

Romans: A Study on Reformation
Lesson 2 “What is the Gospel?”

I. Introduction - We are continuing our series on the book of Romans today. Paul wrote this letter to the church in Rome to bring reformation to this important church in 57 A.D. We are studying verse by verse through the book with our focus being on “Reformation.”

A. Reform is a compound word. Re means to do again and form means to make or create. Reform does not mean to add to. God wants to go deeper than just bring revival to our nation. He wants to reform it. **Explain the difference between reformation and revival.**

B. Today we are going to study the first part of *Romans 1* and answer the question, “What is the Gospel?”

1. Before you think that’s obvious and stop paying attention, I want to submit that over 90% of people in the Bible-Belt don’t know what the gospel is (this includes Christians).
2. Before we jump into the passages, I want to make a statement: The entirety of the Bible is not the gospel. Not everything in the Bible is the gospel. Is it all the word of God? Absolutely! It’s just not the gospel because the gospel is a very specific message within the Bible.

II. What is the Gospel?

A. Romans 1:1-7 The Gospel is About Jesus

1. **Verse 1** Paul was called to be an apostle (sent one). Apostle was a Roman term that described a person who went into a conquered territory to bring the culture of Rome (currency, education, language, etc) to the conquered nation and make it ready for Caesar when he came to visit.
 - a. Paul was one who laid cultural foundations everywhere he went when he started church. With this letter, he was wanting to change the culture of this church in Rome.
 - b. The current culture of the church in Rome was one of pride and division between the Jews and Gentiles. Both sides thought they were right and Paul is going to show in this letter that everyone needs Jesus.
2. **Verses 2-4** These passages reveal what the gospel is about. It’s about Jesus.
 - a. The Gospel is not about turn or burn. That’s not the gospel.
 - b. The Gospel is not about judgment. That’s in the Bible, but that’s not the Gospel.
 - c. The Gospel isn’t *Proverbs* or writings of wisdom in the scripture. We need wisdom because it will teach us how to live, but it isn’t the Gospel.

d. Gospel is the Greek Word **euangelion**. It means glad tidings and is communicating the idea of almost too good to be true news. When a new Caesar came to the throne, heralds would go out and declare the euangelion that we have a new king and things are going to be better now.

e. The gospel is about the Son, which the scriptures revealed.

3. **Verses 5-7** Paul says he received his call from Jesus and also says they were **all called** by Jesus. God has called everyone to Himself. **2 Peter 3:9**.

B. Romans 1:8-15 Paul's Desire to Visit Rome

1. As we've talked about before, Paul wanted to visit Rome (this desire came from God and was part of his call). Unfortunately, he chose to go to Jerusalem instead and got sidetracked on the will of God for two years.

2. **Verse 11** Paul wanted to establish them in spiritual things. **Spiritual gift - pneumatikos**. The word used isn't charisma so Paul probably wasn't trying to establish them in the gifts of the spirit (healing, prophecy, etc). He was probably trying to establish/lay a foundation of spiritual truth. **Gifts don't establish us. They draw us. The word establishes us.**

3. Paul goes onto say he wanted to come sooner and was hindered (ministering in Asia Minor and Greece). His point was to let them know how bad he wanted to be there. He shared he was a debtor to the Greeks and barbarians because this is who he was called to (the Gentiles).

C. Romans 1:16-17 The Just Live by Faith

1. **Verse 16** *I'm not ashamed of the gospel*. Why make this statement?

a. Presenting the message of the savior who went to the cross in a wealthy, sophisticated city like Rome that had quite a bit of prestige could be embarrassing.

b. Preaching the gospel in the midst of legalistic Christians could be hard because the true gospel is hard on the flesh. No rules added; the flesh likes rules.

c. The true gospel is an invitation to everyone including the legalists so this could have upset the Gentiles.

2. **Verse 17** *The Just shall live by faith*. The point is the ground is level at the foot of the cross. The gospel is for everyone whether you are religious or not. Faith is what we believe about God. We live by what we believe about God, not what we do for God.

3. Going back to **verse 16**, what is salvation? Its the Greek word soteria, which means safety, preservation deliverance. **It means saving from hell, but it also means you are safe with God (even when you mess up)**. It also means healing, peace and prosperity. **John 3:17 Amplified Classic** *For God did not send the*

*Son into the world in order to judge (to reject, to condemn, to pass sentence on) the world, but that the world might find salvation and be made safe and sound through Him. **This passage reveals the heart of God. We are safe with Him. All we need to do is believe.***

III. Conclusion - The gospel is about how we are safe with the true King! He wants to make us whole in every aspect of our lives - spirit, soul, and body!

A. Pray Closing Prayer

B. Call Up Prayer Team