

## **Opening the Letter (Part One)** ***The Gospel of God***

Romans 1:1-7

Read Romans 1:1-7

1. As we open the letter to the Romans the first word we see is "Paul." It was very common for Greco-Roman letters to begin with the name of the sender, unlike our modern letters that begin with the recipient. What do you know about this man Paul? Use the rest of the Bible, specifically the book of Acts, and see how many of the following questions you can answer.
  - a. What was his race?
  - b. What tribe was he from?
  - c. What was his official status before his salvation?
  - d. How did he become a Christian?
  - e. How many books of the Bible did he write?
  - f. What was his occupation (besides being a missionary)?
  - g. Was he married?
2. Paul's life and ministry must have been very well known to the Romans because he does not need to spend much time telling them about himself and giving them these facts. List the three self-descriptive phrases that Paul gives in verse one.
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.



7. In five sentences or less, describe what the gospel of God is.

8. While Christians do not hold the specific office of apostle, they still have a commission that is just as real and serious as Paul's. If you are a Christian, you are to be a "bond-servant" of Jesus Christ. That is, you are to do whatever He tells you to do and to be totally yielded to His will.

a. What is your commission?

b. Where in the Bible is it found?

c. Are you being faithful to it?

d. If you are, when is the last time you obeyed it?

e. If you aren't, what kind of a servant does that say you are? How do you plan to change?

9. So far in this passage we have learned that God communicates His gospel not by some miraculous means, but by using simple people whom He sets apart for the task. In verse two, Paul elaborates on the gospel of God. He knew that this gospel sounded new to a lot of people in Rome and He did not want them to think this was some religion that he just thought up one day. Paul feels the need to quickly explain a little bit about the gospel before he continues. First of all Paul explains that the gospel of God was "promised beforehand through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures (v.2). To what specifically is Paul referring when He uses the words "holy Scriptures?"

10. Paul describes the gospel further by stating that it is centered upon one person. Who is that person?

11. Why is it significant that Paul mentions that Jesus was a descendant of David? Refer to 2 Samuel 7:12-13; Psalm 89:3-4, 19, 24; Isaiah 11:1-5; Jeremiah 23:5-6.



16. What does it mean that the gospel should be spread “for His name sake?” Are you spreading the gospel for his name sake?
  
17. Paul describes the Roman believers (and by implication all other believers) with a couple of descriptive terms in verse 7. What are these terms? What encouragement do you get from these terms?
  
18. God is almighty and sovereign and what He purposes will be accomplished. But He chooses to use people like Paul and you to accomplish His purposes. He uses your prayers to bring about His will, He uses your encouraging words to build up other Christians, and He uses your attempts to share the gospel in order to transform people from the realm of darkness into the realm of light. Take a few moments to reflect on this reality and pray that God will help you to be a more willing tool for His use and for His glory.