

Beginning Down the Romans Road 2021-09-12

Romans 1:1-7

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.

I'm excitedly cautious....Romans called most important letter ever written.

- stretch mind brilliant theologians but written to common, many slaves.

Romans is most complete, logical, clearest presentation of Christian faith found in New Testament.

- theological masterpiece... *THE* foundational letter of New Testament.
 - Methodically and systematically outlines salvation in Jesus Christ.
Slide, Romans 1:16-17

Written to Christians in Rome in A.D. 57 by Paul while in Corinth. Act 20:2-3

- Paul didn't establish church in Rome...likely began after Pentecost.
 - Made up of majority of Gentiles with strong Jewish minority.

He hoped to pass through Rome on way missionary work in Spain. Romans 15:23-24, 16:1

- Phoebe from city near Corinth, probably carried letter to Rome.

Purpose: strengthen existing work in Rome through letter/visiting. Romans 1:11-12, 15

- Paul never been to Rome so explains who he is, his credentials and theology before arrives. "Here's who I am and this what I believe."

Paul: born Jewish parents in Tarsus, also Roman citizen, educated in Jerusalem, raised strict Pharisee.

- hated Christianity, persecuted church, responsible for imprisonment/death of many Christians....helped kill 1st Christian martyr.
 - Was on his way to Damascus to capture Christians, came face to face with the risen Jesus and became believer himself.

But Romans is god-centered not man-centered.

- Not who Paul is but *whose* Paul is. Romans 1:1
- servant = "slave" expresses his absolute devotion and subjection to Jesus Christ.

- Unthinkable for Roman citizen to ID self as a servant/slave.
 - Paul understood he was bought/owned/ruled and sent by Jesus.

apostle means one sent, like ambassador. 1 Corinthians 15:7-8, Acts 26:15-17

- apostle saw risen Jesus firsthand and command by Jesus to represent/speak for him.
 - Romans is not just Paul's word; it's *God's* word.

Coupled with "set apart" emphasizes authority Paul received from God.

- Used same Greek word to ID readers. Romans 1:6-7
 - not apostles but saints (set apart) to God.

Romans is God-centered and gospel-centered...fully expounds gospel.

- Paul's mission: preach Gospel to Gentiles he formerly hated. Romans 1:1-5

1-6 one long sentence that previews all that follows. God and Gospel (good news)

- "of God" means gospel from/all about God. Piper "God is the gospel."
- Vs 2 Paul not make up. God tell good news before Jesus came.
 - links gospel to God's Old Testament promises through Jesus' human lineage.
- Vs 3 good news not about religious system but unique person.
 - Jesus is both human and divine. connects Jesus' sonship with God.
 - Hypostatic union important for complete understanding gospel
- Vs 4 proof Jesus was God is His resurrection from dead.
- Vs 5 Goal of Paul's ministry to Roman Christians: obedience from faith.

My goal for us going down Roman's road is like Paul's: increase understanding of gospel resulting in greater obedience of faith and deeper worship. Romans 16:25-27