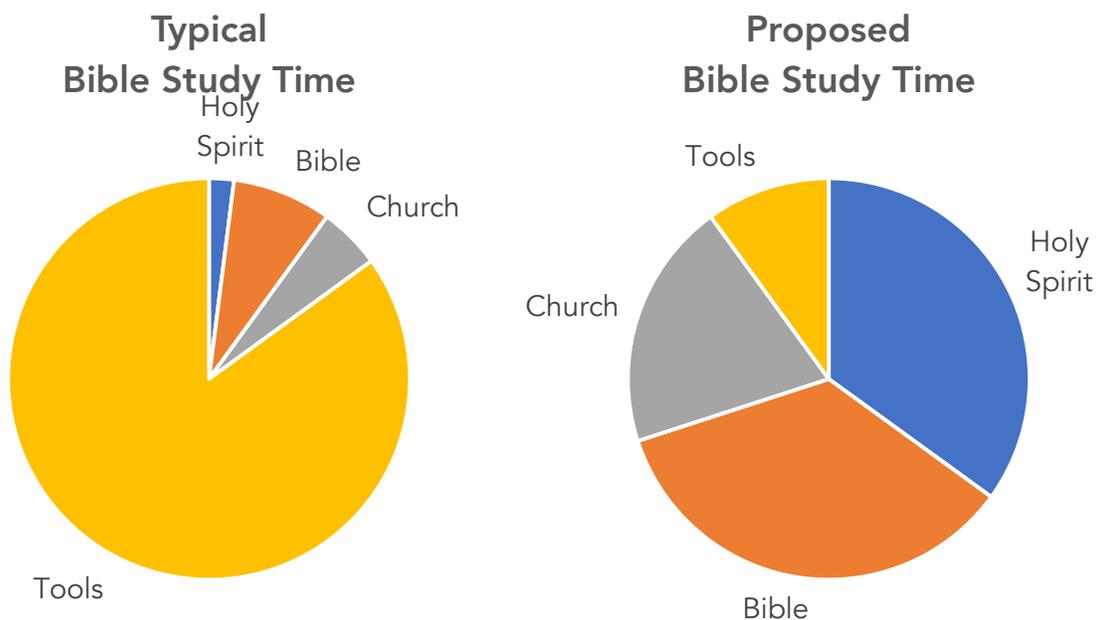


# Romans

Greeting ([Romans 1:1-7](#))

## Introduction

A gentle review: Did we do this? Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.



Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

## Read: Greeting (Romans 1:1-7)

**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.

## Explain: Greeting (Romans 1:1-7)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let's ask some questions.

### Are there any literary/structural observations?

This text is **one** sentence in the ESV (reading orally is difficult because of the breathing).

- Side comment 1: If you know you're going to read Scripture in public, practice. The reader conveys much to the listener through the manner of reading.
- Side comment 2: Paul, the lawyer king of the comma, uses extended arguments. Feel free to read **Romans** repeatedly to understand what Paul is saying. **Jessica Norris: I do not know why but figuring out that Paul was a lawyer made me read the first 7 verses this week as if it were an opening statement at trial, laying out facts for a jury, and trying to "win" them to his team.**

**Stott: Letter-writing conventions vary from culture to culture. We address our correspondent first ("Dear Joan") and identify ourselves only at the end ("Yours sincerely, John"). In the ancient world, however, the custom was to reverse the order, the writer announcing himself or herself first and the correspondent next ("John to Joan, greetings!"). Paul normally followed the convention of his day, but here he deviates from it by giving a much more elaborate description of himself than usual, in relation to the gospel.**

**How much can you say in one sentence?** This week's text reminded me of the length of the first sentence of **A Tale of Two Cities: It was the best of times, it was the worst of times . . . .**

In Greek, **Romans 1:1-7** would look something like this (no spaces between words, no punctuation, and everything in capital letters).

