

2020 VISION "GOSPEL CALLING" ROMANS 1:1-7

You have a letter from the Apostle Paul. Please don't ask, "What does it say?" Please don't say, "Just tell me what I need to know." And please don't assume you can pass over the doctrinal part to get to the Christian living part. You need to read it for yourself, and you need to know everything it says—the *theological* as well as the *practical*.

Otherwise, Paul wouldn't have written it, and the Holy Spirit wouldn't have inspired it. Consider what Martin Luther wrote about the book of Romans: "It is worthy not only that every Christian should know it word for word, by heart, but occupy himself with it every day, as the daily bread of the soul. It can never be read or pondered too much, and the more it is dealt with the more precious it becomes, and the better it tastes" ("Preface to the Epistle to the Romans" (1522), cited by Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 22).

The book of Romans was written to everyday Christians, most of whom were Gentiles, meeting in house churches (Ro 16:5) in Rome. Following Paul's first missionary journey (Ac 13:3-14:28) and the Jerusalem conference (Ac 15:1-35), the apostle wrote Galatians from Antioch in the autumn of A.D. 49. During Paul's second missionary journey (Ac 15:40-18:22), the apostle wrote 1 and 2 Thessalonians from Corinth in the summer of A.D. 51. During Paul's third missionary journey (Ac 18:23-21:17),

Romans can never be read or pondered too much, and the more it is dealt with the more precious it becomes, and the better it tastes.

— Martin Luther

the apostle wrote 1 Corinthians from Ephesus in the spring and 2 Corinthians from Macedonia in the fall of A.D. 56. **He wrote Romans from Corinth in the winter of A.D. 56-57.** Following his arrival in Jerusalem, he was arrested and three years later wound up in Rome as a prisoner (Ac 21:27-28:16). During his two years in prison, he wrote the Prison Epistles, Ephesians in the fall of A.D. 60, Colossians and Philemon in the fall of A.D. 61, and Philippians in the spring of A.D. 62. After his release and perhaps a fourth missionary journey (see *The NIV Study Bible*, 1836-37), he wrote the Pastoral Epistles, 1 Timothy in the fall of A.D. 62, Titus in the summer of A.D. 66, and after being jailed again, 2 Timothy in the fall of A.D. 67, before finally dying as a martyr under Nero in the spring of A.D. 68 (see Harold Hoehner's chronology of the apostolic age adapted by H. Wayne House, *Chronological and Background Charts of the New Testament*, 129-132).

In his letter to the Romans, Paul tells us what we all need to know about the "gospel of God . . . regarding his Son" (1:1-2).

This Week's Core Competency

Giving Away My Faith – I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes. Ephesians 6:19-20, *Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.*

The gospel is worth giving away because the gospel is a message about God's Son. The point of the opening of the letter to the Romans is to *inform*. It tells us about Paul and about ourselves, but most importantly, it tells us about the gospel of God,

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which is in essence a message about God's Son. His eternal Son: "The Word," John says, "became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the father, full of grace and truth" (Jn 1:14). His incarnate Son was, humanly speaking, a descendant of David, having the right to rule as Messiah over Israel and the nations. Following his humiliation, Jesus was exalted to a position of power by his resurrection from the dead and is now seated at the right hand of God (Ac 2:33). The gospel is a message that calls people to a life of obedience that springs from faith. Rather than a message that's too good to be true—it's true enough—it's a message that's too good to keep to oneself.

day **1** ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

Romans 1:1-7

1 Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God- 2 the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures 3 regarding his Son, who as to his earthly life was a descendant of David, 4 and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord. 5 Through him we received grace and apostleship to call all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith for his name's sake. 6 And you also are among those Gentiles who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.

7 To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people:

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

Cf., another translation

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,

7 To 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. (ESV)

EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

- * Circle "servant" in v. 1.
- * Underline "called to be" and "set apart for" in v. 1.
- * Circle "gospel" in v. 2.
- * Double underline "promised beforehand" in v. 2.
- * Bracket "as to his earthly life" in v. 3.
- * Bracket "through the Spirit of holiness" in v. 4.

