

## ROMANS 1:1

**Sunday Morning: August 8, 2004**

**Text: Romans 1:1-7** "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called *to be* an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, 2. (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) 3. Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; 4. And declared *to be* the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead: 5. By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name: 6. Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ: 7. To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called *to be* saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."

I have been seeking the Lord's will as to the direction that we need to continue in our study of the scriptures, and in particular, the Word of God. I've had one suggest the book of Romans. It just so happens that this week I am having my devotions in the book of Romans and so I've decided that I would at least put my foot, as Moses and the High Priest put His foot in the Red Sea, and we'll find out if the Lord opens it for us to walk through and to glean and to study! I'm sure that there is much to learn but I thought that it would be profitable for us to look at Romans and to be blessed by this very doctrinal epistle and it gives us God's plans and His purposes for us. It gives us encouragement to do the right thing. So I want to read Romans chapter one, I want to read the first seven verses. We won't cover the first seven verses but we will look at verse one this morning to some degree.

One of the things that we will notice from the very beginning is that this Epistle is not written to the church at Rome. Obviously there was more than one church, group, because churches met in homes and Aquilla and Priscilla's was one place where they met and reference is made to them being in Rome again. They had been in Rome and kicked out and had apparently gone back. You find them in the sixteenth chapter of the book of Romans but this is written to "all that be in Rome that are beloved." This is an adjective; it's a descriptive word, talking about those in Rome to whom Paul is writing. He's writing to those that he loves and that the Lord loves. He is writing to the called. If you notice, well, if you're looking at your Bible, you will notice that the word "to be" is in italics and it's simply another adjective describing their condition. They are called. He's writing to those who are called. That has some pretty strong implications. You don't call deaf people; you don't call people who don't have ears to hear. So Paul is writing to a specific group of people who have ears to hear. And not only that, I believe they have eyes to see. So we're defining the group. He is not writing to the lost at Rome, he is writing to the saved, that have ears to hear, that can hear. He is writing to those that are beloved and beloved are those who are elect. You find that in First Thessalonians. Paul knew of their election, beloved of God. So he is writing to a specific group of people and then it says, "to be saints." The words, "to be" is in italics and it's the "holy ones," the ones that are living a holy life, a separated life. So he's not writing to sinners to tell them how to be saved. He is writing to saved people who have ears to hear and eyes to see and that they can be encouraged to live a life worthy of the calling that they have received.

### GOSPEL OF GOD

**Romans 1:1** "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called *to be* an apostle, separated unto the **gospel of God,**"

Now, Paul in the verses that we read and in particular in verse one, it says, "Paul a servant of Jesus Christ, called" and again the word "to be" is in italics in this verse as well. This is an

adjective describing the fact that Paul was one who was called and he was an apostle and he is separated unto the Gospel of God. One of the things that you will see through this, if you look up the word Gospel in the concordance, you will find that there are references made to the Gospel of God, also to the Gospel of His Son (that's in verse nine)

### **GOSPEL OF HIS SON**

**Romans 1:9** "For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the **gospel of his Son**, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;"

Paul was preaching the Gospel of His Son. In Romans one, sixteen we find that Paul is preaching the Gospel of Christ

### **GOSPEL OF CHRIST**

**Romans 1:16** "For I am not ashamed of the **gospel of Christ**: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

So we find Paul is preaching to those that are believing in the present tense. He's preaching to faithful people. The word, 'believe' is in the present tense implying faithfulness upon their part in believing in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the Lord Jesus Christ. So it's a continual thing. Then in Romans chapter ten and verse six, Paul says,

### **GOSPEL OF PEACE**

**Romans 10:15** "And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the **gospel** of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"

And that is good things to come. It's not in the Greek text, but the implication is that the gospel of peace has to do with good things that are coming and those good things that are coming has to do with our rewards, our inheritance, our position of honor and glory in His coming Kingdom and so Paul is preaching that message. In Romans chapter sixteen Paul says

### **MY GOSPEL**

**Romans 16:25** "Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to **my gospel**, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,"

Paul preached what he called, "his Gospel." And the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began. Paul's gospel had been kept secret from the time of the beginning of the world. So Paul's' gospel is not the plan of salvation. God is not in the business of keeping the plan of salvation a secret! When Adam sinned in the garden, he knew the plight of the world, that it was fallen, it needed a Savior and He had plans for one to come in due season. Until that time came. They offered animal sacrifice to maintain their fellowship after having embraced the God of Adam and the God of Enoch and Noah and the rest of them. We today, think in the terms of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. But Paul's' gospel was a hidden gospel and it's the good news pertaining to ruling and reigning with Christ. My personal feeling is this, that these gospels that Paul preached are all related to each other. The Gospel of His Son has to do with His coming Kingdom. Ruling and reigning in the coming Kingdom as a son of God, because that's what will happen to The Son of God – the Lord Jesus Christ. The Gospel of Christ has to do with His Millennial reign. The word, Christ, has to do with being anointed, being the Messiah, the Messiah is the one who will sit upon the throne of His father, David. So, we see that the book of Romans is presenting a gospel that pertains to His coming Kingdom and glory and it's those who have ears to hear that can respond to that message.

