

**Ro 1:6–15 (ESV)** including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, <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 Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>(8)</sup> First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world. <sup>(9)</sup> For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I mention you <sup>(10)</sup> always in my prayers, asking that somehow by God’s will I may now at last succeed in coming to you. <sup>(11)</sup> For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you— <sup>(12)</sup> that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith, both yours and mine. <sup>(13)</sup> I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented), in order that I may reap some harvest among you as well as among the rest of the Gentiles. <sup>(14)</sup> I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. <sup>(15)</sup> So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

## I. PAUL IS WRITING TO BELIEVERS IN ROME

**Intro:** Last week we saw that Paul was writing to the believers who lived in Rome

In these verses he identifies three things that are true of every believer – Called, love by God, Saints

### 1. The believer is one who is called to belong to Jesus Christ

**Ro 1:5–6 (ESV)** through whom we have received grace and apostleship **to bring** about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, <sup>(6)</sup> including you **who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,**

A. This would be that **effectual call** God places upon a person that begins in eternity past

**Eph 1:4 (ESV)** even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world...

- 1). It is activated in our life – when the Spirit illuminates the Gospel powerfully  
Convincing us we are guilty before God and in desperate need of forgiveness
- 2). This results in our embracing Christ by faith and becoming God’s children

B. We see this calling of God in the church of Thessalonica

**1 Th 1:4 (ESV)** For we know, brothers loved by God, **that he has chosen you,** (cf. Eph 1:4)

- 1). How did they know they had been chosen by God?
- 2). Because of how the “call” came into their life

**1 Th 1:5 (ESV) (we know he has chosen you)** because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in **power** and in the **Holy Spirit** and with **full conviction.**

- 3). Paul preached the gospel to many in Thessalonica
  - a). But for the majority it was just words – foolishness – they were blinded to the truth
  - b). But Paul says those who were **chosen** – those words hit them differently
    - 1a). The Spirit applied those words in power – convicting them of sin  
And drawing them to the Savior

**Transition:** So these Romans were chosen by God and called by God

A. They had experienced the same thing the Thessalonians had

### 2. The believer is “Loved by God”

**Ro 1:7 (ESV)** To all those in Rome who are loved by God...

A. When did this love start? When they responded to the gospel call? Now I love you – I didn’t before

- 1). No! God loved them – and us - from eternity past

**Je 31:3 (ESV)** the LORD appeared to him from far away. **I have loved you with an everlasting love;** therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you.

- 2). It is a love that began in eternity past and will reach into eternity future

**Ro 8:31–39 (ESV)** What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? <sup>(32)</sup> He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? <sup>(33)</sup> Who shall bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. <sup>(34)</sup> Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. <sup>(35)</sup> Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness,

or danger, or sword? <sup>(36)</sup> As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.” <sup>(37)</sup> No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. <sup>(38)</sup> For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>(39)</sup> nor height nor depth, *nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

**Point:** Do you see how long you’ve been loved – how long you will be loved

- A. You have always been in his mind and in his heart – you always will be
  - 1). He has always loved you and will never stop loving you

### 3. The believer is called to be a saint

**Ro 1:7 (ESV)** To all those in Rome who are loved by God *and called to be saints*:

- A. ESV is not that good here – NKJV – NASB is better
  - 1). “To be” is in italics – showing it was added – not in original manuscripts
  - 2). Better reading would simply say “To all those in Rome who are loved by God *and called saints*”
- B. Why is that important? It is something God has done – not a status we achieve

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#### Saint defined: What it’s not

- A. Not a classification given by the church to a select few who lived some exemplary life
  - 1). They are saints and the rest of us are just average joes – that’s not scriptural!
- B. Everybody who is a believer is a saint... every believer in this room is a saint

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#### Saint defined: What it is

