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## God Never Planned On You To Be Successful

January 6, 2019 - Romans 1:1-7

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**1 Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, 2 which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, 3 concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh 4 and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, 5 through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, 6 including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, 7 To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

### CHAPTER ONE

(1:1) Paul is the only one of the Bible writers who discarded his Jewish for his Gentile name. It is the transliteration of the Latin *paulus* (π α υ λ υ ς) or *paulles* (π α υ λ λ ε ς) meaning "little." Some think it had reference to his diminutive stature (II Cor. 10:1, 10). It was a common practice among the Hebrews to give their children a Gentile name in addition to the Jewish one. The apostle's Jewish name was Saul. His Gentile name gains the ascendancy on his first missionary journey as he deals with the Roman officer on Cyprus, and thereafter marks him out as the apostle to the Gentiles.

He designates himself as "a servant of Jesus Christ." The word is *doulos* (δ ο υ λ ο ς), the most abject, servile term used by the Greeks to denote a slave. The word designated one who was born as a slave, one who was bound to his master in chords so strong that only death could break them, one who served his master to the disregard of his own interests, one whose will was swallowed up in the will of his master. Paul was born a slave of sin at his physical birth, and a bond slave of his Lord through regeneration. The chords that bound him to his old master Satan, were rent asunder in his identification with Christ in the latter's death. The chords that bind him to his new Master will never be broken since the new Master will never die again, and is Paul's new life. Paul's will, at one time swallowed up in the will of Satan, now is swallowed up in the sweet will of God. The reader will observe how wonderfully God has watched over the development of the Greek language so that at the time it was needed as the medium through which He would give His New Testament revelation to the human race, its words were fit receptacles and efficient instruments for the conveyance of His message to man.

Paul calls himself a bonds slave of Christ Jesus. The case classification is genitive of possession. The apostle is proud of the fact that he is a slave belonging to his Lord. There were certain individuals in the Roman empire designated "Slaves of the Emperor." This was a position of honor. One finds a reflection of this in Paul's act of designating himself as a slave of the King of kings. He puts this ahead of his apostleship.

This is followed by the designation, "called to be an apostle" (a.v.). The words "to be" are in italics, which means that they are not in the Greek text, but are supplied by the translators in an effort to clarify the thought for the English reader. Furthermore, the thought expressed by the a.v. would require a participle in the Greek text. The text has *klētos apostolos* (κ λ η τ ο ς ἄ π ο σ τ ο λ ο ς), an adjective and a noun, literally, "a called apostle." The adjective comes from the verb *kaleō* (κ α λ ε ω), "to call" in the sense here of "to call to assume an office." Paul was a called apostle in the sense that God summoned him to that position and placed him in it. The translation "called to be an apostle" could refer to a future apostleship of which Paul was not then in possession. Paul wished to emphasize for the sake of his authority and the authority which his position would give the letter he was writing, that he was already in possession of the office and exercising the authority it conferred upon him. We must be careful to note also, that the word "apostle" is not the translation of the word *apostolos* (ἄ π ο σ τ ο λ ο ς) but its transliteration, and that in a shortened form. The word comes from the verbal form *apostellō* (ἄ π ο σ τ ε λ λ ω) which is found in a document bearing the date of a.d. 342, in the clause "to proceed with the officers *sent for this purpose*," (*Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, Moulton and Milligan) where the word "sent" is the Greek word *apostellō* (ἄ π ο σ τ ε λ λ ω), and where the context gives it the meaning of "sent on a commission." The noun was used of an envoy, namely, one sent on a commission to represent another person, the person sent being given credentials and the responsibility of carrying out the orders of the one sending him. Our word "ambassador" adequately translates it. Paul thought of himself as an ambassador of the King of kings. The word "apostle" today has the idea of a disciple of the Lord Jesus, one of the Twelve, sent on a preaching tour. The Greek word as used by Paul did not have that meaning basically, although in the exercise of his duties, he as an ambassador would preach the gospel. Paul, therefore designates himself as a divinely and effectually summoned ambassador of the Lord Jesus, sent by Him on a commission with credentials, the commission, to evangelize the Gentile world, his credentials, miracles.

