

Romans

SERMON SERIES

Romans



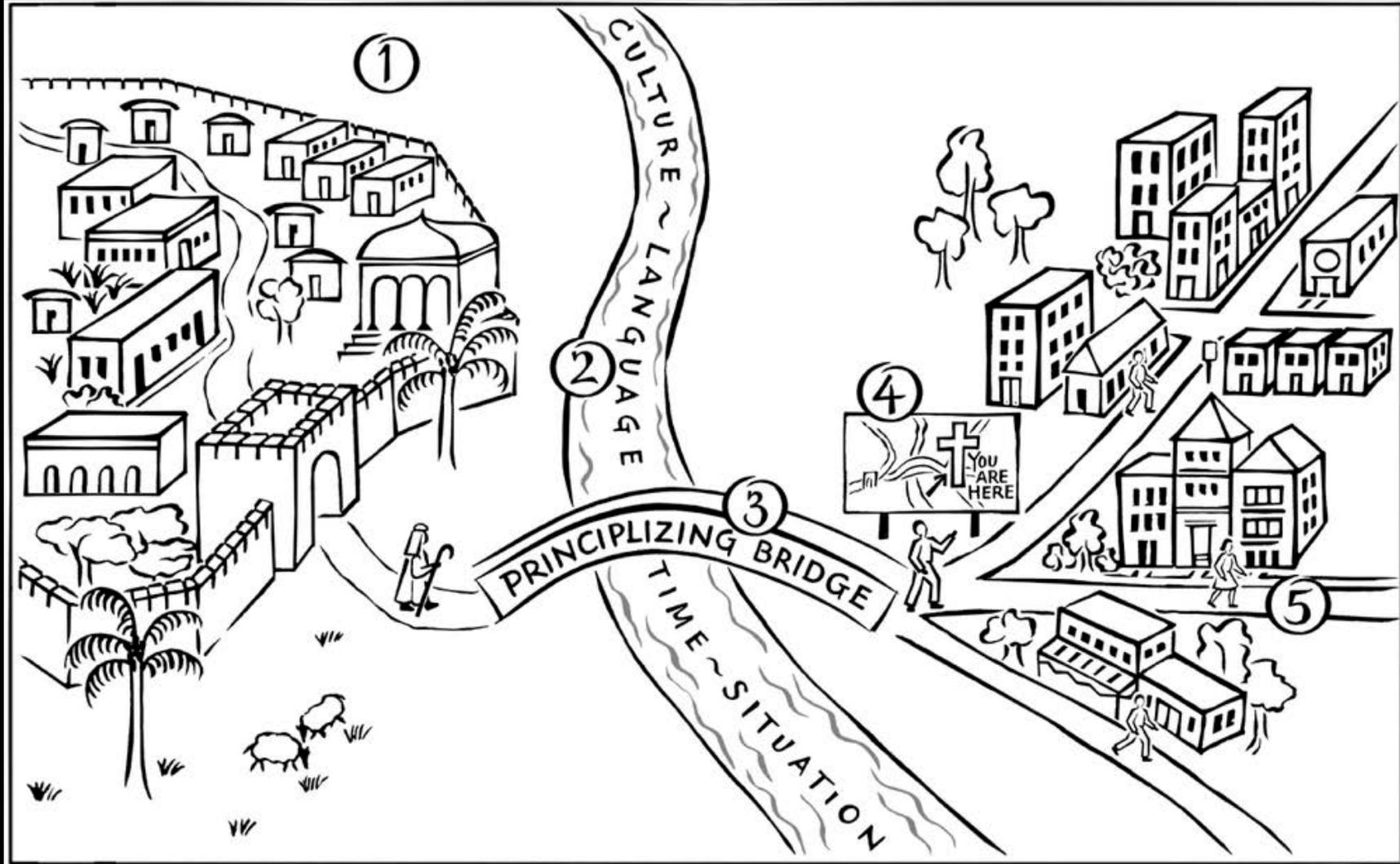
THE GOOD NEWS



# **This Weeks Sermon**

*“Grasp the Text in Their Town”*

*Romans 1:7*



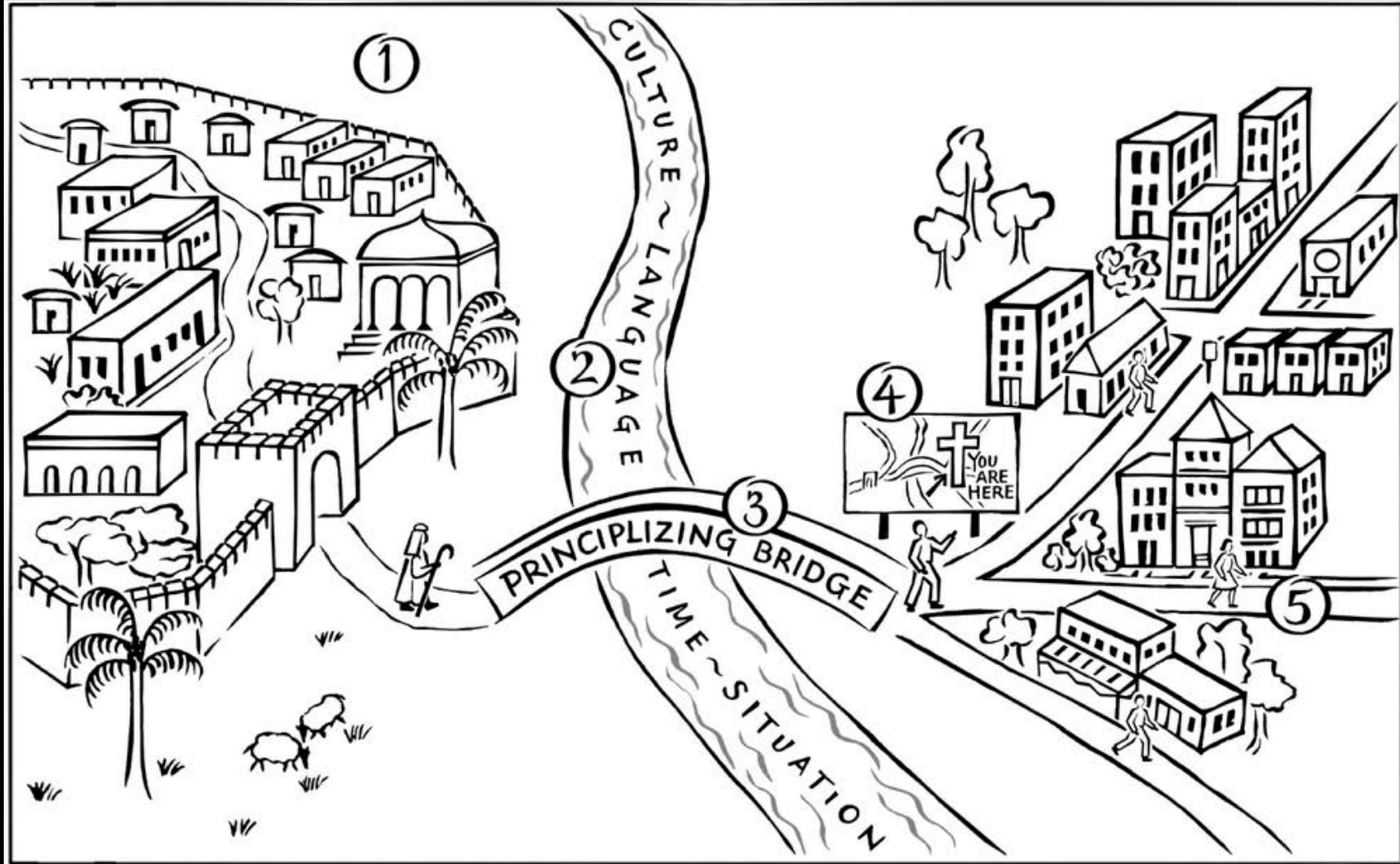
# Romans 1:1

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God



**No one, any where, at any time, is beyond  
the reach of the gospel...**

**This book is not written to you!**



## Romans 1:7

<sup>7</sup>To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called  
to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the  
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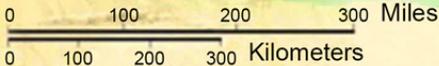
Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the  
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**Where is Rome?**



