

Romans Chapter 1B

Friends, the greatest need that we have in the world today is for the Gospel of Jesus Christ to be proclaimed in the power of the Holy Spirit to every nation, every tribe, every kindred, and in every language.

- Although we face tremendous political division in our nation, our greatest need is not political.
- Although the Nations around us are continually in turmoil because of the corruption that is in them due to sin, our greatest need is not border security!
- IN a time when the building block of society, the family is being destroyed by the ongoing redefinition of gender and marriage, our greatest need is not social.
- Despite the proliferation of Nuclear Weapons by Iraq and North Korea our most pressing need is NOT the strengthening of our defenses. **Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.** Ps. 127:1

From a biblical prospective, our greatest need is for the life-changing Gospel of Jesus Christ to explode in the hearts of men and women radically transforming them from the inside out!

- The socio-economic issues that so easily capture our attention, the fears that so readily captivate our minds and the moral decline of society that saddens our hearts are all mere symptoms of an even greater malady.
- In the Gospel of Mark, the Lord Jesus said:

Mark 7: 21 **For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, 22 coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. 23 All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."**

- Scripture tells us that the heart of man, The very core of his being is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Jeremiah 17:19
- BUT God, in his infinity mercy has provided a way for the wicked heart of man to be radically transformed and that is through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Friends, we have in front of us, what I believe is the most clear and concise, the most thoughtful and thorough explanation of the Gospel that is available to us in the Bible

- It is my prayer as we walk through the book of Romans together that we will grow in our understanding of the Gospel and in our ability to effectively communicate it.
- Here in the opening 6 verses, of Ch. 1 the Apostle Paul lays out for us the:
 1. The Origin of the Gospel
 2. The History of the Gospel
 3. The Content of the Gospel
 4. The Goal of the Gospel

1. The Origin of the Gospel

Romans 1:1 **Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,**

- As we discovered last week, Paul viewed himself as a bond-servant, a slave who was summoned or effectively called by God not only to salvation but also to serve as an Apostle, one who was set apart and sent by God to proclaim the Gospel.
- Now, this phrase, “**The Gospel of God**” tells us that God is both the origin and the object of the Gospel. HE is both the source and the substance of the Gospel.

Friends, It is very important that we understand the Gospel did not originate in the mind of man. It is not the product of man’s wisdom. The Apostles did not sit around the table one evening and devise a religion that would expose the total depravity of man and exalt the immeasurable grace of the Triune God.

The Gospel IS fully and completely a product of the infinite wisdom and unlimited knowledge of Almighty God. It clearly reveals man’s desperate need for salvation and then it beautifully displays the gracious provision of God securing that salvation through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Paul elaborates on the origin of the Gospel in his letter to the Galatians where he writes: **For I would have you know, brothers, that the gospel that was preached by me is not man’s gospel. 12 For I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.** Galatians 1:11

- My friends, Only God could have designed this Gospel. Who but God could have conceived this outrageous plan:

That God the Father would commission God the Son to leave his eternal abode in glory and enter into this fallen, corrupt world. Being born of a virgin through the agency of the Spirit. Born under the Law of Moses, obeying that law in every point that you and I have so horribly failed. So that through Christ’s active obedience he would secure a perfect righteousness that would be credited to our account as if we ourselves had lived a sinless life before God. WHO but God could have designed this Gospel?

Who would imagine that the Son of God would willfully bear the full fury of the God’s wrath for the sin of corrupt men? What mind could conceive that the one who knew no sin would become sin for us so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him? That by the shedding of His blood he would reconcile Holy God and sinful man, that He would redeem men from the slave market of sin and adopt them into his own family.

Who would have thought this plan through to the very end where Christ who arose from the dead and ascended into heaven would be exalted to the right hand of the Father and serve as a faithful high priest securing eternal life and assuring the final glorification of every single one of God’s precious children?

My friends, because this is God’s Gospel and because it is a divine revelation NONE of US have the right to tamper with it, to tweak or to adjust the message, to make it more

relevant for today's culture. We must not twist it, we must not add to it or take away from it. We cannot reinterpret it or reconfigure it in any way because it is God's Gospel.

Paul said in Galatians 1:8.

But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed.

- Let him be accursed; that is devoted to destruction and consigned to the hottest part of hell itself. Paul goes on to say:

Galatians 1: 9 **As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.**

- My friends the strong words that Paul speaks with regard to the Gospel are further proof that God is both the source and subject of the Gospel.

What does all of this mean to US? – It means that we should be discerning, it means that we should be very careful in what we are hearing on the television, on the radio and sadly even in our churches today. Today's culture of tolerance has weakened our defenses and left us vulnerable to any number of false teachings.

