



## Introduction to the Course

Date: 57 or 58 A.D. at the end of his third missionary journey (Acts 20:3) when he was in Corinth for three months gathering an offering from the Gentile Christians for the church in Jerusalem (Romans 15:25; Acts 24:17)

Authorship: The apostle Paul (1:1) *“Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God...”*

Recipients: The recipients of the letter were the people of the church at Rome (1:7), who were predominantly Gentile.

## Introduction to the Course

Reason for writing: To announce his plans to visit Rome after his return to Jerusalem (15:24, 28-29). He was writing to a church he had never visited before. He will visit later in Acts 28:11ff after being under arrest for three years in Caesarea. He used his right as a Roman citizen (*provocatio*) to appeal directly to Caesar. Paul wrote so that the believers in Rome would know the gospel of Christ and to inform them regarding future plans involving them.

Paul was about to take an offering that he had collected from various churches to the poor church in Jerusalem. After that, he intended on going to visit the Roman church for a time to preach the Gospel to them.



## Introduction to the Course

### Outline

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| <u>The Wrath of God</u> | 1:18-3:20 |
| <u>The Grace of God</u> | 3:21-8:39 |
| <u>The Plan of God</u>  | 9-11      |
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## Introduction to the Course

### A second-century description of Paul:

“At length they saw a man coming (namely Paul), of a small stature with meeting eyebrows, bald head, bow-legged, strongly built, hollow-eyed, with a large crooked nose; he was full of grace, for sometimes he appeared as a man, sometimes he had the countenance of an angel.”

*(The Acts of Paul and Thecla, Chapter 1)*



## Introduction to the Course

### Paul

- *A Roman citizen (Acts 22:28). Probably born in 5 A.D.*
- *Parents named him Saul (after king Saul) from the tribe of Benjamin, Paul's tribe.*
- *His father was a Roman citizen and a Pharisee (Acts 23:6).*
- *Probably from a wealthy family (He was a student of Gamaliel, the greatest teacher in Israel in the first century (Acts 22:3) between 22-55 A.D. Paul lived in Jerusalem even though he was from Tarsus (eastern Turkey), a city of 500,000. Tradition was that Paul's family was originally from Galilee but moved during the Jewish diaspora.*
- *Age 5- He would go to Synagogue school and memorize large portions of the Pentateuch (Genesis – Deuteronomy)*

## Introduction to the Course

### Paul

- *Age 10- Began studying the teachings of the rabbis (oral tradition)*
- *Age 13- He became a man. The best students were directed to the rabbinic schools for a very demanding education, and he was a top student:*

*Galatians 1:14: "I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions."*

- *Paul spoke at least three languages- Aramaic, Greek, and Hebrew*
- *Although born in Tarsus, he was brought up in Jerusalem (Acts 22:3) and maybe lived with his married sister (Acts 23:16).*
- *Paul's Roman name was Paul. He was never again called Saul after his conversion (Acts 13:9).*



## Introduction to the Course

### Paul

- *Acts 22:4- Became a persecutor to the death of those who follow "The Way."*
- *He held the coats of those who stoned Stephen (Acts 7:58). It could be that the stoning was under Saul's authority.*
- *He began persecuting the church in Jerusalem (Acts 8:1)*
- *He is a few years younger than Jesus. He is in his mid-thirties (a few years after the crucifixion of Jesus) when he travels to Damascus to bring back prisoners to be punished in Jerusalem.*
- *Paul was saved! (Acts 9, 22, 26) His view of Christ changed from being dangerous (a crucified Messiah) to glorious (a risen Lord). Anyone can be saved- both the down and out and the up and out.*

## Chapter 1

**Verse 1-** *Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,*

*Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus- Paul means "little."* Usually, prescripts were short as the sender signs the letter at its beginning. This is an unusually long prescript (vv. 1-7) because Paul hasn't visited this church before (he is unknown). He is bound to God as a servant and as an apostle (one sent by God). "Slave" is one of Paul's favorite titles for himself. Prescripts allowed the recipient to know who sent the scroll.

*gospel of God-* The good news of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.



## Chapter 1

**Verse 1-** *Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,*

*set apart-* Paul was a Pharisee (Perushim- "separate ones.") He once was separated **from** others, but now he is separated **to** the gospel

*gospel of God-* The good news of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.

