

Introduction:

Good morning...It is good to be here today with you...If you are new or visiting...I hope you feel warmly greeted...If you are interested in joining Calvary as a member, then I encourage you to see me in the hallways following the service today...

I also want to Thank all those that volunteered, served, planned, and contributed in any way to a wonderful and successful Easter weekend...This place was packed...It was awesome...

I believe the Lord is blessing this place...I believe our brightest days as a church are still to come...

Bow with me in a Word of Prayer...

ME:

Please go ahead and turn in your Bibles to Romans Chapter 1...Romans Chapter 1...Today We will also introduce the Book of Romans and we will then exegetically pick apart the deep deep deep verses of 1-7...

Yet as we crack open and begin the Book of Romans...Personally I feel like a coward...I am a bit intimidated...I feel that I can only merely scratch the surface of such a deep and wonderful Book....

My intimidation today reminds me of the time I was gripped with terror as I stared up at Batman Pinnacle Rock...

Story of Batman Pinnacle Rock...

As some of you know...Laurel and I are a bit outdoorsy and adventurous...But Laurel and I are rookie adventurers compared to my father and brothers in law...A couple of years ago Laurel and I took a trip out west to Colorado...

We spent a week or so in Rocky Mountain National Park doing various hikes such as Long's Peak and rock climbing up the Flat Irons outside of Boulder, CO...

But perhaps the most dangerous and scary thing we did that week was climb up Batman Pinnacle Rock...David, Dustin jr and Dustin sr and I set out to rock climb this beast...

I remember getting to the base and staring up at this GIANT 700 foot sheer cliff...I felt completely terrified and intimidated...I remember looking up there and feeling like I'd never make it up...

I sat there overwhelmed...And I said to them out of fear, “Ya know guys I think I am going to sit this one out...”

David Drake says, “Now, Byron, ya know, that you are married to our sister...” I got the hint.....In other words, if you whimper out them I will tease you the rest of your life...I needed no further convincing...

So before even beginning our adventure up the rock face...We first had to orient ourselves and examine our path up the rock...Then we climbed up step by step...

Up we went....Up this GIANT rock face...Pitch after pitch we climbed...As I climbed my excitement built...and once I arrived at the top there was a breathtaking vista of the valley below...A sight line that extended for miles and miles...

Transition: The initial intimidation of staring up at the 700 foot cliff is my initial intimidation as I stare up the tall task of teaching through Romans...

But Despite the intimidation, I am excited for our adventure together and as we climb and when we arrive at the top...I know that we all will look back finding it rewarding...

Transition: Perhaps no book in the entire Bible has been more influential in church history than the Book of Romans...The Book of Romans inspired the reformation and even inspires many of the doctrines we adhere to today...

Martin Luther said regarding the Book of Romans: “It is the chief part of the New Testament and the perfect gospel . . . the absolute epitome of the gospel.”

Another scholar said, “The Book of Romans is beyond question the most dynamic of all New Testament letters even as it was written at the climax of Paul’s apostolic career.”

Transition: Yet in order to really appreciate this amazing book...We must first gain the lay of the land...We gain the lay of the land by understanding its background...A thorough examination of any Bible book’s background is essential...It is essential for proper interpretation, proper application and full enjoyment...

Football Illustration

But before we dive into the Book’s Background, Allow me to put the importance of understanding the background of a Bible book in perspective...It begins with a Football Game

How many of you have ever seen someone who didn’t understand the rules but tried to watch a

Football? **What is their experience like?** They are bored...Why? Because they can't interpret what's going on...They have no frame of reference to understand what is happening...It is the same way with the background of a Bible book...

Transition: Not understanding a Book's background is like trying to watch a football game without understanding the rules....When you read it, it makes no sense...**Understanding the background** of a Book of the Bible allows one to understand, interpret and ultimately enjoy one's experience...

