

Romans 1:5-7

The Provision of God

The Book of Romans chapter 1. We are in this section verses 1 through 7 which is the first part of a three-part introduction to the book. Remember Paul had never been to Rome before he wrote this letter. He wrote the letter in a form that the people in Rome would understand and receive. And that is that the letter was written according to the judicial system in Rome. And for the Roman person, the Roman mind, it was all about the law. How do things line up with the law? How did it line up with the judicial system? So Paul presents to us what is technically called *a legal brief* that you must turn into the court to state your case - your introductions, and the qualifications, the credentials of those involved, as well as the basis of your presentation.

We know in the first eleven chapters that it is The Doctrine of the Christian Faith. We are going to study Condemnation, Justification, Sanctification, Selection, and Restoration. Also in chapters 12 through 16 the lifestyle and growth of the believer is explained in The Doctrine of Transformation and Exhortation.

But we are here at the beginning in the introduction. In verse 1 Paul introduces himself. I guess I have to read through it, do I not? **Paul, a slave of Jesus Christ, a called apostle, who has been separated for the gospel of God, which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures (or Holy Writings), concerning His Son, the One who has become (or come into physical existence) from out the seed of David according to the flesh, the One who has been declared - notice how it reads - Son of God (it is a title) in power according to the Holy Spirit (Spirit of holiness), and from out of the resurrection from the dead, he then identifies him as Jesus Christ our Lord.** But verse 5 he says, **Through whom we received grace and apostleship for obedience of faith.** Notice the literal translation: **for obedience of faith among all the nations, on behalf of His name, among whom,** that is, the nations, **you yourselves also are called (it is a title) of Jesus Christ; To all the ones who are in Rome, beloved of God, called saints.** That is what kind of saints we are: *called saints*. **Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

That finishes out this first section of introduction. Paul has introduced himself and his capacity - he is a slave of Christ. He is an apostle by calling. Jesus Christ called him and Jesus Christ appointed him. Not by man or through man's committee, it is by Jesus Christ. His consecration, that he had been separated for the gospel even from his birth. Concerning which Gospel, verse 2, the promises: **whom he promised before.** The chosen instruments: **through his prophets.** The chosen communication: **in the Holy Scriptures.** And the creed: **concerning His Son.** The Scriptures talk about Jesus Christ in every place.

Then he presents the pedigree of Christ - both His humanity and His deity. **The One who has come from out of the seed of David according to the fulfillment of Scriptures.** The category is **according to the flesh.** But the deity of Christ **who has been declared Son of God,** that is a title, **in power.** Category: **according to the Spirit** because the other was according to the flesh. **According to the Spirit,** and thirdly the certification, **from out of the resurrection of the dead.** And then he identifies who this Son of God is: **Jesus Christ our Lord.**

For today, verse 5, the provision of God. Paul says, **Through whom** (that is, Jesus Christ) **we received grace and apostleship**. Notice, first of all, in his presentation when he says *we received*, that he does not say, *I received*. He says, *we received*. Every apostle, every believer, everyone that functions in the body of Christ does so because of God's grace, not because of anything that we have done. **We received this grace**. His office as an apostle it was a result of grace not of his choosing, but of God's grace.

Interesting in Ephesians chapter 4, Paul says that we all have received the gift of grace according to the measure of Christ. Our salvation, Ephesians chapter 2 verses 8 and 9, is by grace through faith. His favor upon us. And He continues to pour out His grace after salvation. Everything that He would have us to do is by grace.

In II Corinthians chapter 11 Paul mentions the fact that - **Concerning all the apostles**, he says, **I have labored more than them all, but yet not I but the grace of God that is in me**. He says, "It is only by God's grace that I am what I am. It is only by God's grace that I can work and labor for Him as much as I can." It is all by grace that we have received.

Notice his office: **grace and apostleship**. The word means his office, his function within the body of Christ. God provides for whatever He wants us to do.

But notice these three prepositional phrases. We have received it for a purpose.

- 1) First of all, **for obedience of faith**.
That is the literal translation, *for obedience of faith*.

Let me say to you today there is a difference between *obedience* and *submission*. Think about it. There is a difference in the Bible between submission and obedience. *Obedience* is the word **ὕπακούω** (hupakouō) that means *put your hearing under*. That means every single word that is said. Children are to obey their parents. Whatever words come out of the parent's mouth, they are to obey. But then there are other relationships between husband and wife, between employer and employee, between Christians and government, that is called *submission*. That is **ὑποτάσσω** (hupotassō). It is a military term that means *to line up with someone*. Line up with someone in Christ, for the Christian. It is not just two people, it is three. Have a proper relationship with people. Line up in God's proper order. But it has nothing to do with dictatorship and word for word obedience, "Whatever I say you do." This is a functional relationship.

There is a difference between submission and obedience. For instance in Acts chapter 4 when the governing officials told the disciples they could no longer preach the resurrection in the name of Jesus, they said, "Well, whether it is right in the sight of God to serve you or serve God, you are going to have to choose. But, you know, we are going to obey God rather than man." So a person in a position of submission when they are asked to violate the word of God or to sin they have the freedom to say, "No." That is *submission*.

