

# sermon study guide

September 11/12, 2021

(see next page for Sermon Summary)

## “Romans” Part 1: I Am Not Ashamed of the Gospel

Dr. Henry Schorr

### IN - PURSUE RELATIONSHIP

1. In what ways have you been able to engage in something you're passionate about this past season (a hobby, interest, cause)? How easy is it for you to talk to someone about your passion and invite them to share in it?
2. What has been the impact of the book of Romans on your life? Significant? Confusing? How familiar are you with it?

### UP - PURSUE GOD

Read Romans 1:1-7, 14-17

3. In introducing himself to the Christians in Rome, how does Paul describe himself? What is the significance of these descriptors for his original readers? For us in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?
4. What truths about the gospel does Paul proclaim in these verses?

### OUT - PURSUE MISSION

5. Many Christians regard evangelism as an optional activity. Paul regarded it as an obligation. Where do you stand? Why?

Read 2 Corinthians 4:18 and 1 Peter 3:15

6. Pastor Henry encouraged Christians to “keep the main thing the main thing.” For you, what is the “main thing” in following Christ? How will you keep this primary in the challenging season in which we live?

#### For Personal Reflection/Prayer:

**What has the power of the gospel looked like in your life? How does this influence you to share the gospel with others? Are there any shifts in your life you need to make in order to “keep the main thing the main thing”?**

### THE WORD (NIV)

#### Romans 1:1-7, 14-17

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 Scriptures 3 regarding his Son, who as to his earthly life was a descendant of David, 4 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. 5 Through him we received grace and apostleship to call all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith for his name's sake. 6 And you also are among those Gentiles who are called to belong to Jesus Christ. 7 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.

14 I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish. 15 That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are in Rome. 16 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. 17 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.”

#### 2 Corinthians 4:18

So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

#### 1 Peter 3:15

But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect

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Paul wrote the letter of Romans to the church in Rome, likely around AD 57. Paul was born a Hebrew (Jew) but raised in a Greek society. He was a Roman citizen, by trade a tentmaker, and by religious training a Pharisee (a strict Jewish sect). When he heard that people were saying Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, he wanted to bring this upstart religion to an end. He brought severe persecution against Christians (Acts 7 & 8). But after meeting the resurrected Jesus on the road to Damascus (Acts 9), his life was changed forever. Jesus said of Paul, “he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel” (Acts 9:15).

Romans was written to Christians living in Rome whom Paul had never met before. Paul begins the letter we call “Romans” with an extended introduction, likely because he was concerned that he may have a credibility problem. Given his past, would the Roman Christians take seriously what he had to say? He introduces himself as a slave of Jesus Christ, one who has been called by Jesus Christ to proclaim the gospel. He then introduces the gospel and says four things about it:

1. The gospel was proclaimed beforehand by the Old Testament prophets (v. 2).
2. Jesus Christ is fully God, which was proven by his resurrection from the dead (vv. 3-4).
3. The gospel is the gospel of grace (v. 5).
4. The gospel is for all the nations (vv. 5-6)

In verses 7-13 he greets the believers in Rome, and in verses 14-17 Paul reveals his motives and mission to preach the gospel. He says he is “obligated”. In the same way someone who holds the cure to an otherwise incurable disease would be obligated to share that cure, Paul is saying here that in light of the grace shown to him by Christ, he is indebted to Christ to fulfill his calling and preach the gospel. In verse 15 he shows he is not only obligated, but eager. He longs for everyone to experience the life-transforming power of God’s grace. Not only is he eager, he is not ashamed. Paul is not interested in “watering down” the gospel to make it more socially acceptable. He is not ashamed because the true gospel is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes. It has the power to save and to completely transform a person’s life.

In this era of Covid-19, people (including many Christians) passionately and persistently challenge others’ views on vaccines, masks, rights and freedoms, etc. Most if not all of these people do so because they really believe that their point of view is the truth. But 2 Corinthians 4:18 tells us that we are to focus primarily on the eternal realm, the spirit realm. The main thing God calls us to as Christians is to introduce people to Jesus and to make disciples. Our religious freedoms are important and we need to do what we can within the law to preserve them. But as important as they are, they will not save people who need the Lord. No matter what our situation, Irwin Lutzer challenges Christians, “We must interact with groups and individuals giving ‘a reason for the hope’ that is within us, and doing it with gentleness and respect” (1 Peter 3:15).