

The Book of Romans, Lesson 1, Romans 1:1, "An Introduction"

👉 Ready? We are starting a study into the book of Romans.

1. Introduction to Romans

- ✓ Romans is written by a man who suffered from false teachings and a false religious system but was converted to believing and trusting Christ. The book was written about 30 years after the church in Jerusalem was started by the Apostle Paul. Paul writes this letter or book while he is serving in Corinth, and he is writing to a congregation that he did not start but intended to visit as God allowed. The Book of Romans stands as the most thorough explanation of our complete ruin under sin and God's perfect remedy in Christ. These doctrines and place where they are best explained is where we have to return on a regular basis so that we can stay firmly grounded and founded on the simple and marvelous truths of God's work. "It is either back, back, back to the incarnate Christ and His atoning work, or it is on, on, on to atheism and despair," Francis L. Patton, President of Princeton University. So, we are going to be returning to Romans because a house is no better than its foundation.

2. Beginning at the beginning

- ✓ Paul begins by introducing himself, this not something he does in his other letters because he knows those people and those churches since he was the one that brought them to Christ. A "Bondservant" was the lowest position in a Roman household, this person is an indentured slave for life by their own choosing. We might have expected him to introduce himself first as an apostle, pastor, missionary, church leader or even as a Roman citizen, but that's not what he wants them to know first about him. "What I want you know first and foremost about me is that I belong to someone else." Nobody better than to be enslaved to Jesus Christ the Son of God! Paul is an "Apostle," this means "one who is sent out." Paul picks the order of his introduction because it is critical to understanding who he was and why he did what he did. First, he is a slave by choice and then he is one sent out; he's not sent out against his will. This is the key to the success of his entire ministry, a willing slave of Christ who is sent out under orders to the ministry God has for him. He is "Called," Paul doesn't send himself; he is sent. In the Old Testament, if a prophet sent himself and spoke without God telling him to he was executed! Paul was sent and the fruits of his ministry demonstrate the truth of that. He was "Separated" or set apart for the gospel of God. God cannot work through us completely until we are completely set apart. We have to be set apart from the world and its thinking and teachings before we can be set apart to Christ, "from" comes before "to," we have to let go what the world wants before can take hold of what Christ wants for us. Nothing can come before His call on our lives or else we cannot call ourselves His possessions or call Him Lord. And we dare not separate ourselves from the world only without being separated to Christ. There are a lot of grumpy Christians out there who have separated themselves from things, boast of all the things they have given up. Christianity is not ultimately about what we give up, it is about what we gain.
