



ROMANS

FEBRUARY 2, 2025

SET APART FOR THE GOSPEL!

Romans 1:1

As we begin this journey together studying Paul's letter to the Romans, take a moment to read John Phillips introduction in his commentary:

"All roads lead to Rome." It was a byword and a proverb in the days of Paul. From the golden milestone in Rome great arterial highways flung their tentacles across the world; or if all roads led to Rome, just as surely all roads led from Rome. So time and again this master strategist of Christian missions wrote "Rome" boldly at the top of his itinerary plans. And though something always hindered, he persisted in his purpose. "I must see Rome," he said. "I must see Rome."¹

Romans is a book about the gospel. The letter is saturated by the gospel, soaked in the gospel, pouring out the gospel. Romans 1:17 is the key verse of the letter. In this verse, Paul reveals the theme of Romans, "the righteousness of God."

For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "But the righteous man shall live by faith." [Romans 1:17 \(NASB95\)](#)

Someone once asked G.K. Chesterton, a popular Christian apologist, which one book he would most like to have on a stranded island. "Give me Romans," he said. Romans is so comprehensive that it opens up all of the Bible to us. If you can understand Romans, you can understand Scripture. John Calvin acknowledged this, "When anyone understands Romans, he has an open road to understanding the whole Bible."

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, an English poet in the nineteenth century, called Romans "the most profound work in existence." William Newel, a great itinerant Bible teacher, said, "I have taught Romans more than 80 times and the pastures are still green." C.H. Dodd, a Welsh New Testament scholar and theologian, called Romans "the first and the greatest work of Christian theology and no one in 2,000 years has written anything to match it."

Romans is the lengthiest of Paul letters. He quotes the Old Testament more than 60 times in the letter. This is more than any New Testament book, even more than all of Paul's other letters combined. Paul mentions God 153 times, law 72 times, Christ 65 times, and sin 48 times. The book of Romans has had an impact on monumental figures throughout Church history. St. Augustine, one of the great church fathers, after reading Romans 13 became convicted of his sin and gave his life to Jesus. Martin Luther moved from being



a Catholic monk to becoming the leader of the Protestant Reformation after reading and understanding Romans 1:17. John Bunyan was so inspired by studying the book of Romans that he wrote the great classic book, *Pilgrim's Progress*. William Tyndale said of Romans...

“No man verily can read it too oft or study it too well; for the more it is studied the easier it is, the more it is chewed, the pleasanter it is, and the more groundly it is searched the preciouer things are found in it, so great treasure of spiritual things lieth hid therein.”²

As we begin our study of this wonderful letter to the Romans, let's begin with verse 1:

Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God.
Romans 1:1 (NASB95)

In this verse, we see that Paul was changed by the gospel and set apart for the gospel!

Key thought: When you are changed by the gospel of Jesus Christ, He sets you apart for the gospel!

PAUL, HIS TRANSFORMATION!

- Conversion *Acts 9:1-19*
- Calling *Acts 9:20-31, 13:1-4; Galatians 1:11-2:21; 1 Timothy 1:12-14*

PAUL, HIS DESCRIPTION!

- A bonds slave of Jesus Christ
- Called an apostle
- Set apart for the gospel