

ROMANS CHAPTER 1

Romans 1 - Session 2 (1:1-17)

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Title: "It's all about the LORD"

FOY: This sermon is in Consecutive Expository Format. It means that this sermon is from consecutive verses (passages) through the whole book of Romans. The author's (Paul) intended points are the sermon's main points.

EXPOSITION OF ROMANS 1 (1:1-17)

The Gospel Exalted

v1 Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,

"set apart" = Paul wanted the Roman believers to know that he is no longer set apart unto the service of his own sect as a Pharisee; but now he is separated unto the Gospel of God."

"gospel of God" = God is the most important word in this epistle. Romans is a book about God. Most mentioned topic in Romans. Everything Paul touches in this letter he relates to God, who came into our world to save us. The word "God" occurs 153 times in the book; an average of once every 46 words. This is more frequently than in any other New Testament book.

v2 which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures,

The Gospel is not a new plan of salvation. Throughout the Hebrew Scriptures (Old testament) we read about this plan. That man cannot save himself and need something greater than himself, God Himself to come and help humanity. Salvation by faith has always been God's plan. Therefore, Paul begins by linking the gospel to the Old Testament promises (as he also does in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

v3 concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh,

By mentioning "flesh", Paul implies that something more than flesh is also involved. Jesus is not merely human, He is also the Son of God. It took God Himself to become a man to come and help us to be able to live the life God destined for us.

v4 who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord,

The resurrection is unique to Jesus as He conquered sin and death. Sin and death could not hold Him.

v5 through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake,

v6 among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ;

The gospel says that believers belong to Christ, and that is Good News.

After this introductory description of the Gospel, Paul gets back to the normal letter format by stating the recipients of the letter:

v7 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.

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world.

Greek letters often included a prayer of thanksgiving to one of the gods, and Paul adapts this custom, thanking the true God:

Paul gave God the credit for these people's faith. He didn't thank the people for believing — he thanked God, because God is the one who enables people to believe. Of our own, we would turn away. Whatever faith we have; we need to thank God as the one who gives us that faith.

v9 For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the preaching of the gospel of His Son, is my witness as to how unceasingly I make mention of you,

v10 always in my prayers making request, if perhaps now at last by the will of God I may succeed in coming to you.

Paul desperately wanted to visit the believers in Rome. Also, Paul always prayed for the church in Rome. We too should pray regularly for one another.

v11 For I long to see you so that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, that you may be established;

v12 that is, that I may be encouraged together with you while among you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine.

He wanted to help them by imparting a spiritual gift to them. Gifts can be imparted, e.g. through the laying on of hands. In Acts we see that many people received the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hand.

— but he quickly adds, “or rather so that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine”. When we as believers fellowship together, we can encourage one another in the faith.

v13 I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that often I have planned to come to you (and have been prevented so far) so that I may obtain some fruit among you also, even as among the rest of the Gentiles.

v14 I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish.

Paul has often thought of going to Rome. Even when Paul lived in Jerusalem, he would have met people from Rome and would have heard stories about it. So far, circumstances prevented Paul from going to Rome.

Paul wanted to preach to everyone, and that's why he wanted to preach in Rome, as well.

v15 So, for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

16 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.

17 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."

PAUL IS NOT ASHAMED

Paul was not ashamed of the way in which God saves people. He is not ashamed of telling people about what Jesus did because he knew the power that is in the message. He is not ashamed of the gospel — and he doesn't want the Romans to be ashamed of it, either. We are often intimidated by the unbelief of our culture. One of the greatest failures of Christianity is a fear to share our faith. We know that very often Christianity is marginalised and Christians are ridiculed. In our societies these days there are no more moral absolutes. Because our culture is hostile towards us, many Christians retreat from society and thereby we cannot share with them the power of the Gospel. We are called by God to stand for what is right. The Christians of the first century took the message wherever they went and changed society.

Paul is not ashamed because the Gospel is the Good News that can, have and always will transform lives! God uses the Gospel to bring salvation to everyone who accepts the message, to everyone who trusts in Christ. Christ is the centre of the message and the message of the Gospel is the message of how you can obtain eternal life. It is nothing to be ashamed of — it is something to be shared with everyone, both Jews and Gentiles.

THE PROBLEM OF SIN IS DEEPER THAN ANY SOLUTIONS WE HAVE

Sin separates humans from God. The Bible tells us that the human heart is corrupt and needs help. The problem is just that we cannot save or help ourselves. Our problem is deeper than any solution that this world has to offer. Religion says this is what you must do to get your life sorted out. The Gospel (Christianity) says this is what God has done to get you out of the mess you are in.

Paul is quoting Habakkuk 2:4. The Gospel reveals to us the way that God saves people. It is through their faith in what God came to do to save us. This verse triggered the Reformation.

RIGHTEOUSNESS IS THROUGH FAITH

Paul saying that God's righteousness becomes reality in our lives through faith. We learn about it through faith, by believing the gospel. All who are believers in Jesus have the same access to God the Father.

ANNOUNCING A BETTER KING AND LIFE

The gospel announces a better King, a better society and a better way of living. We think of the Gospel as religion and therefore we back off when in the presence of the unsaved. For Paul the gospel was not a religious message. When a new emperor came into power there was an excitement in the air. The people hoped that the wrongs will be made right, justice would come and peace would be restored. If people got so excited about a new emperor, how much more should be get excited about the King of kings bringing a new way of life. Paul was pronouncing a radical change in the way we live.

The gospel is the greatest story ever told. Large portions of the rest of the book of Romans are proving that the Gospel is in fact the good news.

God saves those who trust Him. Because God saves people based on their faith it is open to everybody. "to all who believe, the Jew first and then to the Greek"

What does it mean when we say God saves us? It means that God saves us by making us righteous. He takes our sin and exchange it for His righteousness.