

September 6, 2026 True Power Session 1 Romans 1:13-15

Who Are You, Paul? (Romans 1:1-4) read in the Bible.

Who are you _____? Paul began his letter to the Romans with an expanded introduction. Believers there had never met Paul. He made extra efforts to validate himself in their sight. Paul wanted the Romans to know that what they were about to read was not his own invention. His letter to them was part of a divine mission, and what he wrote, he wrote for God. Paul's purpose in his life was to fulfill the mission he had been given: to take the gospel to the nations of the world. Do you feel a purpose in taking the gospel to the people around you? One of the reasons for Paul wanting to go to Rome was to use it as a stepping stone to go to the edges of the known world, where people had not heard of Christ, that is, Spain. Paul's mission was to unite and strengthen the church in Rome for the purpose of launching an outreach to the regions beyond.

Gospel Power (Romans 1:13-17) p. 12

Being together with fellow Christians is rejuvenating. Paul longed to be with Christians in Rome. Some of them may have been at the Pentecost in Jerusalem. Paul was prevented from going to Rome "until now." Have you ever been "blocked by God" from doing something? In God's perfect timing, Paul's local work had been established and it was time to proceed to Rome. The visit would strengthen their spiritual kinship for the sake of a fruitful ministry. Also, with the help of the church in Rome, he intended to expand his ministry to new areas where Christ was not known.

Vs. 14 God called Paul to minister to the Gentiles everywhere, not just limited to the Gentiles in the east. All groups of people needed to hear the gospel: Greeks, barbarians, wise and foolish. Barbarians was a word commonly used to refer to those who did not speak Greek and were thought of as being uneducated. With Rome as his base of operations, Paul was eager to preach the gospel to the western part of the Roman empire.

Vs. 16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes... This is also our proclamation! Jesus predicted that there would be opposition to sharing the gospel. **Matthew 10:22** *"And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved."* Whatever others might think, we know that the gospel is the power of God for salvation. The gospel reveals God's plan to accomplish salvation for humanity. The gospel offers salvation to everyone who believes. It is the only way for them/us to escape the righteous wrath of God and be restored to a right standing before the one true God. Everyone needs salvation. Through the work of Christ, it is available by God's grace to all who believe and have faith in Jesus.

Vs. 17 Receiving the gift of salvation through Christ changes everything. Most importantly, it makes us right with God. Trying to earn righteousness by our good deeds leads to nothing more than an emptiness and frustration. A right relationship with God does not result from doing charitable deeds, keeping religious rules, or observing empty rituals. It results from placing our faith in Christ to save us. What is “faith”?

“From faith to faith ... the righteous will live by faith.” Faith is the foundation and the guiding principle by which the saved will live. Beginning with God’s faithfulness, He makes it possible for the believer’s faith. The gospel can be spread from the faith of an evangelist and lead to the faith of a new believer. A person’s faith from elementary level can develop to a more mature faith. I asked myself if I have been growing in the Lord, and has my faith deepened? I can proudly say that I am not ashamed of the gospel, and I will proclaim its truth as God leads.

Divine Revelation (Romans 1:18-20) p. 14

The message of how to achieve righteousness before God is essential because without the salvation available through the gospel, all who have rejected God and suppressed His truth are subject to His wrath. God is not passive or impotent in the face of sin. God’s nature and commands expose what sin is: behavior that is contrary to God’s will and unacceptable in the face of His laws. When sin occurs, it separates the sinner from God and subjects the sinner to punishment. The origin of God’s wrath is the sinful, rebellious behavior of humanity. Evil actions properly earn God’s wrath, not because God is spiteful but because God is just. The godlessness and unrighteousness of people also earn wrath by the damage they do to themselves and others. By their denial of the truth of the gospel and by their bad example they hinder others who, but for their influence, might have accepted the truth and followed the way of righteousness. They suppress the truth of the gospel and close their eyes and cover their ears so they could not see the obvious signs of God’s actual presence in their world. Those who by their own sin and the sin they encourage in others earn divine wrath. The biggest cover-up of modern times is the Theory of Evolution. It is a lie devised to deny the existence of God. It is the invention of an impossible, ridiculous way to explain how the universe came into existence. Science keeps proving evolution is wrong! **Isaiah 45:18** “...He who created the heavens, He is God; He who fashioned and made the earth, He founded it; He did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited—He says: “I am the Lord, and there is no other.”

