

# **BOB HALLMAN - THE EPIC LIFE**

## **Introduction to Romans**

Romans 1:1-7

2000

### **Introduction**

Without question, the book of Romans is one of the most powerful and influential books ever written.

It has prompted some of the greatest revivals in the history of the church.

It has also influenced some of the most significant conversions in church history.

St. Augustine, the most brilliant theologian of the late middle ages, came to conviction of sin & salvation after reading chapter 13 of Romans.

Martin Luther recovered the doctrine of salvation by faith from his study of Romans 1:17 and went on to lead the Protestant Reformation.

In his preface to the Roman letter, he wrote:

"This Epistle is the chief book of the New Testament, the purest gospel. It deserves not only to be known word for word by every Christian, but to be the subject of his meditation day by day, the daily bread of his soul."

His contemporary, John Calvin, wrote:

"When anyone understands this Epistle, he has a passage opened to him to the understanding of the whole Scriptures."

Several centuries later, while listening to the reading of Luther's preface to the book of Romans, John Wesley was converted and became the catalyst of the great evangelical revivals of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Romans has been called:

"The greatest and richest of all the apostolic works." - Meyer

"The cathedral of the Christian faith." - Godet

"The most profound of all the epistles, and perhaps the most important book in the Bible ...' - Gordon H. Clark

### **My own encounter with Romans:**

My own life was forever changed in 1980 I went to Samoa to help build a Baptist church and to teach the art of tapa in the public schools there. I took Chuck Smith's in depth audio study of Romans with me. And for the first time in my Christian life, I understood that salvation and a continued right standing before God were the products of simple faith -- not hard work.

As we begin this study of Romans, I encourage you to do two things:

1. Pray that God will speak to you through Romans in a powerful way, as He has done in the lives of countless others before you.
2. Set a specific goal for your own study of Romans. Read it, meditate on it, and memorize passages that are meaningful to you. And most importantly, apply its life-changing truths to your life.

**Author and date:**

The book of Romans was penned by Paul in 57-58 A.D. from Corinth while on his third missionary journey. Paul had never been to the church in Rome. In fact, when he did finally come, it would be as a prisoner of the Roman government rather than as a guest of the church.

**Recipients:**

Paul wrote to the believers in Rome. We don't know who planted the church in Rome. We are told that Jews and Jewish proselytes from Rome were present at Pentecost (Acts 2:10) and were among the 3000 saved and later took the gospel with them back home (**Ac 2:10**). Or it could be that among those dispersed following Stephen's death were some that went to Rome and preached the gospel there (**Ac 8:1-4**).

The church was:

1. Made up primarily of Gentile believers with a smaller number of Jews.
2. Well known for their faith (1:8) and obedience (16:19).

**Key verses and theme:**

Romans 1:16-17 "I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

**I Paul's View of Himself**

In the first verse Paul discloses three important things about himself. He is:

A. A servant of Christ Jesus

You can learn a lot about someone from how they introduce themselves.

Paul could have introduced himself as, "Dr. Paul, Summa Cum Laude! MDiv,

PhD, D.D." Or, "Paul, the reverend, eminent, holy oracle of God."

Instead, he presents himself simply as a ...

**Servant** = Doulos = "Bondslave"

Every Israelite, who had become a slave could be redeemed (set free for a price) at any time by relatives. But if there was no one to redeem him, then he was to receive his freedom without payment after six years of

service. However, if at the end of six years, he said, "I like it here. I love my master and his family and I'm well treated", then he was brought before the elders of the city and his ear was pierced by his master against the master's doorpost with an awl signifying he was a "doulos", a permanent slave by choice (Ex 21:6; Dt 15:17).

Ps 40:6-8 "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but my ears you have pierced; burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not require. Then I said, "Here I am, I have come-- it is written about me in the scroll. I desire to do your will, O my God."

Paul gave himself wholeheartedly in love to his Divine Master who had saved him from sin and death. And he made himself completely available to Jesus Christ for a lifetime of service.

