

## **Romans 1:2-4**

### **The Promises and Progress of the Son of God**

The book of Romans chapter 1 verses 1 through 7, **Paul a servant (or slave) of Jesus Christ called to be an apostle.** Which is literally *a called apostle* in the Greek text. It is the kind of apostle he is, he is a called apostle. **Who has been separated unto (or for) the gospel of God, which He had promised afore by His prophets in the Holy Scriptures (or Holy Writings), concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, Who was made from the seed of David according to flesh, and declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness, from out of the resurrection from the dead. Through Whom we have received grace and apostleship for obedience of faith among all the nations, for His name, (or more literally, on account of His name), among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ; to all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called saints.** Not called to be saints, but saints by calling. **Called saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

As we shared with you last week - as we opened up this book and began the book of Romans - the book of Romans stands at the beginning of the teaching section of the New Testament. That does not mean that there is no teaching anywhere else. From Matthew through Acts is the historical section as it contains the teachings and ministries of our Lord from the beginning, before His birth all the way through to the death of Paul in Acts chapter 28.

The book of Romans is affectionately called The Constitution of the Christian Faith. It establishes every doctrine and every issue in the church for the believer. And that is why it is placed at the beginning of the teaching section.

All of Paul's letters are at the beginning of the teaching section not because Romans was written first are his letters were written first, but because Paul said that he had been chosen by God to reveal the mysteries of Christ and the early church received that. Paul even said himself in Galatians chapter 1 that if anybody preaches any other gospel than that which he has preached let him be accursed. The early church also accepted that premise. And so Paul's letters are at the beginning. It is as if Paul were to fellowship with us and say, "If you have a concern, or if you have a question, if it is not in my writings it is not true. If it is not according to my writings it is not true."

Now that is a help to us because we can take - as you know, we or anyone else can take even the teachings of Jesus, isolate them, and make them say whatever we think they say, or what we want them to say. But then as we compare it with Paul's writings who he himself presents himself as being taught by Christ Himself - so the doctrines have to be the same, the teachings have to line up. And so we have that focal point that we can go to. Not just one line that deals all around, but we have that point fixed where we can go and connect the dots and make sure that we are right in our assessment and understanding of God's word.

These people in Rome that he is writing to - he has never been to Rome up to this time. These people were not saved under his ministry but we know in the book of Acts that some of them were in Jerusalem. In Acts chapter 2 that some strangers from Rome were there to help

celebrate the Passover. And according to writings outside of the Scripture, historical writings, that those people were saved and went back to Rome and preached the gospel. Others got saved and there were small pockets of Christians all over Rome. Paul desired to come and see them but he also was inspired by God's Spirit to produce a document, much like systematic theology. Here are all the doctrines and teachings of the Christian faith. So that, and here is the purpose of it, so that they would be established in the things of Christ. And we too, as we go through God will establish us in the things of Christ.

Paul wrote in such a way so as to minister to the Roman mind, just like Mark's gospel. The Roman mind thinks along the lines of the justice or legal system. That is why Mark's gospel is so short in comparison to the other Gospels. That is why Mark is very factual, he does not get into a lot of unnecessary explanations and descriptions. Just the facts. So what Paul is doing, and basically what we have, according to the literature experts what we have is a legal document that would be presented to a court. And the attorney, whose name is Paul, is first introducing himself and his qualifications; his relationship with this gospel; along with the premise (the basis) for which he is going to present.

When we get to verse 18 of this chapter, Paul will begin his presentation to the court. And you and I will be able to sit in on that session as we go through and we study condemnation. Do you know that that is a doctrine? Condemnation. It is the indictment against the human race that all have sinned. Justification, that is made right with God. Sanctification. Selection. Restoration. Transformation. And Exhortation. All found in the book of Romans.

Romans is divided up into two sections. Chapters 1 through 11 is the doctrinal section. And Chapters 12 through 16 is the exhortation - how to live in light of the transformation that has taken place.

So last week we began with the introduction with Paul. He introduced his capacity as a slave of Jesus Christ. Not of man, but of Jesus Christ. Secondly, a called apostle. Not an apostle by choice or ambition but God called him to be an apostle. We saw Galatians 1:1 where he says that he is an apostle not by man, nor through man, but through Jesus Christ who called him. And thirdly his consecration, who had been separated for the gospel of God. The very purpose of the gospel in which he is presenting.

Verse two, the promises, as we take up today. He had been separated for the gospel, which He promised before. God promised before and gave the promises within the gospel, which He promised before. The first instruments presented are the chosen instruments through which God chose in His design to reveal the very truth of the gospel. It says, **through His prophets**, that is the literal translation. Not *by them* but *through them*. God spoke through the prophets of old concerning the truths of the New Testament.