- * Circle "appointed" in v. 4.
- * Box "by" indicating *means* in v. 4.
- * Circle "resurrection" in v. 4.
- * Highlight "Jesus Christ our Lord" in v. 4.
- * Bracket "obedience that comes from faith" in v. 5.

day 2

EXPLORE – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. Identify three things Paul says about himself verse 1.
2. Identify three things Paul says about his readers in verses 6-7.
3. *Compare* Paul's status with yours.
4. *Contrast* Paul's status with yours.
5. The gospel was "*promised* through his prophets." "Promised" or "prophesied," what difference does it make?
6. The appellation, "Jesus Christ, our Lord" fits perfectly Paul's description of God's Son in verses 3-4. How so?
7. Explain what the resurrection had to do with Jesus being appointed "Son of God *in power*." Wasn't he the Son of God before his resurrection?
8. Put what "obedience that comes from faith" (lit., "obedience of faith") means in your own words.
9. **Discussion:** Talk about God's *purpose* for you as one who belongs to Jesus Christ.

Paul's letters all have three parts: an opening, a body, and a closing. Included in the opening is the apostle's greeting, often accompanied by a statement of thanksgiving for his readers, as well as a prayer for them. A typical Greek letter included a simple greeting containing the sender's name and the recipient's name followed by the greeting, i.e., "X to Y, greetings." Paul adapted the form of that letter to "X to Y, grace and peace." As far as the book of Romans is concerned, the greeting is:

"Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God (v. 1)

To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people:

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ (v. 7).

The greeting tells us something about Paul and something about ourselves. While the letter is addressed specifically to believers in Rome, it addresses them as Christians, which makes what the apostle says to them relevant to us, also.

The greeting tells us that Paul is a "servant of Christ Jesus" in the same vein as exceptional servants of the LORD in the Old Testament, "called" to fill the *office* of apostle and "set apart" for the furtherance of the gospel. As the Lord said to Ananias, "This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. I will show him how much he must suffer for my name" (Ac 9:15-16). It tells us that we are "loved by God and called to be his holy people." The *grace* of God is his mercy and unmerited favor imparted to us through Christ, and the *peace* of God is the well being which we may enjoy through his grace.

Sandwiched in between in verses 2-6, Paul elaborates on the message he is called to advance (vv. 2-4) and the task with which he is occupied (vv. 5-6). His message is the "gospel of God" (v. 1), rooted in the Old Testament Scriptures, "regarding his Son" (v. 3). The Son is the essence and heart of the gospel. Paul's thinking moves progressively from God's pre-incarnate Son (v. 3), to his incarnate Son, Jesus, the son of David and Israel's Messiah (v. 3), to his exalted Son, appointed to be the Son of God *in power* by his

resurrection (v. 4).

To this last point, Peter declares, "God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. . . Therefore, let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Ac 2:32-36).

One commentator explains the meaning of verses 3-4 this way: "What Paul is claiming, then, is that the preexistent Son, who entered into human experience as the promised Messiah, was appointed on the basis of (or, perhaps, at the time of) the resurrection to a new and more powerful position in relation to the world . . . the Son attains a new, exalted status as 'Lord' (cf., v. 4b). Son of God from eternity, he becomes Son of God 'in power' . . . The transition from v. 3 to v. 4, then is not a transition from a human messiah to a divine Son of God (adoptionism) but from the Son as Messiah to the Son as both Messiah and powerful, reigning Lord" (Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT, 48-49).

His task with which he is occupied as one given the gift of apostleship is "to call all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith for his name's sake" (v. 5). In other words, to call Gentiles to believe the gospel and manifest that belief through the obedience that springs from faith. This idea reappears in Paul's later epistle to the Ephesians. There he writes: "For it is by grace you have been saved through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (2:8-10).

