

Romans: Opening Salutation, Prayer, and Purpose

[Romans 1:1-17](#)

As Paul begins his letter to the Romans, he makes his purpose clear—his desire is to unite the church, both Jew and Gentile, through the gospel. Their understanding of the good news about Jesus' life, death, and resurrection is vital to their growth as believers and effectiveness as the body of Christ in the world.

Application

1. Take some time to reflect and evaluate your personal journey of faith. Has the gospel transformed your life? In what ways is God currently changing you? What is the fruit of salvation in your life? If you're struggling to answer these questions, whom can you talk to in order to move towards clarity?
2. In our cultural context, it is easy to be a nominal Christian and still live a very comfortable life. Do you feel any tension between your faith and your career, politics, or how you interact with the world? If not, what does that indicate about the state of your soul? What steps can you take to deny yourself and live out the gospel in active and concrete ways?

Key Points

- Although Paul has never visited the early Roman church in person, he makes it clear that he is eager to share the gospel, encourage them, and be encouraged by them.
- Paul's primary purpose in writing this epistle is to share the good news about Jesus, which is the culmination of the entire arch of Scripture—ending the exile of God's people and providing hope for all.
- The gospel is the "power of God" working through the Holy Spirit, and it transforms people's lives, both Jew and Gentile.
- This message of inclusion was difficult for many of the Jewish believers to understand, and Paul will address the tension between Jewish and Gentile believers that exists in the church.
- Above all, Paul wants his audience to understand that the righteousness of God is revealed through the person and work of Jesus Christ. This good news transforms us through faith, which includes both belief in and submission to King Jesus.

- We are not saved by our works, but where there is genuine, saving faith, we see a life that is striving to be in close relationship to Jesus.

Other Scripture References

[Genesis 3:15](#)

[Acts 2](#)

[1 Corinthians 1:23](#)

[Habakkuk 2:4](#)

[Matthew 7:21-23](#)