## PAUL

**Romans 1:1** "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called *to be* an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,"

Now, Paul in verse one was a servant of Jesus Christ and he was called, and he was an apostle, one sent, the word apostle means to be sent from. And he was separated unto this ministry of preaching his gospel, which is the Gospel of God, the gospel of Christ, he gospel of peace, the gospel of His Son. I think these are just simply terms that are used synonymously to refer to the same thought. In other words, I have not been able to see a distinction to find out what the gospel of God is. I don't have a definition of that. But I do know what Paul's' gospel is, I can see that very plainly. But anyway, Paul was called and Paul's' calling is like our calling. It's with a purpose. Our calling is not an accident. In Romans chapter eight verse twenty-eight through thirty he says

### CALLING WITH A PURPOSE

**Romans 8:28-30** "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the **called according to his purpose**. 29. For whom he did **foreknow**, he also did **predestinate** *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn **among** many **brethren**. 30. Moreover **whom** he did **predestinate**, them he also **called**: and whom he called, them he also **justified**: and whom he justified, them he also **glorified**."

The calling of God in a life of a believer is according to purpose, not accident. Things come to pass. Things came to pass in Paul's life. I was just reading, I think it's in the twenty second chapter of Acts, when Paul was praying in the temple before the riot had happened and the Lord, through the Holy Spirit, it's in the red letter edition on my computer, the Lord told him to get out of Jerusalem now! And why Paul didn't do that, I don't know, but He told him to get out and he didn't and you know what, he was in bonds and he went to Rome in chains. But anyway, things came to pass in Paul's life and the Lord overrules. Sometimes we make the wrong decisions, when we make a wrong decision that God is not going "uh oh", He's not wringing His hands over decisions that we make that mess up things, you know what I mean. He knows how to work through that. In fact, later on He told Paul, "don't worry about it, you're on your way to Rome." And he was, and Paul did go to Rome. But he says, Paul's calling was for a purpose and our calling is for a purpose as well. Now, all things work together for them who love God – people leave out this phrase when they use Romans eight, twenty-eight. You know they use Romans eight, twenty-eight as a rabbit's foot. "All things work together for good to them that love God and are called according to His purpose." Well, not all of God's saints love Him because the Word of God says, "if you love me, you keep my commandments." And there are a lot of Christians today that are not being obedient to His commandments and things are not going to work out well for you because you are probably going to become very lost and disorientated and to despair in situations that come. But the Lord understands that and will make adjustments for you in the days ahead of you. Well, Paul was called. And the reason He was called was because God foreknew that Paul would be in His family and because He knew he would be in His family, He predestinated things that for him that he would do. And so the calling according to purpose and we will look at that in just a moment. But let me just point out to you that when Paul met the Lord on the road to Damascus, this is not a salvation event for Paul. Paul was not saved, as we think of salvation, when we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, Paul was not saved on the road to Damascus. He had already been saved as a Jewish boy and had grown up. And the only way you could be saved before Jesus Christ died on the cross was to become a Jew or embrace the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Paul was saved the same

way that Joseph and Mary were saved. Tell me how Joseph and Mary were saved? Elizabeth and Zachariah, Simeon, Hannah, how were these people saved? Well, they embraced the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Paul was saved the same way. Because what happened to Paul on the road to Damascus, having a light shine upon him and blind him, if that's the way of salvation, then the fellow who accosted me on the streets of Chattanooga and told me, he said, "as soon as I have an experience that Paul had, I'll get saved." And that's legitimate. If that's the way of salvation, you can expect a light in front of you to the point that you can't see and you're going to be directed to go to some address on a street, you know, anywhere. What happened to Paul was, Paul was being accosted, he was being arrested, he was saying the chain has run out Paul and you're fighting against me! And you know, Paul said, "Lord, what do you want me to do?" He knew when the chain had run out and he knew he had encountered a heavenly being and he was not going to resist. But let's continue. Paul had credentials

### PAUL'S CREDENTIALS

**Acts 22:3** "I am verily a man *which am* a **Jew**, born in Tarsus, a *city* in Cilicia, yet **brought up** in this city **at the feet of Gamaliel**, and **taught** according to the perfect manner **of the law of the fathers**, and was **zealous** toward God, as ye all are this day."

