

# JUDGES & ROMANS: RUINED TO RIGHTEOUS

## Lesson 2: Righteous Through Gospel Power

Key Verse: For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."~ Romans 1.16-17

“👤📧, 📧, 🗣️🗣️, 🗣️🗣️,” This is how Paul would introduce himself using only emojis! (Romans 1.1) While Paul opens his letter by claiming authorship and introducing himself, he quickly reveals the One this letter is about: **Jesus Christ**. Then, Paul quickly exclaims the good news, or **gospel**, he is exploding to share: Jesus Christ, our Lord, resurrected from the dead (👤), breaking ALL the barriers (🚫🚫🚫) so that anyone from any nation (ACBVEAMXUMCNUIRITGRDERU+) may reside in God’s kingdom! (🙌🙌🙌🙌🙌🙌)

*Beautiful Savior, Jesus Christ, thank You for dying for us. Thank You for dying in faith that Your Father’s power would raise You from the dead. Thank You for giving us access to the same Father, the same faith, and the same power so that we may belong to You eternally. Increase our obedience and our faith. Make us unashamed missionaries of the gospel of salvation in Jesus to all.*

**Romans 1.1-17** Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, **2** which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, **3** concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh **4** and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, **5** 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, **6** including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

**7** 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.

**8** First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world. **9** For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I mention you **10** always in my prayers, asking that somehow by God’s will I may now at last succeed in coming to you. **11** For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you— **12** that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith, both yours and mine. **13** 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.

**14** I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. **15** So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome. **16** For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. **17** For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”

**Diamonds:** Paul’s first words in his letter to the church community in Rome are filled with passion and enthusiasm. We see his uncontainable drive expressed in phrases like, “without ceasing [I pray for you]” (V 9), “I long to see you” (V 11), “we may be mutually encouraged” (V 12), “I have often intended to come to you” (V 13), “reap some harvest” (V 13), “I am under obligation” (V 14), “I am eager to preach the gospel” (V 15), and “I am not ashamed” (V 16).

1. Do you remember when the gospel of Jesus Christ as Messiah and Savior first “clicked” for you? Perhaps it was the first time you heard it, or even the 100th time, but at some point, the “light bulb” clicked on in your mind and heart. As you recall your journey to salvation, or “to belong to Jesus Christ” (V 6), remember your excitement, enthusiasm, passion, and/or face-planting emotions as you embraced Jesus as your Messiah and Savior. How was your response like Paul’s? (For example: What did you long for? How did a new boldness surprise you? Did you experience a brave willingness to endure and risk gospel shame? How did the gospel spur you on to pray for others without ceasing? Or what burdensome obligation did you happily embrace to reap God’s harvest?)

–OR– If you have yet to know Jesus as your Messiah and Savior, consider God’s role as your shepherd in leading

you to this moment. What is unresolved for you? Where is doubt, shame, or uncertainty creating confusion? What do you hope God will teach you, show you, and/or answer for you so that the gospel of Jesus as Messiah and Savior will “click” on like a fresh light bulb in your mind and heart?

2. The introduction introduced Paul using only emojis. As Paul's sister-in-Christ, what emojis would you use to introduce yourself to Paul?

Paul's letter builds on a shared sense of belonging among all in this new, diverse small group, house church-style community of Jesus followers. This was necessary because of the fundamental truth that Jesus is the Christ, the promised Messiah, who was resurrected from death to life by *God's* power, triggered great social, religious, and political controversy. In addition, Paul's conversion from zealous, law-abiding, legalistic Jew to devout, freedom-fighting Christ-follower made him a target within his own Jewish community for his “liberal [religious] polic[ies]”<sup>1</sup>.

Additionally, the first Jewish Christian community in Rome became political exiles for a few years under the rule of Claudius. It is believed that Claudius expelled Jewish Christian who were rioting in response to “disputes within the Jewish community over the claims of Jesus to be the *Christos*, the Messiah.”<sup>2</sup> With Claudius no longer ruling over Rome (likely because he is dead), the Jewish Christians returned to Rome as a minority group which created “social and theological divisions” with the Gentile Christian majority.<sup>3</sup> As Dr. Moo explains, “Gentile Christians, undoubtedly part of the community before the expulsion, would have come into greater prominence as a result of the absence of all, or most of the Jewish Christians. Theologically, this would have also meant an acceleration in the movement of the Christian community away from its Jewish origins.” Now in the minority, it is understood that the Jewish Christians were experiencing a “sense of inferiority” among the majority Gentile Christians.<sup>4</sup>

As in the book of Judges, we see historical events and corresponding cultural forces creating leadership vacuums and a power shift triggering conflict and tension among God's people. But also, in Romans we will see the reminder that God's sovereignty is revealed in His unthwartable will of Kingdom expansion to His Glory. In Judges, this is seen in the tribe's call to faith in God's promise of their entrance into their earthly inheritance, and in Romans, this is seen in God's call to faith in God's promise of entrance into His presence and eternal inheritance fulfilled through Jesus Christ.