Yet before we dive into the background for the Book of Romans...I must first warn you about today's sermon...It is going to be HEAVY...Heavy on information...I hope that you hang with me...

Transition: As we begin our discussion in the Book of Romans let us first map out the Book of Romans...What is the entire Book of Romans all about?

WE:

The Book of Romans is all about “the Gospel...”...The entire Book of Romans centers around the Gospel...

What is the Gospel? The Gospel is the “good news” of Jesus Christ...Simply...That mankind is sinful and broke...and that **God**...Displaying His love for us sent Jesus to pay for our sin and that by faith in Jesus we can have eternal life through faith in Christ...

The entire Book of Roman centers around the Gospel...The simplified map or outline for the Book of Romans is...

Chapters 1-4...Our need and plan for the Gospel

Chapters 5-8...Transforming work of the Gospel

Chapters 9-11...God's sovereignty over the Gospel

Chapters 12-16...The Practical Outworking of the Gospel

Transition: But we do not just need to know an overview map...But we also need to know the lay of the land...The lay of the land consists of the background information of a book...which consists of 5 main parts.. the Author, the Audience, Date of Writing, Location of Writing, and Genre ...

Transition: So, let's first look at the Author...You already know most likely...But notice what it says in verse 1...

GOD:

Read verse 1... “Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, ^acalled as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God...”

This manner in which Paul discloses his authorship is fairly common for this time period...**But one interesting note on authorship** is not found in verse 1...But is actually found in Romans 16...Romans 16:22 says, “I, Tertius, who write this letter, greet you in the Lord.”

Who was Tertius? Tertius was Paul’s scribe...Paul acknowledges the use of the scribe Tertius to record Paul’s dictation...It was a very common practice to have a scribe directly transcribe the words of an author...However, the use of a scribe in no way detracts from the validity of Paul’s authorship nor the reliability of the Book of Romans....

Transition: Yet notice back in Romans 1:1 what Paul says about Himself...Look at verse 1 again with me...

“Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, ^acalled as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God...”

How does Paul describe himself?

#1: He first describes himself as a bond-servant...the Greek word “δοῦλος” of Christ Jesus...The word “δοῦλος” shows that Paul is submissive to His master Jesus the Christ (the anointed Messiah) that he in a way is enslaved to the cause of Jesus Christ

#2: He calls himself an apostle...The term apostle generally only refers the 12 disciples turned apostles and Paul...

#3: But Notice something else about his call as an apostle...He says, “set apart for the gospel of God” These words, “Set apart” literally means “detached”...But when you couple this word with its perfect tense, and passive mood...Then it gives a vivid description...(Pause...But we will just skip it...)...The Perfect Tense tells me that “set apart” was a past event with continuing ongoing results...And then The Passive mood tells me that it is God doing the action...So allow me to put it all together...

God spotted Paul and scooped down from heaven at a specific moment and detached Paul out of his Pharisaical life... detaching Paul for the continuing call of spreading the Gospel...\

Transition: So, we see Paul’s authorship in verse 1...But notice the audience in verse 7...

Read verse 7...“to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called *as* ^bsaints: Grace to you and

peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.¹”

What do you instantaneously realize about Paul’s audience? It is written to those in Rome... Some of you are saying, “Ok duh...Its called the Book of Romans...”

But it isn’t written to just anyone in Rome...It is written to people “called as Saints...” The word “saints” here is literally “holy ones” or “separated out ones”...So...Paul’s specific audience is Christians living in the city of Rome...

What else can we tell about the Audience of the church in Rome? Other verses in Romans reveal about the audience...

#1: By the time of Paul’s writing, the church had been around many years (15:23),

#2: The church was sufficiently large enough to assist him to travel to Spain (15:24).

#3: The Roman Church contained both Jew and Gentile.

#4: Tradition has it that the church in Rome was started by Peter...But this is not likely...It was more likely started by converts on the Day of Pentecost

Transition: So the author is Paul and the Audience is the Church in Rome...Ok...So the next piece of information is the DATE...