Here's a Jewish doctor, a teacher of the law, the Law of Moses, "as ye all are this day" – he's talking to the Jews in the temple at Jerusalem there. And he says, "I was zealous, just like you are." And Paul said in Philippians chapter three verses five and six

### PAUL WAS JUST

**Philippians 3:5-6** "**Circumcised** the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of **Benjamin**, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a **Pharisee**; 6. Concerning **zeal, persecuting the church**; touching the **righteousness** which is in the **law, blameless.**"

"I was circumcised on the eighth day," - just like you guys were, he could imply that, he didn't say that to these people in Jerusalem there. Paul was doing everything right as far as Judaism was concerned; he was just misled. You know, there are plenty of misled children of God. They think they are doing what God would have them to do, in fact Jesus told His disciples, he says, they're going to kill you thinking they're doing God a service when they're not. And so, there are plenty of misled Christians today because they have very little understanding of this book. They don't spend very much time in it, if at all. They'd rather spend time in this book and I'm holding up a hymnbook! And of course this has too many hymns in it, doesn't have enough choruses! They'd rather spend time in this book, the hymnbook, the chorus book and not very much time in this, this is too convicting and this is more fun to sing! Anyway, so, Paul had zeal.

### PAUL'S ZEAL

**Acts 22:4-5** "And I **persecuted** this [the] **way** unto the **death**, binding and delivering into **prisons** both men and women. 5. As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring **them** which were there bound unto Jerusalem, for **to be punished.**"

You talk about being misled; Paul was very misled! He was doing everything that God didn't want him to do. Even in Acts chapter eight, verse three Paul says,

### SAUL PERSECUTED THE CHURCH

**Acts 8:3** "As for **Saul**, he made havock of **the church**, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed *them* to prison."

What a sad commentary! In Galatians chapter one Paul says

## EXCEEDING ZEAL FOR TRADITION

**Galatians 1:13-14** "For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that **beyond measure I persecuted the church** of God, and **wasted** it: *14*. And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly **zealous** of the **traditions** of my fathers."

You see, the tradition of the fathers was more important than the truth of the scriptures themselves – tradition! Tradition influenced Paul; tradition influences many in the church today. Now, Paul persecuted Jesus and Jesus let him know whom he was persecuting.

## SAUL PERSECUTED JESUS

**Acts 22:6-8** "And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone **from heaven a great light** round about me. *7*. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, **why persecutest thou me?** *8*. And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, **I am Jesus . . .**, whom thou **persecutest**."

You know what that tells me? That the persecution of those in the church, is persecuting whom? Jesus Christ! Are you being persecuted? You know, who's being persecuted? Jesus Christ is being persecuted. It's just that they can put their finger on you and they can't put their finger on Him. You see, that's the problem. So what they will do, seeing that Jesus is in the heavenlies, they will, and Satan will make arrangements for the persecution of the church, the people in the church. "And I answered, Who art thou, Lord?" He knew who was in charge! Man, he didn't have any debate, he says, "who art thou, LORD?" Paul knew right off the bat that he was doing the wrong thing! And Paul acknowledged him as Lord. In verse ten

## PAUL ACKNOWLEDGE HIM AS LORD

**Acts 22:10** "And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do."

When Jesus Christ is Lord, then He gets to call the shots. "What do you want me to do?" Now, what happened is that Jesus Christ accosted Paul on the road to Damascus, and then he began to introduce men in his life. And the first one he introduced in his life was Ananias. And in chapter twenty-two of Acts and verse twelve it says

## GOD USED ANANIAS

**Acts 22:12-15** "And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt *there*, *13*. Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. *14*. And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. *15*. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard."

Paul heard, he couldn't see. Got involved with Ananias and Paul began to see, and that's what happens. The blind man who could hear Jesus come, remember the story in the book of John, he could hear Jesus coming and he called out, Lord have mercy upon me, and when he called upon the Lord to have mercy upon him, the Lord allowed him to see. You can hear but you can't see everything, you can't get it together, you just ask the Lord to have mercy upon you and help you to see the things that you can't grasp when you're studying. So Ananias came and he ministered to him. Also God used Barnabas. We'll talk about that in a moment but let me just pick up on what Ananias said unto him. "For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard." And in Galatians chapter one verse fifteen through seventeen it says

## CALLED BY THE GRACE OF GOD

**Galatians 1:15-17** "But when it pleased God, who **separated me** (to this calling) from my mother's womb, and **called me by his grace**, 16. To **reveal his Son** in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: 17. Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus."

