

Romans 1

Paul the apostle's letter to the Christians in the church in Rome making it clear that sinners, whether Jewish or Gentile, are saved only by God's grace and through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and not by their own good works or religious practice. And that this gospel brings about a changed life.

1 Paul a servant. Every Christian is a servant with a heart set to obey our Master.

An apostle – One sent away on a mission to preach the gospel.

2 The gospel is anticipated and prophesied in the Old Testament account of God's dealings with Israel.

3, 4 The gospel concerns the Lord Jesus Christ who was Man and God. Humanly speaking He was the Son of King David. His resurrection powerfully declares that He was also the Son of God.

5 The Lord Jesus Himself, when Paul was saved, especially called Paul to take the gospel particularly to the pagan Gentile nations. He received grace for this task. Grace means he did not deserve such an honour and that he was given the strength and ability to carry it out. Sinners were and still are called by the gospel to a new life of obedience that springs from faith in Christ.

6 The believers in Rome had been called and now were Christ's people.

7 They were thus loved by God and were saints. Saints- means set apart to God, or consecrated. All believers are saints, that is our high and holy calling. Grace- undeserved loving kindness. Peace- reconciled to God with the mind conviction that all is well.

8 Paul is thankful to God for the believers in Rome; they had a good reputation as faithful to the Lord.

9, 10 He prays earnestly for them and hopes that he will be able to visit them.

11, 12 He wants to help strengthen them and for mutual encouragement.

13 Paul had planned and hoped for some time to visit them.

14 Paul felt that he owed the gospel to others, educated and uneducated.

15, 16 Paul is eager to preach the gospel because it is the power of God to save sinners and change their lives. All who believe are saved. The gospel was first preached to the Jews who had the Old Testament in which the coming Kingdom of Christ had been prophesied, but it was also for the Gentiles or pagans.

17 Those who believe the gospel receive a perfect righteousness from God. This means they are accepted by Him as perfectly righteous people. This is The Righteousness of Christ, not self righteousness. It is theirs through faith alone.

18 God's righteousness is revealed in the gospel. Also God's wrath is revealed against sinners. The wrath of God, is God's pure, holy, righteous, justified indignation against those who have ignored Him

and broken His laws. The wrath of God is revealed to bring home to sinners the grave danger they are in so that they will be encouraged to flee from the wrath to come and find salvation in Christ. It is the wrath to come – God’s intention to judge men and reward them according to their deeds – “After death the judgment”. Sinners naturally seek to suppress the truth. That is, deny their guilt, make excuses for their sins, talk up their self righteousness.

19 Here is a specific instance of that, namely atheism - the belief that there is no God; but the evidence that He exists is plain.

20 Though God, being a Spirit, is invisible, the visible creation of the world cries out that there is a Creator. The denial of God’s existence is inexcusable. The evidence is overwhelming.

21, 22 Rejecting the knowledge of God they employed their minds in devising alternatives. Their ‘wise’ reasoning became dark and foolish.

23 They substituted for the glorious Immortal God, wood, stone and bronze images of men, birds, animals and reptiles. We may have given up the idols of pagan primitive men but we still have substitutes for God in the lives of unsaved men. Australian Idol, Hollywood idols for example.

24 There is often a direct connection between ‘idolatry’ and sexual immorality. When men give God away eventually He gives them up. They dishonour their bodies by corrupting God given sex in marriage.

25 Rejecting truth they believe a lie. They worship what has been created instead of The Creator.

26, 27 Paul specifies a variety of horrible sexual sins. There is a terrible penalty attached to all such sins.

28 Again man’s rejection of God leads to God’s rejection of man.

29-31 A list of sins to which mankind is prone. Some are captive to some particular sins whilst others practice other sins.

32 Not only is the practice of such sins condemned by God, but to applaud others who so sin is even more deserving of the wrath of God.