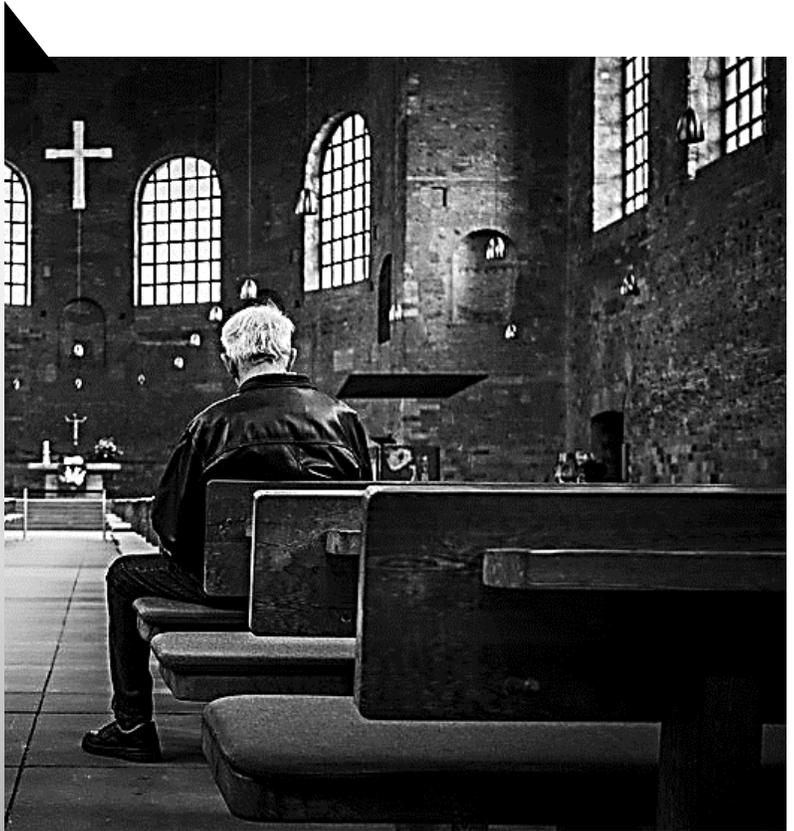




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# The Epistle of Romans

The Justification of the Ungodly

Chapter 1 Verses 1-7

Verse 1 – Paul calls himself a *δουλος* (slave). Among some, a *δουλος* was a derogatory word. To be a slave is to be in a different class – a lower human that is restricted. It is interesting though that Paul uses this term as a positive. He is a slave of Jesus. Indeed, the Christian is 'owned' by Jesus. As a slave, a Christian not only belongs to another but does what he is ordered – his life is not his own.

Paul also calls himself an apostle. An apostle is one sent with a delegated responsibility. Apostles are 'empowered' representatives. Therefore, Paul is not simply Paul, but Paul in his official capacity as an apostle.

And who are the Christians in Rome? They are the ones 'set apart' for the Gospel. They are not just mere people but the 'elect' of Jesus!

And finally, in verse 1, we hear the word, 'gospel.' What is this gospel that Paul speaks of? The gospel is good news 'from' God and good news 'about' God. It is a message about something in real time, space, and history that happened which is good! The gospel is the good news of Jesus' birth, death, resurrection, and ascension.

Verse 2 – The good news has been delivered and is continually delivered to people through the prophets in the holy scriptures (i.e., The Old Testament).

Verse 3 – The gospel is 'good news' about Jesus. Keep in mind that the Gospel is news that should be preached and proclaimed. If the gospel is not about Jesus, it isn't the gospel.

Verse 4 – Jesus is the promised Messiah who descended from David. He is the one promised to Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:15 as well. In fact, all of the Old Testament traces the promise of Jesus from Adam/Eve to Abraham, from Abraham to Isaac, from Isaac to Jacob, from Jacob to Israel, from Israel to David, and then from David to Mary and Joseph.

Verse 5 – The gospel 'does stuff.' The gospel is not mere information that we are to act upon, but it is good news that acts upon us. The gospel-preached has great power and effects. The gospel presents the saving power of God in Jesus, bringing 'the obedience of faith.' Keep in mind that faith is not possible without the proclaimed gospel. Therefore, faith is the obedient response to the preached Word; faith is that which is created by the gospel. Gospel comes first, then faith – faith receives.

Verse 6 – We all want to belong to something! Therefore, it is encouraging to see that Paul says that Christians are called by God to belong to Jesus Christ.

Verse 7 – We are not saints by what we think, say, or do. Sainthood is not based on a quality within mankind. Instead, God's loving call to mankind is that which makes saints. God comes first: we love because He first loved us; we have faith because of the gospel first preached to us; we are saints because we have been called.

