

ROMANS 1:1-17

1) Where, in the larger context of the whole of Romans, does this passage occur?

2) Trace the structure of the passage by dividing it up into sub-sections.

Greeting: The Content and Goal of Gospel Ministry (1:1-7)

3) How does Paul describe himself in v. 1?

4) According to v. 2, how is the Old Testament related to the gospel?

5) How does this shape our understanding of the Old Testament? Why is the OT so important?

Digging Deeper:

The Old Testament is fundamentally about God's promise to bless the world through a descendant of Abraham and David. This promised descendant will rule as God's king and bring about the restoration of all things. The many stories of the OT constitute a single Story. And this Story is about the reclamation of a lost human dominion over the world—lost because of the fall of mankind into sin—through a Davidic dynasty. In short, it is about the coming of the kingdom of God.

Key OT promises:

- The promise of a woman's seed (Gen. 3:15)
- The promise of a descendant of Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3; 15:5; 17:5-6)
- The promise of a descendant of David (2 Sam. 7:12-16; Ps. 89; 132; Isa. 11:1-5; Jer. 23:5-6; Ezek. 34:23-24)

6) What is the gospel about? What do verses 3-4 tell us about Jesus?

Descended	appointed
from David	to be the Son of God in power
according to the flesh	according to the Spirit of holiness
	by his resurrection from the dead

Digging Deeper:

The idea that Jesus was enthroned as the messianic King is also found in Acts (see Acts 2:32-36). Peter concludes from Jesus' resurrection from the dead that "God has made him both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). Paul connects the resurrection of Jesus with his installation as God's Son by citing Psalm 2:7 in Acts 13:33: "God has fulfilled the promise to us their children by raising Jesus, as also it is written in the second Psalm, 'You are my son, today I have begotten you.'"

7) What is the purpose of Paul's apostolic ministry, which he received through Jesus Christ? What is its ultimate goal?

8) How does the example of Paul's apostolic ministry shape how you live and serve?

Thanksgiving: Gratitude and Encouragement from the Gospel (1:8-15)

9) What is Paul thankful for? How is this significant?

10) What is Paul praying for? Why?

11) Why would Paul preach the gospel to people who were already Christians? What implications does this have for us?

Theme: The Gospel of God's Righteousness (1:16-17)

12) Why is Paul eager to preach the gospel in Rome?

13) Why is Paul not ashamed of the gospel?

14) Why is the gospel the “power of God for salvation”?

15) What is “the righteousness of God”?

16) What does “from faith for faith” mean? Why is it so critical to understand this?

17) How does Paul support his statement?

Digging Deeper:

When the NT writers quote the OT, they bring out the full meaning that the OT text originally had. So it is always helpful to look up any OT quotation in its context.

In Habakkuk 2, the believer waits for the appointed time when God’s promises will be fulfilled. There are two possible responses: Some will be puffed up (Hab. 2:4a) with a proud self-sufficiency that thinks it can cope on its own. By contrast, “the righteous” (that is, those who believe the promises) “will live by his faith”. His believing the promise will both bring him into right relation with God (the main emphasis in Romans), and also keep him in right relation (the emphasis in Heb. 10:38).

Faith is taking God at his word. The opposite of faith is proud self-sufficiency. The life of faith is all-encompassing: it is by faith that one initially receives the gift of salvation (eternal life), but it is also by faith that one lives each day.

18) Based on Romans 1:1-17, how would you explain the gospel?

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- 1) The gospel is centred on the person and work of Jesus Christ. Do you know who Jesus is and what he came to do? What would it mean for you to submit to Jesus' lordship in your life?

- 2) Paul was completely committed to believing, obeying and proclaiming the gospel. How might we also live a gospel-centred life? Be specific.

- 3) In our relationships with other Christians, how much are we singing and speaking the praises of Jesus? How can we promote this kind of mutual encouragement in the gospel?

- 4) Why might we be ashamed of the gospel? How can we overcome this?

- 5) How has studying this Scriptural passage deepened your understanding of the gospel? What impact will this have on how you think about and live as a Christian?

Studying God's Word

Four key questions to ask:

- 1) What does the text say? [OBSERVE]
 - Take careful note of the content of the Bible passage

- 2) What does the text mean? [INTERPRET]
 - The aim is to discover the biblical author's *intention* or *purpose* in writing this particular passage of Scripture. In other words, *why* does the text say what it says?

- 3) What is (are) the main point(s) of the text? [INTERPRET]

- 4) What implications does the text have for: [APPLY]
 - The non-Christian;
 - The Individual Christian; and
 - The church?

OUTLINE OF ROMANS

I. Introduction (1:1-17)

- A. Salutation (1:1-7)
- B. Thanksgiving (1:8-15)
- C. Statement of theme (1:16-17)

II. The Heart of the Gospel: Justification by Faith (1:18-4:25)

- A. The universal reign of sin (1:18-3:20)
- B. Justification by faith (3:21-4:25)

III. The Assurance Provided by the Gospel: The Hope of Salvation (5:1-8:39)

- A. The hope of glory (5:1-21)
- B. Freedom from bondage to sin (6:1-23)
- C. Freedom from bondage to the law (7:1-25)
- D. Assurance of eternal life in the Spirit (8:1-30)
- E. The believer's security celebrated (8:31-39)

IV. The Defense of the Gospel: The Problem of Israel (9:1-11:36)

- A. Introduction: The tension between God's promises and Israel's plight (9:1-5)
- B. Defining the promise: (1) God's sovereign election (9:6-29)
- C. Understanding Israel's plight: Christ as the climax of salvation history (9:30-10:21)
- D. Summary: Israel, the "elect", and the "hardened" (11:1-10)
- E. Defining the promise (2): The future of Israel (11:11-32)
- F. Conclusion: Praise to God in light of his awesome plan (11:33-36)

V. The Transforming Power of the Gospel: Christian Conduct (12:1-15:13)

- A. The heart of the matter: Total transformation (12:1-2)
- B. Humility and mutual service (12:3-8)
- C. Love and its manifestations (12:9-21)
- D. The Christian and secular rulers (13:1-7)
- E. Love and the law (13:8-10)
- F. Living in light of the day (13:11-14)
- G. A plea for unity (14:1-15:13)

VI. The Letter Closing (15:14-16:27)

- A. Paul's ministry and travel plans (15:14-33)
- B. Greetings (16:1-23)
- C. Concluding doxology (16:25-27)