

Approximately Expository 35 minutes



## **Romans 1 - “The Gospel: The Power of God for Salvation”**

### **Opening Prayer:**

**Father God, in the mighty name of Jesus, we come before You with humble hearts. We thank You for Your Word ... living, powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword. Lord God, as we open Romans chapter 1, open our eyes to see, our ears to hear, and our hearts to receive what the Spirit is saying to the church. Glorify Jesus in this place. Convict where needed. Encourage where needed. Save where needed. Transform us by Your truth. In Jesus' name, amen.**

## **Historical Setting:**

The Apostle Paul wrote the letter to the Romans around A.D. 57 from Corinth during his third missionary journey. Unlike many of his other letters, Paul had not yet visited Rome. The church in Rome was likely started by Jewish believers who had been in Jerusalem at Pentecost (Acts chapter 2) and returned to Rome with the gospel.

Rome was the center of the known world .... politically powerful, morally corrupt, spiritually dark. It was a city filled with idolatry, emperor worship, sexual immorality, and pride. The Roman Empire boasted of its power, its roads, its armies, and its philosophy.

And into that environment, Paul writes about another power .... not the power of Caesar, but the power of God.

This letter is Paul's clearest presentation of the gospel. And in chapter 1, he begins with the foundation: what the gospel is, why the world needs it, and what happens when humanity rejects God.

## 1. The Gospel Is About Jesus (Romans 1:1-7):

Paul opens: **Romans 1:1**(NIV)

**"Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God"**

Notice Paul calls himself a servant .... literally a **bondservant**. Before he is an apostle, he is a servant. That is pure Christianity right there. We serve Jesus.

The gospel was: (Vs.1:2-3)

**Romans 1:2-3**(NIV) <sup>2</sup> **the gospel he promised beforehand through his**

**prophets in the Holy Scriptures<sup>3</sup> regarding his Son, who as to his earthly life was a descendant of David,**

The gospel isn't a new idea. It was promised in the Old Testament. Genesis, Isaiah, Psalms .... all pointing to Jesus.

Verse 3-4 tells us who Jesus is: **Romans 1:3-4(NIV)<sup>3</sup> regarding his Son, who as to his earthly life was a descendant of David,<sup>4</sup> and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.**

- Fully human - “as to his earthly life, was a descendant of David”
- Fully divine - “through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power... by his resurrection”

The resurrection declares **Jesus is Lord.**

And Paul says in verse 5: ***Romans 1:5(NIV) <sup>5</sup> Through him we received grace and apostleship to call all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith for his name's sake.***

👉 Faith leads to obedience... We are not saved by obedience, but saving faith produces obedience.

The church in Rome was called: (Vs.1:7)

***Romans 1:7(NIV) <sup>7</sup> To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.***

That is **us too**. Loved. Called. Set apart.

**2. Not Ashamed of the Gospel (Romans 1:8-17):**

Paul longs to visit Rome. He says in verse 16:

**Romans 1:16**(NIV) <sup>16</sup> **For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.**

- Rome gloried in power .... military power.
- Paul gloried in gospel power.

The word “**power**” here is ***dunamis*** in Greek...(δύναμις). where we get dynamite. The gospel is explosive power. It breaks chains. It opens blind eyes. It saves sinners.

Salvation is:

- **For everyone who believes**
- **First for the Jew, then for the Gentile**

Verse 17 is the theme of Romans:

**Romans 1:17(NIV) “For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed — a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: ‘The righteous will live by faith.’”**

**Righteousness** is not earned. It **is revealed**. It is received **by faith**.

**From first to last ... faith.**

👉 You do not start with works and graduate to grace.

👉 It is grace from beginning to end.

### **3. Why the World Needs the Gospel (Romans 1:18-23):**

Now Paul shifts.

**Romans 1:18(NIV)<sup>18</sup> The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of**

**people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness,**

We do not like to talk about wrath. But if God is holy, He must judge sin.

Verse 19-20 explains that creation itself reveals God:

**Romans 1:19-20(NIV) <sup>19</sup> since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. <sup>20</sup> For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.**

- Look at the stars.
  - The ocean.
  - The human body.
- Creation screams design. Design implies a Designer.

But what did humanity do?