**Application:**

The believer who doesn't yet truly know God -- His character, His attributes, His love, His faithfulness, His patience, His grace and mercy -- will have great difficulty being a bond servant of Christ. But for those who do, their lives are filled with purpose and focus; their hearts with peace and joy.

B. Called to be an apostle

**Called** = Kletos = "Invited or appointed"

Paul was not self-appointed! God called him!

2 Tim 1:11 "And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher."

**Apostle** = Apostolos = "A delegate or messenger"

"An ambassador of the Gospel of Christ."

In the NT there are 3 groups of apostles:

1. God appointed Jesus as the great Apostle - Hebrews 3:1
2. Jesus appointed 12 "A"postles: One of the unique features about these 12 is that they were personal witnesses of His resurrection of Jesus Christ.
3. In the book of Acts, Barnabas, Titus, Andronicus, Junia and quite a few others are called "a"postles. So although the 12 apostles had a unique ministry, anyone who speaks for God as an appointed ambassador of Christ can be considered an apostle.

**Application:**

I believe that God is still appointing "apostles" today -- men and women who are specially sent out to preach the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. May our church be filled with such men and women!

### C. Set apart for the gospel of God

**Set apart** = Aphorizo = "To set off by boundary; or a line of demarcation."

In the OT this word is used of setting apart to God the firstborn, of offering to God the first fruits, of consecrating to God the Levites, and of separating Israel to God from all other peoples.

Interestingly, the root word for "set apart" is the same word from which we derive our English word, "Pharisee."

But instead of setting himself apart for the human traditions of men as the Pharisees had, God set Paul apart for the gospel.

When was Paul set apart for the gospel?

1. When he was ministering to the Lord - Acts 13:2

While he was worshipping (praising and honoring Him in thanksgiving) and while he was fasting.

#### **Application:**

If you want to be used in ministry, be a man or woman who regularly spends time worshipping Him and communicating with Him through the Word and prayer.

2. But even before the Spirit set Paul apart for the gospel in Acts 13:2, the Son separated him in Acts 9 on the road to Damascus.
3. But according to Paul in Gal 1:1,15, his original calling occurred when the Father set him apart at the very moment of birth.

**Gospel** = Euaggelion = "Good news."

In the Septuagint (which is the Greek version of the Old Testament) this same word is used for the people of Israel who were released from the Babylonian captivity. It meant " Good news! You can go home. You're free!"

The New Testament writers used this same word to proclaim release from spiritual captivity that was purchased through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

## **II Paul's View of The Gospel**

A. The gospel was promised beforehand:

1. Through the prophets

Acts 10:43 "All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

The gospel was not a divine afterthought -- a corrective to an unexpected human disaster -- a last minute revision to God's eternal strategy. No, the gospel was promised beforehand through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures.

There are over 300 prophecies about Jesus Christ in the Old Testament -- most of which were fulfilled in His first coming!

The Old Testament prophetically told us:

His tribe: The tribe of Judah - Gen. 49:10

His family: From the family of Jesse - Isa 11:1

Who his mother would be: A virgin - Is 7:14

The dates of his birth and death: - Dan. 9:25-26

Where he would be born: Bethlehem - Micah 5:2

What name he would be given: Immanuel - Is 7:14

How he would die: On a cross - Ps. 22:1-18

His resurrection: Ps. 16:8-11

B. The gospel reveals the Son's identity:

1. His human nature

a. A descendent of David

**Seed** = Spermatoz = "Offspring"

Both Mary (Luke 3:23, 31), Jesus' natural mother, and Joseph (Matt 1:6, 16), Jesus' legal father, were descendants of David.

Luke 1:31-33 "You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."

Phil 2:6-7 And although He was "in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness."

2. His divine nature

Matt 1:20 "But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit."

John 1:1-2, 14 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning ... The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth."

So we have Jesus, fully man and fully God:

1. In His humanity he willingly paid taxes, but in His divinity He provided the payment supernaturally,

2. In His humanity Jesus was exhausted and slept, but in His divinity He was able to instantly calm a violent storm.
3. In His humanity He hung on the cross, bleeding and in severe agony, but in His divinity He was able to grant eternal life to the repentant thief who hung nearby.

a. Declared with power to be the Son of God:

**Declared** = Horizo = "To mark out" ("horizon")

The root word from which we get our English word, "horizon"; that line between sky and earth. By raising Jesus from the dead the Father "horizoned" Him -- that is, clearly marked out Jesus as the more than just a man -- He is the divine Son of God.