ΠΑΥΛΟΣ ΔΟΥΛΟΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ ΙΗΣΟΥ ΚΛΗΤΟΣ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΟΣ ΑΦΩΡΙΣΜΕΝΟΣ ΕΙΣ ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ ΘΕΟΥ ΔΙΕΠΡΟΕΠΗΓΓΕΛΑΤΟ ΔΙΑ ΤΩΝ ΠΡΟΦΗΤΩΝ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΕΝ ΓΡΑΦΑΙΣ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ ΥΙΟΥ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΓΕΝΟΜΕΝΟΥ ΕΚ ΣΠΕΡΜΑΤΟΣ ΔΑΥΙΔ ΚΑΤΑ ΣΑΡΚΑ ΤΟΥ ΟΡΙΣΘΕΝΤΟΣ ΥΙΟΥ ΘΕΟΥ ΕΝ ΔΥΝΑΜΕΙ ΚΑΤΑ ΠΝΕΥΜΑ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΣΥΝΗΣΕΧΑΝΑΣΤΑΣΕΩΣ ΝΕΚΡΩΝ ΙΗΣΟΥ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΚΥΡΙΟΥ ΗΜΩΝ ΔΙΟΥΪ ΕΛΑΒΟΜΕΝ ΧΑΡΙΝ ΚΑΙ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΗΝ ΕΙΣ ΠΑΚΟ ΗΝ ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ ΕΝ ΠΑΣΙΝ ΤΟΙΣ ἔθνεσιν ὑπὲρ τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ ἐνοῦς ἐστε καὶ ὑμεῖς κλητοὶ ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ πασίν τοις οὖσιν ἐν ῥώμῃ ἀγαπητοῖς θεοῦ κλητοῖς ἀγίοις χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ

So . . . be grateful for your English version with its punctuation and capitalization.

**Julie Fleming: Did Paul know about periods??**

Let's read the text again—this time asking the question:

## What do the **words** mean?

The easiest way to answer this question is to go to an interlinear and see some definitions. Here's the one I use ([studylight.org/isb](http://studylight.org/isb)):

**Romans 1:1** [ Resize Font: - / + | Toggle Font | View in: BYZ TIS TR NA WH PES | Study Tools ]

**KJV** – Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated (5772) unto the gospel of God,

**NA** – παῦλος δούλος χριστοῦ ἰησοῦ, κλητὸς ἀπόστολος, ἄφωρισμένος (5772) εἰς εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ,

Clicking on one of the Greek words results in something like this:

# 3972 Παῦλος		Definition [ Thayer's   Strong's ]
<b>Transliteration</b>	<b>Origin</b>	<b>Strong's Definition</b> Of Latin origin; ( <i>little</i> ; but remotely from a derivative of G3973, meaning the same); <i>Paulus</i> , the name of a Roman and of an apostle: - Paul, Paulus.
Paûlos	of Latin origin	
<b>Phonetic</b>		
pow'-los		
<b>Part of Speech</b>	<b>TDNT</b>	
Noun Masculine	None	
<b>Translated Words</b>		
<b>KJV (164)</b> - Paul, 163; Paulus (the deputy), 1		
<b>NAS (158)</b> - Paul, 152; Paul's, 5; Paulus, 1		
<b>HCS (158)</b> - As Paul, 2; I, Paul, 1; Paul, 109; Paul's, 4; Paulus, 1; Though Paul, 1; Was it Paul, 1; When Paul, 2; While Paul, 1; a citizen," Paul, 1; after Paul, 2; as Paul, 1; before Paul, 1; called Paul, 1; day Paul, 1; for Paul, 1; had passed, Paul, 1; he brought Paul, 1; it to Paul, 1; man Paul, 2; mdash; Paul, 3; of Paul's, 1; replied Paul, 1; sent Paul, 2; take		
<b>Verses with Identical Parsing (78)</b>		
Acts 13:9Acts 13:16Acts 13:46Acts 14:11Acts 14:14Acts 15:35Acts 15:36Acts 15:38Acts 15:40Acts 16:3Acts 16:18Acts 16:25Acts 16:28Acts 16:37Acts 17:22Acts 17:33Acts 18:5Acts 18:18Acts 19:4Acts 19:13Acts 19:21Acts 20:1Acts 20:7Acts 20:10Acts 20:16Acts 21:13Acts 21:18Acts 21:26Acts 21:29Acts 21:37Acts 21:39Acts 21:40Acts 22:25Acts 22:28Acts 23:1Acts 23:3Acts 23:5Acts 23:6Acts 23:10Acts 23:17Acts 23:18Acts 24:10Acts 25:10Acts 25:19Acts 25:23Acts 26:1Acts 26:25Acts 26:29Acts 27:9Acts 27:21Acts 27:31Acts 27:33Acts 28:8Acts 28:15Romans		

You can see the following:

- the Strong's number
- what the word looks like in Greek
- a transliteration (turning the Greek letters into English letters)
- a pronunciation guide
- the part of speech
- a definition
- how many times its used in other translations
- etc.