Obedience is putting your hearing under, which means every single word that is told to you, you must do. And that is that word here, **for obedience of faith**. God gives us the grace for the purpose of being obedient to the faith. The way the Greek text presents it here is obedience comes out of faith. Faith possesses the obedience. As we put our hearing under the things of the Lord, we are to obey the persuasion of God's Spirit. Period. No questions asked. It does not make any difference how we feel, or what we think, or what our opinion is - we are to obey. And God gives us the grace to obey.

- 2) Secondly, positionally, **among all the nations**.
No matter where the Lord has a believer He gives us the grace that produces obedience of faith.
- 3) Thirdly, the purpose for it all. This is all, **on behalf of His name**.
That is how it literally reads. The basis for everything is God sends us out - first of all He saves us, and He sends us out, and He gives us His grace for His benefit, because it is representation of His name.

Remember in Scripture when someone goes upon the basis of the name of another, the name represents the characteristics of that name. If we go in the name of Christ and the Lord does not supply by His Spirit it is His name that is tarnished. That will never happen. God gives us the grace to do what He would have us to do so that people would see us and people would say, "Well your God is a gracious God. He provides everything for you." Even obedience to the persuasion of His Spirit among all the nations and it glorifies His name.

Then verse 6, the position of the believer. **Among whom you yourselves also are called of Jesus Christ**. That is a title. Paul said in verse 1 he is a called apostle. He says now, "All of you are called." The word *called* does not mean just sound a voice or an invitation. This special word has to do with giving the invitation and having it accepted. It also points out to us that the basis of the Lord's salvation in our lives was initiated by Him and He drew us to Himself. We have been called by Christ. So a believer when they are asked about their salvation, the proper response is, "The Lord called me and I responded and I received His Son."

Verse 7, sixthly, the people. The people who are in Rome. In the Greek text the present participle *being* - **to the ones being in Rome** - shows their present location in Rome.

Secondly, Paul had never been to Rome prior to writing this letter. These are not people who were saved under his ministry but we are told in Acts chapter 2 verse 10 that there were people, pilgrims from Rome that were in Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was poured out. Some were saved who were from Rome. They went back and evangelized the rest of the population.

To those who are in Rome. But notice the two adjectives that describe these Christians again by way of encouragement to them: **beloved of God**, and secondly, **called saints**. This tells us that when Paul is writing this letter he is not preaching to unbelievers or the unsaved, but rather he is teaching the saved, the believers.

Because, first of all, **beloved of God**. Nonbelievers are never called *beloved*. That is never the title for a nonbeliever. Does God love the world? Yes. But they are not His beloved. The word *beloved*, the adjective form, represents somebody who is the object of God's love. Again, **God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son**, it is for the world as a whole. But each individual believer is the object of God's love all the time, because we are His children. We are beloved of God.

Secondly, we are called saints, that is, saints by calling. Not called *to be* saints, we are already saints. We will get to that in a moment. But it is what kind of saint we are. I am a saint by calling, not by man's committee, not by my ambition. But again, all believers, not only are they *the called* but they are *saints*. So what kind of saints are we? We are called saints.

What does it mean to be a saint? It means to be set apart. Interesting it has nothing to do with the character of a person. Never. Even in the Old Testament the same word was used for all of the vessels in the tabernacle when they traveled. They were set apart for the Lord's purposes and for nothing else. You could not take them home and use them for common use. Now in their traveling they would get scratched and nicked and dented. I am sure after the trip they were not really good looking pieces of vessels but they were for the Lord's purpose, set apart, not for common use. That is who a saint is. A saint is a person that has been set apart. It does not represent the character of a person, it represents their faith. Their faith. I am of the faith of Jesus Christ, set apart by Him. And I am set apart not by my own religious efforts but by His calling. He has called me.

And lastly, the preface, as it gives the greeting, **Grace to you and peace**. The same preface that he gives in all thirteen of his letters, **Grace to you and peace**. This represents the greeting both in Greek and Hebrew. In Greek the word *grace* is the greeting. And *peace* is the greeting for the Jews, *shalom*. **Grace to you and peace**.

And then he shares who communicates this grace and peace. It is **from God Our Father**. Again He is the one that pours out the grace and He is the one that provides the peace. It is all given by Him, it is not attained by us. But not only God the Father, but also **the Lord Jesus Christ**. Some translations even have *from God our Father even the Lord Jesus Christ* making it one.

So we have finished this section in Romans chapter 1, the first of a three-part introduction. Where Paul is presenting his opening remarks: the credentials of those involved; who he is; who Jesus Christ is and His credentials; who the people are that he is writing to; and who the people are that he is writing about.

Next week will get into the Prayer of Paul in verses 8 through 15 and then the power, verses 16 and 17 before we begin the actual heart of the letter.

The first subject is that of The Doctrine of Condemnation. That goes from chapter 1 through to the end of chapter 3. And then ~~verses~~ chapters 4 and 5, The Doctrine of Justification. People do not like to study that first doctrine but it is a doctrine, The Doctrine of Condemnation. Who is condemned? It is a judicial term that means who has the sentence against them already,

not in the future but now. God has already passed the sentence of judgment. In fact, in Romans chapter 1 Paul will present that God's judgment is already being exercised. His sentence is already being carried out and we will see how that works.

Let's close with prayer.