DATE:

When was the Book of Romans written? Paul most likely wrote it from the City of Corinth during his third missionary journey...Putting its date of writing around 57 A.D. which is about 25 years after Jesus’ death and resurrection...

Transition: Yet another helpful question for this Book’s background is what is going on in Rome in the Date of 57 AD?

In 57 AD, Rome is in a time of prosperity and growth....BUT it had emperor Nero reigning...Nero’s reign began when he was 16 and lasted until he was 30...Nero’s reign began with great prosperity but then declined rapidly...Because as many of you know...Nero is a bit of a psychopath...History has it that Nero murdered his own mother...

Nero is also rumored to set fire to Rome in 64 AD...Nero blamed Christians for the fire which ushered in a wide spread vicious persecution of the Christian church...

So let me put it all together for us...When Paul actually writes this letter to the Romans...There is not widespread persecution of the church and Nero remains on the throne for another 9 years...

Transition: So, we see this Book’s author, audience and date...But about its genre?

Let us first define genre...What is the Genre? The dictionary defines “genre” as a class or

¹ [New American Standard Bible: 1995 update](#). (1995). (Ro 1:1–7). La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.

category of artistic endeavor having a particular form, content, technique, or the like...”

Ok...so...A genre in the Bible is a category a type of writing...For example: in the Bible there is Poetry, Narrative (or story), Apocalyptic (Revelation)...

But The Book of Romans genre is kind of two different genres mixed together...#1 It is epistolary...It is an actual letter written to an actual specific audience...But #2 It is also Legal...It really a lawful, legal treatise.....for the Gospel...

Transition: So we examine the Book’s General Theme and Outline...Its Author, the Audience, Date of Writing, Location of Writing (which was Corinth), and its Genre ...

Transition: Yet we are just warming up...We are now about to dive into the text...And Now we get to the real meat of the Book of Romans...I am both excited and nervous...Let us begin the absolutely packed verses of 2-6 by reading verse 1-2...with the Promise of the Gospel

Read verses 1-2, “Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, ^[a]called *as* an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ² which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures,”

In verse 1, we see Paul as the Author...Ok...But What does Paul mention in verse 2? The Gospel was a Promise...The Gospel was a promise described in the Old Testament...Notice what Paul is saying about the Gospel in verse 2... Notice the beauty in verse 2... “set apart for the gospel of God, 2 which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures,²”

Notice...That the Gospel is not just a “new invention” with Jesus...The idea or plan of the good news does not just randomly appear with Jesus...

No.....Friends listen, the entire Old Testament is pointing to the Gospel...to the redemptive plan of God...The entire Old Testament was pointing to the Cross and the Empty Tomb...The Gospel program is not new...

Transition: But notice with me a second observation from verse 2...Not only is the entire Old Testament pointing to the Gospel...There also seems to be specific prophecies...” through His prophets in the holy Scriptures,” ”In fact, there are over 500 fulfilled prophecies from the Old Testament...

What are some key prophecies that point to the Gospel and Christ? In order to keep our lunch plans, I will highlight a handful of key passages...And listen to how specific they are...

Genesis 3:16- “And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall ^[d]bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel.”

² [New American Standard Bible: 1995 update](#). (1995). (Ro 1:1–2). La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.

Genesis 12:1-3, “Now the LORD said to Abram, “[a]Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father’s house, To the land which I will show you; ² And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so [b]you shall be a blessing; ³ And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who [c]curses you I will [d]curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.”

Genesis 15:6, “And Abraham believed in God and it was reckoned to Him as righteousness...”

Psalms 22:1-22:18, “my God my God why have you forsaken me...**22:18**, “They divide my garments among them, And for my clothing they cast lots.”

Isaiah 7:14, “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a [i]virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name [m]Immanuel- God with us...”