It is interesting in II Peter chapter 1 verses 20 and 21 he says, **Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.** And those of you in the Greek class the last couple of weeks, you should understand what interpretation is, *explanation*. If the message came from God it did not come from the prophets understanding or explanation. Verse

21, **For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.**

What is interesting about these prophets - we are told in I Peter chapter 1 verses 10 and 12 concerning salvation - Peter says, **Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what (or *what manner*) of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it (or *Him* meaning the Spirit) testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed - that is, these prophets - that it was not unto themselves, but it was for us that they were ministering these things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.** After the prophets prophesied they began to question, "What is this message? Who is it for? Is it for us?" And Peter says that as they began to diligently search as to what this message means and who is it for that they realized it was not for them. That it was for us. It was a promise of the coming Savior and the promise that would come in the future. And so it is interesting that Paul presents under the promises to the court that it was through the prophets the God chose to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Secondly, the chosen communication. The prophets, it was **through the prophets and it was in the Holy Scriptures** (or *holy writings*). This is the phrase that is used for our Bibles: *the Holy Bible* or *holy book*. That is a phrase holy writings or Holy Scriptures. So it was not just through people alone speaking, but God had it written down, inspired through men and written down for our communication.

We saw in Jude verse 3, Jude said, **I had a necessity to write to you that you should agonize over the faith which was once and for all delivered unto the saints.** It is in the writings, it is in the holy writings. It is canonized. It is finished. It is complete.

Thirdly, the Creed. The gospel contains the creed concerning His Son, God's Son. If anyone were to ask you, "What is the Bible all about? What does the Bible teach?" It is about Jesus Christ. From beginning to end, from creation to the end of all things, it is about Jesus Christ. The book of Revelation is the revelation of Jesus Christ. Genesis chapter 1 in creation is the creation made through and by Jesus Christ. It is concerning His Son.

The psalmist said in Psalm 40 verse 7, **Then said I, Lo I come in the volume of the book it is written of me.** Written of Jesus Christ.

We saw last Thursday, in Luke chapter 24 verse 27 that Jesus with the two that were on the road to Emmaus, **And beginning at Moses and all of the prophets, Jesus expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.**

We also saw in Luke chapter 24 verse 44 how the Lord ministered himself through His word to the disciples. He said unto them, **These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.** Jesus said.

**Then He opened their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures.**

How do you know when God has opened up your or anyone else's understanding to understand the Scriptures? Is when you see Jesus Christ. When you see the truth about Him and in Him.

So He presents the promises. The promises came through the chosen vessels, the prophets; through the chosen communications in the Holy Scriptures or holy writings; and the creed was it is concerning His Son.

And then, the pedigree. **Concerning Jesus Christ, He is the one who has become (or come) out of the seed of David according to the flesh.** This pedigree has two parts as Paul is presenting the qualifications of the content of Scripture who is the Son of God:

I) First of all, it is His humanity.

**That He is the one who has become**, that is a word used for *creation*, **from out of the seed of David according to the flesh.**

So first of all, the conception. It was prophesied in II Samuel chapter 7 verses 12 to 13 that Messiah would come through David's seed. II Samuel 7:12 says, God speaking to David, **And when thy days be fulfilled, and then shalt thou sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed from out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.** One of the many prophecies of the Messiah to come *through the bowels*, through the seed line of David. So He came. He became flesh. He became human. Number one, through the conception of the line of David which got already prophesied, and secondly in category, according to the flesh. So we are talking human here. Nothing spiritual, but human. Jesus fulfilled the legal requirements for being the Messiah by being born through the seed of David, and the line of David and becoming a man. And He was in the legal line through Joseph, and He qualified and met all the requirements of qualification for Messiah.

II) But then there was a second part, His deity.

First His humanity and now His deity. Verse 4, **The One who has been declared Son of God** (that is His title) **in power, according to the Spirit, from out of the resurrection of the dead; Jesus Christ our Lord.** Very interesting presentation there, His humanity and now His deity. He has been declared *Son of God*.

Without getting into too much technicality, *Son of God* is a title not only for the Messiah but for God Himself. And that is why the Jews got upset when Jesus claimed to be the *Son of God*. In our way of thinking we think, why would they get upset that He was the Son of God? If He said He was God then I can see why they would get upset. No, *Son of God* is the title of God, son being the representative of God.

So in deity He has been declared son of God in three ways:

1) Number one, capability: **in power.**

He just did not use words. He basically taught, and then power moved in Him and through Him to match the teaching. Or He would teach and then God's Spirit would verify it through the ministry to match His teaching.

2) Secondly, the category.

We first saw according to the flesh, notice the category: **according to the Spirit.** So we human and we have deity. We have human and now Spirit. The category in which He has been declared *Son of God* is according to the Spirit.

3) And thirdly, the certification.

And this is where Jesus himself said when asked for a sign, He says, **No sign will be given this generation except for as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so shall the son of man be three days in the heart of the earth.** And then He will rise. That is your sign. Because they did ask for a sign from heaven.

And this is very important in our thinking. When people asked Jesus for a sign in the gospel it is like, "Do something to show us the verification of what You are saying." But if they ask for a sign from heaven that is completely different. Because the Jewish people believed, especially the leaders of the Jewish people, that if indeed you were from God there would be a sign from God, from heaven, about you, or on you. That God would be giving his verification and there would be no shenanigans because you cannot do it, it has to be God from heaven.