- Easy believism is a Gospel without repentance, no need to change your life just pray this prayer and you are in!
- Watered down Gospel – God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life.
- A self-centered Gospel, seeking God only for the things he can provide such as Health and Wealth and Success.

Now as we move on we find that the Gospel of God has deep roots in history. It is not a new discovery, it's not a second thought; in reality, the Gospel has been God's plan for the salvation of man from the very beginning.

2. The History of the Gospel

Romans 1: 1 **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,**

- The Gospel, which originated with God, was not a divine afterthought NOR does it first appear in the New Testament. The Gospel was not "Plan B" or some revision of God's initial strategy because the Old Covenant failed.
- No, Paul tells us that the Gospel of God was promised beforehand through His Prophets in the Holy Scriptures. That would be the Old Testament.
- The Gospel was First Announced to Adam and Eve in the Garden.

In the very first book of the Bible, Moses who is described as a Prophet in Deuteronomy (18:15) records what Bible Students have long called the "Protoevangelium" or the First Gospel in Genesis 3:15: Speaking to the Serpent God says:

Genesis 3:15 "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

- No sooner did man fall into sin But God promised to send a deliverer, A Savior, who would destroy the works of the Devil.
- Of course, we understand that Jesus came uniquely through a woman, a virgin named Mary and on the cross; he effectively crushed the serpent's head.
- Moving on we follow the promised seed of the woman from Chapter 3 to Chapter 12 where God shared that same Gospel with Father Abraham.

Genesis 12: 2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

- Paul interprets Genesis 12 for us showing that this same Gospel, by which we are saved was revealed to Abraham.

Galatians 3: 8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed." 9 So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

- It was by the grace of God through faith in the Gospel that Father Abraham was declared righteous before God.
- IN Genesis 15:6 Abraham believed God and it was credited to Him as righteousness. So you see:

From Moses to Malachi there is one continuous record of the Gospel, one way that the saints of God were justified in God's sight and that is By grace alone, through faith alone in Christ alone as revealed in the Scripture alone for the glory of God alone.

The Gospel is clearly seen in the redemption of God's people from the land of Egypt where God powerfully delivered them from the bondage of slavery through the sacrificial blood of the lamb.

The Gospel was brilliantly illustrated through the Levitical System of sacrifices, and was proclaimed with clarity by the Prophets.

- From the Pascal Lamb of Exodus to the Suffering Servant of Isaiah the progressive revelation of God points forward to the coming of Christ who would bear our griefs and carry our sorrows.
- And that my friends brings us to the Content of the Gospel which is the humiliation and exaltation of Jesus Christ.

3. The Content of the Gospel.

Romans 1: 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,

- Many of the books I have read say that these two verses are derived from a primitive creed that was developed in order to help believers remember the essence or the content of the Gospel.
- Within these two simple verses, we encounter the humiliation and subsequent glorification of Jesus Christ.

Essential to the Gospel is the fact that the eternal Son of God put on human flesh and was born into the family line of David as the prophets foretold.

- In 2 Samuel 7, God made a promise to David:

2 Samuel 7: 12 **When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.**

- And we understand, through his incarnation, Jesus the Messiah was born of Mary who was a descendant of David. He came into a family where Joseph, his legal guardian was also a descendant of David.
- The Gospel of Matthew opens with these words:

Mt 1:1 **The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.**

- In order to share in our weakness and carry our sin Jesus emptied himself by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (Phil.2)

But my friends, that's only half of the story. After the justice of God was satisfied and payment for The Sin of God's elect was complete on the third day Jesus rose from the grave.

- The second half of this ancient creedal statement contrasts the deep humiliation of Christ by pointing to his glorious exaltation.

Romans 1: 4 (HE Christ) **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,**

- Here Paul speaks of the exaltation of Christ, wherein THROUGH the resurrection he was declared or appointed to be the Son of God in power.
- Listen, nothing within Christ's essential nature ever changed, He is, He was and he always will be the Eternal Son of God. What changed was his position.

- Now by virtue of his obedience in suffering and his glorious victory over sin and death, God the Father exalted him to the highest place.
- His humiliation and subsequent resurrection has resulted in his exaltation. He is now and forever the Lord of all!

Philippians 2: 9 **Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

SO WHAT does that mean for you and for me? IT means that the one who DIED for us NOW lives for US! The one who humbled himself has been exalted to the highest place. He is LORD of all! HE HAS BEEN:

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Ephesians 1:20b - 22 **(HAS BEEN) seated at the right hand of God in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. All things (Have been put) under his feet and (HE IS NOW THE) head over all things to the church,**

So my friends, Any Gospel that Negates or Water's Down the Sovereign Lordship of Jesus Christ is a corrupt Gospel. Jesus has been exalted to the highest place as Lord of all.

