

Greetings of Glory and Grace # 1

Romans 1: 1-7

Today we are beginning an exciting journey through the book of Romans. Many consider this to be the apostle Paul's crowning achievement regarding his epistles. We know that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for our lives, but Romans reaches the great depths of doctrine and soars to the high peaks of theology. It truly is a powerful book.

Paul had yet to visit the Roman church and penned this epistle while on his third missionary journey. It was written from Corinth, following the second epistle to the Corinthian church. Many agree it was written around A.D. 56. Paul greatly desired to visit Rome, but was compelled to deliver the financial contributions of the Macedonian believers to the struggling church in Jerusalem, [Rom.15: 25-27](#). Since he could not visit at this time, Paul sought to prepare the church in Rome to assist in reaching Spain with the Gospel, [Rom.15: 24, 28](#).

Romans can be divided into three main categories: Chapters 1-8 deal with the great doctrines of salvation; Chapters 9-11 deal with the unbelief of the Jews and God's dealing with them; Chapters 12-16 deal with general principles related to the Christian life. In the introductory material of his study Bible, Dr. David Jeremiah speaks of the pattern Paul followed. *Paul took a clear, two-pronged approach in Romans: doctrine followed by duty; theology followed by practice; understanding followed by application; and believing followed by doing.*

We have much ahead of us in the coming weeks. Today I want to examine the [proclamations](#) Paul gives as he greets the Roman church, while we consider: [Greetings of Glory and Grace](#).

I. The Greeting Expressed (1) – [Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God](#). I am certain many of them had heard of Paul, but he takes a moment to introduce himself. Much can be learned through this greeting. Consider:

A. Paul's Submission – He described himself as [a servant of Jesus Christ](#). This is the Greek word *doulos* and literally means a bond slave. Paul reveals that he is actually a slave of Christ, bound in service to Him. He implies no resentment here, but rather a sense of great joy. Paul had reached the pinnacle of success as a Pharisee and yet he rejoiced in his salvation, gladly giving up worldly success while submitting his life in service to the Lord.

- Surely this challenged the Roman readers as it should us. Paul gladly submitted in service to the Lord. We too need to surrender to Him and serve the Lord with gladness!

B. Paul's Service (1) – He also reveals he was [called to be an apostle](#). He had not sought this position within himself. In fact, he had no desire for the Lord or the church prior to meeting the Lord in salvation. God had chosen Paul, calling him to be an apostle. The word apostle means “*sent one*.” Paul knew he was sent of the Lord to carry the good news of the glorious gospel. All believers have this obligation, but Paul was one who actually saw the living Lord. Typically this is accepted as the criteria for being recognized as an apostle.

- It is interesting to note that Paul spoke of his being a servant of the Lord before he described himself as an apostle. He well understood submission must always precede service. He would've been ineffective in apostolic work apart from complete surrender to the Lord. What a lesson there for us. Many want the glory of position without the sacrifice of submission!

C. Paul's Separation (1) – [...separated unto the gospel of God](#). It wasn't an accident that Paul had been chosen of the Lord as an apostle. There was a great work to be done. Paul had been separated to carry the gospel, the good news, unto the Gentiles, literally to the world. He was no longer the man he used to be. He no longer pursued the same agenda. His life had been given wholly to the Lord for the preaching of the Gospel.

- I think we all would agree there is a great need for separation in our day as well. We will never accomplish all the Lord desires of us while desperately trying to hold on to the former life. We must be willing to die to our desires and seek to serve the Lord, separated from the world and the lusts thereof.

II. The Glory Exalted (2-4) – Here Paul seeks to exalt the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. He wants to take a moment to introduce the Lord as well. Consider:

A. The Prophecy (2) – ([Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,](#)) In order to grasp the context, we must understand Paul is referring back to the Gospel he was separated to preach. The Gospel is the good news of Jesus Christ. It reveals His death, burial, and resurrection. Paul assured the reader of the fulfillment of prophecy in Christ. Jesus was the Christ. He is the One the prophets spoke of. He is the One the Scriptures proclaimed would come. They had heard of the man, Jesus Christ, and Paul wanted to ensure them that He was the Christ. Every prophecy concerning His coming had been fulfilled. There was no need to look for another!

