

Romans

Greeting [1:1-7]

- **Author [1:1]**

- Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, Παῦλος δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, κλητὸς ἀπόστολος ἀφορισμένος εἰς εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ,
 - Paul starts off the letter by identifying himself.
 - He is the human author of this letter [2 Tim 3:16] and wants the Romans to be confident that this letter is coming from him.
 - Paul then characterizes himself as a bond-servant of Christ.
 - He identifies himself this way in other letters as well [Gal 1:10; Phil 1:1; Col 1:7; Titus 1:1].
 - Paul mentions his calling to the office of apostle.
 - This was quite common in his other letters [1 Cor 1:1; 2 Cor 1:1; Gal 1:1; Eph 1:1; Col 1:1; 1 Thess 2:6; 1 Tim 1:1; 2 Tim 1:1; Titus 1:1].
 - The word “called” is κλητὸς (klētos) which means “called” or “invited”.
 - God invites us to participate in offices or ministries, but not all believers respond to the invitation.
 - By describing himself as a bond-servant, Paul portrayed his humility before the Lord.
 - By describing himself as an apostle. Paul declared his God-given authority over spiritual matters.
 - Paul then spotlights his gospel ministry.
 - The phrase “set apart” is from ἀφορίζω (aphorizō) which means “separated” [Matt 25:32; 2 Cor 6:17] and can mean “set apart” [Acts 13:2; Gal 1:15].
 - Paul had been set apart for ministry, but this did not mean being isolated like the Pharisees.
 - Paul interacted with people in pagan society and was willing to work [Acts 20:34; 1 Th 2:9; 2 Th 3:8].

- **The Gospel Concerning the Son [1:2-6]**

- which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, ὃ προεπηγγείλατο διὰ τῶν προφητῶν αὐτοῦ ἐν γραφαῖς ἁγίαις
 - The word “which” is a neuter pronoun referring back to the word “gospel” in verse 1.
 - This means that Paul is saying that God had promised the gospel through the O.T. prophets.
 - Paul does not quote the prophets here, but Philip’s quote of Isaiah 53:7-8 in Acts 8:30-35 is one good example of this along with Jesus’ teaching during His resurrection [Luke 24:25-27, 44-47].
 - The phrase “holy Scriptures” refers to the O.T. and, interestingly, is only used here in the N.T.

- Paul uses a similar expression in 2 Tim 3:15 which also shows that the gospel was in the O.T.
- concerning His Son, who became a descendant of David according to the flesh,

περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ τοῦ γενομένου ἐκ σπέρματος Δαυὶδ κατὰ σάρκα,

 - The phrase “concerning His Son” makes it clear that the pronouns “He” and “His” in v. 2 were referring to God the Father.
 - The Son is identified as Jesus Christ in v. 4.
 - The phrase “who was born” is a participle of γίνομαι (ginomai) which means “to become”.
 - This shows the deity of Christ because He was the Son of the Father before He became human.
 - The word “descendant” is from σπέρμα (sperma) which means “seed”.
 - This word is often used to describe descendants [Luke 1:55; John 8:33, 37; Acts 7:5-6, ...].
 - The phrase “a descendant of David” establishes the humanity of Christ as well as His being in the prophesied line of the Messiah [Mt 1:1; Ps 89:3-4].
 - The phrase “according to the flesh” gives the final testimony regarding Jesus’ lineage because He is not merely related to David through faith – He is truly a blood relative of David [Luke 3:23-31].
 - Paul uses this expression to indicate lineage elsewhere in the book of Romans [4:1; 9:3, 5].
 - In chapter 8 Paul uses this expression to indicate the carnal walk of some believers [8:4, 5, 12, 13].
 - Paul uses this expression in both of these ways many times in his other letters [1 Cor 1:26; 2 Cor 1:17; 5:16; 10:2, 3; 11:18; Gal 4:23, 29; Eph 6:5].
 - The only other use is in John 8:15.
- who was powerfully declared the Son of God as a result of the resurrection from the dead,

τοῦ ὀρισθέντος υἱοῦ θεοῦ ἐν δυνάμει ... ἐξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν,

 - The word “declared” is from ὀρίζω (horizō) which means “to make a determination about an entity”.
 - This word is translated in a variety of ways in the NASB [Acts 2:23; 10:42; 17:26, 31; Heb 4:7].
 - In this case God the Father determined to make the truth regarding Jesus being the Son of God known to others through the resurrection, so “declared” makes sense as a translation.
 - The phrase “with power” is ἐν δυνάμει (en dunamei) which means “in power”.
 - This could mean that Jesus is powerful or that the power of God was on display in the resurrection.
 - The construction of this sentence favors the latter understanding.

