

Abounding Grace Christian Church

A Study through the Epistle to the Romans – Part 1

I. Introduction - Today we begin a series of study through the epistle of Paul to the Romans. The book of Romans is the longest and most theologically significant letter of the Apostle Paul's. As we study this epistle together, we are going to discover some of the most foundational, yet profound truths of the Gospel. The theme of Romans is the Gospel and its revelation of God's righteousness. In this study, we will see more clearly what righteousness is, the results of receiving it and how to walk in righteousness in our everyday lives.

II. Some Background.

- A. This letter was written to the Christians in Rome around A.D. 57 – A.D. 60. There is little doubt by anyone that it was written by the Apostle Paul. This was a church that Paul didn't start and had never been to up to this time.
- B. No one knows for certain who began the church at Rome but, based upon what Paul writes, it was probably a very strong and established church.

III. A Basic Outline of the Letter to the Romans.

- A. **Righteousness Required – Romans 1:1-4:25.**
- B. **Righteousness Received – Romans 5:1-8:39.**
- C. **Righteousness Rejected – Romans 9:1-11:36.**
- D. **Righteousness Revealed – Romans 12:1-16:27.¹**

IV. Exposition of Chapter One.

A. Verses 1-7 - Paul' Salutation.

1. **Verse 1** – The name “**Paul**” is a Gentile name which literally means; “**little**”. It was common practice among the Hebrews of Paul's day to give their children a Gentile name in addition to their Jewish name.² Paul's Hebrew name was “**Saul**”, meaning “**desired**” or “**asked for**.”
 - a. **Paul**: The life and ministry of Paul is well documented in the book of Acts chapters 8 through 28, as well as Galatians 1 and 2, and II Corinthians 11 and 12. It is almost universally agreed that Paul wrote Romans from the city of Corinth as he wintered there on his third missionary journey as described in **Acts 20:2-3**. This is based on **Romans 16:1, 23** along with **I Corinthians 1:14**.
 - b. “**...a bondservant of Jesus Christ...**” – The Greek word here is “**doulos**” which literally means; “**slave**.” A slavery undertaken voluntarily out of love. Kenneth Wuest writes: “**one who was bound to his master in chords so strong that only death could break them, one who served his master to the disregard of his own interests, one whose will was swallowed up in the will of his master.**”³
 - c. “**...called to be an apostle...**” – Paul states that he was “**called**” (or, appointed) to be an apostle. The word “**apostle**” means; “**one who is sent forth to represent another.**”
 - 1) The original meaning of the word “**apostle**” is multi-faceted.
 - a) In secular, classical Greek it meant:
 - i. An emissary or ambassador.
 - ii. A fleet of ships or an expedition sent with a specific objective.
 - iii. The admiral who commanded the fleet.
 - iv. The colony which was founded by the admiral.
 - 2) There are different types or rankings of Apostles in the New Testament.
 - a) Jesus Christ. **Hebrews 3:1**.
 - b) The “**Twelve Apostles of the Lamb**”. **Revelation 21:14**. (No one else can stand in this ranking of apostle. They were sent forth for a specific time and

¹Kevin J. Conner, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Portland, OR: City Bible Publishing, 1999)

²Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 11.

³Ibid.

purpose.) Special qualifications were laid out for them as we see in **Acts 1:15-22.**

c) Post-Ascension Apostles. (These consist of those who became apostles AFTER the ascension of Jesus to the right hand of the Father.)
cf. I Corinthians 12:28 and Ephesians 4:11-14.

3) The work of an Apostle. **“There are many people after my position, but there are not nearly so many after my work.”**

a) In Scripture, no two apostles had exactly the same work to do.

b) All apostles are teachers and preachers of the Word of God. **Acts 2:42; I Timothy 2:7.** (They often do the work of the other four of the five-fold ministry gifts.)

c) Apostles have part in founding and establishing churches.

Acts 14:21-23; I Corinthians 3:10-11.

d) Apostles are to have a **“fathering”** type ministry. **I Corinthians 4:15.**

e) There are specific **“signs of an apostle”**. **II Corinthians 12:12.**

d. **“...separated to the gospel of God.”** – The word **“separated”** means; **“to set off by a boundary”**; **“to mark off by boundaries”**; **“to limit”** and **“to be set apart for a purpose.** Compare this with **Acts 13:1-3.**

1) **“...the gospel of God.”** – The word **“gospel”** means; **“good news”** or, **“news of victory.”** The idea of being an apostle is that you are a special ambassador or messenger. Paul’s message is the gospel (good news) of God. It is the gospel of God in the sense that it belongs to God in heaven. This isn’t a gospel Paul made up; he simply is a messenger of God’s gospel.

2) Some scholars believe that Paul may be alluding to the fact that at one time, as a Pharisee (which means, **“separatist”**), he was set apart for the law but now he is set apart for another message – the good news of Jesus Christ.

2. **Verse 2 – “which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures.”** - The Gospel was promised and foretold in the Old Testament (**cf. Luke 24:44.**)

3. **Verse 3 – Shows forth the Humanity of Jesus Christ.**

a. **“...concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh.”**

1) The word **“born”** here means **“to come into existence”** and sometimes is translated as the word **“became”** (**John 1:14.**)

2) Only His humanity was “born” or “made”. He was of the “seed” of David according to the flesh, or according to the body (humanity).

a) **“...born of a woman, born under the law.”** – **Galatians 4:4.**

b) **“...coming in the likeness of men...”** – **Philippians 2:7.**

c) **“...in the likeness of sinful flesh...”** – **Romans 8:3.**

d) **“...God was manifest in the flesh...”** – **I Timothy 3:16.**

e) **The Father prepared a body for the Son – Hebrews 10:5.**

4. **Verse 4 – Shows forth the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ.**

a. **“...and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead.”**

“Jesus was always the Son of God, but the Father declared Him to be the Son by resurrecting Him. Jesus did not change in essence—He always was the Son—but in status and function. God appointed the Son to a new and more powerful position in relation to the world at the Resurrection (cf. Matt. 28:18). He is now not only the Messiah but the Lord of all.”

Dr. Thomas Constable⁴

⁴Thomas L. Constable, *Notes on Romans*, (<http://www.soniclight.com>: Sonic Light Publication, 2013)