

RO 1:1 Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God--² the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures³ regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David,⁴ and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.⁵ Through him and for his name's sake, we received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith.⁶ And you also are among those who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.

RO 1:7 To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints:

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

I mentioned to someone a couple of weeks ago that we will be starting a series on Romans and their comment was “Good finally something to get our teeth into” I enquired as to why that comment was made and the response was that Pastoral Care, worship and mission had been all very nice but those topics had very little doctrine in them., and that the doctrine is simplistic. Well, let’s be blunt here. **Pp2 Romans has doctrine, but it also has the basics.** Here in Romans we see had things explained by linking them with the basics. The basics of Christian living are in this book and we will be confronted by them. Why? Because the Romans didn’t get it right, the Corinthians certainly didn’t get it right and Paul had to spell out the doctrines so they could get it right.

So what we are looking at is good doctrine. We will also look at some theology. Hang on what’s the difference.

Well for me it goes like this.

PP3 Dogma is what is totally non negotiable – The crucifixion, the risen Lord, etc

PP4 Doctrine is what ties us to our belief structure – How we interpret biblical truth and includes things like how we read such things as who Jesus is, what the Holy Spirit is all about, the Trinity or triunion, etc.

PP5 Theology is how we apply all that.

Theology is flexible even debatable, doctrine is less moveable and dogma is not moveable at all.

So we will have some differing’s of opinions within Romans, yet we will also find what unites us.

In Romans we find the basics of what we believe and some tough stuff thrown in. It will take months, so the series will be split up and we will look at it over a 9 month period, with some gaps.

Now having said that. Romans is the coolest. Right from the start – so much to get out of it. I advise you to look at the passage ahead of time, have a think about it, I won’t always preach from the most popular bit of the passage and there will always be more that we can get out of it that can not be covered in a ½ hour sermon

Let's roll.

Oh what an introduction. Not just introducing Paul, but a gamut of theology and doctrine To understand.

PP6 RO 1:1 Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God—

We see right from the start that Paul had a concept that his position in life was more to do with Jesus than to do with his own success. An interesting aside is that Paul is the only biblical writer that discards his Jewish name for a Gentile one. Paulus or Paulles means little. It is nearly a theological statement, but hey everything that Paul did was a theological statement.

PP7² the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures³ regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David,⁴ and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.⁵ Through him and for his name's sake, we received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith.⁶ And you also are among those who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.

Its all about Jesus. His ministry is about Jesus. Notice it says, **PP8 we received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith.**

We received grace (this is community – we all together received grace) why – to call people. **PP9 We give the message of God's call** – we are involved in God's ministry along with Paul. Paul states right from the outset that he believes he is in partnership with these people – People he has never met, but believes to be working for God in Rome. It's kind of like praying for missionaries we have never met. Working with them, never met them but trusting that God is using them and our prayers together.

The other aspect here is that it is from all the gentiles. People of other nationalities than Paul, remember he was Jewish. Why is this important? Probably – the Roman church had gentiles in it. He is saying here its ok to be a gentile. And continues this thought in verse 6

PP10⁶ And you also are among those who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.

This is just as vital for us. My assumption here that there are few of Jewish descent here. My great grandmother was a Polish Jew, but hey we don't have many Jews in this area. So mostly we are gentiles. This includes us. We can be called, we have been called. Called to what???

What does it mean to be called by God? Or as this verse puts it called to belong to Christ. Let me say, in one sense all are called. I believe Jesus death on the cross was to take away the sins of the world. There is a general call. **Pp11^{MT 22:14} "For many are invited, but few are chosen."**

But

There is a specific call. It is mentioned that God knows who will accept, we will look at those concepts in Romans 8 and we can have some wonderful discussions before and after those sermons.

Lets have a bit of a preview here.

PP12 RO 8:28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. 29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. 30 And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

Notice here the called according to His purpose – what is that purpose. We spoke a few months ago about our purpose in life to glorify God.

PP13 ICO 10:31 So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

So being called to His purpose is to be called so that we can glorify God effectively. That would mean to have a relationship with God that works and is right so we can worship and our glorifying is acceptable to God. **PP14 We are called to glorify God.** Hey this is individual and corporate, this is what we as a church exist to do!!!!!!

Now this is a pretty vague concept. Does it mean to wonder around yelling Glory to God in the highest. Or maybe finishing our phone calls with the hallelujah chorus or something. We get an interesting glimpse in the next verse.

PP15 RO 1:7 To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Notice the underlining.

PP16 Called to be saints.

In the New Testament – saints are those who belong to Jesus. So we are saints. You don't have to be a martyr to be this kind of saint, you don't have to be pious and religious, you have to belong to Jesus. So being a christian is a calling.

The other thing here is **PP17 The word here “called” really means called out, or invited out.** – in the greek is κλητοίς kletois = called or invited out of what?

Called out of a mundane humdrum of life. Called out of a life that is not God's best and given the option of the best. And called to be saints.

The greek word here is, someone dedicated to God, **PP18 something holy and sacred.** agios – agios.

So **PP19 A saint is someone dedicated to God.**

When we put it that way we have a different perspective. We say people are called to the ministry but we say people have a specific calling. Like being a missionary is a calling, being a doctor is a calling, being a mother is a calling, being a street sweeper is a calling, being retired is a calling.

Within that we are called to glorify God.

PP20 So if you are retired – glorify God in retirement.

If you are a farmer glorify God on your farm

If you are a teacher Glorify God as you teach

Basically, put yourself in the picture here.

That would mean – using your time to be the best christian person you can. You are dedicated to God who uses your skills for His kingdom. It does not mean that you have to work for charity, mow the church lawn and attend bible study. Although participating in those things may be your service to God.

PP21 It means – live the life God wants you to. The same goes for other vocations. God put you there – do it with integrity, do it with God’s will in mind and all that you do – do for the glory of God. That kinda means – do it like God is the boss and he is watching. Notice the first bit of verse 7.

PP22 RO 1:7 To all in Rome who are loved by God

This is an amazing part of accepting our calling. PP23 Recognise that God loves us. Paul is pointing out that the christians in Rome had a relationship with God – one dependant on God’s love.

PP24 To be loved by God is an amazing thought,

PP25 To be called by God is an amazing honour.

PP26 To have a relationship with God is too amazing to put into words.

But the verse reads for us. PP27 “To all in Bathurst Baptist Church who are loved by God and called to be saints”. Look around you, see God’s saints. Look around you – see the people that God loves.

Paul treats these people with a huge respect. Why?? Because God loves them!!!

We should be looking at people with God’s perspective in Mind.

God loves ‘em and called em.