Vs. 19 What can be known about God is evident. The vast evidence that validates God’s presence simply cannot be ignored. God revealed Himself in several ways. Natural revelations are various truths about God that people can

see in God's creation, the natural world. God revealed Himself within a person. There is a part of us that only God can fill.

God does not conceal Himself from us. He makes Himself known to us through the extraordinary as well as the ordinary circumstances in our daily experiences. God's special revelation refers to specific revelatory acts such as the words of the prophets or the written Scriptures. The person and message of Jesus, God's own Son, and the teachings of the Spirit through the words and writings of the apostles are also revelations from God. Those who receive the special revelations God has given are also responsible for how they respond to the revealed truth. Anyone who looks closely and honestly at what God has made should see evidence pointing to Him and should be driven to seek the Creator and Sustainer of it all. So, when people reject God's truth, they are subject to His wrath.

Worthless Thinking (Romans 1:21-25) p. 15

Rejection of God leads to corrupt ways of thinking and living. There is a biblical view and a world view. Although people knew God, they refused to glorify Him as God. Glorifying God starts with recognizing Him as God and affirming His sovereignty and goodness. God has revealed His power in creation. He is worthy of praise. God is the master of all, the owner of all, and every good thing comes from Him. **James 1:17** *"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning."* Most of all, we should be profoundly grateful for God's saving grace giving us eternal life. Paul lamented the sad state of those who have turned away from God. Rather than living in His revealed truth, their thinking became worthless. Thinking refers to a person's process of reasoning or sometimes the conclusions a person reaches after considering evidence and options. Corrupt thinking leads to corrupt conclusions and bad decisions. **Mark 8:36** *"For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?"* Rejecting God can lead to the worship of idols—the senseless act of worshiping things imagined and made by flawed human beings. Rejecting God also can make people think and behave as if sin is not real and will not be punished. Rejecting the light of God leads to living in darkness. Their senseless hearts were darkened. A senseless heart not only fails to provide guidance but actively leads a person astray. Such a person would not be walking in the light but stumbling about in the dark. Errors, bad decisions, and self-destructive behavior would be the common results. When we see these in our world, we are seeing the inevitable results of lives lived apart from God. I think of the things in this world that people are captured by who do not have God in their lives: drugs, pornography, sex-trafficking, cheating, selfishness, and a world view that says it is okay to do something as long as the person gets a benefit.

Vs. 22 Tragically, persons who reject God, embrace false gods, and live according to worldly lies think they are wise. They think they understand the true nature of reality and how the world works. However, by rejecting the truth revealed by God, they embarked on a path of error and have become fools. Idolatry is foolishness. The creation itself reveals the glory of the immortal God. Creation is too grand, too immense, too complex to be the work of the false gods commonly worshiped in Paul's day. Paul declared worshiping gods made by human hands was foolishness. By creating images resembling a mortal man or some sort of animal, people invariably sought to elevate some part of creation to the level of Creator. They attributed human characteristics to the false gods and seem to think these imaginary deities could be manipulated.

Vs. 24 God's love is seen in His long suffering. People rejected Him, but the immediate result was not destruction. Rather, God delivered them or gave them up to the desires of their hearts [lust]. God released them so they could follow their hearts in their attempts to find spiritual contentment in unbridled sexual encounters. In so doing they continue to disgrace themselves as they sink deeper into spiritual darkness.

Vs. 25 People might worship and follow some imagined superior being or create mythologies with multiple gods or might imagine themselves as in control of their world and their fate. All such imagined alternatives to the one true God share one characteristic—they are false. Since such gods are human creations, they also share human failings and are used to excuse or even endorse sinful human desires. Paul's comments identify the self-deception and immoral blindness of a people in desperate need. Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, was called to help such people because God loves them and desires them to turn to Him. People may reject, debate, and ridicule the truth of the gospel, yet the gospel itself asserts that these same people are in need of Godly empathy, and God through us, His church, reaches out a loving hand to draw them back to Him. Reach out to people and share the gospel.

Things to think and pray about:

We need to seek opportunities to share the gospel

We can point others toward God through what He has revealed in His creation.

Rejecting God ultimately leads to devastating consequences.