If you click on all the words, you end up with something like this (~Amplified Bible):

**1 Paul** ["little"], **a servant** [*doulos*, slave, bondservant] **of Christ** ["anointed"] **Jesus** ["Jehovah is salvation"], **called** [invited, appointed, called] **to be an apostle** [delegate, ambassador], **set apart** [set off by boundary, limited, excluded, appointed, divided, separated, severed; perfect middle participle] **for the gospel** [good message, gospel] **of God**, **2 which he promised beforehand** [promised of old, promised before; aorist active indicative] **through his prophets** [foreteller, inspired speaker, prophet] **in the holy** [sacred, holy] **Scriptures** [documents, Scriptures], **3 concerning his Son** [child, son], **who was descended** [sown, issue, seed; second aorist active participle] **from David** ["beloved;" ESV footnote: Or *who came from the offspring of David*] **according to the flesh** [meat, flesh, physical body, human being] **4 and was declared** [marked out, bounded, appointed, decreed, specified, declared, determined, limited, ordained; the root word for **set apart** in **1:1**; aorist middle participle] **to be the Son** [child, son] **of God in power** [force, miraculous power, ability, abundance, might, power, strength, violence, mighty work] **according to the Spirit** [current, breath, breeze, spirit, soul] **of holiness** [sacredness, holiness] **by his resurrection** [standing up, resurrection, moral recovery, raising from the dead, rising again] **from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord** [supreme authority, controller, Mr., God, Lord, master, sir], **5 through whom we have received** [taken, gotten hold of, accepted, attained, brought, caught, held, obtained, received, taken away; second aorist active indicative] **grace** [graciousness, acceptable, benefit, favor, gift, gracious, grace, joy, liberality, pleasure, thanks, thankworthy] **and apostleship** [commission, apostolate, apostleship] **to bring about the obedience** [attentive hearkening, compliance, submission, obedience] **of faith** [persuasion, credence, moral conviction, reliance upon, constancy in profession, truth itself, assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity] **for the sake of his name** [called name, name] **among all the nations** [races, tribes, foreign ones, Gentiles, heathens, nations, peoples], **6 including you who are called** [invited, appointed, called—same as in **1:2**; present middle indicative] **to belong to Jesus Christ**, **7 To all those in** [present middle participle] **Rome** ["strength"] **who are loved** [beloved, dear (the root word is *agape*)] **by God and called** [invited, appointed, called—same as in **1:2** and **1:6**] **to be saints** [sacred, saints]:

**Grace** [graciousness, acceptable, benefit, favor, gift, gracious, grace, joy, liberality, pleasure, thanks, thankworthy—same as in **1:5**] **to you and peace** [one (to join), peace, quietness, rest] **from God our Father** [parent, father] **and the Lord Jesus Christ**.

If this seems tedious—it is. This is Bible study: focusing on and meditating on words. Bible study is staring at the text and asking for help. Bible study is about thinking and thinking and thinking about the text. Bible study is not about hurrying—this is about waiting and staring. This is using a crock pot; it's not about using a microwave.

After staring at the text, we see that we should ask more questions.

### Are there any **repeated** Greek words?

- **called**
- **declared**
- **grace**

How is 'called' used? ("called" is used three times)

- Paul was called to be an apostle (1:1)
- We are called to belong to Jesus Christ (1:6)
- We are called to be saints (1:7) **Ironside: We do not become saints by acting in a saintly way . . . we are constituted saints.**

How is 'declared' used? ("declared" is used twice)

- Paul was set apart (declared) for the gospel (1:1)
- Jesus was declared to be the Son (1:4)

How is 'grace' used? ("grace" is used twice)

- We receive grace from Christ (1:5)
- Paul greets the Romans with grace (1:7)

### Are there any topics Paul brings up more than once?

- **Jesus** (1:1-7)
- Jesus' **sonship** (1:3, 4)
- ???

Next, we can step back a bit and make some observations of the text.

### What are some **observations** of the text?

**1 Paul, a servant** [Paul calls himself a *doulos*] **of Christ Jesus** [Paul makes a beeline to Jesus], **called** [Paul was called; **Ravi Zacharias: A job is something you choose. A calling is something for which you have been chosen. God has a calling on your life.**] **to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God** [Paul makes a beeline to the gospel; **Chris Arnold: There is humility there, and a reminder that this is God's business, not Paul's; Rachel Samsel/McGee: Separated from something and separated to something are two different things**], **2 which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures** [Paul connects Jesus with the prophets of the Old Testament; Paul also had extensive knowledge of the Old Testament from his pre-Jesus days (God will use what you learned before Christ for Christ)], **3 concerning his Son, who was descended from David** [Paul connects Jesus with King 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** [Paul says the resurrection and the Spirit declared Jesus to be God—the resurrection was the stamp of approval on Jesus' life and message; **Maclaren: The**