3. The power of God is identified as the game-changer in both Judges 1 and in this portion of Romans 1.1-17. How do you see the power of God making a difference for the tribes in Judges, as well as within the blended community of Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians? (Use Lesson 1 to help with your answer. However, it's okay to focus your answer on this lesson if it's best for you!)

Several of Paul's phrases in verses 3-6 are tricky because they unintentionally can be understood as denying the divine nature of Christ as only revealed by His resurrection. But they are best understood as Paul defining Christ as God's Son both in Jesus' humanity as a descendent of David (V 3) and in being defined as God's Son whose resurrection “ushers in the new age of redemption.”<sup>5</sup> As a result, like us, Paul has received grace. But unlike us, he has a unique role as an apostle, or one who has seen Jesus (Acts 9.1-9), and whose commission by Jesus was specific and unique to Paul (Acts 9.15-16). This grace, alongside Paul's apostleship, brings obedience and faith, “...obedience always involves faith, and faith

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<sup>1</sup>Stott, p. 17; Moo, p. 2

<sup>2</sup>Moo, p. 4

<sup>3</sup>Moo, p. 5

<sup>4</sup>Moo, p. 11

<sup>5</sup>Moo, p. 49, and pp. 42-53

always involves obedience.”<sup>6</sup> This is brought for all nations, thereby falling in line with God’s will of Kingdom expansion (Exodus 19.5-6; Deuteronomy 7.6; Isaiah 42.6, 49.6; 1 Kings 8.43), now through Jesus Christ (Matthew 28.18-20). Thankfully Paul’s incredibly gracious and sweet greeting in verse 7 resolves all confusion.

4. How does Paul greet the Christ-followers in Rome (V 7)? How does the simplicity and preciousness of his greeting in verse 7 unify all he has said about Jesus and God in verses 1-6? In other words, how would any confusion or misunderstanding, or limited understanding about Jesus be brought to simplicity by Paul’s words in verse 7?

Paul shouts to his audience, “I am a MISSIONARY!” in verses 8-17.

5. According to Paul’s declaration, what would you find in the job description of a missionary? What are some of the things that missionaries do?

While we tend to leave the job of missionary work to those who also declare, “I am a missionary!”, being a missionary isn’t necessarily reserved for some and not for others.

6. How does Paul imply that missionary-type work is occurring even among those who aren’t labeling themselves as missionaries in verses 8-13? What does this imply about your role as a missionary today?

**Deity: Jesus Christ~** (Romans 1.1-6) “A compound name for the incarnate (human) person of the Trinity: *Jesus* refers to the man from Nazareth (Matthew 21.11; Luke 2.1-7; Acts 4.10), and *Christ* is Greek for ‘Messiah’, which means ‘anointed’. In Acts 5:42, He is referred to as Jesus the Christ: apparently this was abbreviated to the form *Jesus Christ*.”<sup>7</sup>

7. What does Paul teach us about Jesus from verses 1-17? In other words, what does Paul tell us about Jesus that lays the foundation for belief in Jesus as the Christ, or Messiah?

Like God, Jesus is eternal (John 1.1-2) and was the “instrument”<sup>8</sup> God used in creation (John 1.3). He is God’s promised deliverer: “a seed of the woman to crush the head of the serpent (Genesis 3.15), a child of Abraham (Genesis 12.3), a lion of the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49.10), a star from Jacob and a scepter from Israel (Numbers 24.17), a prophet like Moses (Deuteronomy 18.15-19), a royal Son (Psalm 2.7), a son of David (Psalm 132.11; 2 Samuel 7.12-13), a child born of a virgin (Isaiah 7.14), a Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9.6), a shoot from the stump of Jesse (Isaiah 11.1), a revelation of the glory of the Lord (Isaiah 40.3-5), a light to the nations (Isaiah 49.6), an ancient one born in Bethlehem (Micah 5.2), a speaker of peace whose rule shall extend from sea to sea (Zechariah 9.10), and the God of justice and the Lord come to His temple (Malachi

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<sup>6</sup>Moo, pp. 50-51

<sup>7</sup>MacArthur & Mayhue, p. 932

<sup>8</sup>DeYoung, p. 163

3.1).<sup>9</sup>

- Highlight your favorite thought(s) from the above paragraph. Consider using this in your Scripture-Soaked Prayer.

