

## **Called By God (Part 1)** **Romans 1:1-7**

In a typical letter of the first century you would find the writer's name, the name of the recipient(s), and a brief greeting. Under the direction of the Holy Spirit, Paul expanded each element of the salutation in a manner that embodied and laid a solid foundation for the message he was about to deliver in his letter.

Paul began by:

- 1) establishing his authority as an apostle of Jesus Christ;
- 2) setting forth the broad parameters of the Gospel of which he was about to write;
- 3) identifying the very heart of the Gospel, which is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself; and
- 4) identifying the recipients of the letter, not just in Rome, but including you and me, and describing the blessings and responsibilities we receive when we accept God's call on our lives contained in the Gospel.

Note the emphasis on calling in this passage: 1) God's calling of the Apostle Paul; 2) Paul's ministry of calling people to faith in Jesus Christ; and 3) God's calling on our own lives.

### **I. The Author (1:1, 5a)**

- Paul's: 1) Condition; 2) Confrontation; 3) Conversion; and 4) Commission to carry the Gospel to Jews and Gentiles.
- Paul's conversion: 35 AD. Time of writing: approx. 20+ years later in 57 AD.
- God had used Paul to spread the Gospel and plant churches throughout Asia Minor (Turkey) and Greece; now in Corinth on his Third Missionary Journey, he was setting his sights on Italy (Rome) and Spain further to the West.
- He wrote Romans to prepare the believers for his coming and to enlist their support as he prepared to carry the Gospel to the western limits of the Roman empire.
- "These terms express startling claims, yet they imply privileges which belong to all who preach the good news, and even to all who are followers of Christ." (*Charles Erdman, Romans, p. 17*)

#### **A. His Identity** – a servant of Christ Jesus

1. As a servant, bond-servant, slave of Jesus Christ, Paul lived in complete submission to his Lord and Master. He had been purchased by Christ, by His sacrifice on the cross, and was, therefore, completely surrendered to His will. (1 Cor. 6:20; 7:23)
2. "Such should be the relation to Christ realized by every one of his followers. It should be the complete submission and loving service of one who has been 'bought with a price'" (*Charles Erdman, Romans, p. 18*)

#### **B. His Calling** – called to be an apostle

To be an apostle is to be an ambassador, a missionary, a personal representative, a messenger for the One who sent you. (2 Corinthians 5:17-21)

#### **C. His Ministry** – (vs. 1) set apart for [the proclamation of] the gospel of God...(vs. 5) to call people from among all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith

1. Romans 1:1 and 5 tell us exactly who Paul was and what his life and ministry were all about.
2. Principle (vs. 5): Love for the Lord and faith in the Lord manifest themselves in obedience to the Lord. (Cp. John 14:15)

## II. The Gospel (1:2)

### A. The Fountain of the Gospel – the gospel of God

1. The “Good News” had its source or origin in God.
2. The Gospel was not invented by man; it was revealed to us by God. (2 Peter 1:20-21; 2 Timothy 3:16)

### B. The Foretelling of the Gospel – the gospel he promised beforehand through is prophets in the Holy Scriptures

1. The Gospel is set forth in the Old Testament in type, symbol and prophecy.
2. “The New is in the Old concealed; the Old is in the New revealed.”
3. Examples: Old Testament sacrificial system; prophets, priests and kings; Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53.
4. Cp. Luke 24:25-27, 44-45; John 5:37-40.

### C. The Fulfillment of the Gospel – regarding his Son...Jesus Christ

1. Jesus is the fulfillment of the Gospel. In fact, Jesus IS the Gospel!
2. “The predicted Messiah of the Old Testament is the Christ of the New; the Servant of Jehovah [e.g. Isaiah 53] whom the prophets predicted is the Son of God whom the apostles preached.” (*Erdman, Romans, p. 19*)

## III. The Lord (1:3-4)

### A. His Humanity – a descendant of David

1. God became a Man; He identified with us in our humanity.
2. Jesus fulfilled the many prophecies that the Messiah (Christ) would be a descendant of David and, ultimately, He will sit on the throne of David to rule over the nations.

### B. His Deity – the Son of God

The Resurrection proves the deity of Christ.

### C. His Lordship – Jesus Christ our Lord

Jesus was either a liar, a lunatic, or the Lord. (Josh McDowell, *More Than a Carpenter*)

## IV. The Recipients (1:5b-7)

- A. Called From Among All the Gentiles (1:5b)
- B. Called to the Obedience that Comes from Faith (1:5b)
- C. Called to Belong to Jesus Christ (1:6)
- D. Called to Be Loved by God (1:7)
- E. Called to Be Saints (1:7)
- F. Called to Receive God’s Grace and Peace (1:7)
- G. Called to Call Others