Resurrection is God's last and loudest proclamation, "This is My beloved Son: hear ye Him", **Jesus Christ our Lord** [Paul declares Jesus to be Lord], **5 through whom we have received grace** [We receive grace through Jesus] **and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name** [MacArthur: Although God gave His own Son to save the world (John 3:16) and does not wish for any person to perish (2 Pet 3:9) it must be recognized that the primary purpose of the gospel is not for man's sake but God's, for His name's sake. Man's salvation is simply a by-product of God's grace; It's main focus is to display God's glory.] **among all the nations, 6 including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ** [Our salvation is connected with our calling],

**7 To all those in Rome** [Paul had not been to Rome, but he knew folks there] **who are loved by God and called** [Paul connects the ideas of love and calling] **to be saints:**

**Grace** [This is the Gentile greeting] **to you and peace** [This is the Jewish greeting] **from God our Father** [Gentiles and Jews have the same Father in God] **and the Lord Jesus Christ** [Gentile and Jews have the same Lord in Jesus Christ].

Stott summarizes **Romans 1:1-7** well: **To sum up, here are six fundamental truths about the gospel. Its origin is God the Father and its substance is Jesus Christ his Son. Its attestation is Old Testament Scripture and its scope all the nations. Our immediate purpose in proclaiming it is to bring people to the obedience of faith, but our ultimate goal is the greater glory of the name of Jesus Christ.**

## Apply (What is the point?)

(let's do three for Bible study and three for **Romans**)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Bible study is <b>slow</b>             | 1. Paul focuses on <b>Jesus</b>                   |
| 2. Bible study asks questions             | 2. Paul focuses on the <b>gospel</b>              |
| 3. Bible study asks <b>more</b> questions | 3. Paul starts with <b>grace</b> and <b>peace</b> |

## Personalize (What do we do with that?)

(This is a BIG shift for me—moving from "me" to "we" with the personalization. This letter was written to a group and not an individual, so the personalization is plural.)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Slow down and stare at the text              | 1. Focus on <b>Jesus</b>                    |
| 2. Talk (to the HS & to each other)             | 2. Focus on the <b>gospel</b>               |
| 3. Talk <b>more</b> (to the HS & to each other) | 3. Talk about <b>grace</b> and <b>peace</b> |

## Next week: Longing to Go to Rome (1:8-15)

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world. 9 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I mention you 10 always in my prayers, asking that somehow by God's will I may now at last succeed in coming to you. 11 For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you— 12 that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine. 13 I 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. 14 I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. 15 So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

## Homework

### Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- The Bible: **Romans** (ESV)
- Church: [bit.ly/FlemingSS](http://bit.ly/FlemingSS)
- Tools: [bit.ly/romans2017](http://bit.ly/romans2017)

### Our process

- Ask the Holy Spirit for help
- Read **Romans** (once) and **Romans 1:8-15** (a lot)
- Talk to someone in our class about **Romans**
- Read your resource and email Jim ([jim314@yahoo.com](mailto:jim314@yahoo.com)) helpful quotes and/or insights by Wednesday

## Quotes & Observations

### Doug Skinner (Phillips)

Abraham Lincoln once said, "I can see how it might be possible for a man to look down upon the earth and be an atheist, but I cannot conceive how he could look up into the heavens and say there is no God."

### Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

The author made it a point to focus on that Paul "knew who he was." "Paul's introduction introduces us to deeper and more productive levels of spiritual life."

He breaks the verses down into:

Paul's view of himself vs 1

Paul's view of preaching 2-4

Paul's view of his commission 5

Paul's view of the Roman believers (and us) 6-7

V. 1: So we see that the key to Paul's self image is servant-hood. At the root of his psyche this incredibly productive man views himself primarily as a slave of Christ.

Paul was not self appointed! God called him! . . . God had summoned him. . . . At the base of Paul's self perception was the fact that his lifework was God's doing. What a comfort-what a motivation.

V. 5: The author mentions that Paul sees his commission largely as a matter of graces. "The grace of God is infinite and eternal."

V. 6-7: "Fellow believers we are loved by God! We need to get used to this, but we should never get over it." I read this quote to J and I believe that he summed up my thoughts really well: "If you could ever get used to the fact that He loves you, you could get over it really fast. How could you get used to? Why does He love me?" In my opinion there is a fine line between getting used to it and becoming complacent with it.