# MAP OF PAUL'S MISSIONARY JOURNEYS

- ← Paul's first journey
- ← Paul's second journey
- ← Paul's third journey
- ← Paul's voyage to Rome
- City
- One of the "Seven Churches"



**How did these churches get planted in  
Rome?**

# How did these churches get planted in Rome?

*“All Roads Lead to Rome”*

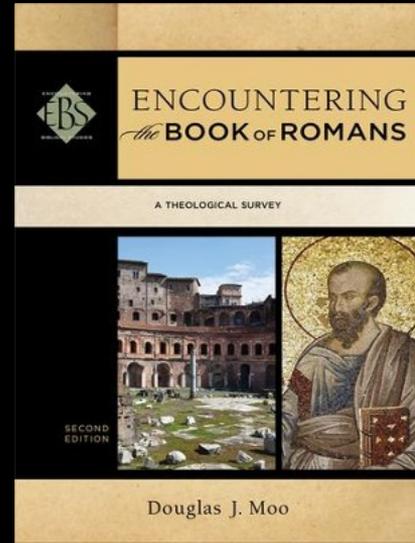
writing in 1175 by Alain de Lille, a French theologian and poet



The tradition that the church in Rome was founded by Peter (or Peter and Paul together) cannot be right. It is in this very letter that Paul enunciates the principle that he will “not build on another person’s foundation” (15:20). This makes it impossible to think that he would have written this letter, or planned the kind of visit he describes in 1:8–15, to a church that was founded by Peter. Nor is it likely that Peter could have been at Rome early enough to have founded the church there. Since the traditions we possess associate no other apostle with the church at Rome, the assessment of the fourth-century church father

Ambrosiaster is probably correct: the Romans “have embraced the faith of Christ, albeit according to the Jewish rite, without seeing any sign of mighty works or any of the apostles.” The most likely scenario is that Roman Jews, who were converted on the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem (see Acts 2:10), brought their faith in Jesus as the Messiah back with them to their home synagogues. In this way the Christian movement in Rome was initiated.

Douglass Moo, *The Letter to the Romans*, pg. 3-5



**This means the Great Commission  
Worked!**

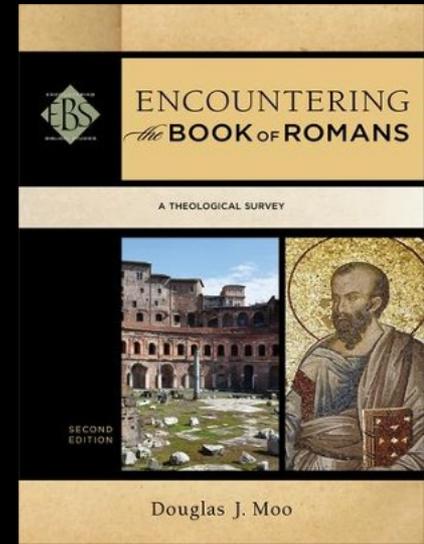
**Who are all of those in Rome?**

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*They started in the Jewish Synagogues – so  
how did Christianity spread to the  
Gentiles?*

An important event in the history of the Jews in Rome is mentioned by the Roman historian Suetonius. In his *Life of Claudius*, he says that Claudius “expelled the Jews from Rome because they were constantly rioting at the instigation of Chrestus” (25.2). Most scholars agree that “Chrestus” is a corruption of the Greek *Christos* and that the reference is probably to disputes within the Jewish community over the claims of Jesus to be the *Christos*, the Messiah.

