of who their daughter is marrying so she could inherit.

God anticipated this through what we read in Numbers 36 and Joshua 17 about the daughters of Zelophehad

Luke 3:23

“So Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years old. He was the son (**as was supposed**) of Joseph, the son of Heli,” (NET 2nd ed.)

Supposed - ἐνομίζετο – from νομίζω

By law or by custom

Joseph was the adopted son of Eli, Mary’s dad, so that Mary would not lose her inheritance

As a result of the daughters of Zelophehad, Jesus meets the prophecy for Messiah two ways and as such the prophecy to David is not abrogated. He is virgin born. Yet becomes heir. “The angel Gabriel affirmed Jesus’ Judean lineage, telling Mary that “he will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High.



The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David” (Luke 1:32, NLT). David was of the tribe of Judah.” (Got Questions Ministries 2014-2021)

Romans 1:1–4

“Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, **who was declared the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead**, Jesus Christ our Lord,” (NASB 2020)

How do we know Jesus is God? He walked out of the grave. Totally human and yet totally divine at the same time.

We call that the hypostatic union. There is your theology term for today.

Hypostatic union” is a term which describes the union of the Messiah’s humanity and divinity in one hypostasis, or individual existence. The term describes the idea that God the Son took on human nature yet remained fully God. Theanthropic is another term which comes from the Greek and expresses the same idea; it describes a person who embodies two distinct natures, the nature of both God and man. (Fruchtenbaum, Messiah Yeshua: Divine Redeemer 2019, 5)

Paul is setting us up to understand that Jesus Christ is fully man and He is also fully God, at the same time. Dr. Fruchtenbaum outlines this for us. “When we speak about Yeshua’s hypostatic union, we mean five things:

1. He is undiminished deity. He is fully God. He never was less than God.
2. He is fully human. He has full humanity.
3. His undiminished deity and full humanity have been united into one person forever. There is still only one person, but He has two distinct and separate natures. These two natures can never be separated. They have been united into one person forever.
4. The product of this union is the Theanthropic Person, the One who is fully God and fully man—the God-Man.
5. This is the great mystery spoken of in Colossians 2:2–3 as the mystery of God, even Messiah—that Yeshua is fully God and fully man. (Fruchtenbaum, Messiah Yeshua: Divine Redeemer 2019, 5)

What Paul is stating here is foundational. “The resurrection of Jesus did not “make” him the Son of God; it declared and revealed in a powerful way that he was and had always been God’s Son. As a descendant of David, Jesus was a human being, but his resurrection from the dead declared to all that he was also the eternal Son of God.” (Schreiner 2018, 45)

Romans 1:5–7

“through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles in behalf of His name, among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ; 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.” (NASB 2020)

Paul lets us know what is more important to him in verse 5, is it his position, or the fact that the grace of God has been poured out onto him. Yep, the grace of God. Anything we are or do as a result of our following Jesus Christ is because of His grace. Because Paul has been called by the Lord to serve in the office of an Apostle, the grace he is experiencing includes the additional strength to be able to serve in that role. He does that for us in whatever it is He has called us to do. His grace is all sufficient. Paul knows that firsthand.



## 2 Corinthians 12:7–9

“Because of the extraordinary greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me—to keep me from exalting myself! Concerning this I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might leave me. And He has said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.” Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.” (NASB 2020)

Paul absolutely recognizes that the job he is in, cannot be done without the grace of God. And for him, that is seriously required to bring the word to gentiles.

He believes that he has a task of winning the “obedience of faith” even from the Romans, even though they are not his converts. He has a divine commission to accomplish this task even in Rome, and when he does so it will be not for his own personal glory but for the sake of God’s name. (Witherington III and Hyatt 2004, 35)

Paul’s goal was to go to Rome and then to Spain. As he wrote this letter, he did not know the Lord also had in store for him, talking to the major movers and shakers of the day.

But since he is sold out to Jesus, he will indeed tell anyone he comes in contact with about the Lord. He knows this though about the church in Rome, they are followers of Jesus Christ. He would already know that from his work in Corinth the first time through with Aquila and Priscilla. They were serious grounded followers of Jesus and Jewish as well since they had been booted out of Rome by Claudius. That only applied to the Jews and no to the church. But what Paul knew about the church in Rome, a lot of his information had come from them.

The believers in Rome are part of the body of Christ.

Paul had never been to Rome. He would like to go. He would actually wind up living there for a couple of years but right now he does not know that. This letter is very different from all of the others he has written; those were churches he was involved in, this one, he is a stranger.

When he gets to verse 7, he is returning back to the standard letter format of the day. Now we know who the letter is addressed to, the church in Rome.

In designating the Roman Christians as “beloved by God” and “called to be saints,” Paul implies that they are God’s chosen people; for both phrases echo OT designations of Israel. (Moo 1996, 54)

Paul uses the term “saints” a lot. When he says that, it is not based on behavior, but on the status of who they are in Christ. You and I are saints. We may not act like we think saints would act, but that is indeed our status.

Paul will indeed be talking about redemption. Jesus is the heart of the gospel, it is all about Jesus and Paul has now teed up this topic as a central theme for this letter.

He echoes the priestly blessing as he proclaims grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ to the church in Rome. And with that, his introduction is complete.

If there is one thing we get though from this, he is all about proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.

## Romans 3:21–24

“But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. We are made right with God by



placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins." (NLT)

Romans 10:9–13

"If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced." Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For "Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved."" (NLT)

### ABC's of Salvation

- A. Acknowledge that you are a sinner, tell Him that.
- B. Believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sin and that He rose from the dead.
- C. Confess that Jesus is Lord. Tell someone about what you have done.

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