B. The Humanity (3) – [Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;](#) Paul confirms this Man, Jesus, was and is the eternal God-Man, the very

Son of the living God. He came robed in a body of flesh, born of a virgin womb of the lineage of David. Sin required a perfect sacrifice in order for atonement to be made. Jesus lived a perfect, sinless life in a body of flesh and offered Himself the atoning sacrifice for sin! Had there been no birth, there would've been no death. Had there been no death, there would be no salvation from sin. The humanity of Christ is essential when we speak of the Gospel and God's plan of redemption and reconciliation.

C. The Deity (4) – *And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:* Paul speaks of the deity of Christ. He was publicly revealed as the Son of God with power, living a life of holiness known only to God. His life, wisdom, miracles, and resurrection from the dead proclaimed His power. God alone could've accomplished what Christ did as He lived and walked upon the earth. There is no doubt this Man was God in the flesh! Paul wanted to affirm the fact that Jesus was without doubt the Christ, possessing all the power, deity, and holiness of God the Father.

D. The Victory (4) – *And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:* Here we find the element that sets Christ apart from all others. He came to atone for sin, and that He did as He bled and died upon the cross. However, if the cross had been the end, we would yet be without hope. Christ alone had power over death. They placed his lifeless body in the grave, but the grave couldn't hold Him. He came forth triumphant, declaring victory of death, hell, and the grave.

- Had He not risen from the dead, we might have received forgiveness for sin, but there would be no hope of eternal life. The penalty of sin is death and Jesus conquered death, freeing the saved from the penalty and eternal consequence of sin!

III. The Grace Extended (5-7) – As he concludes the greeting, Paul takes a moment to address the marvelous grace extended in the Lord. Notice:

A. The Rendering of Grace (5a) – *By whom we have received grace and apostleship...* Paul reveals the source and foundation of such grace. He is well aware of all Christ accomplished for him. He knew apart from Christ he would yet be in his sin, lost and condemned before God. He would not have received such a glorious calling, to share the good news. It was all of Christ!

- We too must recognize the source of such grace. Christ alone provided for our salvation and He alone can extend such grace!

B. The Realm of Grace (5b) – *for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name*. Paul was a Pharisee among Pharisees. He was one of the elite within Jerusalem, and yet he was lost without Christ. He knew the significance of grace and what he had received. Paul also realized this grace was not reserved for the Jews only. He had been called an apostle to the Gentiles. He was to share the good news with the world.

- We have lived sheltered lives being born and raised where we were. We tend to think everyone has heard the Gospel at some point, but there are many within our communities who have never heard. We must understand that Jesus didn't just die for those who were raised in church or are familiar with the Bible. He died for all people, of every tongue and nation! We must develop the passion and concern Paul had to tell others of His great love and grace.

C. The Recipients of Grace (6-7a) – *Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ: ^[7a]To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints*. There would be many struggles ahead for the believer. Knowing Christ in salvation does not shield the Christian from adversity. Paul knew their faith would be tested and they would hear much heresy and false doctrine. The Judaizers would seek to create doubt within their hearts. Paul wanted to assure them of their faith and help them realize their position in Christ. All who have trusted Christ in salvation, realizing their need, repenting of sin, and believing by faith are secure in the Lord.

- Isn't it amazing to consider we are part of the family of God? We have been made righteous through Christ. We have the blessed hope of eternal life. I rejoice to be a recipient of such grace!

D. The Request for Grace (7b) – *Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ*. Much will follow through the depths of this epistle, but at the onset Paul seeks to comfort their hearts and encourage them in the faith. He desired the church at Rome to experience the fullness of grace and peace available from the Lord.

- It has been said that grace is the cause and peace is the effect within our lives. God's grace always brings peace. Life will have its share of difficulty, but where grace is extended and received, peace abounds!

Conclusion: Paul introduced himself as a servant and apostle of the Lord, called to carry the good news. This established his character and authority, but it also revealed his heart. It served to challenge others in their faith and service. We have received so much in Christ; the least we can do is surrender our lives in service to Him.

However, you can't submit and serve someone you don't know. Christ died for the sin of humanity. His saving grace is offered to every nation. He desires all to be saved from sin. If you have never believed on Christ by faith, repented of your sin, and received salvation, I challenge you to consider the truth of the Gospel. Will you respond to His gracious offer of salvation?