

WEEK 1

ROMANS

The Gospel of God

Called, Claimed, and Set Apart

Romans 1:1–7

THE BIG IDEA

The gospel is God's promised good news about Jesus Christ our risen Lord, who calls us by grace to belong to Him, live under His authority, and make His name known.

PART ONE

Introducing Romans

WHO WROTE IT?

Paul — Formerly Saul

- A zealous Pharisee who persecuted the church
- Confronted by the risen Jesus on the Damascus road
- The persecutor became the preacher

“Paul did not merely study the gospel. Paul had been rescued by it.”

WHEN & WHERE?

Written from Corinth, c. A.D. 57

- Jerusalem — carrying an offering that unites Jew and Gentile believers
- Rome — a church Paul didn't plant, but wants to strengthen
- Spain — his next mission field

“Paul goes deep into theology because he wants the gospel to go farther into the world.”

One Family, Two Backgrounds

- A.D. 49 — Claudius expels Jews from Rome; Gentile believers lead alone
- A.D. 54 — Jewish believers return to a changed church
- Paul writes to reconcile both into one family in Christ

“Jesus did not die merely to give isolated individuals a private relationship with God. He died to create one redeemed people from every background.”

PART TWO

The Flow of Romans

Chapters 1–8

- 1:1–17 — The gospel introduced
- 1:18–3:20 — Humanity's problem: all have sinned
- 3:21–4:25 — Justified by faith, not works
- 5–8 — New life, freedom, and the Spirit

Chapters 9–16

- 9–11 — Has God failed Israel? No.
- 12–15 — The gospel-transformed life
- 15–16 — The gospel on mission

“Romans explains how God’s gospel saves sinners, creates a new people, transforms their lives, fulfills His promises, and advances His mission through Jesus Christ.”

PART THREE

Romans 1:1–7

Let's read it together.

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.

VERSE 1

Servant · Called · Set Apart

- Servant (doulos) — Paul belongs completely to Jesus
- Called — an apostle by Christ's own commission, not self-appointed
- Set Apart — for the gospel of God, not his own message

"Jesus is not an accessory we add to our lives. He is the Lord to whom our lives belong."

DISCUSS

When you think about Jesus, do you primarily think of Him as someone who helps your life — or as the Lord to whom your life belongs?

VERSE 2

Not Plan B

- Genesis 3 — the promised seed
- 2 Samuel 7 — the eternal throne of David
- Isaiah & Jeremiah — the suffering servant, the new covenant

“The cross was not God cleaning up an unexpected disaster. It was the fulfillment of His redemptive promise.”

VERSES 3–4

Descendant of David, Son of God in Power

- Genuinely human — born of David's line
- Raised — declared Son of God in power by the resurrection
- The crucified King is alive; a new age has begun

“The resurrection did not merely change what we believe about Jesus. It changed the age of history in which we live.”

JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD

Not just Paul's Lord. Ours.

VERSE 5

The Obedience of Faith

- Not legalism — “my obedience earns God’s acceptance”
- Not cheap grace — “since God accepts me, obedience doesn’t matter”
- Genuine faith trusts and surrenders to Jesus as Lord

“We are not saved by obedience, but the faith that saves us begins producing obedience.”

DISCUSS

Why do people tend to fall into either legalism or cheap grace? How does the gospel correct both?

VERSE 6

Called by Jesus Christ

- God took the initiative — not our perception, His mercy
- “Those he called, he also justified.” — Romans 8:30

VERSE 7

Loved. Called. Saints.

- Loved by God — before we do anything
- Called as saints — status before behavior
- Identity precedes obedience

“We do not live holy lives to become God’s people. We pursue holiness because grace has already made us God’s people.”

VERSE 7

Grace to You, and Peace

- Grace comes first
- Peace is what grace produces — Romans 5:1

“The Christian life does not begin with trying to convince God to love you. It begins by receiving the love He has already demonstrated in Christ.”

BRINGING IT TOGETHER

God's promised gospel is centered on His risen and reigning Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who calls us by grace to belong to Him, live in the obedience of faith, and make His name known among the nations.

Four Questions

1

Who owns my life?

Not just my Sunday or my beliefs — my time, body, relationships, money, future.

2

Am I trusting the gospel or my performance?

We obey from acceptance, not for acceptance.

Four Questions

3

Is my faith producing obedience?

Where am I saying, “Jesus can have everything except this”?

4

Am I living for His name or mine?

In my family, my work, my neighborhood — whose name?

GOSPEL CLOSE

He didn't stand at a distance demanding we climb our way to God. He entered history, lived faithfully, died for sinners, rose, and now reigns. You don't earn this call — you receive it.

BEFORE WE GO

Which identity is hardest for you to believe: loved, called, or set apart?

NEXT WEEK

Romans 1:8–17 — why Paul is not ashamed of the gospel

Loved by God. Called by grace. Set apart as His holy people. Sent for the sake of His name.