



(For access to all available commentaries and sermons of Charlie's click [HERE](#))

Romans

Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God... Romans 1:1

Christ the Lord has come and is revealed to us in the four gospel accounts. What was veiled and prefigured in the Old Testament is revealed and realized in the New. After the gospel narratives, the book of Acts is introduced. It shows the development of the church from its infancy to the point where it was ready to replace Israel as a light to the nations during Israel's second exile.

In the book of Acts, an immense amount of information and structure is given to show us how things transition from the early Jewish church to the predominantly gentile church which would carry the spiritual banner of the message of Jesus Christ for the next 2000 years. As incredible as it seems, this handing over the banner to the gentiles was prophesied in the blessing Noah pronounced upon his sons Shem and Japheth in Genesis 9:26, 27.

Acts begins in Jerusalem and Peter is the main focus of chapters 1-12. Acts ends in Rome and Paul is the main focus of chapters 13-28. Within these parallel divisions are underlying parallels which show the banner being passed and it is necessary to show them in order to understand the significance of what is coming in Paul's epistles –

Act/Chapter

1. Peter's work began by the Holy Spirit (2)
1. Paul's work began by the Holy Spirit (13)

2. Peter was thought to be drunk and & then explains himself (2)
2. Paul was thought to be mad and then explains himself (26)

3. Peter's first sermon begins new section of book (2)
3. Paul's first sermon begins new section of book (13)

4. Peter has a time of work, preaching, and then persecution (2-11)
4. Paul has a time of work, preaching, and then persecution (13-19)

5. Peter has trouble after healing a man lame from birth (3)
5. Paul has trouble after healing a man lame from birth (14)

6. Peter says, "Silver and gold have I none" (3)
6. Paul says, "I have coveted no one's silver or gold" (20)

7. Peter's shadow heals (5)
7. Paul's handkerchief heals (19)

8. Peter is arrested in the temple and taken to Sanhedrin (4, 5)
8. Paul is arrested in the temple and taken to Sanhedrin (21-23)

- 9. Peter confronts Simon the sorcerer (8)
- 9. Paul confronts Elymas the sorcerer (13)

- 10. Peter performs an exorcism (5)
- 10. Paul performs an exorcism (16)

- 11. Peter raises Tabitha from the dead (9)
- 11. Paul raises Eutychus from the dead (20)

- 12. Peter lays hands for reception of Spirit (8)
- 12. Paul lays hands for reception of Spirit (19)

- 13. Peter worshipped (10)
- 13. Paul worshipped (14)

- 14. Peter imprisoned with miraculous escape (12)
- 14. Paul imprisoned with miraculous escape (16)

- 15. Angel stood by Peter (12)
- 15. Angel stood by Paul (27)

- 16. Peter called by vision to preach in Caesarea (10)
- 16. Paul called by vision to preach in Macedonia (16)

- 17. Peter's success brings Jewish jealousy (5)
- 17. Paul's success brings Jewish jealousy (13)

18. Peter heals the bedridden Aeneas (9)

18. Paul heals the bedridden father of Publius (28)

19. Peter ordains deacons (6)

19. Paul ordains elders (14)

20. Peter is “filled with the Spirit” (4)

20. Paul is “filled with the Spirit” (13)

Along with these many parallels, Paul will state in his writings four times that he is the Apostle to the Gentiles and twice that Peter is the Apostle to the Jews. This then is the significance of these parallels. They are highlighted for our understanding of the immense importance of Paul’s 13 epistles – Romans to Philemon. He is the instructor of the church which has been led by the sons of Japheth since the exile of Israel in AD70.

To dismiss Paul and his writings then is to reject church doctrine and thus there is no cohesion to the Christian message. This has increasingly been the case in the past 150 years or so as the church has become more liberal and turned from Paul in an attempt to be more “tolerant” and less firm on the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

As Acts ends in Rome, it is fitting that God established the order of the epistles beginning with Romans. This is the “constitution of Christianity” and it gives wonderfully valuable insights into the Person and work of Jesus Christ and it also gives important information concerning the times when Israel will again carry the spiritual banner of God’s message. To misunderstand Paul’s words in Chapters 9-11 leads to a “spiritualization” of much of the Old Testament. These unfulfilled Old Testament passages will be realized in Israel of the future, not the church.