Paul defines his apostleship by the words, "separated unto the gospel of God," that is, he as an apostle is separated to the gospel. The verb is *aphorizō* (ἀ φ ο ρ ι ζ ω), made up of *horizō* (ὁ ρ ι ζ ω), "to mark off by boundaries, to limit, separate," and *apo* (ἀ π ο), "off from," the compound verb meaning, "to mark off from others by boundaries, to appoint, set one apart for some purpose." He was separated by God from all mankind for his apostleship. We find a reflection of this in his words, "This one thing I do" (Phil. 3:13). "Separated" is a perfect participle in the Greek text, the tense speaking of a past completed

action having present results. The past act of God in separating Paul to the one thing, the gospel, finds its results in his permanent position as a person separated to the one thing. "Gospel" is *euaggelion* (εὐαγγέλιον), "good news." It is found in an inscription of 9 b.c., with reference to the birthday of the Emperor Augustus, "but the birthday of the god (the Emperor) was for the world the beginning of tidings of joy on his account" (*Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, Moulton and Milligan). The term *euaggelion* (εὐαγγέλιον) as "good news" of an important character was well known throughout the Roman empire, and especially in its capital, Rome. Paul, writing to the saints in this city, must have had its secular and popular usage in mind, and sets off in contrast to it, the good news which he was separated by God to tell out to the Roman world, namely, God's good news. *Euaggelion* (Εὐαγγέλιον) and *theos* (θεός) (God) do not have the definite article in the Greek text. Quality or character is stressed. The good news was such as would be expected from God, God-like good news. The Roman Emperor was worshipped as a god in the state religion. There was a polemic touch here, contrasting the God of the Christians with the god of the pagan Roman citizen. Paul was hoping some day to come to the city where the great power of Rome was centralized and the Emperor was worshipped as a god, with a message diametrically opposed to the religion and political atmosphere of Rome.

Translation. Paul, a bondsman by nature, belonging to Christ Jesus, a called ambassador permanently separated to God's good news.

*(1:2–4) In these verses, the apostle defines what he means by God's good news. First, he says that God promised this good news by the writers of the Old Testament. As Denney says, "The gospel is not in principle a new thing, a subversion of the true religion as it has hitherto been known to the people of God. On the contrary, God promised it before, through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures. It is the fulfillment of hopes which God himself inspired." Thus does Paul at one stroke cut away all objections to his message from the Jews who said he was introducing something new and opposed to the Mosaic economy. Vincent remarks, "Paul's Old Testament training is manifest. Naturally, in beginning the more precise description of the new revelation, he refers to its connection with ancient prophecy." The term "prophets" as used here does not limit the writers to those we know as the major and minor prophets, but includes writers such as Moses and David who also spoke of the good news. The Greek text does not have the definite article before "holy scriptures," emphasis being upon quality or character. The books are in character holy, for they convey God's good news. This good news is concerning God's Son. Of this, Weiss says, "Taken by itself, 'the Son of God' is, in the first instance, a title rather than a name. It goes back to Psalm 2:7; the Person to whom it is applied is conceived as the chosen object of the Divine Love, God's instrument for accomplishing the salvation of His people." The words "Jesus Christ our Lord" are rejected by both Nestle and Westcott and Hort. The title, "Son of God," speaks of Him in His deity. Paul introduces the subject of His humanity in the words "which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh." "Was made" is ginomai (γενόμενος) in a second aorist participle*