I for one am in awe that God loves me and calls me His own. He picked me, the Savior of the world loves me; for me that's hard to get used to. I don't think that I want to get used to it, I want to continue to be in awe of His love for me. There are days that I don't recognize His love for me in the way that it deserves, I am after-all human. There are also days that I am so overwhelmed with the fact that God loves me.

He finished the section with this:

We are loved of God,  
We are saints,  
We are objects of His grace and unending favor  
His peace is ours  
Forever.

### Karrie Harness (MacArthur Bible Study)

In the opening statement Paul explains his job title, his MO, referenced OT for support and his declaration of who Jesus was, both from an earthly standpoint and as a divine being, how it relates to us and what we then are called to do . . . all in one breath. Gotta love commas!

### Darla Skinner (Mounce)

The Old Testament continually points beyond itself to a time of fulfillment, the age to come. God made his promise "through his prophets" in the Old Testament. He entrusted his message to be written down. What the prophets wrote became "Holy Scriptures." Here we have a brief summary of the method God chose in order to communicate with his people. Scripture originated with God. He used prophets to communicate his will, and they accomplished that purpose by writing down what God was pleased to reveal. The result was Scripture that is holy.

### Sean McGarvey (Ironsides)

"The writer, Paul, designates himself a servant -- literally, bondman -- of Jesus Christ. He does not mean, however, that his was a service of bondage, but rather the wholehearted obedience of one who realized that he had been 'bought with a price' (1 Cor. 6:20; 7:23), even the precious blood of Christ." p. 17

Ironsides writes of Paul being "separated unto the gospel of God" as others like Moses, Jeremiah, and John the Baptist being "separated from his mother's womb" (Galatians 1:15). This separation also has facets of 1) Paul being delivered from both the people of Israel and the Gentile nations and freed to be a minister and witness, and 2) of his specific separation with Barnabas for the work of carrying the gospel to the Gentiles.

He dials in on the definition of the gospel as not a new law, not a code of morals or ethics, not a creed to be accepted, not a system of religion, and not good advice, but rather "a divinely given message concerning a divine Person, the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord. This glorious Being is true Man, yet very God. He is the Branch that grew out of David, therefore true Man. But He is also the Son of God, the virgin-born, who had no human father, and this His works of power demonstrate. To this blessed fact the Spirit of Holiness bare witness when He raised dead persons to life." p. 19

“From Him, the risen One, Paul had received grace (not only unmerited favor, but favor against merit, for he had deserved the very opposite) and apostleship by divine call that he might make known the gospel unto all nations to the obedience of faith for Christ’s name’s sake.” p. 19

As for the “to all that be in Rome,...called...saints (v. 7)”: “Observe that they were all saints in the same way that he was an apostle, namely, by divine call. We do not become saints by acting in a saintly way, but because we are constituted saints we should manifest saintliness.” p. 19

### Chris Arnold (Barclay)

So we know that Paul wanted to get to Spain, and had been planning to do so while concurrently addressing various issues within the various churches. So [Galatians](#), [Corinthians](#), [Philemon](#), et.al. all seem to deal with a current ISSUE - pantheism, slavery, legalism, etc. There are also shepherding tendencies in his letters that are designated to keeping the churches on track. This may be because he had such a large hand in planting and physically living with the people in these churches. They are his “babies,” if you will.

[Romans](#) stands out immediately as being the “Introduction to Paul” letter.

He’d not been to the church in Rome and had not started it, although there does seem to be evidence of him knowing people who may have been instrumental in the early stages of the church in Rome (Priscilla, Aquila, Epaphroditus, Mary, etc). So this letter would be his formal introduction. He will lay out who he is, what he is about, and why, possibly to build anticipation for his arrival. To set the stage for his work in Christ, and maybe even to build a base from which he could more easily achieve his desire to get to Spain.

So he starts out writing to a church in what is probably one of the most (if not THE most) important cities of the world . . . and he says in the style of the day, “I am Paul, I’m writing you, and we are going to talk about Jesus. We are gonna talk about him because he is the Son of God, and he loves you.”

It strikes me that Paul starts out the letter to the [Romans](#) just like we should start our prayers. Acknowledging God, Praising Him, and reaffirming our faith and belief in Him as our Redeemer. What an awesome example to show!

He also puts it in perspective. This is PAUL THE APOSTLE, about whom anticipation and excitement may well be high, and he says “I’m a servant/slave of Christ, Called to be an apostle, and set apart for the Gospel of God.” There is humility there, and a reminder that this is God’s business, not Paul’s.

Barclay said that “Paul never thought of himself as a man who had aspired to an honour, he thought of himself as a man who had been given a task.”