- A. It is the Greek word – Hagioi = to set apart, to be *separate*, to be holy
- B. The saint is one that has been chosen by God before the foundations of the world  
Drawn to God by the Spirit illuminating the Gospel in a powerful way  
And “separated” out by God through salvation and sanctification

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#### What are we separated from? (a few thoughts)

- A. We are separated out from the judgment that is coming on the world because of sin
  - 1). By grace the saint (believer) has been rescued from that coming destruction
  - 2). Hell is no longer a threat for the one who is “In Christ”

**Ro 8:1 (ESV)** There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

- a). Look at how God sees you believer – find your joy and rest here

**Ro 8:29–30 (ESV)** For those whom he foreknew (**There is that choice**) he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. <sup>(30)</sup> And those whom he predestined he also called, (**There is the call**) and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. (**There is the security**)

- 1a). Our salvation is so secure – in God’s eyes – he already sees us as glorified
- 2a). He has separated us out from his judgment

- B. We are separated out from the sinful ways of the world to live a holy life

- 1). When God draws a sinner to himself – he doesn’t save them and leave them where he finds them  
They are delivered from the domain of darkness – a life dominated by sin

**Col 1:13 (ESV)** He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,

- 2). Now they are freed from sin’s stranglehold to live a life characterized by obedience

**Point:** This all happens because God has done something

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- A. He has acted in love towards us – calling us into a relationship with himself
  - B. And that calling is always a separating call
    - 1). Separating us from the judgment the world will experience
    - 2). Separating us from the sin that was destroying us – freeing us up to live for him
      - a). To live that life God will bless with his joy and peace
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## II. WHY PAUL IS WRITING

**Ro 1:8–15 (ESV)** First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world. <sup>(9)</sup> For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I mention you <sup>(10)</sup> always in my prayers, asking that somehow by God’s will I may now at last succeed in coming to you.

**Intro:** Paul hadn’t been able to visit but he wanted them to know how much he cared for them

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### 1. He wanted them to know he had heard about them and was praying

**Ro 1:8 (ESV)** First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world.

- A. He was thankful for them and was praying for them

**Ro 1:9–10 (ESV)** For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I mention you <sup>(10)</sup> always in my prayers...

**Spurgeon:** “No wonder they prospered so well when Paul always made mention of them in his prayers. Some churches would prosper better if some of you remembered them more in prayer.”

**Transition:** So Paul is praying in general for the Roman church – he adds a specific

### 2. He wanted them to know why he hadn’t visited

- A. It’s not because he didn’t want to – he asked God many times to allow him to go but had been stopped

**Ro 1:10 (ESV)** always in my prayers, asking that somehow by God’s will I may now at last succeed in coming to you.

**Ro 1:13 (ESV)** I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented)...

- 1). Same thing happened on Paul’s second missionary journey

**Acts 16:6-7 (NIV)** Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, *having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia.* (7) When they came to the border of Mysia, *they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to.*

**Thought:** I find comfort in that – Paul had trouble discerning the will of God at times too

- A. He’d think – that looks like a good area to go into – but God would stop him
  - 1). Probably through arranging circumstances that would shut the doors
  - 2). Probably what happened in Rome – Paul would make plans to go – but they were blocked
    - a). Believing in the sovereignty of God trusted that it was God stopping him
- B. Also comforting because it shows God can keep us from making mistakes by blocking us

**Transition:** But why did Paul want to visit Rome – verses we skipped

- A. He describes why he hadn’t visited. Not because he didn’t want to. He did but it wasn’t God’s timing yet.
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## III. WHY PAUL WANTED TO VISIT ROME

**Ro 1:11–12 (ESV)** For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you—<sup>(12)</sup> that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith, both yours and mine.