Paul's purpose in the opening to Romans is to inform rather than direct. In it he provides information that he wants us to know to prepare us for his elaboration on the gospel of God that will follow. That said, knowing has its implications. To know the glory of the gospel is to be compelled to share it.

day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you in his word.

The Message of the Passage

The gospel of God is the message about Jesus Christ our Lord proclaimed so that people might believe and manifest the obedience that comes from faith.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James teaches in James 1:22. Reflect on the message of Romans 1:1-7 and your response to it.

Describe your initial reaction to the message.

As you reflect on it, describe the relevance of the message to you personally.

What one thing might you do in direct response to the message?

notes STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

v. 1 **servant** The term connotes total devotion, suggesting that Paul is completely at his master's disposal. It's used to refer to a select few in the OT, e.g., Moses, Elijah, and David. Romans 14:4 implies that all Christians are servants of Christ Jesus in a more general sense. "Some prefer the rendering 'slave,' but this could suggest an unwilling attachment. In Israel the citizenry regarded themselves as servants of their king, even though they were free men. Since this word *doulos* is used of Christ in relation to the Father (Phil 2:7), where 'slave' would be inappropriate, the translation 'servant' is altogether fitting here" (Everett F. Harrison, "Romans," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 10:14).

v. 1 **called to be** Paul is an apostle not in the *general* sense, "messenger," but in the *technical* sense, "messenger with special authority." "If 'servant' expresses Paul's commitment to Christ, 'apostle' sets forth his authority as Christ's appointee—his right not only to preach the gospel (believers in general could do that) but to found and supervise churches and if necessary discipline them" (14). "The apostles, then, were the immediate messengers of Christ, appointed to bear testimony to what they had seen and heard . . . To be an apostle, therefore, it was necessary to have seen Christ after his resurrection, 1 Cor. ix. 1, and to have a knowledge of his life and doctrines derived immediately from himself" (Charles Hodge, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 16).

v. 1 **set apart for** I.e., set apart for the preaching and furtherance of the gospel of God. "It is most natural to locate the time of this setting apart at Paul's conversion and commission (Acts 9:15; Gal 1:12)" (Harrison, 14).

v. 2 **gospel** The gospel of God is the message "regarding his Son" (v. 3).

v. 2 **promised beforehand** "The 'prophets' through whom God promised the gospel include men like Moses (cf. Acts 3:21-22) and David (cf. Acts 2:30), in addition to those we would ordinarily classify as 'prophets' per se . . . His purpose is general and principal, to allay possible suspicion about 'his' gospel as new and innovative by asserting its organic relationship to the OT" (Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT, 44). "Promise means more than prophecy, because it commits the Almighty to make good his word, whereas a prophecy could just be an advance announcement of something that would happen" (Harrison, 14).

v. 3 **as to his earthly life** Lit., "according to the flesh" (ESV). The phrase alludes to the incarnation of the Son. "The gospel centers in God's Son, who had this status before he took 'human nature' and who, in becoming man, became not only an Israelite (9:5) but a son of David (Matt 1:1; Luke 1:32; Acts 13:22, 23; 2 Tim 2:8), a qualification he needed as Messiah (Isa 11:1)" (14).

v. 4 **through the Spirit of holiness** Lit., "according to the Spirit of holiness" (ESV), i.e., the Holy Spirit.

v. 4 **appointed** Cf., "declared" (ESV). "The word rendered declared (*horizo*) has the fuller force of 'appointed' (it is used in Acts x. 42, xvii. 31 of Christ's appointment as Judge of all)" (F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans*, TNTC, 72).

v. 4 **resurrection** "Paul does not mean that Jesus became the Son of God by the resurrection, but that He who during His earthly ministry 'was the Son of God in weakness and lowliness' became by the resurrection 'the Son of God in power'" (72). "The period of Christ's earthly life and ministry was followed by another phase—that which resulted from his resurrection" (Harrison, 15).

v. 5 **obedience that comes from faith** Lit., "the obedience of faith" (ESV). The rendering in the NIV "places the emphasis on post conversion commitment: the obedience of the Christian that is to follow and be the fruit of faith. The other major option is to take 'faith' as a definition of 'obedience': 'the obedience which is faith'" (Moo, 52). Perhaps both nuances are in view since obedience and faith are so closely related. "'Faith' is 'obedience' to God, 'obedience which consists in or springs from faith,' because God commands everyone to believe in Christ (cf. John 6:29; Acts 17:30-31)" (Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on Romans," 2017 ed., 17, www.soniclight.com).