And he right away affirms the Birth of Christ, his descent from King David, and His Bodily Resurrection – leading to our salvation. He underscores the fulfillment of prophecy as well.

All of this is ONE sentence.

### Jessica Miller (Stott)

Luther: Here the door is thrown open wide for the understanding of the Holy Scripture, that is, that everything must be understood in relation to Christ.

Nygen: So the resurrection is the turning point in the existence of the Son of God. Before that he was the Son of God in weakness and lowliness. Through the resurrection he becomes the Son of God in power.

It seems that the two expressions ‘according to the flesh’ and ‘according to the Spirit’ refer not to the two natures of Jesus Christ (human and divine), but to the two stages of his ministry, pre-resurrection and post-resurrection, the first frail and the second powerful through the outpoured Spirit. So here is a balanced statement of both the humiliation and the exaltation, the weakness and the power of God’s Son, his human descent traced to David, his divine sonship-in-power established by the resurrection and gift of the Spirit. Moreover, this unique person, seed of David and Son of God, weak and powerful, incarnate and exalted, is *Jesus* (a human, historical figure), *Christ* (the Messiah of Old Testament Scripture), *our Lord*, who owns and rules our lives. Perhaps we could add that Jesus’ two titles, ‘the Christ’ and ‘the Lord,’ will have specially appealed to Jewish and Gentile Christians respectively.

[On 1:16] What he is affirming is that the gospel is for everybody; its scope is universal. . . . We too, if we are to be committed to world mission, will have to be liberated from all pride of race, nation, tribe, caste and class, and acknowledge that God’s gospel is for everybody, without exception and without distinction. This is a major theme of [Romans](#).

[On 1:17] For the proper response to the gospel is faith, indeed faith alone. Yet a true and living faith in Jesus Christ both includes within itself an element of submission (cf. [10:3](#)), especially because its object is ‘Jesus Christ our Lord’ ([4](#)) or ‘the Lord Jesus Christ’ ([7](#)), and leads inevitably into a lifetime of obedience. That is why the response Paul looked for was a total, unreserved commitment to Jesus Christ, which he called ‘the obedience of faith.’ This is our answer to those who argue that it is possible to accept Jesus Christ as Savior without surrendering to him as Lord. It is not. Certainly

the Roman Christians had believed and obeyed, for Paul describes them as being *among those who are called to belong to Jesus Christ (6)*.

We should be 'jealous' (as Scripture sometimes puts it) for the honor of his name—troubled when it remains unknown, hurt when it is ignored, indignant when it is blasphemed, and all the time anxious and determined that it shall be given the honor and glory which are due to it. The highest of all missionary motives is neither obedience to the Great Commission (important as that is), nor love for sinners who are alienated and perishing (strong as that incentive is, especially when we contemplate the wrath of God, verse 18), but rather zeal—burning and passionate zeal—for the glory of Jesus Christ.

To sum up, here are six fundamental truths about the gospel. Its origin is God the Father and its substance is Jesus Christ his Son. Its attestation is Old Testament Scripture and its scope all the nations. Our immediate purpose in proclaiming it is to bring people to the obedience of faith, but our ultimate goal is the greater glory of the name of Jesus Christ.

Tim & Mila Archer (Maclaren)

#### Chapter 1:1-7 The Witness of the Resurrection

vs 1-4

It is a great mistake to treat Paul's writings, and especially, this Epistle, as mere theology. They are the transcript of his life's experience.

Both (birth and ascension) are supernatural. and the Virgin Birth corresponds at the beginning to the supernatural Resurrection and Ascension, at the close. Both, such an entrance into the world and such a departure from it, proclaim at once His true humanity, and that "this is the Son of God."

The Resurrection is God's last and loudest proclamation, "This is My beloved Son: hear ye Him".

Scripture not only represents Christ's Resurrection as a divine act but also as the act of Christ's own power. In His earthly life He asserted that His relation both to physical death and to resurrection was an entirely unique one. "I have power", said He, "to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again"; and yet even in this tremendous instance of self-assertion, He remains the obedient Son, for He goes on to say, "This is my commandment have I received of My Father".

If the death of Christ were not followed by His Resurrection and Ascension, the whole fabric of Christianity falls to pieces.

If we have only a dead Christ, we have not a living Christianity.

vs. 7

Here were plenty of imperfect Christians amongst them; many things to rebuke; much deadness, coldness, inconsistency, and yet none of these in the slightest degree interfered with the application of these great designations to them. So, the, "Beloved of God" and "saints" are not distinctions of classes within the pale of Christianity, but belong to the whole community, and to each member of the body.