In the New Testament, He is “the Word made flesh (John 1.1-18), and Immanuel, God with us (Matthew 1.23). He is the Lamb of God (John 1.29), the bread of life (John 6.35), and the King of the Jews (John 19.21). He is Helper (John 14.16) and the Great I AM (John 8.58). Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life (John 14.6). He is the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1.15), the radiance of the glory of God, and the exact imprint of His nature (Hebrews 1.3). He is our Advocate (1 John 2.1), our Great High Priest (Hebrews 4.14), and the founder and perfecter of our faith (Hebrews 12.2). Jesus is the faithful witness, firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of earth (Revelation 1.5). He is the Alpha and Omega, the one who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty (Revelation 1.8). He is the first and the last, and the living one (Revelation 1.17-18). Jesus is the King of kings and Lord of lords (Revelation 19.6).<sup>10</sup>

- Highlight your favorite thought(s) from the above paragraph. Consider using this in your Scripture-Soaked Prayer.
8. Focusing on your two most favorite thoughts about Jesus from the Old Testament and the New Testament, how do they help you connect the Old Testament and the New Testament? How is the relevance of knowing the Old Testament revealed in Jesus? In other words, how does seeing Jesus in the Old Testament help you understand its importance in fully understanding the writing in the New Testament?

–OR–Share why you chose your two favorite thoughts about Jesus. Why are they precious and/or meaningful to you today?

**Bonus: Beautiful Savior-** Inspired by the German hymn, [\*Beautiful Savior, King of Creation\*](#) (1677), this deity encapsulates Jesus as Son of God, the Messiah and Savior; Son of Man, the empathic High Priest who wore the crown of thorns; and the King of creation who restores what was created through Him by His Father (John 1.1-3), wearing the insulting but *final* crown of thorns, exchanging it for a crown of glory, seated at the right Hand of His Father, God (Hebrews 12.2). Jesus’ crucifixion was more than a humiliating death when considering the role of created things used to crucify God’s Son: nailed to a tree designed by His Father, wearing a crown of thorns, designed by Satan.

And now, all glory, honor, praise, and adoration belong to Him forevermore because by His wounds we are healed (Matthew 8.17), reconciled to God (Ephesians 2.13-22), now our Father, too! (Romans 8.15-17; Galatians 4.4-6) He truly IS a Beautiful Savior.

**Doctrine: The Gospel~** (Romans 1.16) “The gospel” is the good news that Christ died for us, was buried, and rose again (1 Corinthians 15.1-8). There is only one “good news” of salvation; any other gospel is false (Galatians 1.6-10).

The message of the gospel is the good news that sinners can become the children of God through faith in Jesus Christ, God’s Son (John 3.16).

“To add anything to the gospel is to deprive it of its power. We are not saved from our sins by faith in Christ *plus* something else; we are saved by faith in Christ *alone*.”<sup>11</sup>

9. Just for fun, what emoji best describes the gospel to you, and why?

<sup>9</sup>DeYoung, p. 165

<sup>10</sup>DeYoung, p. 167

<sup>11</sup>Wiersbe, p. 634

**Your Scripture-Soaked Prayer:** As you studied this week, what verse(s) lit up like a neon sign as you read them? What passage or thought remains in the forefront of your mind? Maybe your favorite thoughts and corresponding scripture from this week's deity, Jesus Christ, are a perfect springboard for your SSP. Even if it seems like the verse cannot be used as a prayer, be brave and bold and try it!

### Lecture Outline:

**Aim:** God calls believers to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ.

- I. Gospel Slaves (Romans 1.1-7) **T1:** God calls believers to be His kingdom-advancing slaves.
  - a. When were you redeemed from a life of slavery to sin to a life of slavery to Christ?
  - b. What are the positive aspects or blessings of being His slave?
  - c. How is God using you to advance His kingdom?
- II. Gospel Salvation (Romans 1.8-17) **T2:** God calls believers to eagerly and shamelessly proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ.
  - a. How prepared are you to proclaim the gospel?
  - b. How might your failure to share the gospel indicate you are ashamed of the gospel?
  - c. What can you do to obey God's call despite your fear being hated, rejected, or ostracized?

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