

# Romans, Chapter 1

**Salutation:** (Romans 1:1-7)

1:1: "Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,"  
δοῦλος: slave/bond-servant; **human autonomy is set aside**; a new will comes into effect.

Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ: Order "**King Jesus**" in the context of Rome demanding allegiance to the emperor.

κλητὸς ἀπόστολος: **Efficacy of God's call**. Think of your Holy Baptism into Christ. See verse 7. This is true for you too: what has God called you to be? Back to verse 1: "Set apart /ἀφωρισμένος/apho-ris-menos = to separate/set apart"

Summary: What is Paul? **1) Servant; 2) Called; 3) Set-Apart (do these apply to you?)**

1:2: the Gospel was promised **by the Old Testament prophets!** The Gospel is not just a NT thing.

1:3: **the two natures of Christ are taught here in one verse.**

1:4: ὁρισθέντος: declared (to be the Son of God) // also **resurrection tied to outpouring of Holy Spirit**

1:5: ὑπακοήν πίστεως/obedience of faith = **literally "by the listening of faith"**

What brought it about? Answer: grace/ χάρις

1:6 and 1:7: "called" and "called" (please answer: **to be what?**) 1:7: "**grace**" and *then* "**peace**"

**Thanksgiving:** (Romans 1:8-15)

1:8: What is St. Paul thankful for? He thanks the Father **through** Jesus Christ (Jn. 14:6)

1:9: λατρεύω/"serve" as in serve or worship...encompasses **his entire life**. In what way? 1) "with my spirit" and 2) "in the gospel" // praying "without ceasing"

1:10: "asking" goes prior verse "without ceasing"

1:11: Why Paul's fervency? "that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strength you" (in the passive: "**that you might be strengthened [by God].**")

1:12: This is also Paul's desire: "to be **mutually encouraged**" ...how important is this?! // note that "faith" is **not** individualized, **but communal faith** in the body of Christ/Church

1:13: ἀδελφοί/"brothers" as in "brothers and sisters" = image of the **family of God** // "prevented" = we don't know who or what prevented him (Acts 16:7 or 1<sup>st</sup> Thess 2:18?).

1:13: "some harvest" is equivalent to "fruitful labor" (Phil 1:22) = **to strengthen believers & to reach unbelievers.**

1:14: remember that St. Paul is a bond-servant; He must live out God's will. **He MUST.**

1:15: He is eager = willing and ready [to preach the gospel]

**Theme:** (Romans 1:16-17)

1:16: The gospel is **foolish in the eyes of the world, but St. Paul doesn't care**. He is not ashamed of it. **See 1 Cor 1:18.** // "gospel"/εὐαγγέλιον = news of victory; but **not just declaration, but that which causes the victory**. It introduces a **new era** and brings peace to the world.

1:16: More than words, but power/ δύναμις, and not just power, **but “power of God”/miraculous power [as it causes up to cross from death to life].**

1:16: unto “into salvation/ εἰς σωτηρίαν” = **to snatch others by force from serious peril, as well as to keep, benefit, or preserve (Middendorf, p 88).**

1:16: for all “who believes” (**present active participle = believing/trusting/actively as a constant state**)...we receive the gospel/God’s power through faith which is always grabbing hold of it, trusting in it. **Luther: “Faith, however, is a divine work in us that changes us and makes us to be born anew of God...It kills the old Adam and makes us altogether different men, in heart and spirit and mind and powers; it brings with it the Holy Spirit. O, it is a living, busy, active, mighty thing, this faith...” (FC, IV, 10)**

1:17: “the righteousness of God is revealed”...not that “righteousness” given us to do (Law), **but that “righteousness” God imputes as a gift on account of Jesus Christ (Gospel)!**

1:17: FROM faith (the **objective** faith/Luther: “Here I stand!”) FOR faith (**subjective** faith in the heart that trusts)...the order is crucial.

1:17: Again, nothing new, St. Paul is quoting the O.T. prophet **Habakkuk (2:4)**. Better translation: **“who is righteous by faith shall live.”** Righteous in this sense is forgiveness of sins.

**God’s Wrath on Unrighteousness: (Romans 1:18-32)**

1:18: **Ἀποκαλύπτεται – present, passive, indicative. God’s wrath going on right now.**

1:18: **ὀργή** - anger (**extreme**) and **wrath**.

1:18: **ἀσέβειαν/ungodliness = a religious concept**

1:18: **ἀδικίαν/unrighteousness/evil = an ethical concept** (see order & cause and effect)

1:18: What are people doing in their ἀδικίαν? They **SUPPRESS** the truth.

1:19: The natural knowledge of God makes God plain **to everyone**.

1:20: Creation shows God the Creator (his invisible attributes) – “clearly perceived...in the things that have been made.”

1:21: Against their possessing this natural knowledge, they did not honor God or give thanks to him [**1) Honor & 2) Give Thanks = what Christians do**] But if you don’t, then what are doing? Committing **idolatry (back to 1:18)**...as a result, thinking becomes futile [**worthless**] and hearts become darkened [**lacking common sense**]. 1:22 elaborates

1:23: **A horrible exchange!**

1:24: Consistent with their choice, they are “given over”/ **“God gave them up”**...note: God did **not** give them evil lusts, but permitted them to have **what they had already desired and chosen**.

1:25: Here again is **catastrophic exchange** committed by men.

1:26: **Second time, “God gave them up”** ... one manifestation of evil are “dishonorable passions” (1:27 elaborates): [excurses: all Christians battle sin, but keep in mind here the difference between **“having” sin (1<sup>st</sup> John 1:8-9) and “keeping” sin (1<sup>st</sup> John 3:6 & 9)**. All Christians battle manifestations of their sinful flesh, but do not **pursue them and submit to them**...thus, homosexual desire is not to be made tantamount to homosexual practice]

1:28: **Third time, “God gave them up”** ... **what is God’s intention?** 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:9: “[God] not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.” // Why the order women first, then men? **Men bear ultimate responsibility [God’s natural order]**.

1:29-32: Elaborates on the condition of a “debased mind” (verse 28) = **undiscerning mind**.