Each man gets as much of the love of God as it is possible to pour upon him.

I need only observe, further, that the word "called" here does not mean "named" or designated", but summoned. It describes not the name by which Christian men are known, but the thing which they are invited, summoned, and called by God to be. It is their vocation, not their designation. Now, I need not, I suppose, remind you that "saint" and "holy" convey the precisely the same idea: the one expression it in a word of Teutonic, and the other in one of classic derivation.

Either God is my center, and that is holiness; or self is my center. in more or less subtle forms, and that is sin.

There is no faith which does not lead to surrender.

Consecration may be cultivated, and must be cultivated and increased. There is a solemn obligation laid upon everyone of us who call ourselves Christians, to be saints, in the sense that we have consciously yielded up our whole lives to Him; and are trying, body, soul, and spirit, "to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord".

### Julie Fleming (Keller)

Keller starts chapter 1 in his book saying "Romans is, at its heart, a letter about the gospel."

Verse 1 Paul introduces himself. He says he is a servant-a slave. "He has a master. He is a man under authority." Called to be an apostle, set apart. "Paul was set apart to spread the gospel, to pursue this one overriding aim. This is what Paul will "slave" for all his life; but it is also what he will rejoice in through all his life."

Keller says the gospel means 'good herald', it's an announcement. "Paul is the herald of this announcement. The gospel is not Paul's but it is of God."

Verse 3: **concerning his Son:** "The gospel centers on Jesus. It is about a person, not a concept; it is about him, not us."

Verse 4: **declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead:** "His resurrection and ascension were his path to his

rightful place. It is where we see not only that he is the Son of God, but that he is now the Son of God in power.”

“The gospel is both a declaration of Jesus’ perfect rule, and an invitation to come under that perfect rule to make him ‘our Lord.’”

Verse 5: **to bring about the obedience of faith**- “Obedience flows out of faith; it is a consequence of saving faith, not a second condition for salvation.” “True faith in our hearts brings obedience in our lives. There will be a joyful obedience that flows from truly trusting this King.”

Verse 6-7: Paul describes the church in Rome in 4 ways, “called to belong to Jesus Christ, loved by God, called to be saints, and (they) enjoy grace and peace from God our Father and Lord Jesus Christ.”

Did Paul know about periods?? That is one crazy long sentence!

Jessica Norris (Kroll)

The gospel had been preannounced by the old testament prophets from [Genesis 3:15](#)-[Malachi 4:2](#). Paul quoted 61 times from the old testament during his writings.

Paul was the bridge between the Jews and the Gentiles.

Christ was not born but eternally is God the Son. His humiliation came when he volunteered to be made in the likeness of man and His exaltation came when He was resurrected by the Holy Spirit of God.

Love and service, being loved and being set apart as saints always go hand in hand.

I do not know why but figuring out that Paul was a lawyer made me read the first 7 verses this week as if it were an opening statement at trial, laying out facts for a jury, and trying to “win” them to his team.

Christen Barber (Luther)

[\[Romans\]](#) 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.

It’s really interesting how the beginning of this commentary is Luther defining basic theological terms (law, sin, grace, faith, etc.) but it’s not really surprising considering this was before the Reformation, when people really started studying the Bible for themselves. He especially focuses on explaining what the law is, emphasizing that the works that fulfill the law do not necessarily have any “heart” in them. I assume this is to introduce his audience to the common theme of “not by works lest any man should boast” that is found throughout [Romans](#), a concept that, I imagine, was foreign to the pre reformation church.

## Rachel Samsel (McGee)

In regards to verse 1 where it says "separated unto" McGee points out that being separated from something and separated to something are two different things. A Christian who is separated from something and not unto Christ will have a barren life. It is not what you are separated from or no longer doing but more of who you are separated to. If you are separated unto Christ, you will have a life that appeals rather than one that turns people off. He then uses this example—Christians are salt. Salt makes you thirsty. Do you make anyone thirsty for Christ, the Water of Life?

Another that stood out was verse 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," McGee elaborates stating, "Grace is God's method of salvation and none of us could be saved if God had not been gracious." Then apostleship (in the Greek) means "a sending forth". Every believer should be a witness, one sent forth with a message.

Lastly in verse 7: "grace and peace" constitutes the formal introduction in all of Paul's letters. McGee breaks it down stating, "Grace (*charis*) was the gentile form of greeting and peace (*shalom*) was the Jewish form of greeting. Paul combined them since he was speaking to both the Jews and the gentiles as the church was made up of both."

