

PAUL—GOOD NEWS FOR A BROKEN WORLD!

*A Prepared Servant
With a Prepared Message
For Prepared Hearts*

Romans Series
PBC 2025

Texts: Romans 1:1-7; Acts 21:37-22:29; Acts 24:10-21; Acts 26:1-32;
Philippians 3:3-11; I Cor. 16:9

We are embarking on the first leg of a journey through a book that some have called "The Mount Everest of the Bible." This journey will test our resolve, demand our attention and strength, and engage every spiritual muscle God has given us. However, the experiences we encounter along the way will transform us for the better! When we stand on the summit beside Paul and behold the majestic view of God and the Gospel of His grace through which He saves the world, we will join our voices with Paul's and proclaim from a full heart – *"To the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen!"* (Romans 16:27)

No one can guide us on our climb better than someone who has received God's immense grace and experienced the Gospel's transforming power. In other words, no one is better positioned to share the story found in Romans than someone who has personally lived this story and been profoundly affected by its truth. And Paul is such a person! Because the gospel he unashamedly proclaims and carefully explains has radically changed him, he is confident it will change people like you and me!

This morning, I want us to meet the author and allow Scripture to more fully explain why God selected Paul as the apostle to the nations. I want us to do this so that God can use Paul's story to shape our own!

I. God Prepared a Man (1:1)

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,

Thoroughly trained in the traditions of his ancestors, deeply influenced by Greek culture and wisdom through Diaspora Judaism, and born a Roman citizen, Paul was comfortable, well-prepared, and fully capable of engaging with every aspect of the world he was called to reach for Christ through the gospel!

A. His Background (Acts 21:27-22:3)

- **Greek Influence:** He explained to the Roman tribune that he spoke Greek by indicating he was a citizen of Tarsus, which was no obscure city! (21:37-39).
- **Roman Influence:** Paul emphasized his Roman citizenship to the centurion, preparing to scourge him (Acts 22:25).
- **Jewish Influence:** To the Jewish crowd clamoring for his arrest, he emphasized his Jewish heritage as a devout follower of the Law and his fervent dedication as a Pharisee. (Acts 22:3)

B. His Conversion (1 Timothy 1:12-15; Acts 22:4-16)

- How did it happen? He was shown mercy! (1 Tim 1:12-15)
- When did it happen? At a time when we would have least expected God to convert him! (Acts 22:4-8)
- What happened? God opened His eyes, declared a word to him, and Paul confessed the truth about Jesus! (Acts 22:9-16)
- Why did it happen? So that Paul would be a witness for Christ to everyone about what he saw and heard! (Acts 22:14-15)

C. His Appointment (Romans 1:1)

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God

- Commissioned as a servant of Christ
- Called as an apostle of Christ
- Consecrated as an ambassador of the Gospel

Which brings us to this question – what is the gospel God commissioned Paul to take to the nations?

II. God Prepared a Message (1:1-4)

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, Paul describes the gospel he was commissioned to preach as God's message to the world! In this text, it is described as:

A. God's good news (1:1)

B. Promised in the OT (1:2)

C. Centered on Jesus (1:3-4)

Paul recognized Jesus, who he had once despised as a blasphemer and fraud, as God's promised Messiah. He repented of his self-righteousness and embraced Jesus as his personal Lord and Savior!

This is what it means to confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord. This is what it means to believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead! And this is what is required for you to be saved!

III. God Prepared a Mission (1:5-7; Acts 22:21)

Romans 1:5-7 *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.*

Acts 22:21 *And he said to me, 'Go, for I will send you far away to the Gentiles.'* "

A. Consisting of bringing about a particular kind of obedience God demands of all people, including the nations. (1:5)

B. Done for the sake of Christ's name (1:5)

C. Resulting in the transformation of all who believe (1:6-7)

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.

And the first and foremost proof that God could and would do this for the worst sinner who would humble his heart, repent of his sins, and embrace Jesus as Lord of his life . . . was Paul!

God knew what he was doing when He prepared Paul for this great mission! And He knows what He is doing when he called you to salvation, prepared you for service in His kingdom, and commissioned you to take the gospel of His mercy to the nations around you!

Conclusion: Lessons for the Marketplace of Life

1. God has a specific service planned for each of us from before our birth. We won't miss it!
2. God will initiate, orchestrate, and navigate the circumstances of that calling to us in His own time and place and by His own means!
3. That calling begins when He opens our eyes, and we see ourselves for who we truly are (sinners in need of mercy) and recognize and embrace Jesus for who He is (Savior and Lord).
4. This call to salvation and appointment to gospel service is by grace. It is initiated, sustained, and empowered by grace!

5. This calling centers on Christ and focuses on the salvation He has come to offer sinners.
6. God determines the scope of our ministry and makes it known to us by His Spirit.
7. God will unfold that calling providentially as He did with Paul.
8. This calling will require our whole life for the entirety of our life.
9. This calling involves suffering, but it leads to glory.
10. This calling will lead to lasting treasure and eternal joy. We will not waste our life when we give it to Christ for this purpose!