

Welcome...

“Set Apart for the Gospel”

This is week number two of our new series: G.O.S.P.E.L.! – a study of Romans

Let’s begin by quickly reviewing last week’s bird’s eye view of Paul’s letter to the church at Rome...

- A. Romans is the Bible’s “recipe” of God’s authentic “gospel” (good news)
- B. *** VIDEO *** “What is the Heart of the Gospel?” (John MacArthur)
- C. Romans has 7 sections:
 - a. G. Greeting
 - b. O. Offense/Out-lawed (Sin)
 - c. S. Salvation
 - d. P. Purifying (Sanctification)
 - e. E. Everything (God’s Sovereignty over all of creation)
 - f. L. Love (Servitude – love as a verb)
 - g. ! Warning against false teaching amidst the letter’s close
- D. Romans reigns in those who would abuse grace, and forces Pharisees to free grace, so as to rightly represent grace & God’s true gospel
- E. Romans “theme” is found in 1:16-17...

T/S: I want to begin this study with two profound words of wisdom... the first comes from Martin Luther, 500 years ago, and is directed at me (the Pastor). Then the second quotes Rick Warren and it is directed to you, (the listener).

1. Martin Luther on Romans ch.1:

“The first duty of a preacher of the Gospel is, through his revealing of the law and of sin, to rebuke and to turn into sin everything in life that does not have the Spirit and faith-in-Christ as its base. Thereby he will lead people to a recognition of their miserable condition, and thus they will become humble and yearn for help. This is what Paul does. He begins in chapter 1 by rebuking the gross sins and unbelief which are in plain view... He says that, thru the Gospel, God is revealing His wrath from heaven upon all mankind because of the godless and unjust lives they live. For although they know and recognize there is a God, yet human nature, without grace, is so evil that it neither thanks nor honors God. This nature blinds itself and continually falls into wickedness, and is unashamed of itself...”

2. Rick Warren on the book of Romans in its entirety:

“The best way to approach Romans is by seeing it as a letter written to you.”

We begin our study of the book of Romans by beginning at the beginning... Rom. 1:1
“Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God.”

... a treasure trove of truth in love... so much in such a small package...

- A. Paul
- B. Slave (of Christ Jesus)
- C. Summoned (“called”)
- D. Sent-one (“apostle”)
- E. Set-apart
- F. For the gospel
- G. Of God

1. **Paul**

- a. Religiously = **Hebrew**
- b. Culturally = **Greek**
- c. Politically = **Roman**
- d. Transformationally = **Acts 9 & Galatians 1-2:12**
 - i. Note: God prepared Saul even before he changed to Paul
 - ii. Note: God met Saul the sinner & made him Paul the saint
 - iii. Note: God took world’s #1 sinner & made him #1 saint
 - iv. **Key Yesterday need not interfere w/ your today/tomorrow**

2. **Slave** (“doulos”) – we did an entire series on this word last year....

- a. Slave means **SLAVE! / “OWNED!” (servants = paid / owned vs rented)**
- b. Being a blessed slave brings blessed **Freedom!**
- c. **Qt:** “A person engulfed in self-will and self-fulfillment becomes less and less capable of loving because as his desire to possess grows, his desire to give withers.” - John MacArthur
- d. **Divine Slaves look for, live for, and truly love their Master & His assignments!**

3. **Summoned** (“called”)

- a. **Acts 9...** Jesus came & called Paul personally... **(just like He does us!)**
- b. **Acts 9:15** (confirmed by Ananias)
- c. **Acts 26:16-18:** 'Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a minister and as a witness (mar-toos) of what you have seen of me and what I will show you. I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'
- d. **1 Cor. 9:16** = “... Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!
- e. **Galatians 1:1,10** = “Paul, an apostle—sent not from men nor by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father... Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ.
- f. **God’s call is the only one that brings His blessing with it!**

4. **Sent-Out/Sent-One** (“apostle”)

- a. Definition:
 - i. **“Ambassador”**
 - ii. **“Commissioned Representative”**
 - iii. **Origin = “Cargo ships were called “apostolic”**
 - a. **Dispatched with a specific shipment**
 - b. **Dispatched with a specific destination**
- b. Every true Christian is a “sent one” --- cargo = gospel / dest. = world
 - i. Acts 1:8 - **Spread**
 - ii. Jude 3ff - **Contend (fight for the Truth...)**
 - iii. Titus 1:11 – **Defend (fight for the people!)**
- c. **False Gospels/Teachers are devil-sent, NOT divinely sent!**

5. **Set-Apart** (for the gospel)