**Romans 1:21(NIV) <sup>21</sup> *For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.***

Notice the downward steps:

1. They knew God.
2. They refused to glorify Him.
3. They stopped giving thanks.
4. Their thinking became futile.
5. Their hearts were darkened.

Verse 22:

**Romans 1:22(NIV) *“Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools.”***

Human pride replaces divine truth.

They exchanged the glory of God for images. Idolatry.

👉 Whenever we replace God with anything .... money, pleasure, politics, self .... we create idols.

#### 4. The Great Exchange (Romans 1:24-27):

**Romans 1:24-27(NIV) <sup>24</sup> Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. <sup>25</sup> They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.**

**<sup>26</sup> Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. <sup>27</sup> In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men**

**committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error.**

Three times Paul says:

- **“Therefore God gave them over...”** (Vs.1:24)
- **“Because of this, God gave them over...”** (Vs.1:26)
- **“God gave them over...”** (Vs.1:28)

This is sobering. When people persistently reject God, He allows them to experience the consequences of their choices.

Verse 25:

**Romans 1:25(NIV) <sup>25</sup> They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.**

Every sin begins with an exchange. Truth traded for a lie.

Paul describes sexual immorality and unnatural relations .... not to single out one sin as worse than another, but to show the depth of human rebellion.

👉 The issue is not just behavior .... it is rejection of the Creator.

When society pushes God out, confusion rushes in.

## 5. The Results of Rejecting God (Romans 1:28-32):

Verse 28:

***Romans 1:28***(NIV) <sup>28</sup> ***Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done.***

Paul lists the fruit of that mindset:

- . Greed
- . Envy
- . Murder
- . Strife
- . Deceit
- . Gossip
- . Arrogance
- . Disobedience to parents
- . No love
- . No mercy

This is not just “ancient Rome.” This is modern culture.

Verse 32 is chilling:

**Romans 1:32(NIV) <sup>32</sup> Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.**

👉 It is one thing to sin. It is another to celebrate sin.

## But Here's the Hope

Romans chapter 1 diagnoses the problem. The rest of Romans reveals the cure.

👉 The world is guilty. We are guilty. But the gospel is the **power of God for salvation**.

Jesus stepped into our Romans 1 mess.

On the cross, Jesus, our messiah, took the wrath described in verse 18. **Romans 1:18(NIV) <sup>18</sup> The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness,**

He lived the righteousness described in verse 17. **Romans 1:17(NIV) <sup>17</sup> For in the**

***gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”***

He rose in power described in verse 4.

***Romans 1:4(NIV) <sup>4</sup> and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.***

- 👉 The gospel is not “try harder.”
- 👉 It is “trust Jesus.”

## **Invitation: Be Born Again**

Maybe today you see yourself in Romans chapter 1.

Maybe you have exchanged truth for lies.

Maybe you have pushed God out.

Maybe you feel the weight of sin.

👉 The good news is this: God has not given up on you.

Jesus said you must be born again.

- You are not saved by religion.
- You are not saved by morality.
- You are saved by repentance and faith.

The same power that raised Jesus from the dead can raise you from spiritual death.

“**If**” you believe Jesus died for your sins and rose again...

“**If**” you are ready to turn from sin and surrender to Him...

“**If**” you are ready to call Him Lord...

You can be saved right now. This very moment!

If you have never given your life to Christ, you can do that right now....

👉 All you need faith in Christ.

If this is you today....pray something like this:

Let us pray:

**“Lord Jesus, I know I am a sinner. I believe You died for me and rose again. I turn from my sin and place my trust in You. Forgive me. Save me. Be my Lord and Savior. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”**

👉 If you prayed that sincerely with faith in Christ, the Bible says you are saved.

**“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” (Romans 10:13)NIV**

...Welcome to the family of God!

**Closing Prayer:**

**Father God, we thank You for the truth of Romans chapter 1. We thank You that even when humanity rebels, Your grace is greater. Lord God, protect us from exchanging truth for lies. Keep us grounded in the gospel. Give us boldness to say, “I am not ashamed of the gospel.”**

**And for anyone listening who has never surrendered to Jesus.... I pray today is your day.**

**We glorify You, Jesus. You alone are righteous. You alone are Savior. You alone are Lord.**

**In Your powerful name we pray,  
Amen.**

