



WITH DR. MICHAEL WRIGHT

Lesson Brief | Season 2 | Episode 2

“Grace to You”

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Romans 1:1-7. Introduction.

Chapter 1 of *The Letter of Paul to the Romans* begins with Paul’s call to the ministry. In verse 7, the apostle offers a blessing to the recipients living in Rome. “Grace to you and peace from God.” Paul sought to instruct and encourage the church to present their bodies a living sacrifice. In this lesson we will consider verses 1-7 about Paul, his servanthood, his calling to be an apostle, and his being set apart for the gospel. We will also learn how Christians everywhere are called to be messengers in a shifting culture. John Montgomery Boice wrote, “To study this book is to walk in the footsteps, not only of the apostle Paul, but of such theological and pastoral giants as Martin Luther, John Calvin, Robert Haldane, Charles Hodge, D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, and many others.”

Saul. Confronted. Why are you persecuting me?

Saul was confronted by the resurrected Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus. “Why are you persecuting me?” (Acts 9:4) Stephen, a deacon in the first church, was murdered because of his testimony about Christ. It was recorded that “Saul approved of his execution.” As a result, a great persecution against the church was launched. Luke explains, “Saul was ravaging the church...and dragged off men and women and committed them to prison.” (Acts 8:1-3) Thus, on the way to Damascus, Jesus challenged Saul, “Why are you persecuting me?”

Saul. Converted. Paul.

Meeting the resurrected Christ on the Damascus Road transformed Saul. He traded his Jewish name (Saul) for the Gentile version – Paul. He exchanged his prominent title of Pharisee to a lesser designation – slave of Jesus Christ. He traded killing for encouraging. On his third missionary journey, while in Corinth, the apostle wrote to the church at Rome in A.D. 56. We have that letter. It is the sixth book in the New Testament. *The Letter of Paul to the Romans* is the finest work of theology ever written. Donald Grey Barnhouse said. “The writing cannot be considered a mere product of human thought any more than the Lord Jesus can be considered the mere human product of the Virgin Mary.”

Servant.

Paul said 3 things about himself: (1) He is a servant. (2) He is called to be an apostle. (3) He is set apart for the gospel. He then explained 2 facts about the gospel. (1) The gospel was

promised beforehand. (2) The gospel was promised by the prophets in the holy Scriptures. By mentioning the prophets and the Scriptures, the apostle authenticates the reliability all 39 books of the Old Testament – 17 historical, 5 poetical, and 17 prophetic.

Jesus. Flesh. Spirit. Resurrection.

Paul also explained 3 important truths about Jesus. (1) Jesus is a descendant of David according to the flesh revealing his humanity. (2) Jesus is declared to be the Son of God according to the Spirit revealing his divinity. (3) The resurrection of Christ validates Paul's testimony. We can be confident in the word of God because it is supported by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Believers. Grace. Apostleship.

Because of the Gospel, those who place trust in Christ alone for salvation are the recipients of (1) grace and (2) apostleship. Grace is "unmerited favor." When I was in college, I heard a preacher say that G-R-A-C-E is "God's Riches at Christ's Expense." Salvation is a gift and thus cannot be earned. The doctrine of salvation-by-works is offensive to God. God sacrificed his son to redeem mankind. To suggest salvation by works ignores the need for Christ's death on the cross. Works leads to death. Grace results in apostleship. To be an apostle means to be a messenger, to represent Christ on earth. The truth is that believers are saved by grace and granted the role of messengers of Christ in every nation on the planet.

Conclusion. Grace and Peace to You.

Paul greets the church with "Grace to you and peace from God." (1:7) He uses this greeting in all 13 of his epistles. "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor 1:3) "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Cor 1:2) "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." (Gal 1:3) "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." (Eph 1:2) "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." (Phil 1:2) "Grace to you and peace from God our Father." (Col 1:2) "Grace to you and peace." (1 Thes 1:1) "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Thes 1:2) "Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord." (1 Tim 1:2) "Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord." (2 Tim 1:2) "Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior." (Tit 1:4) "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." (Phm 1:3) It is obvious that Paul loves God's people and wishes that every church may experience God on every spiritual level possible. May you place your faith in Christ alone for salvation and receive his offer of grace, mercy, peace, and apostleship.

Dr. Michael Wright is the President of Gospel in Real Life. The mission of GRL is community and cultural transformation via the truth of the gospel primarily delivered via blog and podcast. GRL launched in November 2020 and has now been heard in over 13 countries. GRL is a 501(c)3. For more information or you if would like to make a donation, please go to GospelInRealLife.org. Your tax-deductible gift is always appreciated. Love and blessings.