Isaiah 52-53, “Surely our [e]griefs He Himself bore, And our [f]sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, [g]Smitten of God, and afflicted. ⁵ But He was [h]pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our [i]well-being *fell* upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. ⁶ All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to [j]fall on Him.”

Micah 5:2, “[i]But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, *Too* little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. [d]His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity.”

Zechariah 9:9, “Behold, your king is coming to you; He is [g]just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the [h]foal of a donkey.”

Just to name a few...Friends, listen, allow me to jam something into your mind...The entire Old Testament...All of these pages...Point to that (Jesus the cross and the empty tomb)...Page after page of the Bible points to the redemption plan of God...

The entire Gospel magnifies GOD...which was Promised through the Prophets...Paid and Implemented through Christ...And Given freely to us by faith...

WOW...

The point of verse #2: The Gospel was a Promise...the entire Old Testament is a promissory note pointing to the arrival death and resurrection of **Jesus the Christ...**

Transition: But who is Jesus? All of the promises of the Gospel found in the Old Testament point to **The Person of the Gospel...**found at verse 3-4...

“3 concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, 4 who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord,”

The person of the Gospel: is who? Friends the Gospel is simply a person...It is Jesus God in the eras time God sent Jesus...

#1: Notice first... The person of the Gospel is God's Son..."concerning his Son"...Designating Jesus as more than a prophet but **Deity**....

#2: Notice second...The Personal of the Gospel was "Descendant of David according to the flesh..." **In other words**...Jesus is a physical great-great-great grandchild of David...

Why is that important? For many reasons but specifically here Paul is showing His partial Jewish audience that Jesus is the rightful heir to the eternal Davidic throne promised in 2 Samuel 7...

Notice again verse 4... "who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead..."according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord,""

Notice here, What did the resurrection in verse 4 prove? If you missed it...we talked about it last week...Here the resurrection proved payment...it is our receipt for the payment of our sin...

But it also proved what? It proved that He truly is the Son of God...He truly is deity...Fully God...We know he is fully man...Descendant of David...But he was and is Fully God...

Jesus is fully human, fully divine...Jesus is the Christ (the anointed messiah promised through the Old Testament and sent to fulfill those prophecies...And Jesus is "our" "Lord"...Master...We are subservient to Jesus...He is our master...

Transition: Oh friends...I'd like to go even deeper...As I was studying and chewing on verse 3-4 this week...I had an epiphany... ..(Long Pause)

My epiphany was that we Christians have the Gospel all wrong (Long Pause)

Preacher after preacher (I'm included in this) convince us time and time again that the Gospel is all about me...

Preachers convince us that The Gospel is human centric...That the Gospel is all about ME....That the Gospel is only meant to save ME...It is for MY redemption...And it is...

But friends, listen, watch this...We are only a supporting actor in the play for redemption...
The star of the show is God...

#1: It is all about Jesus...It was, is and will always be about Jesus...That God loved us so much that He sent His one and only spotless SON to die on the cross paying for each of our sin...1 John 2:2... And then because of HIS great love for us...He gives us the free gift of eternal life...We open this free gift by faith in Jesus Christ...

The Gospel should not highlight ME but God... The story of the Gospel is much more of a story of God's love than our redemption (repeat)...Rather than magnifying my sinfulness...The Gospel Magnifies...In fact, It explodes... God's greatness and His sovereignty over the entire universe...

The Book of Romans is all about God...It is about God's plan for redeeming all of creation and justifying us as a supporting actor...

Transition: Wow... I told you these verses are absolutely packed...And we've only done 4 verses...Yikes...Romans make take 11 years...I plan to set the record...Just kidding...So, Point #1: The Gospel was a Promise, #2: The Gospel is a Person, and point number three is found in verses 5-6 as it describes the **Purpose of the Gospel...**

Look at verse 5-6... "5 through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about *the* obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake, 6 among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ..."

Point #3: The Gospel serves a Purpose... The Gospel Serves a Purpose...Here in verse 5-6 there is the purpose of the Gospel...