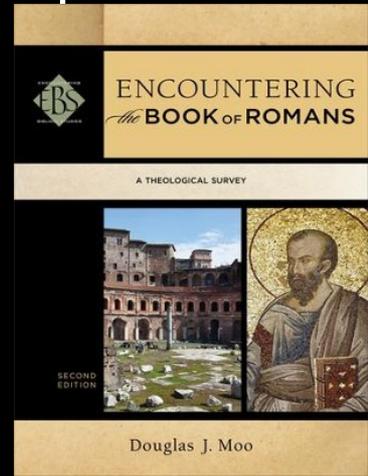
Douglass Moo, *The Letter to the Romans*, pg. 3-5



The significance of this scenario for Romans is clear. Gentile Christians, undoubtedly part of the community before the expulsion, would have come into greater prominence as a result of the absence of all, or most, of the Jewish Christians. Theologically this would also have meant an acceleration in the movement of the Christian community away from its Jewish origins. Claudius's decree of expulsion was apparently allowed to lapse within a few short years (perhaps at his death in A.D. 54), so that when Paul writes in A.D. 57 Jewish Christians (such as Prisca [Priscilla] and Aquila; cf. 16:3) have returned to Rome — but no longer as the dominant group.

These circumstances are a recipe for divisions along social and/or theological lines. Moreover, the decentralized nature of the Jewish community from which the Christian community sprang would also make it likely that the Christians in Rome were grouped into several house churches. Confirmation that this was the case comes from Rom. 16, where Paul seems to greet several different house churches. It is possible, then, that different house churches aligned themselves more or less with one group or the other.

Douglass Moo, *The Letter to the Romans*, pg. 3-5



# Romans 16:1-16

I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cenchreae...<sup>3</sup> Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus...<sup>5</sup> Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia.

<sup>6</sup> Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you. <sup>7</sup> Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners...<sup>8</sup> Greet

Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord. <sup>9</sup> Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys. <sup>10</sup> Greet Apelles, who is approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the family of

Aristobulus. <sup>11</sup> Greet my kinsman Herodion. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus. <sup>12</sup> Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa

# Romans 16:1-16

Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord.

<sup>13</sup> Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well. <sup>14</sup> Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers who are with them. <sup>15</sup> Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them.

# Romans 1:7

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In the New Testament, the word translated as 'saints' is *hagioi* meaning the holy ones. They are not holy in and of themselves; not holy because they have reached an unthinkable level of virtue or righteousness. Rather, they are those who have been made holy by the fact of having been set apart by God and consecrated to him. There is a very close link between the idea of God calling people and God sanctifying people (the word 'sanctify' literally means 'set apart' or 'saintly'). The church is both the *ecclesia* (those called out) and the *hagioi* (the saints).