That is why Elijah in the Old Testament, when he was confronting the prophets of Baal and he said, "Well let us have a test as to which one of us is of the Lord. I tell you what, we will set up an altar, and put a sacrifice on the altar, and you can call on your God to call fire down from heaven. You know, no room for magic, or somebody trying to pull a trick. From heaven. Fire come down from heaven and consume your sacrifice. If your god is true call upon him and see if he will do it. But I tell you what, I will put my sacrifice on there, and I will call on God from heaven, and He will consume it. I will show you who God is putting the seal of approval on." So, of course, the prophets of Baal would call [on their god].

I like Elijah probably out of all the figures in the Bible the best because he fits my sarcastic view of life. Because he says, "Go ahead call fire down from heaven," and they were screaming, and calling, and they were cutting themselves. And Elijah was standing off on the side and he goes, "Yell louder, he might be sleeping." I like that. And they were getting more and more frustrated. So he says, "Time is up." He says, "Now what I want you to do is dig a trough around the altar, fill it with water, put water on the sacrifice," so there is no mistake that fire consumed it. And he called on God and fire came down from heaven and consumed everything. The altar, the sacrifice, everything. So who was approved of God you see? It was a sign from heaven. It is something that God did without respect to the person themselves. So when they came to Jesus and said, "Show us a sign from heaven," they were not asking Him to perform a miracle on the horizontal. They were looking for Him, "Since you say God is Your Father have Him verify it by Him from heaven performing a miracle." And Jesus said, "The only sign that is going to be given is the resurrection from the dead. I will be dead. He will raise

Me up." That is the verification or certification. So He was in power, and according to the Spirit, and certified as raised from out of the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Now you can imagine, he is presenting this to the court. And here is what we have had so far to the court.

- Who is the one presenting this material?  
It is Paul, who is a slave of Jesus Christ, a called apostle. so he is one of the top representatives within the Christian faith. Somebody who has full time in his entire life given over unto the gospel of God. That is his qualifications.
- Then he presents the promises.  
He says, "Everything that I am going to tell the court is according to promise. That God promised all of these things through the prophets, in the holy writings, concerning His Son."

(And hopefully those of you that have the outlines in the Greek you can actually see statements made in three prepositional phrases to back it up. That is a neat systematic thing that is going on here.)

- And then the pedigree of this Jesus Christ.  
In the human He fulfilled all of the requirements of Messiah. And spiritually He has been declared by God the Father to be Son of God, title, in power, according to the Spirit, and from out of the resurrection of the dead. And this Son of God happens to be Jesus Christ our Lord.

So you can see this presentation in the court. He is laying the groundwork. He is laying the foundation.

So that when we get into - and the first doctrine that we are going to study is The Doctrine of Condemnation. Oh, you want to be here for that one. Condemnation. Learn all about that. How condemned the human race is. It is condemned to death. We have all sinned. People do not have to reject Christ to lose their souls. They are already going there, they are already going to hell, they are already losing their souls without even hearing about it because they are born with a sin nature and they are born into sin.

So the first thing Paul is going to present is the *condemnation*, which is actually a judicial or legal term that means *a sentence against somebody*. A sentence. And he is presenting the great courtroom in heaven where God the Father says He has already passed judgment on the human race. Before anybody can even answer for themselves He has already passed judgment on the human race.

And he is going to spend quite some time listing the reasons why to the point that you almost get depressed. What hope is there? Is there an end to this story? Does he have to keep piling it on? I get the point. And that is when he introduces *justification*. He first has to

convince us that sentence and judgment has already been passed and then God's provision for people to be justified and made right with God. Fascinating book.

We will continue next week as we go through and finish out this section, the introductory remarks in verses 1 through 7. The introduction actually carries on up to verse 17. And verse 18 Paul will begin to explain to us that not only has condemnation and judgment already been passed upon the human race; but he is going to present the fact that God is already, presently, right now, bringing judgment, part of that judgment on the human race.

And we will see, we have talked in the past about understanding why God is long-suffering, why He hasn't brought judgment, why He does not end it all, and bring the judgment to pass. One of the worst things, one of the worst kind of judgments God can put on a person is called a *reprobate mind*. It means *a mind that will reject the truth*. You want to reject the truth, I will help you. And God gives them a reprobate mind. They will reject all of the truth because they rejected the truth. They do not want the truth. You do not want the truth? Here I will give you a lie, go chase it.

That has got to be one of the worst judgments a person can experience. Worse than physical affliction and all the other things is to be given a mind that will automatically reject the truth of Christ, because they have rejected the truth of Christ. Much like Pharaoh in the Old Testament. God's messenger came and said, "Let My people go." And Pharaoh said, "No." Okay. So God hardened his heart so that he would not let the people go. *Well, that is not fair*. No, he made the decision, that is what his heart was like. So God hardened his heart to reject God's message to let His people go. And even after he let God's people go he still sent the soldiers after them to kill them out in the wilderness as they were traveling so God killed the Egyptian army. Pharaoh's heart was not going to change. A reprobate is not changed.

And we will study - it is good for our understanding to know about God's judgment, what He says about it, how He brings it about - The Doctrine of Condemnation.

Let's close in prayer.