*signifying entrance into a new condition. The verb means "to become." John uses it in his statement, "The Word became flesh" (1:14), that is, entered into a new state or condition by assuming a human body and putting Himself under human limitations. "Flesh" here refers to the corporeal part of man, his physical body. "Seed" is the seed from which anything germinates. It is used in this context of the ancestry of David. That is, the Son of God, so far as His human ancestry is concerned, comes from the line of David. This individual, comprising within His Person two natures, that of Deity and that of humanity, is "declared to be the Son of God." "Declared" is *horizō* (ὁρίζω), "to mark out the boundaries or limits" of anything, "to appoint, decree, determine." Thayer says, "for although Christ was the Son of God before His resurrection, yet He was openly appointed (a.v. declared) such among men by this transcendent and crowning event." Vincent says, "As respecting Christ's earthly descent, He was born like other men. As respecting His divine essence, He was declared. The idea is that of Christ's instatement or establishment in the rank and dignity of His divine sonship with a view to the conviction of men. This was required by His previous humiliation, and was accomplished by His resurrection which not only manifested or demonstrated what He was, but wrought a real transformation in His mode of being." Denney remarks, "The resurrection only declared Him to be what He truly was."*

This declaration, this demonstration of the Deity of the God Man was, Paul says, "in power." It was in the sphere of power that this declaration was made, the power of God that raised our Lord from the dead. This power operated "according to the spirit of holiness." Vincent says here, "In contrast with *according to the flesh*. The reference is not to the Holy Spirit, who is nowhere designated by the phrase, but to the spirit of Christ as the seat of the divine nature belonging to His Person. As God is spirit, the divine nature of Christ is spirit, and its characteristic quality is holiness." Denney is helpful here, "The sonship, which is declared by the resurrection, answered to the spirit of holiness which was the inmost and deepest reality in the Person and life of Jesus. The sense that there is that in Christ which is explained by His connection with mankind, and that also which can only be explained by some peculiar relation to God, is no doubt converged in this description, and is the basis of the orthodox doctrine of the two natures in the one Person of the Lord." With respect to His humanity, our Lord came from the royal line of David, with respect to His divine essence (spirit of holiness), He was demonstrated to be such in the sphere of the resurrection power of God which raised Him from the dead. But here we must be careful. The Greek text does not have *ek nekrōn* (ἐκ νεκρῶν), "out from among the dead," but only *nekrōn* (νεκρῶν), "of the dead." The phrase refers to the resurrection of all the dead in other places in the New Testament, and here, to their resurrection as included and involved in the resurrection of our Lord (Vincent). It is Christ's resurrection which demonstrates His deity after assuming humanity, but His resurrection viewed together with the resurrection of all the righteous, the resurrection of the latter being made possible by the former.

Translation. Which He promised aforetime through the intermediate agency of His prophets in holy writings, concerning His Son who came from the seed of David so far

as His humanity was concerned, who was demonstrated as Son of God in the sphere of power so far as His divine essence was concerned, by the resurrection of the dead.

*(1:5–7) The “we” refers only to Paul, since it is qualified by the sphere of his ministry, to the nations or the Gentiles. The reception of grace by Paul was in the form of the salvation God gave him in response to his faith. As a saved man he was appointed as an apostle, an ambassador. He was given the office of an apostle. As to the meaning of the words, “for obedience to the faith,” scholars differ. Some say that it means obedience to the Faith, the Christian system of belief, as in Acts 6:7 where a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. Others say that obedience is the obedience which springs from and is produced by faith. Robertson sees it as an objective genitive and interprets it as meaning the obedience which springs from faith. Vincent defines it as “the obedience which characterizes and proceeds from faith.” Denney defines it as “the obedience which consists in faith.” Alford translates, “obedience to the faith,” and defines the faith, not as the gospel which is to be believed but the state of salvation in which men stand by faith. “For” is eis ( εἰς ), a preposition often speaking of purpose or result, here used in the sense of the words “in order to bring about.” “Nations” is ethnos ( ἔθνος ), here, the Gentiles. Paul was appointed an apostle in order that through his ministry there might be brought about an obedience which springs from faith, or an obedience to the Faith, among the Gentiles. If we take the former interpretation as correct, then Paul’s commission was to bring about a general obedience among the Gentiles that springs from faith, if the latter, then his commission was to bring about an obedience to the Christian Faith among the Gentiles. The latter is more specific and definitive of that kind of a commission God would give Paul. He would not be given a commission in such indefinite terms. While not at all insisting upon the latter meaning, the writer suggests it as more in keeping with the context. Alford remarks that the construction here is like that in II Corinthians 10:5 where the a.v. has “bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” The word “Christ” is objective genitive. It receives the action of the noun of action, “obedience.” The translation could read “obedience to Christ.” “Faith” is objective genitive, and receives the action from the noun of action, “obedience,” and we have, “in order to bring about obedience to the faith among the Gentiles.”*