Notice here a key pronoun "we"... Who is he talking about? "We" includes Paul and the church in Rome...but friends I believe on a practical level we can expand this we to **all believers...**

And Notice...the purpose of the church in Roman and our purpose today... What is the church in Rome's purpose...what is our purpose because of the Gospel?

Read Romans 1:5, "To bring about *the* obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake..."

Wait...I believe we have the Gospel all wrong... We think the Gospel is about fire insurance...But as I see it here in verse 5...The Gospel is more than fire insurance...But the Gospel causes obedience...

Look again at what it says, "to bring about *the obedience of faith* among all the Gentiles for His name's sake, "]

The reason for the Gospel...Is Yes to Magnify Him... Is Yes to Save ME...But Also To bring obedience...Friends, listen...The Gospel causes obedience...The Gospel and obedience are inseparably linked...It is impossible for someone to believe in the Gospel and not change their life... The Gospel causes Obedience...

Oh friends, Listen, we cheapen the Gospel.....we deepen the Gospel ... when we "say" we believe and not change... We cheapen the Gospel...when we make it all about us... We cheapen the Gospel...when we make is fire insurance... We cheapen the Gospel...when God is not the star... We cheapen the Gospel when we do not wake up every morning with a sense of

gratitude...

Oh, friends, I hope for at least nothing else... That by the time we go through the Book of Romans that we at the end elevate the Gospel...Appreciating the Gospel...Allowing the Gospel to shape our lives into obedience...

Transition: But the Gospel truly only shapes the lives of those who know the Person of the Gospel...

Friends, If you are sitting here and you do not know the person of the Gospel...If you do not know Jesus Christ Personally...Then I invite you today...to open the free gift of salvation by faith...Believe in Jesus Christ and you will be saved...But do not stop there...Surrender to Jesus as your Lord...And serve Him...

YOU:

But on a practical level... To all Christians, What should I do with all this information? How should Romans 1:1-7 change one's life...So for you I give you three application steps...To help each and everyone of us put Romans 1:1-7 into practice...

Step #1: Appreciate the Gospel:

The fact that the Gospel is a fulfilled promise from the Old Testament, the fact that deity came into the additional form of humanity to pay my sin, the fact that the Gospel shapes my life...should cause appreciation for the Gospel...Verses 2-6 should cause us to appreciate the Gospel...

God didn't have to save you... But God chose to save you... He can exist without us...I hope that there isn't a day that goes by that the Gospel is not reflected upon and appreciated...

Step #2: Submit to the Gospel:

The purpose of the Gospel is not just to give us fire insurance...The purpose is to cause obedience...The purpose of the Gospel for all those currently saved is to cause us to obey it...To obey the scripture...

Friends, Think about it: The Gospel causes obedience... And then if the Gospel causes obedience....Then... when it says love other, love others...When it says Love God, then Love God, when it says give preference to one another, then give preference to one another, when it says Rejoice with those who rejoice weep with those who weep, then rejoice and weep, when it says to let not unwholesome word proceed from your mouth then let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth...Friends, the Gospel causes obedience...Obey it...

Step #3: Spread the Gospel:

Be like Paul...Be so appreciative and submissive to God and His Gospel that it causes us to Spread the news of the Gospel to all those we see...

To tell you a quick story:

I have a friend named Shannon... And I believe she is so appreciative and submissive to the

Gospel that it causes her to spread the Gospel...

She will often times go to the park and run down runners just to share...She will purposefully initiate conversations just to share...Friends, spread the Gospel...

WE: As a Close, let me close with a thought...

It is a quote... "The Gospel is a Christian's life preserver, his map and his fuel...The Gospel saves us from eternal consequences that we deservedly have, it is our map to spiritual growth and salvation, and it is our fuel to live our life well...But it takes daily steps of appreciation and submission to live out the true effects of the Gospel..."

I thought the Gospel was solely to save us...