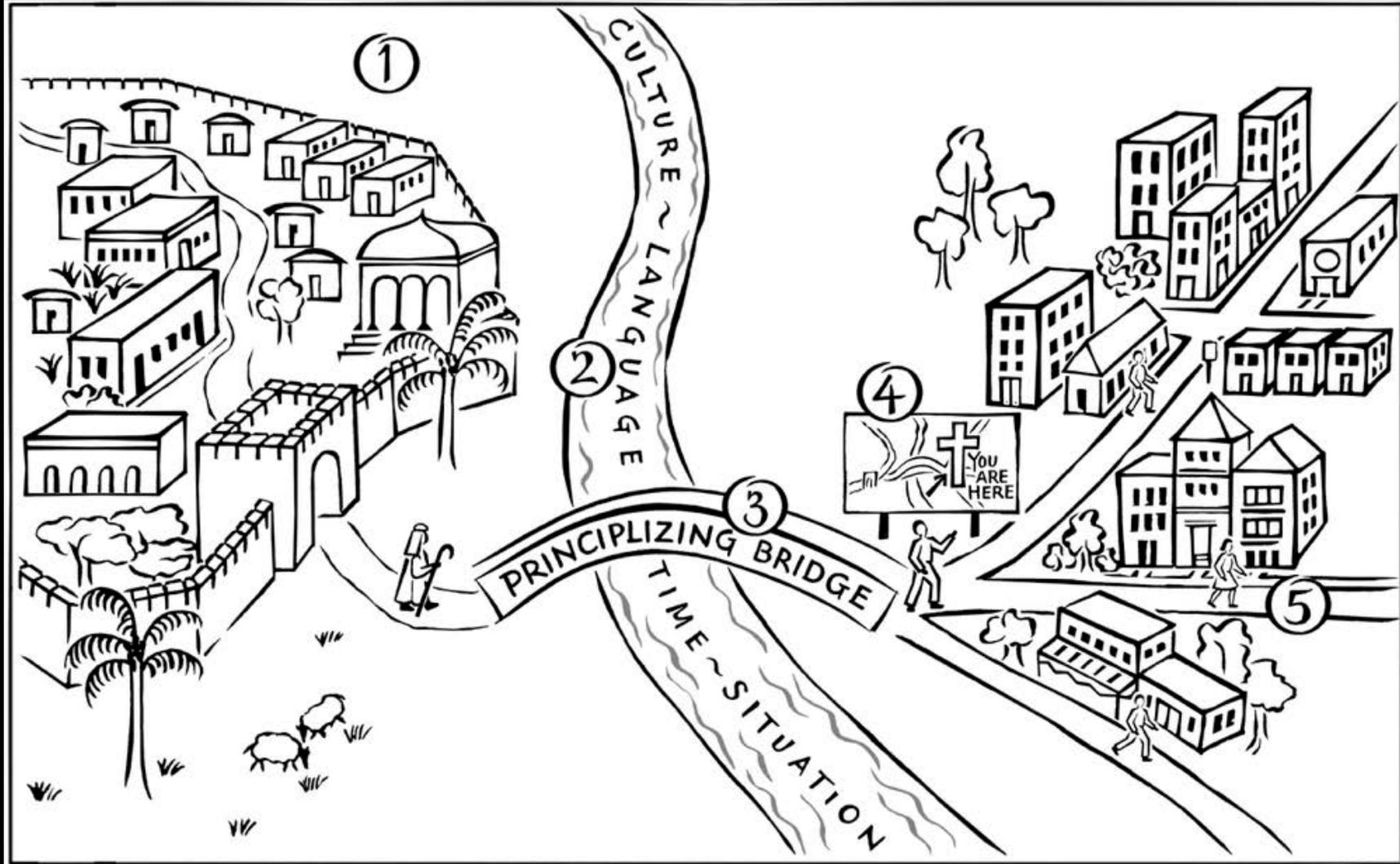
Sproul, R. C. (1994). *The Gospel of God: An Exposition of Romans* (p. 23). Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications.



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See, the question this morning, and we'll come back to this at another time ... In the Old Testament, the community is described in two words. One word is *edah*, the transliteration of the Hebrew, and this refers to the community of God as a result of heritage and external union. The second word is *qahal*, which describes those who are united to God within the *edah*, who are united as a result of hearing the call of God to them. It is that *qahal* word which is then translated *ecclesia* in the New Testament translation of the Old Testament, and it is the word *ecclesia* which is used throughout the New

Testament as a description of the nature of the church, thereby reminding us that it is clearly possible to be part of a visible, identifiable church entity as a result of external assignation, religious interest, focus, heritage, baptism, family tradition. It is distinctly possible to be part of that *edah*, without being part of the *qahal*, without having heard the call of God into our spirits, saying, “I want to include you in my Son. I know that you have benefited from all of these external elements. I know that this is important to you. I know that you are trying to work all of that out.

But listen, don't let all of that prevent you from hearing the word of truth, as it is proclaimed in the gospel, believing it and being included in Christ." You see, this is the great issue. Is a person a Christian as a result of something that is done to them by a religious professional? Is a person a Christian as a result simply of them determining that they will now include Christ and Christianity in their portfolio? Or is a person a Christian only when they have been brought to see the utter end of themselves and the hopelessness of all of their attempts at acceptance with God, and they have cried out to him, "Lord Jesus Christ, I cast myself upon your mercy, and I am amazed that you would include me in your company."

**This means the Great Commission Works!**

# Gospel Application

*You have been called; you have been set apart for the  
gospel and to share the gospel*