**Power** = Dunamis ("dynamite") = "Force, strength, or miraculous power."

Eph 1:19-20 "That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms."

1. By His resurrection from the dead

John 2:18-21 "Then the Jews demanded of him, "What miraculous sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?" Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days." The temple he had spoken of was his body."

In Acts 17:31 we are told that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is proof, beyond all doubt, that He was indeed God, the Son.

b. Declared to be "Jesus Christ our Lord."

**Jesus** = Savior

**Christ** = Anointed One

**Lord** = Sovereign Ruler

### III Paul's View of His Commission

A. The agency of Paul's commission:

1. Through Christ and for Christ

a. He received grace

**Grace** = Charis = "It is unmerited favor, unearned favor, in which a believer has nothing of value to contribute.

Mercy = Not getting what we do deserve

Grace = Getting what we don't deserve

John 1:16 "From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another."

**Application:**

A believer has no cause for self-congratulation, because he contributes nothing at all to his salvation. Human achievement has no place in the divine working of God's saving grace. We "are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus." Rom 3:24

b. He received apostleship

*Apostleship* = Apostole = "Commission"

B. The goal of Paul's commission:

1. To call people to the obedience:

1 Pet 1:2 You "have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ."

*Obedience* = Hupakoe = "Attentive listening, compliance or submission"

**Application:**

A person who claims faith in Jesus Christ but whose pattern of life is utter disobedience to God's Word has never been redeemed and is living a lie. Faith that does not manifest itself in obedient living is worthless (James 2:14-26). We are not saved *by* good works. But we are saved *to* good works. It is not that faith plus obedience equals salvation but that obedient faith equals salvation. True faith is always evidenced by obedience to God.

a. That comes from faith

*Faith* = Pistis = "Trust, persuasion, belief, conviction"

"Faith is not belief without proof, but trust w/o reservation."

It is produced by exposure to God's Word (Ro 10:17), and expresses itself through obedience to God (Rom 1:5; Gal 5:6).

**IV Paul's View of The Believers In Rome**

A. They were called to belong to Jesus Christ

*Called* = Kletos = "Invited or appointed"

II Thess 2:13-14 "But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth. He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."

B. They were loved by God

*Loved* = Agapetos = "Deeply loved"

Col 3:12-15 You are "God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved."

Deut 33:12 "About Benjamin he said: "Let the beloved of the LORD rest secure in him, for he shields him all day long, and the one the LORD loves rests between his shoulders."

C. They were called saints

**Saints** = Hagios = "Sacred, holy, or set apart."

How is it possible to call anyone today a saint?

Most people have the idea that saints are sinless people. Or that they are unique individuals like Mother Theresa. But according to the Bible there are only two types of people in the world -- saints and pagans. If you're a believer, God has called you a saint. And as saints, we are set apart for holiness.

1 Pet 1:15-16 "But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."

D. They were recipients of God's twin gifts:

1. **Grace** = "God's favor in spite of demerit" [A common Greek greeting]

2. **Peace** = Shalom = "Inner quietness, tranquility, and rest." [A Jewish greeting]  
"Not the absence of problems, but confidence in God in the midst of them."

Paul linked these two words together: "Grace and peace". He always put them in that order, because you can never know God's peace until you understand His grace.

For the unbeliever, the Bible tells us that in Is 48:22 that:  
"There is no peace," says the LORD, "for the wicked."

But for the believer, there are two sources of peace:

1. Peace that comes from knowing that Jesus took all our sin and absorbed our punishment on the cross and reconciled us back to God.

Rom 5:1-2 "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God."

2. Peace that comes from yielding our lives to God in prayer.

Phil 4:6-7 "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."



*Copyright, Bob Hallman, 1996-2020, All Rights Reserved.  
Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the  
New International Version ©1984 by International Bible Society.*