When I think about him being separated from his mother's womb, the separation was to his calling. Not that he was born, so much, I'm sure that that could be implied in this as well. But he separated me unto that calling that He had for me according to His purpose because He foreknew in the ages before that Paul would be His chosen vessel. And He called me by His grace. Separated from birth and then He called me, when? On the road to Damascus and what was he to be doing? He was to be revealing His Son. He would be preaching the gospel of His Son. In other words, Paul needed more than the announcement from Ananias that you're going to be a special messenger from God. He had to go to the backside of the desert, he had to go to Arabia to get the message and he didn't get it from the Apostles. He got it right from the Lord. Paul was an apostle and it was Jesus Christ who chose His apostles, one at a time and we find Paul being chosen by the Lord on the road to Damascus. I don't know whether Paul got a crash course or he had to spend three years in the desert with the Lord to get all that the apostles had gotten during His ministry here on the earth. So Paul was with the Lord for a period of time in Arabia and then he returned again to Damascus. Then God brings into his life, Barnabas. In Acts nine, twenty-seven

## GOD USED BARNABAS

**Acts 9:27** "But Barnabas took him, and brought *him* to the **apostles**, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus."

You have got to appreciate the fact that people were afraid of Paul. Wouldn't you be? If you lived in Iraq, would you go slap old Saddam Hussein on the back and say, "How are you doing, pal?" I don't think so! Not if he was after your hide! People were afraid of Paul and you know what? It took a man like Barnabas to stick his neck out for this man that made havoc of the church.

## BARNABAS USED AGAIN

**Acts 11:25** "Then departed **Barnabas** to Tarsus, for to seek **Saul**:"

Barnabas saw what was in the apostle Paul and the Lord, I'm sure was moving in Barnabas' heart to come along beside Paul and to help him.

## BARNABAS AND SAUL

**Acts 13:1-2** "Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as **Barnabas**, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and **Saul**. 2. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me **Barnabas** and **Saul** for the work whereunto I have called them."

And when you see in the Book of Acts, you'll notice Barnabas' name comes before Paul's name because Barnabas was the leader but there came a time in the life of Saul when that reversed. It was Paul and Barnabas, but for a while it was Barnabas and Saul, because Barnabas was doing the leading and God will bring people along side of us to help us to grow and to mature, just like Barnabas was used in Paul's life. Well, what I think that we're going to do is that we're

going to leave off with our study this morning because we could continue on considerably longer here. We had a lot of announcements and a lot of fun in our announcements so we're going to pick up here Lord willing, and talk about Paul being a servant. Paul was a servant and we too need to be servants of the Lord and I'm sure that we can be encouraged along that line and need to be encouraged along that line from day to day. So let's just close in a word of prayer, thanking God that He has called each one of us for a purpose. And I'll read a couple of verses that may help us with this. In Ephesians two ten it says

### **HIS WORKMANSHIP**

**Ephesians 2:10** "For we are his **workmanship, created in Christ** Jesus unto good works, which God hath before **ordained that we should walk in them.**"

God's got a plan for you. He's got a plan for me just like He had a plan for Paul. It's just that His plans for us are not the same magnitude that He had for Paul. Paul not only was a preacher, but he was writing doctrine and when I think about Jeremiah twenty-nine, eleven, the Lord says,

### **THE LORD HAS A PLAN FOR US**

**Jeremiah 29:11** "For I **know** the **thoughts** that I think toward you, saith the LORD, **thoughts** of peace, and not of evil, **to give you an expected end.**"

Now, there are times when you think that we're sideways of Him and it aint too peaceful! But you know what? The Lord's thoughts toward us are thoughts of peace, not of evil to give you an expected end. God's got a plan, He's got an expected plan for you, just like He had for Paul and we just need to respond, when the chain runs out, we need to learn how to say, "Who is it, Lord and what do you want me to do?" And I quit jerking on that chain! May the Lord help us to do that!

Father, we just thank You for the life of Paul, not a perfect man, not a man that had great credentials, to be called into the ministry; making havoc of the church, killing those that are part of Your family, throwing them into prison, but Lord, we just thank You that we saw that You called him by Your grace, arrested him on the road to Damascus and changed his life. Lord, help us to be ready to be changed as we walk with You day by day. Thank You again for Your Word and we pray, Lord, You'd help us to respond to it in obedience and that we might be encouraged to say, Lord, what would You have me to do? In Jesus Christ's name we pray, amen.