“For” is *huper* ( ὑπὲρ ), “for the sake of, in behalf of.” The words “The Name” are an Old Testament expression speaking of all that God is in His being, His majesty, glory, power, holiness, righteousness. It is used in the sense of character or reputation. For instance, “that man has a name for honesty.” That is, he has a reputation for honesty. That is his character. So, Paul says that he was appointed as an apostle in order to bring about obedience to the Faith among the Gentiles in view of all that the Lord Jesus is in His glorious Person, that is, in honor or recognition of all that He is, and for His sake. It was a service of love in recognition of all that Jesus is in Himself and for His sake.

Then Paul deftly brings in the Roman saints in the words “among whom (the Gentiles) are ye also the called of Jesus Christ.” “Called” is *klētoi* ( κλητοί ), “called ones,” those

called, summoned by an effectual call in which the one called is rendered in sovereign grace willing to appropriate salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus. Paul says these Roman saints were “the called of Jesus Christ.” This could be genitive of possession, belonging to Jesus Christ, as Robertson translates, “called to be Jesus Christ’s.” Denney says, “They belonged to Him because they have heard and obeyed the gospel.” Yet, Alford says, “the expression can hardly be taken otherwise than as ‘called by Jesus Christ,’ ” and cites John 5:25 and I Timothy 1:12. Paul describes the recipients of this letter also as “beloved of God.” The word is in the plural, “loved-ones of God,” and the word “God” is without the article, “God’s loved-ones.” The word “love” is *agapē* (ἀ γ α π η), the love that was shown at Calvary. Then the apostle says of them, “called to be saints.” The words “to be” are in italics, showing that they are not in the Greek text, and are supplied by the translators. The Greek has an adjective and a noun, namely, “called saints,” that is, saints who were constituted saints by the effectual call of God into salvation. The word “called” here has no idea of “named saints.” “Saints” is *hagios* (ἀ γ ι ο ς), the noun form of *hagizō* (ἀ γ ι ζ ω), “to set apart for God.” Thus a saint is a sinner who in answer to his faith in the Lord Jesus has been set apart by the Holy Spirit for God, set apart from sin to holiness, from Satan to God, out of the First Adam into the Last Adam, to live a set-apart life of separation. It is interesting to note that the words “saint, sanctify, sanctification, holy, hallow” all are translations of this same root *hagi* (ἀ γ ι). The root idea is that of separation from to separation to. In its religious use it contrasts the secular from the religious or sacred, that which is unholy from that which is holy.

The word “saint” is God’s designation of a believer. The name “Christian” was coined by the world as a term of derision. The city of Antioch in Syria had a reputation for coining nicknames. Luke says, “The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch” (Acts 11:26). The word is used three times in the New Testament, and each time as a term of reproach or derision. Here in Antioch, the name *Christianos* (Χ ρ ι σ τ ι α ν ο ς) was coined to distinguish the worshippers of the Christ from the *Kaisarianos* (Κ α ι σ α ρ α ν ι ο ς), the worshippers of Caesar. It was a term of derision, flung into the teeth of the followers of the Christ by the proud worshippers of the Emperor. Agrippa used the term when Paul was defending himself and his message before the king. Agrippa said, “With such little persuasion you would make me a *Christianos* (Χ ρ ι σ τ ι α ν ο ς).” Peter in his first letter (4:16), by the Holy Spirit appropriates the title as a proper designation of a believer when he says, “If any man suffer as a *Christianos* (Χ ρ ι σ τ ι α ν ο ς).” The grace which Paul prays will be theirs is grace for daily living in the form of the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The peace is peace of heart, a state of Christian tranquility.

