

Introduction:

- Romans 1:1-17

I. The Letter Begins 1:1-17

- A. It is all about the Gospel
 - 1. The open and closing of the letter to the Romans is about Paul relationship to the Gospel. In between is a view of his Gospel that he explains to the Christians in Rome both Jew and Gentile.
 - 2. This is the longest of all Paul's letters and even for letters of his day. And this is the longest of all Paul's introductions to his letters. Reason: He was introducing himself to a church that he did not found nor had he visited.
- B. The Opening Establishes: "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." (Romans 1:1, NLT)
 - 1. Paul's Master
 - a) Paul a slave of Christ Jesus.
 - b) Gr. *doulos*. The phrase denotes total devotion. He is totally dependent upon the Lord. In other words he was at the total disposal of Jesus his Lord. Humility, devotion and obedience are connected to this word. Especially as it is used in relation to the OT. Jacob was a slave to Laban...it was a voluntary act on his part.
 - (1) It prompts us to ask ourselves, "How devoted am I to the Lord Jesus?"
 - (2) What is the level of humility that I walk in? Can I, the greater, wash the feet of those who lower?
 - c) In Jn 13 Jesus shows that He too is a slave. IE. Washes the disciples feet. Let this mind that was in Christ Jesus be found in us!
 - d) A slave is not greater than his Lord nor is an apostle greater than the one who sends him. Is Jesus really Lord of our lives.
 - e) We have to ask ourselves, "Are we functioning at that status?" It is a question of Lordship of Jesus over our lives. Another truth we must consider at the opening of this letter is that Paul refers to Christ Jesus, he does not use the term Lord but Christ which also translates to the Jew the same as Messiah Jesus! At the very start Paul is already introducing the Jewish/Gentile relationship. (We spoke of this in the two introduction to Romans messages.)
 - 2. Paul's calling/office–Apostle
 - a) Paul not only refers to himself as a slave of Christ Jesus but also as an apostle.
 - b) He is more than just a messenger! He is appointed by the Lord Jesus Christ to function as one called to the birthing or founding of the church.
 - c) He uses the word, "called"/chosen! To ignore Paul's claim to this authority, ignores the purpose of this letter.

3. His purpose and final description of himself is one sent out to preach the Gospel. Some translations read set apart for the Gospel. Lev 20:26 and Acts 13:2
 - a) "Paul is claiming that his life is totally dedicated to God's act of salvation in Christ—a dedication that involves both his own belief in, and obedience to, that message as well as his apostolic proclamation of it." NICNT Romans, D. J. Moo
 - b) Romans therefore becomes a letter about God
 - (1) and how He has acted to bring salvation
 - (2) preserved His justice
 - (3) and how His purposes are worked out in history
 - (4) and how He is people are to relate to Him.
- C. The Gospel Further Defined
 1. vs 2 Paul once again connects the present reality of the Gospel to the OT prophets "from long ago". He announces that God promised this Good New/Gospel. Again, we see the connection of the Jew and Gentile in this statement.
 2. So Paul is tying together the new work of God in His Son, the content of this Good News/Gospel and the OT.
 - a) Gr. *Euangelion* - Good New - means to proclaim good news, to deliver a message. Usually had a sense of victory in it...a message bearing good news that brings joy and delight. The proclamation of victory!
 - b) Jesus himself is literally the message of Good News! He is the focus of the Good News! He is the Good News! He is the Message...the Word!
 - c) The message carries with it the sense of fulfillment. Much like the Jesus message to John the Baptist... the blind see the deaf hear the lame walk and dead are raised.
 - (1) *"How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of the messenger who brings good news, the good news of peace and salvation, the news that the God of Israel reigns!"* (Isaiah 52:7, NLT)
 - (2) *"And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is why the Scriptures say, 'How beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring good news!'"* (Romans 10:15, NLT)
 - d) We really begin to see how packed this 17 verse introduction really is.
 - D. The Power Punch of the Gospel
 1. Two parallel phrases: It is the Son who is the focus of the Gospel, a person, Jesus.
 - a) He was born in the flesh in King Davids line. = His pre-existence
 - (1) King Davids line...another Jewish reference that binds Jew and Gentile together.
 - b) He was shown to be the Son of God when He was raised from the dead by the power of the Holy Spirit. = eternal.
 - (1) It is the Son who is appointed to be the Son! (on the basis of the resurrection.

(2) "The transition from v. 3 to v. 4, then, is not a transition from a human messiah to a divine Son of God (adoptionism) but from the Son as Messiah to the Son as both Messiah and powerful, reigning Lord." Moo, D. J. (1996). NICNT Moo (p. 49).

Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

- c) The use of the phrases together suggest that we have not come full understanding if we consider Jesus from just one perspective.
2. Four verses of power titles. Good News equals:
 - a) Son of God
 - b) Seed of David
 - c) Messiah
 - d) Lord
 - e) These titles make it clear to us that the Gospel cant be understood outside of the person of Jesus Christ! After all, it is His resurrection that makes all of this possible.
- E. The Return From the Excursion.
 1. Paul now returns to talking about himself after this glorious little excursion to the Good New of Jesus Christ.
 2. Paul has received through Jesus the grace of apostleship.
 3. He shares three phrases
 - a) Obedience of faith or faith to obedience. Translations differ. I am kinda simple why not just let it be understood as: obedience always involves faith and faith always involves obedience.
 - b) Paul says I am called to the gentiles. His calling is to gentiles as distinct from Jews.
 - c) To bring glory to His name. He is a minister not for personal gain, or even that of his converts but solely for the glory/name of Jesus Christ.
- F. vs. 6 & 7 Paul now continues his letter by tying vs. 1 the person writing to his audience. To all of you in Rome.

Conclusion:

- The focus of Paul to the Roman is the Gospel...the Good News.
- The Good News is not good news outside of Jesus Christ.
- By Paul's calling and mission he has authority to speak into their lives.
- We now know what this letter is about.