

Glen Park Gospel Church  
**Tuesday Evening Bible Study Group Notes**

Rev Chris Trinham

Studies in Romans - Introduction

No 1

## The Man and His Message

### Scripture Reading: Romans 1:1-17.

God had a purpose for Paul which energised, characterised and directed his life from the day on which he surrendered to the Lordship of Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus. We have the story recorded in Acts chapter 9 and in verse 15 "But the Lord said unto him (Ananias), Go! This man 1. is my chosen instrument 2. To carry my name before the Gentiles, 3. and their kings, 4. and the people of Israel:" (NIV) The word suffer in verse 16 is from the Greek word *pascho* which gives us our word 'passion' and means to experience, to feel. It can be both positive feeling or as most often in the New Testament something to be endured, as in illness or persecution.

Romans is more than "A Digest of Doctrine" as some have suggested, it is an explanation of the things which we will experience as one of those 'called to be saints'. It gives us the reason for the things we experience along the way. As such it is a picture of considerable detail, but before we scrutinise it we must stand back and gaze at the whole canvas to put that detail into its context.

#### **First, Paul Was Conscious of His Calling and That of His Readers v1-7.**

In verse one he gives us a summary of his personal qualification to write that which is to follow. He was called as a servant or slave (his status), a called apostle (his title), by Jesus Christ (his master), for the work of Gospel (his duty).

The story line of Romans goes straight from verse 1 to verse 7. His readers were called to belong to Jesus (Our position v6) and thus loved by God (our privilege), called *to be* saints, or set apart to holy purpose (our character).

All in between is an expansion of what he meant by his calling. It was to proclaim the life changing gospel. This change is achieved by telling the good news of Jesus, God's anointed, who being raised from the dead is declared to be the Son of God in power. It was the telling of this life changing message which was Paul's

distinctive calling, and is the objective of this series of studies.

The book was written to the saints in Christ at Rome v7, but is directly applicable to all those through the ages who are called to belong to Jesus Christ v6.

#### **Second, Paul Told of His Desire to Meet With Them and How Suitable He Was to Do So v8-17.**

The Greeks called all non-Greeks including Jews, Barbarians; even as Jews called all non-Jews including Greeks, Gentiles. Paul was considered to be an apostle to the Gentiles (v13b, compare Galatians 2:7-9) and here speaks to three groups of people; covenant Jews v16, cultured Greeks v14 and the people from the fringes of the Roman empire. These groups represent the religious, the 'wise' and refined intellectual and also the 'foolish', the rest of us Barbarians, all of whom desperately needed the Gospel, for all were

perishing in sin. See 1 Corinthians 1:18-2.2. For Paul tells us God has included all under sin (Romans 3:9 & Galatians 3:22). It is the same today.

The word 'wise' in v14 is defined as sober minded or self controlled. (See the use of this word in Romans 16:19.) 'Foolish' does not mean idiotic, but is the opposite of wise, a lack of understanding (as in Galatians 3:3), or it could be one who does not control his lusts. (As in Titus 3:3). When we are 'foolish' or wrong in our understanding about righteousness we tend to go astray in our morals. Christians can and do sin. Paul later gives us the answer to this problem. Paul was uniquely positioned for this ministry. He was raised in the wealthy port city Tarsus in Celicia, Asia Minor, which he described as 'no insignificant city' where he as a Jewish lad was taught the trade of tent making (Acts 18:3). It was cosmopolitan; uniting eastern and western culture and learning. He was a Hellenist Jew, the son of a Roman citizen and a Pharisee, both of which he inherited, Roman citizenship by birth (Acts 22:28) and a Pharisee by training later in Jerusalem. (Acts 22:3 and 23:6). Paul could speak the language of and mix with Jew, Greek and Barbarian. He was just the man, God's chosen instrument to take the

Gospel to the Gentiles. Nothing ever happens in our lives by chance and we need to trust God to bring out his purposes in his time. God took his time with Paul.

#### **Last, Paul Announces His Great Theme, the Righteousness of God v16&17.**

He tells us what the righteous God has done to reconcile sinful people to himself as His 'saints' or separated ones. He not only explains in depth how this is done, but what we may expect in the process. Thus it is a manual on Christian Living, or Living by Faith.

The Church at Rome was largely Gentile, some Greeks and Greek influenced Gentiles, but with a definite Jewish component and Paul directs his teaching to all, but in doing so there are portions which address the thinking of each group.

God's answer to man's problem was Paul's answer, that is the gospel or good news about the crucified and risen Jesus, which is an invitation to be transformed to conformity with His righteousness, a righteousness that is freely available to all. By the preaching of the Gospel, God calls all men to Himself. Through Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ alone sinners are called to become saints, the children of God.

This series of studies is designed for the new Christian as well as those who want a practical overview of Romans. It keeps in mind the practical questions of how to live by faith. Romans allows for study in depth. Take it at your own level. There are thirty six studies in all covering chapters 1 to 16. We trust that you will benefit immensely from your involvement in the word of God.

## Welcome

### Glen Park Gospel Church

Lower Road, Eltham North

Sundays 10.30 am

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