- You cannot receive him as Savior and reject Him as Lord.
- Those he has redeemed by his blood now live to serve a new master. They are no longer slaves to sin they have become servants of God.

So far this morning we have considered the Origin of the Gospel – It is the Gospel of God. It is the Ancient Gospel that was proclaimed as far back as Genesis 3. It is the Gospel of Jesus Christ declaring the humiliation of the cross and the exaltation of the resurrection.

- Finally this morning we consider verses 5-6 and the Goal of the Gospel

4. And we find the Goal of the Gospel in Vs 5 – 6.

Romans 1: 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,**

Looking back at the call of God on his life Paul considers the purpose for which God set him apart and He reflects upon the goal of the Gospel that He was entrusted to carry to the nations.

- With that in mind, Paul tells us that the purpose for his Apostleship and the Goal of his Gospel proclamation is **“to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of (God’s) name among all the nations.”**

- Since we who believe have been entrusted with this same Gospel we should at least try to understand the goal of the Gospel: **The obedience of faith.**

Now because our minds are naturally bent toward human performance and the works of man, our first thought is that this obedience of faith must be the good works that are Produced by faith in the lives of the redeemed.

- Now listen, I am not rejecting the necessity of a transformed life or the fruit of obedience that should be growing in the Lives of God's people.
- I just don't think THAT is what Paul is pointing to here in verse 5.
- I believe that Paul is referring to an obedience which consists in faith.
- I believe He's telling us that faith itself is obedience, that to believe the Gospel is to be obedient to the revealed truth of God.

Think about it, What is sin? 1 John 3:4 tells us that "**Sin is lawlessness**" Sin is rebellion, it is disobedience to the revealed will of God.

- Looking at the Sin of Adam in the Garden, the first man and his wife disobeyed the revealed word of God. (They ate the forbidden fruit)
- So it stands to reason that a redemption which is by faith from first to last would be spoken of as the obedience of faith.
- IN chapter 6 when Paul reflects on the conversion of the Believers at Rome, He refers to their faith as obedience.

Romans 6: 17 **But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed,**

- So we could say that Faith is Obedience to the effectual call of God that comes through the Gospel. It is the response of a renewed heart to the Good News.
- The sovereign, gracious work of God in regeneration, opens our blind eyes to see the Kingdom, giving us a new heart, imparting gifts of repentance that result in the obedience of faith.
- Through the obedience of faith, WE believe and are justified, we confess Christ with our mouth and we are saved. Romans 10:10

So it is that The Goal of the Gospel is to bring about the obedience of faith in the lives of God's elect. We simply make the proclamation and faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.

- Now let's SUMMARIZE, What do we know?

This Glorious Gospel has its origin in GOD. He is the source and the substance of the Gospel. This is the same Historic Gospel that was announced to Adam and Eve after they sinned in the Garden. It is the Gospel of Jesus Christ, declaring his humiliation and his exaltation. Finally, it is through the proclamation of the Gospel, that God powerfully elicits the obedience of faith in the lives of His elect.

Before we close this morning, let me quickly give you one more point, and that is the Exclusivity of the Gospel (WOW 5 points a new record!)

Romans 1:1 Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,

- Honestly, it would be very easy for us to read through this verse and totally ignore that one little word “THE” which comes before the word “Gospel.”
- We call this a definite article, so when we speak of “THE Gospel” we’re actually expressing the exclusivity of the Gospel.

This is not one of many Gospels; it is not one of many ways by which a man might be saved. Paul did not say that he was set apart for “A Gospel” He said he was set apart for “The Gospel.”

- This is “The One and Only Gospel” it is the Only Way of Salvation for man.
- On the night that Jesus was betrayed, Thomas, one of the twelve asked:

John 14: 5 "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" 6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

- With those words Jesus pointed to the Exclusivity of the Gospel.
- In the book of Acts the Apostle Peter was standing before the Sanhedrin after being arrested in Jerusalem and He said:

Acts 4:12 And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

- The Apostle Paul would later write to his friend Timothy:

1 Timothy 2: 5 For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.

- Understand this, there are many paths that lead to hell but there is only one road that leads to heaven and it is in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the one and only true revelation of God’s saving grace and it possesses the power to deliver men and women from the bondage of sin and death.
- As we have seen today there is not one way for Jews to be saved and another way for Gentiles to be saved there is only one way, one way for any man to be saved and it is by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ.