

## Not Ashamed of the Good News

Message 1 of 6 in the series: "Romans: Christianity 101"

### A. Paul introduced himself to the Christians in Rome by telling them what he considered to be his most important credentials.

**"This letter is from Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, chosen by God to be an apostle and sent out to preach his Good News.** God promised this Good News long ago through his prophets in the holy Scriptures. **The Good News is about his Son.** In his earthly life he was born into King David's family line, and **he was shown to be the Son of God when he was raised from the dead by the power of the Holy Spirit. He is Jesus Christ our Lord.** Through Christ, God has given us the privilege and authority as apostles to tell Gentiles everywhere what God has done for them, so that they will believe and obey him, bringing glory to his name. And you are included among those Gentiles who have been called to belong to Jesus Christ. I am writing to all of you in Rome who are loved by God and are called to be his own holy people. May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace." Romans 1:1-7 (NLT)

1. Paul identified himself as a "doulos" of Christ Jesus (a willing slave of Jesus for the rest of his life).
2. Paul identified himself as an apostle (one who is sent, a messenger, an ambassador) chosen by God to spread the Good News of Jesus everywhere.

### B. Paul was looking forward to encouraging the Christians in Rome and to preaching the Good News in a very wicked place.

"Let me say first that I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because **your faith in him is being talked about all over the world.** God knows how often I pray for you. Day and night I bring you and your needs in prayer to God, whom I serve with all my heart by spreading the Good News about his Son. **One of the things I always pray for is the opportunity, God willing, to come at last to see you.** For I long to visit you so I can bring you some spiritual gift that will help you grow strong in the Lord. **When we get together, I want to encourage you in your faith, but I also want to be encouraged by yours.** I want you to know, dear brothers and sisters, that I planned many times to visit you, but I was prevented until now. I want to work among you and see spiritual fruit, just as I have seen among other Gentiles. For I have a great sense of obligation to people in both the civilized world and the rest of the world, to the educated and uneducated alike. **So I am eager to come to you in Rome, too, to preach the Good News.**"

Romans 1:8-15 (NLT)

1. The Good News is real news because it tells us about an actual, historical event. "Let me now remind you, dear brothers and sisters, of the Good News I preached to you before... I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. **Christ died for our sins,** just as the Scriptures said. **He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day,** just as the Scriptures said." 1 Corinthians 15:1a & 3-4 (NLT)
2. The Good News is good news because it tells us salvation from sin and death is available for everyone who puts their faith in Jesus. "For **I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes—the Jew first and also the Gentile. This Good News tells us how God makes us right in his sight.** This is accomplished from start to finish by faith. As the Scriptures say, 'It is through faith that a righteous person has life.'" Romans 1:16-17 (NLT)

### C. Paul reminded the Christians in Rome that everyone needs salvation through Jesus Christ because our godless, wicked world is storing up God's wrath.

God's wrath = God's holy, justified anger toward sin, disobedience, and stubborn opposition to His purposes and will. "**But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath,** when his righteous judgment will be revealed. God 'will repay each person according to what they have done.'" Romans 2:5-6 (NIV)

1. Our fallen human race incurs God's wrath when we wickedly suppress the truth that God created everything. "**The wrath of God** is being revealed from heaven against all the **godlessness and wickedness** of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For **since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.**" Romans 1:18-20 (NIV)

2. The marvelous design of our universe makes it obvious that God created everything, so we are without excuse if we fail to believe. “The heavens declare the glory of God; **the skies proclaim the work of his hands**. Day after day they pour forth speech; **night after night they reveal knowledge**. They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them. Yet their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.” Psalm 19:1-4a (NIV)
3. Our fallen human race incurs God’s wrath when we attempt to redefine who God is, exchanging the truth He has revealed about Himself for lies so we can live the way we want. “For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles... **They exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator**—who is forever praised. Amen.” Romans 1:21-23 & 25 (NIV)

**WARNING!** If people continually reject God, He will eventually give them over to indulge their sinful passions and suffer the horrible, painful consequences. “Therefore, **God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity** for the degrading of their bodies with one another... Because of this, **God gave them over to shameful lusts**. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men and received in themselves the due penalty for their error. Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so **God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity**. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy. **Although they know God’s righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.**” Romans 1:24 & 26-32 (NIV)

#### D. Three important reminders:

1. We don’t need to fear God’s wrath if we have surrendered our lives to Jesus. “Since we have now been justified by his blood, **how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him!** For if, while we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!” Romans 5:9-10 (NIV)
2. We must not be hypocrites. “You may think you can condemn such people, but you are just as bad, and you have no excuse! **When you say they are wicked and should be punished, you are condemning yourself, for you who judge others do these very same things**. And we know that God, in his justice, will punish anyone who does such things. Since you judge others for doing these things, why do you think you can avoid God’s judgment when you do the same things? Don’t you see how wonderfully kind, tolerant, and patient God is with you? Does this mean nothing to you? **Can’t you see that his kindness is intended to turn you from your sin?**” Romans 2:1-4 (NLT)
3. We must not be ashamed of the Good News. “Then he said to the crowd, ‘If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross daily, and follow me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it. And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but are yourself lost or destroyed? **If anyone is ashamed of me and my message, the Son of Man will be ashamed of that person when he returns in his glory and in the glory of the Father and the holy angels.**” Luke 9:23-26 (NLT)

John Schmidt • 10-05-25 • [john@centeringlives.com](mailto:john@centeringlives.com)

#### Connect Group Questions:

1. Read Romans 1:1 and Philippians 3:3-9. Why do you think Paul chose to introduce himself to the Christians in Rome as a slave of Jesus and an apostle of the Good News when he had other credentials that may have sounded more impressive?
2. Read Romans 1:8-17 & 1 Corinthians 15:1-4. Throughout the New Testament, the message of Jesus’ ministry, teaching, death, and resurrection is called “Good News.” What makes it “news,” and what makes it “good”?

3. Read Psalm 2:1-6, Romans 2:5-6, & Revelation 19:11-16. The Bible mentions God's wrath throughout the Old and New Testaments, yet many Christians are reluctant to talk about God's wrath even though Christians don't need to fear it. (Romans 5:9-10) What causes this?
4. Paul and David said it's obvious that God created everything. (Roman 1:18-25, Psalm 19:1-4) Why is this so controversial?
5. How does it make you feel to know that if people continually reject God and harden their hearts against Him, He will eventually give them over to indulge their lustful passions? (Romans 1:24-32) Why doesn't God just force people to obey Him?
6. Why might a Christian be ashamed of the Good News? (Matthew 5:11-12) Why does it matter? (Luke 9:23-26)
7. Discuss the following quotations:

"There is only one condition previously required of those who desire admission into these societies: 'a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins.'"

John Wesley discussing the requirements necessary to join a Methodist society

"God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." 2 Corinthians 5:21 (NIV)