**Paul Wanted to Visit Them for Mutual Strengthening and Encouragement**

## 1. Paul longed to visit them as an Apostle to help strengthen them

- A. Most commentators don't believe Paul is speaking of a specific gift of the Spirit = tongues, helps etc.
  - 1). He is speaking of a general strengthening from the Spirit he could impart
    - Probably through his teaching, mentoring, wise counsel

**Transition:** I love the humility of Paul in the next verse - He longed to visit them as an Apostle but also...

## 2. He longed to visit them as a friend to be mutually encouraged

**Ro 1:12 (ESV)** that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine.

- A. Here we have a great definition of fellowship
  - 1). We tend to use the term fellowship for any time believer's get together – no matter what
    - Had some great fellowship last night – what did you do? – Played twister
  - 2). Nothing wrong just getting together – laughing – SharkNado was great – but not really fellowship
- B. True fellowship is when we mutually encourage one another spiritually
  - 1). When we build one another up – walk away saying “I feel stronger”

**Thought:** A nice balance for the Pastor

- A. It's easy for the Pastor to think he must always be ministering to those in the church
  - 1). Always on – always searching for that next thing to say that is heavy
    - “That reminds me of when Ahithophel saddled his donkey and hung himself” uhhh. What?
- B. The Pastor can easily lose out on being blessed by others = learning from them
  - 1). I learn so much from you when we fellowship after church
    - a). Your angles on the truth that I hadn't seen before

**Point:** Paul says I'm looking forward to being with you – so we can strengthen one another

- A. I have something valuable to offer you – but I know you have something valuable to offer me

**Transition:** Also wanted to visit because he believed a trip to Rome would bear much fruit for the kingdom

## Paul Desired to Preach the Gospel in Rome because of its strategic location

**Ro 1:13 (ESV)** I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented), *in order that I may reap some harvest among you* as well as among the rest of the Gentiles.

### 1. Paul was a brilliant strategist and saw Rome as a vital location

- A. He knew anything that happened in Rome would impact the area around it
- B. Therefore if he was able to reap a spiritual harvest through the gospel in Rome – it would spread
  - 1). The multitude of visitors – they get saved – then take the Gospel to the rest of the ancient world
  - 2). The soldiers get saved and become missionaries as they were stationed in other areas

**Transition:** Paul wanted to minister in Rome because of its benefits - *but also felt an obligation*

## Paul Desired to Preach the Gospel Because He Felt An Obligation

**Ro 1:14 (ESV)** I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish.

### 1. Greeks and barbarians - wise and foolish = everyone

### 2. Paul felt an obligation because of the call upon his life

- A. He had been set apart to preach the Gospel (v. 1) – to neglect this would be disobedience

**Brings up a question:** Shouldn't we all feel a sense of this obligation? Haven't we all been called? Yes

- A. The Great Commission is to every believer

**Mat 28:18-20 (NIV)** Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. (19) Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the

Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (20) and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. *And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.*"

**Objection:** That was only given to the Apostles – are you sure?

- 1). Context tells us that can't be – you have to read properly
  - a). "And surely I am with you always, *to the very end of the age*"
    - 1a). This is to encourage those who preach the Gospel  
Whenever you go and whenever you go – I am with you – you're not alone
- 2). Unless the *end of the age* ended when the last Apostle died  
Then Jesus must have been bringing every believer into this
  - a). Great commission has been called the marching orders of the church

B. **Plus:** The Holy Spirit is given to every believer – look at one of the reasons why

**Ac 1:8 (ESV)** But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, *and you will be my witnesses* in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

- 1). There were 120 people in that upper room – NOT just the Apostles
  - a). God gave them the Spirit NOT just to produce chills – tingles – fall all over the place  
Spirit was given to empower them to be witnesses everywhere – to ends of the earth
- 2). This is one of the reasons the Spirit was given to you

**Transition:** Being a believer puts us under this obligation – an obligation leads to incredible joy

- A. To see somebody's eternity change before your very eyes – and you were a part of it! Amazing!
- B. To know God has used you in that miracle produces the greatest joy