- a. Definition = distinctively different & segregated from every alternative!
- b. Definition in context:
 - i. Individual (Paul/preacher/person) – in womb (Galatians 1:15)
 - ii. Set apart as a SLAVE
 - iii. Set apart per a SUMMONS (“called” by Spirit/Acts 13:2)
 - iv. Set apart as one SENT OUT
 - v. A Slave Summoned, Sent Out, & “Set Apart” FOR the GOSPEL!
 - vi. **Other Scriptures with same “Set-Apart” Gk. word...**
 - **Matt. 13:49-50** = This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come & **separate** the wicked from the righteous & throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping & gnashing of teeth.
 - **Matt. 25:32** = All the nations will be gathered before him, and **he will separate** the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.
 - **Luke 6:22** = Blessed are you when men hate you, when they **exclude** you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man.
 - **Acts 13:2** = While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "**Set apart for me** Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."
 - **Acts 19:9** = when some were becoming hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the people, he withdrew from them and **took away** the disciples...
 - **2 Cor. 6:17** - see below...
 - **Gal. 1:15** = God... **set me apart** from birth and called me by his grace...

- **Gal. 2:12** = Before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and **separate himself** from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group.

- c. Note: MOST CONTROVERSIAL of modern Christian truths because...
 - i. Requires acceptance of **biblical standards / Truth / R&W**
 - ii. Requires personal **accountability**
 - iii. Requires personal & corporate response & responsibilities
 - iv. Requires discernment that will be called “judgmentalism”
 - v. Requires loving but difficult confrontations
 - vi. Requires Christ-like courage to stand alone if need be...
 - vii. Requires acceptance & perseverance in the midst of persecution
 - viii. Requires eternal vs. worldly priorities & perspective
 - ix. Requires God’s grace to initiate & sustain...
 - x. Requires serving an Audience of One!
- d. John Piper: “Set apart from a love of this world, in which:”
 - i. The **glory** of God is not honored...
 - ii. The holiness of God is not revered...
 - iii. The greatness of God is not **admired**...
 - iv. The power of God is not praised...
 - v. The **truth** of God is not sought...
 - vi. The wisdom of God is not esteemed...
 - vii. The beauty of God is not treasured...
 - viii. The goodness of God is not savored...
 - ix. The faithfulness of God is not **trusted**...
 - x. The promises of God are not relied upon...
 - xi. The commandments of God are not obeyed...
 - xii. The justice of God is not respected...
 - xiii. The **wrath** of God is not feared...
 - xiv. The grace of God is not cherished...
 - xv. The presence of God is not prized...
 - xvi. The person of God is not **loved**.
 - xvii. “The infinite, all-glorious Creator of the universe is **disregarded, disbelieved, disobeyed, & dishonored by the world**. Sin = esteeming & valuing & honoring & enjoying man & his creations above God, our Creator.
- e. God set pattern of “setting apart”
 - i. Holy nation... Lev. 20:26
 - ii. First born... Exodus 13:12
 - iii. Tithes... Numbers 15:20
 - iv. Levites... Numbers 8:11-14
- f. Look at biblical history... blur the lines/peoples/etc. = crash and burn!!!

- g. **2 Timothy 1:6-7** = For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.
- h. Spurgeon's "Down Grade Controversy" (see addendum)

“Set Apart”

(An apostolic example. A biblical command. An absolute necessity.)

The Down Grade Controversy

per John MacArthur

In March 1887, Charles Spurgeon published the first of two articles entitled "The Down Grade" Spurgeon, footnoted the first article with a personal endorsement:

Earnest attention is requested for this paper... We are going down hill at breakneck speed.

Shindler... likened drifting from truth to a downhill slope, and thus labeled it "the down-grade."

Shindler further stated... *"some who got on 'the down grade' went further than they intended, showing that it is easier to get on than to get off & that where there is no brake it is very difficult to stop."*

NOTE: (God's Word is the accelerator of Truth & the emergency brake for falsehoods! - JDP)

Some who abandoned the faith did so openly, Shindler said. But **many purposely concealed their skepticism and heresy, preferring to sow seeds of doubt while posing as orthodox believers.**

Many of those who remained true to the faith were nevertheless reluctant to fight for what they believed in. Evangelical preaching was often cold and lifeless, and even those who held to sound doctrine were careless about where they drew the line in their associations with others...

Shindler concluded that first paper on "The Down Grade" with these words:

"These facts furnish a lesson for the present times, when, as in some cases, it is all too plainly apparent, men are willing to forego the old for the sake of the new. But commonly it is found in theology that that which is true is not new, and that which is new is not true."