The book of Romans has 433 verses and so it will take more than a year to complete. When we are finished, hopefully we will have a much fuller understanding of the glory of what God has done for us in the Person of Jesus Christ.

Although this is a long introduction so far, we could actually go on for much, much longer and still not glean all that is necessary to understand what is coming. However, to get to verse 1, we must move on. Here in verse 1 Paul introduces himself using four terms – bondservant, called, apostle, and separated. Two of these terms describe his state before the Lord – bondservant and apostle. The other two are how that state came about – he was called and separated.

Paul's original name was Saul, however, in the book of Acts we see the transition of his name from Saul to Paul. Paul means "small" and he is actually prefigured all the way back in the account of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah when Lot fled to a town call Zoar. God selected Paul and placed hints of him in Genesis to show us what He would do through this wonderful and hardy soul.

As "'a bondservant' of Jesus Christ" he is a slave, belonging to Him entirely and he merits no payment for his duties. His calling by the Lord was as an apostle – a sent one; a chosen messenger. And finally he was "separated to the gospel of God." He was consecrated to be a herald of this message and as the book of acts and his personal writings reveal, he conducted his duties in a manner which brought great honor to his Lord. He performed his duties well.

...which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures,...
Romans 1:2

Paul builds upon yesterday's verse and will continue to do so after this one and therefore we will continue a full quote to keep proper context –

“Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures,…”

“Which He promised before” is speaking of the “gospel of God” and is therefore relating back to Paul’s status as “a bondservant of Christ” and his calling as an apostle. We have to remember as we read the New Testament, that there was no New Testament until it was written. Therefore, the promise came from the Old Testament. That which was given “before” is what Paul is speaking of and it came “through His prophets.”

Nowhere in the Bible will we find this thought contradicted and many times it will be supported. Two important verses to understand divine inspiration are –

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16, 17

...knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. 2 Peter 1:20, 21

Memorizing these verses is recommended, or at least memorizing their location. The Bible was received, in its entirety, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. It is therefore God’s word to mankind and thus there can be no other truly “holy” books. Any other religious or philosophical texts may have value, but none are authoritative when speaking of the things of God. The gospel message, which was anticipated in the Old Testament, stands as God’s plan of salvation to the people of the world.

...concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh,... Romans 1:3

Again, to ensure context, we quote the entire thought thus far –

“Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh,...”

Paul is establishing his baseline for the entire epistle and he is doing it in a way that no one except a fool or someone who comes to the text with presuppositions could miss. Paul is a herald of the “gospel of God” of which all of the prophets and the Scriptures testify and which concerns “His Son Jesus Christ our Lord.” If all of Scripture testifies to this One, then He is the focus of all that God is doing through redemptive history and therefore He is the Lord – Jesus is “Jehovah” of the Old Testament revealed in His fullness in the New.

Paul’s explanation of Jesus begins with the fact that He is God’s Son. This will be explained and clarified in the time ahead. Son-ship can come through procreation or adoption, but we get a hint at where Paul is leading with his next thought – Jesus “was born of the seed of David according to the flesh.” This then tells us, as the gospels, Acts, and surely the entire Bible tells us, that Jesus was born into the stream of humanity. “Of the seed of David” ensures that we understand He is the fulfillment of all of the Messianic promises. These include everything from Genesis 3:15, through Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Judah. David was the final peg in the line of promises and it is through His house that the realization of these promises would come about. We read of the Lord’s promise to David in 2 Samuel –

““When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will

chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever." 2 Samuel 7:12-16

Jesus is the fulfillment of all of the Old Testament prophecies and promises just as Paul notes in this early verse. Noting this establishes the coming context of the epistle.