

Romans 1:1–7**March 30, 2025**

1 Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ² which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, ³ concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴ and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵ through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, ⁶ including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

⁷To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I. Introduction

Paul's opening in Romans establishes his apostolic authority, the divine nature of the gospel, and its connection to God's promises in the Old Testament. This passage lays the groundwork for understanding the gospel's power, the necessity of faith, and the obedience that follows.

II. Exposition and Commentary**1. Paul's Identity and Calling (v.1)**

- Paul introduces himself as a *servant (slave) of Christ Jesus*, emphasizing his total submission to Christ's authority. He is not his own master.
- His calling as an *apostle* highlights that his mission is divinely appointed, not self-assumed.
- How does servanthood relate to apostleship?

2. The Gospel's Divine Origin and Continuity (vv. 2-3)

- Paul stresses that the gospel was *promised beforehand* through the prophets, showing that it is not a new teaching but the fulfillment of God's ancient plan.
- The gospel concerns *God's Son*, who is both divine and human, descended from David in His earthly lineage.
- If the gospel was promised long ago, what does that say about God's consistency? Could a God who changes truly be trustworthy? And if the gospel is the fulfillment of promises, how should that shape the way we read the Old Testament?

3. Jesus Christ Declared the Son of God in Power (v.4)

- Jesus' divine Sonship is *declared* by His resurrection, which confirms His identity and victory over death.
- If the resurrection is the ultimate declaration of Christ's Sonship, what would it mean to believe in Christ but downplay the resurrection? If He is *Son in power* by resurrection, what kind of authority does He now wield?

4. Grace and Apostleship for the Obedience of Faith (v.5)

- Paul's apostleship is for the purpose of bringing about *obedience of faith* among the nations.
- True faith necessarily produces obedience, showing that justification and sanctification are inseparable.
- Can faith that does not lead to obedience really be called faith? If obedience is the fruit of faith, then how should we view a professed belief that does not transform how someone lives?

5. The Inclusion of the Nations in Christ's Call (v.6)

- Paul emphasizes that the Roman believers are *called* to belong to Christ, underscoring the global scope of salvation.
- How is God's heart for the world displayed in the mission of God? How does your posture toward nonbelievers declare and display the gospel?

III. Reflection Questions

1. What does Paul's self-description as a servant and apostle teach about Christian identity?
2. How does the Old Testament foreshadow the gospel?
3. Why is the resurrection essential for affirming Christ's Sonship?
4. What does "obedience of faith" mean in practical terms for believers today?
5. How does this passage challenge an individualistic view of Christianity?

IV. Memory Verse:

Romans 3:20 (ESV)

²⁰ For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

⁸First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world. ⁹For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I mention you ¹⁰always in my prayers, asking that somehow by God’s will I may now at last succeed in coming to you. ¹¹For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you— ¹²that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith, both yours and mine. ¹³I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented), in order that I may reap some harvest among you as well as among the rest of the Gentiles. ¹⁴I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. ¹⁵So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

¹⁶For 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. ¹⁷For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”

I. Introduction

Paul shows gratitude for the Romans' faith, his desire to visit them, and his commitment to preaching the gospel. He emphasizes mutual encouragement, his calling to preach to all people, and the gospel's universal power, declaring it as God's means of salvation and revelation of righteousness through faith.

II. Exposition and Commentary

1. Paul’s Gratitude for the Roman Church (vv. 8–10)

- Paul begins with thanksgiving, acknowledging that the faith of the Roman believers has spread beyond their local community.
- Paul emphasizes Christ’s role as the mediator of all worship and prayer.
- How often do you thank God for the work He is doing in fellow believers?

2. Paul’s Desire for Mutual Encouragement (vv. 11–13)

- Paul longs to visit the Roman church not only to strengthen them but also to be strengthened himself. His ministry is not one-directional.
- Paul’s visit shows that even He must submit his plans to God’s providence.

- Do you view the church as a place to serve *and* be served?
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3. Paul's Obligation to Preach to All (vv. 14–15)

- Paul describes himself as **under obligation** to all people—Greeks and barbarians, wise and foolish. The gospel is not for one ethnicity but for all.
 - His eagerness to preach in Rome shows that the city's influence does not intimidate him; rather, he sees it as an important field for gospel work.
 - Do you see evangelism as an obligation or an optional activity?
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4. The Power of the Gospel and The Righteousness of God Revealed by Faith (vv. 16–17)

- Paul declares, **“I am not ashamed of the gospel,”** even though many in the world see it as foolishness (cf. 1 Cor. 1:18).
 - The gospel is **the power of God for salvation**—not just good advice or moral teaching, but the very means by which God rescues sinners.
 - This salvation is for **everyone who believes**, breaking down distinctions between Jew and Greek. Faith is the only requirement.
 - The gospel reveals **the righteousness of God**, meaning both His perfect justice and His saving action in declaring sinners righteous.
 - **“from faith for faith”** shows that righteousness is based on faith from start to finish. Paul quotes Habakkuk 2:4, highlighting justification by faith alone.
 - If righteousness comes by faith and not works, how does that affect the way you live? Do you trust in Christ's righteousness or your own?
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III. Reflection Questions

1. Why is Paul eager to preach the gospel, even to believers?
 2. How does the gospel display the righteousness of God?
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