Spurgeon quotes from Article #3 on...

"Our solemn conviction is that things are much worse in many churches than they seem to be, and are rapidly tending downward... A new religion has been initiated, which is no more Christianity than chalk is cheese..." Too many ministers are toying with the deadly cobra of 'another gospel,'

"It now becomes a serious question, how far those who abide by the faith... should fraternize with those who have turned aside to another gospel... Numbers of easy-minded people wink at error so long as it is committed by a clever man and a good-natured brother, who has so many fine points about him.

In Spurgeon's estimation the truth of the Word had been so seriously compromised that true Christians needed to consider the command of **2 Corinthians 6:17**: "'Come out from their midst and be separate,' says the Lord..."

Spurgeon, who for decades had been almost universally revered by evangelicals, was suddenly besieged with critics... from within the camp.

Denominational leaders began looking for a way of compromise. But **Spurgeon refused to compromise**:

(NOTE: "Compromise is always a friend to the false & foe to the facts." -JDP)

(NOTE: "Truth, by definition, is uncompromisable." - JDP)

(NOTE: "Compromise is not an option at a spiritual fork in the road." - JDP)

The times are perilous, and the responsibility of every individual believer is a burden which he must bear, or prove a traitor.

there are many things upon which compromise is possible, but there are others in which it would be an act of treason...

Withdrawal from the Union

On October 28, 1887, Spurgeon wrote...

"Fellowship with known and vital error is participation in sin.

Spurgeon saw no reason true Christians should accommodate those who doubted the authority and sufficiency of Scripture.

"May God help those who do not believe these things! Where must they be?"

"Nothing has ever more largely promoted the union of the true, than the break with the false."

Numbers of good brethren in different ways remain in fellowship with those who are undermining the gospel; and they talk of their conduct as though it were a loving course which the Lord will approve of... We cannot understand them. The bounden duty of a true believer, towards men who profess to be Christians, and yet deny the Word of the Lord, and reject the fundamentals of the gospel, is to come out from among them...

Our present sorrowful protest is not a matter of this man or that, this error or that; but of principle.

Close friends, and even some of the students from his Pastors' College, turned against him. But Spurgeon declared to the end that he did not regret the stand he had taken.

“Complicity with error will take from the best of men the power to enter any successful protest against it.” - C.H. Spurgeon

- i. Key verse: **2 Cor. 6:17** = “Come out from their midst & be separate, says the Lord. And do not touch what is unclean.”
- ii. See **1 Cor. 5:13** - “expel the wicked man from among you.”
- iii. Note Paul confronting/challenging Peter over doctrine / hypocrisy
 1. Galatians 2:11ff...
 2. Note: another evidence against Catholic tradition’s wrong assumptions about Peter & his limited role in the birthing & building of God’s church... built on Christ, the solid Rock!

6. “For the Gospel”

- a. We are all **SLAVES**... saved to serve, bringing glory to God by loving Him & living/being Gospel slaves...
- b. We are all **SUMMONED**... “called” by God for the Gospel
- c. We are all **SENT OUT**... with the Gospel message (we are witnesses)
- d. We have all been **SET APART**... for God’s glory as called out, Gospel slaves & sent-ones!
- e. We are here for the **Gospel**... “**Find** the Lost, Grow the **Found**”
- f. Paul sets this in place early... Chapter 1, verse 1... “for the Gospel”
- g. Remember:
 - i. Down Grade Controversy
 - ii. Galatians 1:9 & Titus 1:11

7. (for the gospel) OF GOD

- a. Don’t ever forget whose “good news” this is!
- b. **Jesus** is both the **CONTENT** & **CONDUIT** of grace & gospel!
- c. Donald Barnhouse... illustration of murderous son’s stumble... speaking heart... My son, are you hurt?!? Reflects God’s love for us...

CLOSE:

Are you living “set apart for the gospel” or are you blending in to a blurry world?
With whom do you stand? When do you stand? How do you stand? How consistently..?

Are you set apart with the...

FAITHFUL

OR

FICKLE

OBEDIENT	OR	OBSTINATE
COURAGEOUS	OR	COWARDS
WORSHIPPERS	OR	WORLDLY
UNIFIERS	OR	DIVIDERS
FINISHERS	OR	QUITTERS
CROSS-CARRIERS	OR	BACK-SLAPPERS
TRUTH-TELLERS	OR	LIARS
CLOSERS	OR	POSERS
“RIDE-UP”	OR	“SLIDE” DOWN
PRAYER	OR	PLAYER