Family Talk

Encouragement from one parent's heart to another

Saul was a zealous Pharisee who grew up in a strict Jewish household. His parents held firmly to following the law of Moses and they despised Gentiles, whom they considered to be unclean. As a young person, Saul became increasingly hostile to the believers in Jerusalem and the surrounding areas. As a young man, he made it his mission to eradicate followers of Christ. On one occasion, as he was traveling from Jerusalem to Damascus with a letter that gave him authority to arrest believers and bring them back to Jerusalem to be punished, he had a life-changing encounter. In Acts 9, we read of Saul's blinding encounter with Jesus. Saul, whose name was later changed to Paul, experienced a complete transformation as the truth of the gospel permeated his heart. Paul went on to be the greatest missionary of all time. He devoted the remainder of his life to spreading the good news of Jesus. Paul had not yet been to Rome when he penned the letter to the believers there, but he had much to say to them. The book of Romans is the story of what is wrong with the world and what Jesus did to make it right. As we study the book of Romans this year, you will have many opportunities to have life-changing discussions with your kids. Commit to staying engaged in the discipleship process this year and make an effort to have spiritual conversations each week with your child. We are expecting the Lord to do big things this year!

What Does The Bible Say

Weekly Verse: Read Romans 1:1-7

1. How does Paul describe himself in verse 1?
2. What did Paul say he was called to do?
3. What did he say about the Romans (verse 7)?

What Do You Think

Read verse 5. What do you think Paul meant when he said they were called "to the obedience that comes from faith"? How does your obedience demonstrate your faith?

What R U Going To Do

Write Luke 11:28 on a piece of paper and post it somewhere in your room. Pray and ask God to help you obey His Word each day in 2018!

Core Comp

Giving Away My Faith - I tell others about Jesus to help with God's work.

Memory Verse

Romans 1:16 - *I am not ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes; first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.*

KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized my verse _____, completed *Scrolls* _____, brought Bible _____, brought a friend _____.

Series Discipleship Challenge located in KidPix Store.

Child's name _____ Grade ____ Parent's signature _____

Earn 1 token by completing the PantegoKids Bible study and another token by reciting the memory verse.

Questions: Kids@pantego.org

30 CORE COMPETENCIES

10 CORE BELIEFS

Trinity *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation By Grace *Ephesians 2:8-9*

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

10 CORE PRACTICES

Worship *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness *Matthew 6:33*

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Biblical Community *Acts 2:44-47*

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Giving Away My Time *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Money

2 Corinthians 8:7

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith *Ephesians*

6:19-20

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 CORE VIRTUES

Joy *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

Faithfulness *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Self-Control *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience *Proverbs 14:29*

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

About the Authors

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Wendy Hollabaugh (B.S.W. University of Texas at Arlington) is the Children's Minister at Pantego Bible Church. Wendy has over ten years of experience in Children's Ministry. She has a passion for leading families to connect with God and each other. She enjoys creating compelling environments where kids fall in love with God and His Truth. Wendy and her husband, Greg, are also involved in their own personal youth ministry as they are training their three teenagers, Hannah, Aaron and Noah.



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The mission of THE SCROLLS is to help you Belong, Become, and go Beyond as follower of Jesus Christ through your own active reading of the Bible. Send any questions or comments you may have about this lesson to Tom Bulick. His e-mail address is tbulick@pantego.org.