- The preposition “by” is from ἐκ (ek) which means “from” or “out of”.
- This is used in the sense of “as a result of” in this verse.
- according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord,
κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης ... Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν,
 - The phrase “according to the Spirit of holiness” is a reference to God the Holy Spirit.
 - This tells us that the power of the Holy Spirit was on display in the resurrection of Jesus.
 - The phrase “Jesus Christ our Lord” is in apposition to the phrase “Son of God” earlier in this verse.
 - In order to serve as a lead-in to verse 5, this phrase is placed at the end of this verse.
- through whom we have received grace and apostleship
δι’ οὗ ἐλάβομεν χάριν καὶ ἀποστολήν
 - The phrase “through whom” indicates that the grace and apostleship Paul had received was made possible through his position in Christ.
 - Everything we receive from God today is likewise a result of our position in Christ.
 - Paul was called to serve as an apostle of the Church [1 Cor 1:1].
 - This is an office that was important in the early Church, but is no longer a calling today.
- to bring about the obedience of faith among all the people for His name’s sake,
εἰς ὑπακοὴν πίστεως ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ὑπὲρ τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ,
 - The phrase “obedience of faith” is used again in Rom 16:25-26 as a response to the gospel.
 - This phrase also carries the connotation of the obedience of faith shown in a believer’s walk.
 - The word “Gentiles” is from ἔθνος (ethnos) which means “nation” or “people”.
 - This word is used 187X in the N.T. as an idiom referring to Gentiles, but here it is more general.
 - The phrase “for His name’s sake” explains why Paul was given grace and apostleship.
 - God chose Paul as His instrument to reach all the people for the sake of His Son Jesus [Acts 9:15].
- among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ;
ἐν οἷς ἐστε καὶ ὑμεῖς κλητοὶ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ,
 - The phrase “among whom” refers back to the phrase “among all the people”.
 - There were Jews and Gentiles in the church at Rome so this helps us to understand the more general meaning of ἔθνος (ethnos) in verse 5.
 - The phrase “the called of Jesus Christ” refers to those who have responded to the gospel invitation.
 - Many people are called and do not respond to the gospel, but the phrase “of Christ” here designates those that belong to Christ - believers.

- Principles of Romans 1:2-6
 - The good news message of the Savior from God was promised in the O.T. Scriptures...
 - Seed of the woman [Gen 3:15].
 - In the line of Shem [Gen 9:26].
 - A descendant of Abraham [Gen 12:3; 22:18].
 - Through Isaac and Jacob [Gen 21:12; 35:10-12].
 - From the tribe of Judah [Gen 49:10].
 - In the line of David [2 Sam 7:12-16].
 - Born of a virgin [Isa 7:14].
 - Born in Bethlehem Ephrathah [Micah 5:2].
 - Jesus, eternally God, became human so that he might be our Kinsman-Redeemer [Col 1:15].
 - Jesus came down out of heaven to dwell in the flesh as a descendant of David [John 6:41-42].
 - At the end of His earthly ministry, Jesus began to tell people about His resurrection [Matt 16:21].
 - His disciples remembered this prophecy and it increased their faith in Him and all the things he had spoken to them [John 2:18-22].
 - The raising of Jesus from the dead powerfully declared that Jesus was, in fact, who He had said He was all along – the Son of God [John 3:16-18].
 - The Holy Spirit was involved in raising Jesus from the dead [Rom 8:11].
 - The Spirit delivers the message of the resurrection to us through the Scriptures [2 Pet 1:20-21].
 - Because He is the only Savior [1 Tim 4:10], it is through Jesus Christ that we receive the grace in which we now stand [Rom 5:1-2; 1 Cor 15:1].
 - It is also Jesus who opens the door for us to serve in various ministries and offices [1 Cor 12:5].
 - Paul was called as an apostle by Jesus to proclaim the gospel to all people [Acts 26:12-18; Rom 1:16].
 - Paul's ministry was to bring about the obedience of the faith among all the people – obedience and faith being linked together in Scripture [John 3:16 cf. 3:36; Acts 6:7; Rom 16:25-26].
 - When a person seeks God and hears the gospel message, he is given an invitation to receive eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ.
 - Unfortunately, not everyone who is given this invitation will accept the free gift of salvation offered by God [Rom 6:23].
 - Paul is writing this letter primarily to those who have responded positively to this invitation (believers) in Rome, but knows full well that unbelievers will be reading this letter as well.

- **Audience [1:7]**

- to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called *as* saints:
πᾶσιν τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Ῥώμῃ ἀγαπητοῖς θεοῦ, κλητοῖς ἁγίοις,
 - The phrase “beloved of God” is describing the particular type of love which God has for believers.
 - This is a love from which we cannot be separated [Rom 8:38-39].
 - In verse 6 Paul mentioned our invitation to receive the gospel message.
 - Here in verse 7 Paul highlights the invitation given to all believers to live a sanctified life [Eph 4:1].
- Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
πᾶσιν τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Ῥώμῃ ἀγαπητοῖς θεοῦ, κλητοῖς ἁγίοις,
 - Paul concludes this greeting by expressing his desire for them to know God’s grace and peace.
 - This is a message Paul included in many of his letters [1 Cor 1:3; 2 Cor 1:2; Gal 1:3; Eph 1:2; ...].