

Romans: The Integrity of God

The Gospel of God

Romans 1:1-7

In 750 B.C. Rome was a little farming village. By Paul's day, this little village had become an empire that ruled the world. Though Paul would eventually be imprisoned there twice and ultimately martyred in Rome, when Paul wrote Romans, he had never been to Rome. Paul wrote Romans in 57 A.D. during his second visit to Corinth. He raised funds to help the poor in Jerusalem (Acts 19-20). A woman named Phebe was on her way to Rome, and Paul gave her a letter commending her to the church (16:1). The skeptic Renan said of Phebe, "*she carried beneath the folds of her robe the whole future of Christian theology.*" Luther called Romans "*the purest gospel.*" Calvin said, "*If you understand Romans, you understand the Bible.*"

I. Paul begins Romans with an expected salutation . . .

In Paul's day, the person writing a letter puts his name first. Paul identifies himself in two ways:

(A). As a servant of Jesus Christ . . . he uses the word "*duolos*" which means slave.

This term is one of both humility and dignity. Paul was a *slave of Jesus Christ*; not men.

(B). As an apostle called by Christ. . . "*one sent by another.*" In Paul's case, sent by Christ.

Jesus Christ had "*separated Paul to be a messenger of the gospel of God.*"

II. Paul writes Romans with an excursive style.

The word excursive means "*to wander or ramble with a purpose.*" An excursion is a side trip from the main trip because interest has been piqued! Paul writes this way. The customary greeting is found in vs. one **and** 7; verses 2-6 are an excursion from "*the gospel of God.*"

(A). Paul, an apostle of "*the gospel of God*" (v.1). This phrase triggers something in Paul.

(1). The good news has been promised to us in the Old Testament Scriptures (v.2).

(2). The good news is found in the person of the Son of God (v.3).

(a). The Son of God is in the lineage of King David according to the flesh (v.3).

The gospels of Matthew and Luke record the genealogy of Jesus Christ and we find that both Mary and Joseph are descendants of King David.

(b). The Son of God is "proved" to be who He is by the resurrection (v.4).

In the original, ***Jesus Christ our Lord*** does not come until the end of v.4.

His excursion begins with the ***good news of God***, promised in the Scriptures, fulfilled in the person of the ***Son of God***, from David's family, proved to be the Son of God by His resurrection ---- who is this person of whom I speak?

Jesus Christ our Lord (v.4 in the original text).

Jesus (the one who saves), **Christ** (the Messiah), **our Lord** (Jehovah God).

1. By whom we have been commissioned to deliver the good news (v.5).

2. By whom **you** also have received the call from Jesus Christ (v.6).

(B). "*To all you that be in Rome*" (v.7).

Those who were believers in Rome were "loved of God" and "called saints" by God.

The phrase in the KJV "*called to be saints*" should be translated as "*called saints.*"

III. Paul fills Romans with an evangelical sensitivity.

"*Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ*" (v.7). We find that Paul never loses sight of people. Yes, his letter is doctrinal and filled with truth, but Paul's priority was not so much the conveying of doctrine as it was the "*grace and peace*" that comes to an individual who understands and receives the teaching of Jesus Christ.

As we begin our study, let us remember that the gospel is given to us to change our lives.