

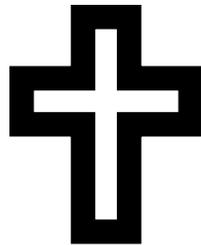
Twelve Lessons

on

Romans I
(Chapters 1-5)

by

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THE GREETING – LESSON 1

Romans 1:1-7

Introduction: Two authors, I believe, have the right concept of the epistle of Romans. Richard W. Dehaan entitled his book on Romans, *The World on Trial*. Tom Westwood named his book on Romans, *Romans, A Courtroom Drama*. Romans is a courtroom trial where Paul as a “grace lawyer” proves that man is guilty as charged and shows how God righteously redeems man. There are four natural divisions in the epistle of Romans.

1. The wrath of God is revealed – 1:18 – 3:20 – question is answered, “Is the world lost?”
2. The wonder of God is revealed – 3:21 – 8:39 – question is answered, “How does God save sinners?”
3. The wisdom of God is revealed – 9:1 – 11:36 – question is answered, “Why is Israel rejected?”
4. The will of God is revealed – 12:1 – 15:33 – question is answered, “How shall a saved man walk?”

Lesson Goals:

1. To qualify Paul as a bondservant.
2. To verify Paul as an apostle.
3. To vindicate the power of the Gospel.

Definitions of Important Terms and/or Phrases:

1. Bondservant – Among the Romans in New Testament times, freedom for a slave could be arranged if ownership was transferred to a god. The slave could then receive his freedom in return for contracting his services. He would continue with his master, but now as a free man.
2. Apostle – The word “apostle” has a wider meaning in the letters of the apostle Paul. It includes people who, like himself, were not included in the Twelve, but who saw the risen Christ and were specially commissioned by Him. Paul’s claim to be an apostle was questioned by others. He based his apostleship, however on the direct call of the exalted Lord who appeared to him on the Damascus Road and on the Lord’s blessing of his ministry in winning converts and establishing churches (1 Cor 15:10).
3. Gospel – The joyous good news of salvation in Jesus Christ. The Greek word translated as gospel means “a reward for bringing good news” or simply “good news.” The gospel is not a new plan of salvation; it is the fulfillment of God’s plan of salvation which was begun in Israel, was completed in Jesus Christ, and is made known by the church.

I. THE SIGNATURE – vs. 1 – Paul puts his signature at the beginning of the letter instead of at the close.

A. Servant – There are six Greek words denoting a servant but Paul uses *doulos*, a bondservant.

1. Bondservant – *doulos* – two concepts
 - a. Obligation – Since Paul was purchased, he feels an obligation to Christ, which can never be fully discharged. This was a personal debt, one that was never to be forgotten, and an infinite debt, one that could never be fully discharged.
 - b. Offered – The word *doulos* should not be translated “bondslave” because it would rule out the essential of choice. Paul has not been “drafted” but is a “volunteer” soldier. Being a servant is not surrendering arms; it is taking up arms. It is not surrendering conviction; but executing a higher conviction. This is the great argument concerning salvation by grace versus salvation by works.
2. Bondservant
 - a. Order – Paul places his position as a “bondservant” before his “apostleship.” Jesus has purchased Paul out of the slave market, and now all that he is and has: his time, his strength, his talents, even life itself no longer belongs to Paul but to Christ. Paul considered it a greater thing to be a bondservant of Christ than to be an apostle of Christ.
 - b. Obligation – Our servitude is based on purchase. We are not only His servants but we are His possession. He is responsible for us, to take care of us and provide for us.

B. Specified – “called to be an apostle”

1. Apostle – two concepts
 - a. Personal Examination – Eyewitness of the resurrected Lord – I Cor. 9:1 and I Cor. 15:8-9
 - b. Personal Appointment – Direct call from the Lord – Acts 9:15
2. Authority – Paul is both a “bondservant” and a “called apostle” declaring to us that he is delivering a message from God Himself, as a servant, yet with all the authority of his apostleship. He is not only a “convert”, he has the “credentials.”

- a. In the Greek Text, “called to be an apostle” is *kletos apostolos* or “called apostle.” The absence of the article denotes a definite call at an indefinite time; and refers the call and office back to God in eternity.
- b. In the mind of God, Paul has always been an apostle.