## Chapter 1

**Verse 2-** *which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures,*

*He promised beforehand-* Paul is still speaking of the gospel. God promised to send a Savior in the Old Testament. The Old Testament prophets foresaw the coming of Jesus (Jeremiah 31:31) and His death (Isaiah 53). Paul will use quotations from Old Testament prophets throughout the epistle to undergird his point

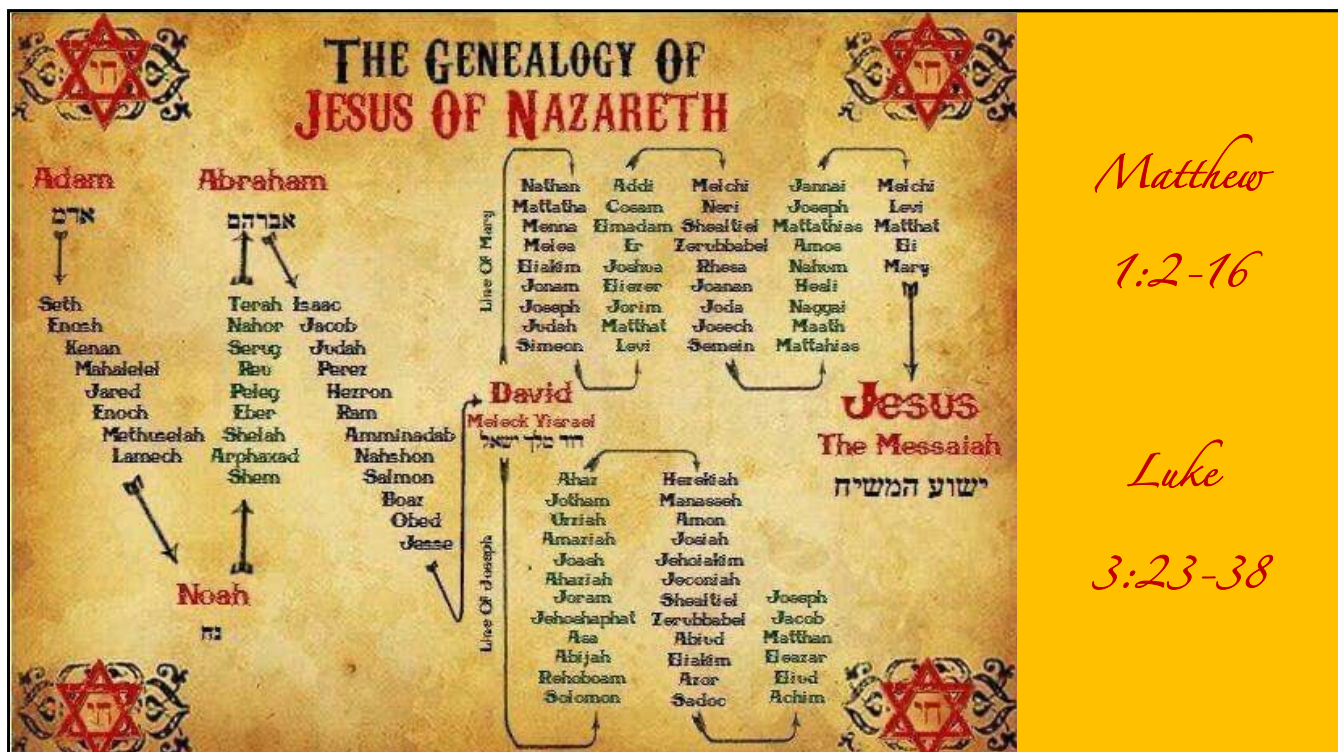


## Chapter 1

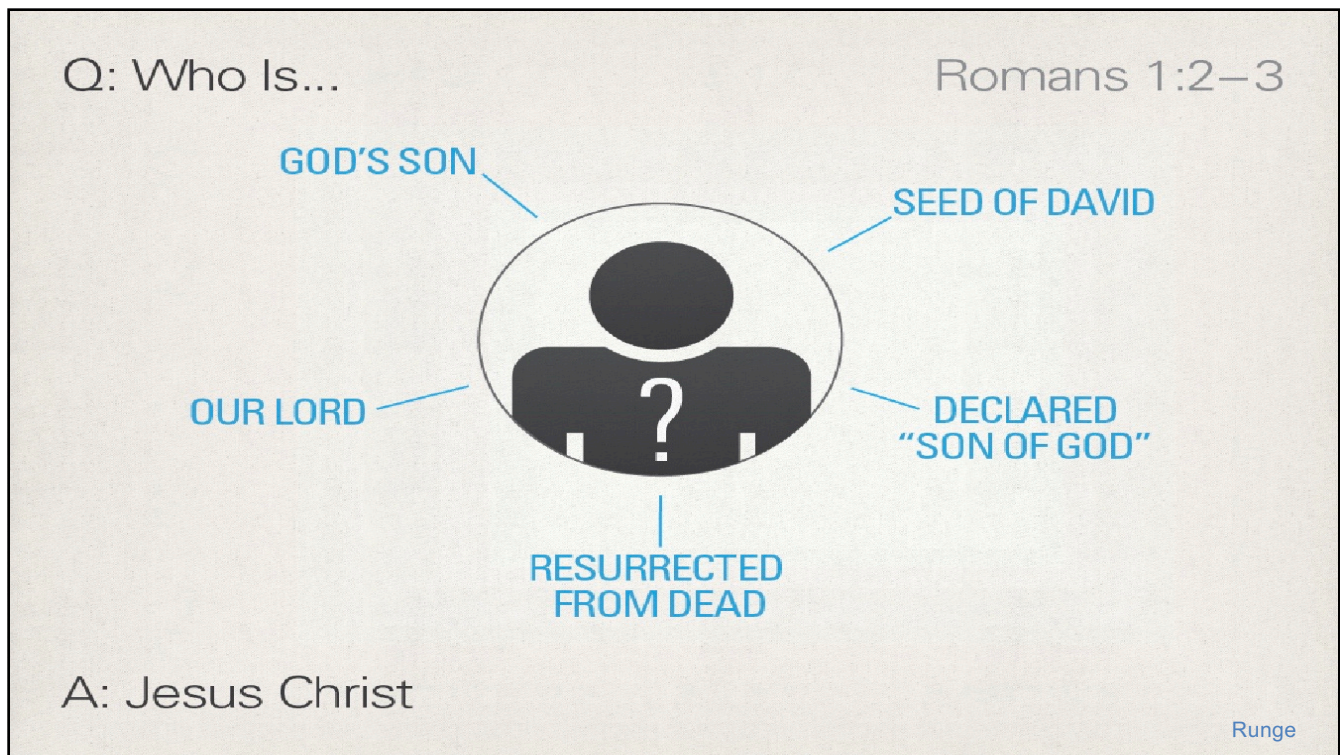
**Verse 3-** concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh,

born of a descendant of David- Jesus was a direct descendant of King David, which is one of the prophetic Old Testament promises that one of David's descendants would sit on the throne of Israel forever (2 Samuel 7:12–16).

David wanted to build the LORD a house but was unable to because he was a man of bloodshed (God never told him to do it). Instead, God made him a house (2 Samuel 7).







## The Hypostatic Union of Christ

*hypostasis* (n.) **Greek** word meaning “substance” from *hypo* “under, beneath” (see hypo-) + *stasis* “a standing, a position.”

Jesus has two natures: one fully human and one fully divine. These two natures are united in one person in the God-man. The hypostatic union is the joining of the divine and the human in the one person of Jesus.



## Chapter 1

**Verse 4-** *who was declared the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord,*

*the Son of God-* The previous verse declared His humanity and this verse declares His deity.

Three prepositional phrases:

- *with power-* from God
- *according to the Spirit of holiness-* by the Holy Spirit
- *by the resurrection from the dead-* the proof of His deity

## Chapter 1

**Verse 5-** *through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles in behalf of His name,*

There is a universal scope to the gospel. Jews and Gentiles have access to salvation.

*the obedience of faith-* Obedience is the true measure of a person's faith. Faith and obedience go inextricably together. Only in obedience is there faith (Mounce). Paul is clear that he is not speaking about obedience to the law of Moses but to faith in Christ for salvation.



## Chapter 1

**Verse 6-** *among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ;*

*you also are the called-* Paul has been writing about himself and the gospel, and now he turns his attention to the Christians in Rome. Since he is called to be an apostle, and they are called as well, he has the right to instruct them even though he has not met them yet.