## 2. Paul felt an obligation because of the need = urgency

- A. If you found a cure for cancer would you have an obligation to share it? Of course. To not would be extremely selfish. How much more the gospel?
- B. We live amongst people who MUST hear the gospel because eternity is rushing at them
  - 1). We never know what day – what way we will be taken – life is fragile
    - a). I don't want people to enter eternity without being told God's good news
  - 2). Tony – felt he should tell his neighbor about God – put it off until more convenient time
    - a). Few days later found him in his garage dead
    - b). Important to respond to that tug if God is telling you to speak to somebody

**Thought:** I know the thought of evangelism can be scary

- A. I'm not saying you have to go out street witnessing – not everybody is called to that
  - 1). But we are called to care for the lost  
And we should be willing to step into those opportunities the Lord opens up
- B. One of the thrilling things about evangelism is Jesus promised to go with us
  - 1). I've discovered when I tell others about Jesus I experience him  
And it does something spiritually to me – It sets me on fire
    - a). Not only am I doing something the Lord says he will be with me in
    - b). I'm also telling others what God has done for me – reminding myself
      - 1a). I usually come away from evangelism spiritually soaring

**Transition:** Another way to be involved in evangelism is through prayer

## 3. Evangelism through prayer

**Ro 1:9 (ESV)** For God is my witness, *whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son*, that without ceasing I mention you

- A. That would be through his own efforts of proclaiming the gospel
- B. But the context is prayer

**Ro 1:9–10 (ESV)** For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I mention you <sup>(10)</sup> *always in my prayers...*

- 1). Paul was evangelizing with the Romans through prayer
  - a). On his knees he was traveling to Rome and joining in their evangelistic efforts
 

**T. J. Bach:** Many of us cannot reach the mission fields on our feet, but we can reach them on our knees.
- 2). Some people teach we shouldn't pray for the lost because it's not in scripture. Really?
 

**Speaking about the Jews: Ro 10:1–2 (ESV)** Brothers, my heart's desire and *prayer to God for them is that they may be saved.* <sup>(2)</sup> For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.
- 3). Example of Hudson Taylor
  - a). He had no interest in the gospel – but was bored and picked up a gospel tract to read
    - 1a). He thought to himself I'll put it down before the call at the end
  - b). At the same time the Lord moved on his mothers heart some 70 miles away
    - 1a). She went into a room in the house she was visiting = locked the door and committed to pray until she knew her only son was saved
  - c). While she prayed the tract began to make sense to Hudson
    - 1a). He understood for the first time what the "Finished work of Christ" meant
    - 2a). Christ had done all that was necessary for man's salvation  
He had paid the penalty he owed because of his sin
    - 3a). He embraced Christ by faith and was saved
  - d). He couldn't wait for his mother to return home – so he could tell her
    - 1a). When she did he said "Mother, the most wonderful thing has happened I have met Jesus Christ"
    - 2a). She just said "I know" and told him the exact time when the Lord told her
- 4). Church history is filled with stories about God using prayer to save individuals
  - a). Pray for your friends, family members, children, co-workers

**Point:** Evangelistic prayer is so powerful

- A. Have a list of unbelievers you pray for regularly – that the Lord would open their eyes
- B. You can join with those who are doing evangelistic work praying the Lord would bless them
  - 1). You enter into their ministry with them
- C. Also pray the Lord would open up opportunities for you
  - 1). Those opportunities you can naturally step into – look for them

**Pr 11:30 (NKJV)** he who wins souls is wise.

**Jas 5:20 (ESV)** Let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

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## CONCLUSION

1. Paul writes to the Romans to tell them why he had not visited
2. Then tells him why he wants to visit

- A. For mutual encouragement
- B. And for spiritual fruit – to take the Gospel into Rome in a greater way
  - 1). Because it was such a strategic location
  - 2). Because of the obligation he felt to tell the unbeliever God's good news

**Therefore: Ro 1:15 (ESV)** So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

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- a). We'll look at that next week