

The Teaching of Paul: A Series of Fifteen Studies

Paul Study 2 – Romans 1:1-7

taken from
Bible Studies for Enquirers and New Believers
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Readings: Romans 1:1-7

Questions and Comments

1. What 3 things does Paul claim about himself in v 1?

- Paul says that he is a slave of Jesus Christ. In Greek, the original language, the word is 'doulos' translated AW in Arabic (e.g. 'Abdullah' means slave of God) and 'ghulam' in Urdu. In the famous Greek translation of the Old Testament Hebrew, called the Septuagint (LXX), the prophet Amos in Amos 3:7 calls the prophets God's servants or more exactly God's slaves (*douloi*). Paul, by calling himself a slave of Jesus Christ, is not only showing his total submission to Jesus but is also putting himself in the prophetic tradition.
- Paul says that he is an apostle. In Arabic and Urdu the Greek word 'apostolos' is rendered 'rasul'. Paul was recognized by the churches as an apostle (Acts 14:14). An apostle is sent by God and bears his message. Sometimes it is a written message (*rasalat*). Paul is such an apostle and wrote a number of inspired letters which were recognized as such and included in the New Testament.
- Paul says that he was set apart for the gospel of God (Galatians 1:15). He was set apart by God for his gospel or good news. The good news is the gospel of the triune God not just the gospel of Jesus. Paul was not only set apart by God but also by the Holy Spirit and the church at Antioch (Acts 13:2). The play on words eludes translation. Paul had been a Pharisee, one of the "separated ones". He had drawn apart in strict personal discipline, rejecting the standards of the world and its attractions and devoting himself with single-minded zeal to the pursuit of righteousness. His experience on the Damascus road changed all this and now he rejoices in the intervention of God in his life and that God has set him apart for the gospel.

2. In v 2-3 what 3 things does Paul claim about the gospel or good news?

- He claims its divine origin – it is the gospel of God.
- He claims it is predicted by the prophets in the holy scriptures of the Old Testament (e.g. Isaiah 52:13-53:12 which foretells the suffering and vindication of God's servant Jesus).
- He claims that it centers on Jesus Christ. This is made clear by v 3-4 which refer to his incarnation – he is descended from King David according to the

flesh (Luke 3:31; Matthew 1:1). In v 4 it refers to his resurrection through the power of the Holy Spirit. The incarnation displays his humanity and the resurrection his divinity. Romans 1:2-4 was perhaps a simple creed of the early church.

3. In v 6-7 what 3 things does Paul write about the believers in Rome?

Further Questions about the Whole Passage

4. What do you know about Rome at that time?
5. What light does Exodus 19:5-6 throw on Paul's second statement about believers?
6. Who has received grace and apostleship?
7. What is the meaning of 'apostleship'?
8. What was the main greeting of the Old Testament (Romans 1:7)?
9. What was the main greeting of the New Testament?