*called-* (*klētoi* from *klesis*) invited to salvation in Jesus Christ.

## Chapter 1

**Verse 7-** *to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

*are beloved of God in Rome-* Paul is continuing to describe those to whom he is writing. This is the end of one sentence (vv. 1-7). This introduction is Paul's longest greeting (prescript) to his longest letter.



## Chapter 1

**Verse 8-** *First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the world.*

*I thank my God* – This begins Paul’s introduction. His habit was to begin his letters with a word of thanks to God, a specific prayer, and a personal message to the recipients. He thanked God for the Romans, and he rejoiced that news of their faith had spread all over the world, probably meaning throughout the Roman Empire.

Ten of Paul’s thirteen epistles open with some form of “I thank my God” (Rom 1:8; 1 Cor 1:4; Phil 1:3; Col 1:3; 1 Thess. 1:2; 2 Thess. 1:3; 2 Tim 1:3; Phlm 4) or “Praise be to God” (2 Cor 1:3; Eph 1:3).

## Chapter 1

**Verse 9-** *For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the preaching of the gospel of His Son, is my witness as to how unceasingly I make mention of you,*

*preaching of the gospel of His Son-* Gospel preaching centers on the gospel of Jesus Christ and is a result of prayer.

*is my witness-* Paul declares that God will support his claim about his unceasing prayer for the Roman Christians.



## Chapter 1

**Verse 10-** *always in my prayers requesting if perhaps now, at last by the will of God, I will succeed in coming to you.*

*I will succeed in coming to you-* Paul reveals what the focus of his prayer has been- that God would allow him to come to the Romans.

This is a model pattern for us in prayer- Ask God, stating that our petition is dependent upon His will. Three answers always come: Yes, No, Wait. In Paul's case, it seems that he wanted to come to them earlier, but the Lord wouldn't allow it.

## Chapter 1

**Verse 11-** *For I long to see you so that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, that you may be established;*

*I may impart some spiritual gift to you-* It could be that Paul is referring to the gift of the Spirit through laying on of holy (apostolic) hands (Acts 8:17-18). Probably, Paul wants to use his spiritual gifts to strengthen the Roman Christians (evangelism?)

*that you may be established-* A visit to Rome would not be for personal advantage or pleasure (Mounce). It would serve to strengthen the faith of those who recently had turned from idols to serve the living God (cf. 1 Thess. 1:9).



## Chapter 1

**Verse 12-** *that is, that I may be encouraged together with you while among you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine.*

*may be encouraged together-* Paul's encouragement would be mutual. Paul and the Roman Christians would be encouraged by each other's faith. Seeing the faith of other believers acted out encourages and challenges us. It reconfirms what we know to be true and helps to renew our commitment to continue in the "obedience of faith" (Romans 1:5, Hebrews 10:24-25).

## Chapter 1

**Verse 13-** *I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that often I have planned to come to you (and have been prevented so far) so that I may obtain some fruit among you also just as among the rest of the Gentiles.*

*to be unaware- (agnoein)* – Paul uses this phrase elsewhere also (Rom. 11:25; 1 Cor. 10:1; 12:1; 2 Cor. 1:8; 1 Thess. 4:13). He wants the Christians in Rome to know that he meant to come to them earlier, but God prevented him from doing so because of his missionary work elsewhere. The purpose of his visit was evangelistic- so that more Gentiles would come to know Christ.



## Chapter 1

**Verse 14-** *I am under obligation both to Greeks and to the uncultured, both to the wise and to the foolish.*

*Greeks and to the uncultured-* Paul owed a debt, not just people from Greece, but all Gentiles. Those who did not speak Greek were considered uncultured as they were not part of Hellenistic culture.

*the wise and to the foolish-* This is another way of expressing what he just said through a couplet.

The truth is that the gospel is for everyone of every race.

## Chapter 1

**Verse 15-** *So, for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.*

*eager-* (*prothumos*- ready in spirit) Jesus Himself gave Paul the mission to preach about Christ to Gentiles from all nations after his Damascus road conversion

Acts 9:15: *But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel.*



Homework for Next Week:

Memorize our next verse!

**Verse 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.*

Next week...

Chapter 1:16 ff

“The Righteousness  
of God”