## George Jackson (Murray)

(verse 1) "The word "gospel" is not used in the sense of the act of proclaiming; it is the message proclaimed. . . . It is a message of glad tidings from God, and it never loses its divinity, for it ever continues to be God's message of salvation to lost men."

"In verse 2 Paul shows his jealousy for the unity and continuity of the gospel dispensation with the Old Testament."

(Verses 3-4) "It is quite apparent that in this passage the highest Christology is present, as also due recognition of the significance of the resurrection in the process of redemptive accomplishment, a significance likewise recognized by Peter in the Pentecost sermon, the statement of which in Acts 2:33-36 is closely akin to and elucidatory of Romans 1:4."

## Julia Gregg (Schreiner)

Not just pertaining to **Romans**, but an interesting note in my commentary was that Paul reshaped his greeting in all his letters to convey the gospel of "grace", which is of distinct emphasis for him. (31) The seven verses of focus this week are the gospel according to the Son—this salutation for Paul is unique because it is the longest and most theologically complex of all of this letters. Of special note, is that this church was

not established by the apostle or one of his coworkers . . . but his desire is to use this church as a “**bridgehead for his Spanish mission**” of spreading of the gospel. (28) In this letter, Paul is establishing a basis by which to direct his comments to this church. One of the most outstanding quotes to me was “[**Paul**] **remarks on the obedience of the Gentiles showing that a changed life occurs for those who embrace the gospel**” (35) It reminds me of the statement- belief dictates behavior. . . . An overture of these verses is really that the gospel is not only from God but is God—it is first and last about God—therefore this salutation closes with focusing again on glorifying Him. One additional note here is the thought of the universal church—there were Jewish Christians but Paul seems to primarily address the Gentile believers in Rome and is focused on unity of purpose—again spreading the gospel.

### Stephen Samsel (Stott)

What would it be like to live as a Christian in first-century Rome? You would be in the capital city of the world empire. The greatest sports, art and politics are centered in your city. You can hear a dozen languages in your streets, and religions of all sorts blend in the stew.

Letter-writing conventions vary from culture to culture. We address our correspondent first (“Dear Joan”) and identify ourselves only at the end (“Yours sincerely, John”). In the ancient world, however, the custom was to reverse the order, the writer announcing himself or herself first and the correspondent next (“John to Joan, greetings!”). Paul normally followed the convention of his day, but here he deviates from it by giving a much more elaborate description of himself than usual, in relation to the gospel.

Leon Morris: “God is the most important word in this epistle. **Romans** is a book about God. No topic is treated with anything like the frequency of God. Everything Paul touches in this letter he relates to God. . . . There is nothing like it elsewhere.”

### Michelle Erickson (MacArthur)

In **Romans 1:1-7** Paul unfolds seven aspects of the good news of Jesus Christ. He first identifies himself as the preacher of the good news (v. 1), then he tells of the promise (v. 2), the Person (vv. 3-4), the provision (v. 5a), the proclamation (v. 5b), the purpose (v. 5c) and the privileges of the good news (v. 6-7).

The gospel which originated with God, was not a divine afterthought, nor was it first taught in the New Testament. It does not reflect a late change in God’s plan or a revision of His strategy. It was promised by God beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, that is, in what we now call the Old Testament.

A believer has no cause for self-congratulation, because he contributes nothing at all to his salvation. Human achievement has no place in the divine working of God's saving grace.

It is not that faith plus obedience equals salvation but that obedient faith equals salvation. True faith is verified in obedience. Obedient faith proves itself true, whereas disobedient faith proves itself false. Together, faith and obedience manifest the inseparable two sides of the coin of salvation, which Paul here calls the obedience of faith.

Although God gave His own Son to save the world ([John 3:16](#)) and does not wish for any person to perish ([2 Pet 3:9](#)) it must be recognized that the primary purpose of the gospel is not for man's sake but God's, for His name's sake. Man's salvation is simply a by-product of God's grace; It's main focus is to display God's glory.

### Albert Whiting (Calvin)

We must here observe, that all are not fitted for the ministry of the word; for a special call is necessary: and even those who seem particularly fitted ought to take heed lest they thrust themselves in without a call.

Concerning his own son-this is a remarkable passage, by which we are taught that the whole gospel is included in Christ, so that if anyone removes one step from Christ, he withdraws himself from the Gospel. For since he is the living and express image of the father, it is no wonder, that he alone is set before us as one to whom Our whole faith is to be directed and in whom it is to center. It is then a definition of the gospel, by which Paul expresses what is summarily comprehended in it.