

## Far in Body, Close in Spirit

### Week 1 - Romans 1:1–17

#### Objectives:

- To explore the opening of the book of Romans and examine how it sets up the rest of the book.
- To examine our own relationship to the gospel through the lens of this passage.

? How do you introduce yourself when you meet new people? What's something about yourself that you rarely talk about when you introduce yourself that you want people to know?

This week we are beginning our study of Romans. Paul had not yet been to Rome, but knew the people there. As the gospels had not yet been written down and widely circulated, it was likely this was the first major piece of Christian literature that many of the Roman believers had seen! (Reference: Zondervan Life Application Study Bible, Romans 1 notes) In this book, Paul sets out a systematic explanation of the Christian faith and how to live it out.

#### Greetings

##### Read Romans 1:1–7 NIV:

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God— <sup>2</sup>the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures <sup>3</sup>regarding his Son, who as to his earthly life was a descendant of David, <sup>4</sup>and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord. <sup>5</sup>Through him we received grace and apostleship to call all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith for his name's sake. <sup>6</sup>And you also are among those Gentiles who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.

<sup>7</sup>To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people:  
Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

? Take a couple minutes to look over the passage on your own. What stands out to you from the passage?

? How does Paul define himself in the introduction of the passage? (vs. 1)

? How does Paul explain Jesus and his connection to the gospel? (vs. 2–3)

? What is our role now as Christians because Jesus came? (vs. 5–6)

### Connection, Noun and Verb

#### Read Romans 1:8–17 NIV:

<sup>8</sup>First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world. <sup>9</sup>God, whom I serve in my spirit in preaching the gospel of his Son, is my witness how constantly I remember you <sup>10</sup>in my prayers at all times; and I pray that now at last by God’s will the way may be opened for me to come to you.

<sup>11</sup>I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong— <sup>12</sup>that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith. <sup>13</sup>I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that I planned many times to come to you (but have been prevented from doing so until now) in order that I might have a harvest among you, just as I have had among the other Gentiles.

<sup>14</sup>I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish. <sup>15</sup>That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are in Rome.

<sup>16</sup>For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. <sup>17</sup>For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”

? How does Paul care for the people in Rome? (vs. 8–10)

? Why did Paul want to come see the Romans? (vs. 11–13)

? How can we care for the believers we know when they are close by? How can we care for the believers we know when they are far away?

Righteousness, according to Merriam-Webster, is “Acting in accord with divine or moral law: free from guilt or sin.”

? Paul says “I am not ashamed of the gospel” in verse 16. Have you ever felt ashamed of the gospel? What encouragement can you take from this passage about why the gospel is not something to be ashamed of? (vs. 16–17)

? What does it mean “to live by faith”? (vs. 17)

#### **For Discussion and Accountability**

? Where is it hard in your own life to trust solely in Christ, and not trust your own righteousness?

? How can we encourage you to allow God, through the gospel, to reveal more of himself to you this week?