C. Separated – “to set apart, ordained, dedicated”

1. Dominated – The Greek word for “separated” in this passage contains the thought of “the horizon.” Paul’s horizon was dominated by Christ.
 - a. Sovereignty separates the elect from the non-elect.
 - b. Salvation separates the believer from the non-believer.
 - c. Service separates the laborer from the loafer.
 - d. Sanctification separates the saint from the sinner.
2. Determined
 - a. Paul was separated by God before his conversion – Gal. 1:15
 - b. Paul was separated by Christ at his conversion – Acts 9:15
 - c. Paul was separated by the Holy Spirit after his conversion – Acts 13:2
3. Directed – “unto the gospel of God”
 - a. Minister – If one is called to preach, surely his preaching is dedicated to the gospel.
 - b. Member – If one is a member and is a businessman, his business must be dedicated to the gospel. The farmer must not dedicate himself to his farming, but rather dedicate his farming to the gospel. The layman should not dedicate himself to his money, but his money to the gospel. Simply, those who do not preach, being dedicated to the gospel, will support the ministry.

II. THE SCRIPTURE – vs. 2 – The Scriptures declare the “gospel of God.”

A. Authority of the Gospel – vs. 2

1. Validation – To the Jew, it was of utmost importance that doctrine be founded in the Scriptures.
2. Validation – Paul validates his doctrine of the gospel of God by quoting from the Old Testament, 61 times in his epistle to the Romans.

B. Accent of the Gospel – vs. 3

1. His Name
 - a. “Son” describes His unique relationship to the Father.
 - b. “Jesus” describes His humanity.
 - c. “Christ” describes His messianic office, He is the anointed one.
 - d. “Lord” describes His exalted position and person. The Bible is so correct in the order of His name. He came first as “Son,” (eternity) then “Jesus,” (time) “Christ,” (messianic ministry) and “Lord” (exalted-Phil.2:11 *“every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord”*), He is God.
2. His Nature – “*made of the seed of David*”
 - a. Contrast – vs. 3 – Others were “born” flesh but He was “made” flesh, a testimony to the “virgin birth.” His humanity came from the seed of David; II Tim. 2:8, Matt. 1:1, and Rev. 22:16.
 - b. Contrast – vs. 3 and vs. 4 – In vs. 3, it says, “according to the flesh” and vs. 4 says, “according to the spirit of holiness.” His humanity is created but His deity is uncreated. The humanity of Jesus was “made” at a definite point in time but His divine nature was existing from eternity and needed only to be “declared.”
 - c. “Declared” – The word means to mark off, to establish a boundary, to set up a landmark, to place a monument for permanent evidence of the established boundary of a territory.
 - 1) Jesus’ resurrection is a monument unto His deity.
 - 2) Jesus’ resurrection is a monument for perpetual evidence. It ends all arguments as being a demonstration that is worth a thousand arguments.
 - 3) “Declared” is used of a monument raised on mortgaged property as evidence of its indebtedness and as security that the mortgaged property would be foreclosed in case of default in payment of debt. The monument was the initial evidence of final ownership in a foreclosure.
 - 4) The resurrection of Jesus is a monument raised upon the territory of death, laying claim to the whole region of death, all those who died in Him. This monument is an immutable guarantee of the final triumph of life over death, and is an initial evidence of final ownership, and a foretaste of ultimate triumph. John 11:25. By the authority of this monument, Jesus is going to foreclose on death one day, and the graves shall give up their dead in Christ, and He shall be the absolute

owner and shall reign in life with eternal subjects, resurrected from the dead.

C. Allocation of the Gospel – vs. 5-7

1. He Dispenses Offices – vs. 5 – “*By whom we have received grace and apostleship*”
 - a. Grace linked with apostleship is not saving grace but “preaching grace.”
 - b. Preaching the Gospel is not a duty, it is a “grace.”
2. He Dispenses Opportunities – vs. 5-7
 - a. The Call of Salvation – vs. 5-6 – This verse is the “killer” for Hyper Calvinism. Preaching the gospel is to be done “among all nations.”
 - b. The Call of Sanctification – vs. 7 – “*called to be saints*” – “to be” is in italics revealing that sainthood is not a process but a position. To accept the position of saint demands living in conformity with the position.

Conclusion: He gives the benediction to the saints in Rome. Grace indicates where salvation *began*, peace indicates how salvation *blesses*, and from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ indicates the *benefactor* of grace and peace.