Translation. Through whom we received grace and apostleship in order that there may be obedience to the Faith among all the Gentiles in behalf of His Name, among whom you also are called ones belonging to Jesus Christ, to all who are in Rome, God’s loved

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ones, called (divinely summoned) saints. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

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## Romans 1:1-17

### I. Epistolary Introduction—1:1-17

#### A. Paul and the Principles of the Gospel—1:1-7

This introduction of himself to the Romans is unusually long by Pauline standards. According to Moo, “the length and theological orientation of this prescript are due mainly to the fact that Paul was introducing himself to a church that he had neither founded nor visited. He wanted to establish his credentials as an apostle with a worldwide commission to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ” (34).

1. The *messenger* of the gospel—1:1
  - a. his captivity—v. 1a

Although Paul might have appealed to his educational credentials, his reputation, his other literary works, or some special accomplishment to distinguish himself in the eyes of the Romans, he is first and foremost *a bondservant of Christ Jesus!* In view of the fact that Paul doesn’t personally know these people, one might have expected him to “drop names” or appeal to past achievements or to his list of publications! But he chooses only to be known as a bondservant of Christ.

In both OT and NT it was a privilege and responsibility to be called a *servant* of God (cf. Moses, Joshua, David, etc.). The term “expresses the total belongingness, total allegiance, correlative to the absolute ownership and authority denoted by ‘lord’ used of Christ” (Cranfield/50-51).

Remember: only in service to Christ is true freedom to be found; ***Deo servire, vera libertas***, or “to serve God (is) true liberty” (Augustine).

**N.B.** It is reflective of Paul’s high Christology that it is no longer **YHWH** but *Christ Jesus* whom he serves as sole master. [But then, of course, Christ Jesus **is** YHWH incarnate.]

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<sup>1</sup> Wuest, K. S. (1997). *Wuest’s word studies from the Greek New Testament: for the English reader* (Vol. 1-2, pp. 293-19). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

b. his calling—v. 1b

Lit., “an apostle by calling” or “a called apostle.” Paul wants to contrast the divine calling by which he became an apostle with human self-appointment by which others claim the authority. It wasn’t ambition or personal effort, but grace alone, that put Paul in the office of apostleship:

“Grace came, omnipotent grace, and the rampart of that great soul fell like the walls of Jericho; the impregnable citadel was carried in an hour, and all its ample magazines [resources] were redeemed for the service of the Lord” (Adolphe Monod).

This *calling/commissioning* is one of two requirements/conditions of apostleship (see Gal. 1:1). One must also have seen the risen Lord Jesus (1 Cor. 9:1–2). Paul also refers to a characteristic proof of apostleship as effectiveness in ministry, particularly the planting of churches.

c. his consecration—v. 1c

See Gal. 1:15–17

**N.B.** The *gospel* = **euangelion** (60 of 76 NT occurrences are in Paul), the good news. Cf. our term *Evangelical*.

2. The *message* of the gospel—1:2–4

a. its *source*, or where did the gospel come from? (the OT promise)—v. 2

Observe here the fundamental *unity* between the two testaments. The gospel of the NT is the *fruit* of which the OT is the *root*. The NT gospel is the flower of an OT seed.

“The Old is by the New explained,

The New is in the Old contained.”

“The New is in the Old concealed,

The Old is by the New revealed.”

Thus, whereas the gospel may well be *good* news, it is by no means *new* news. It is as old as the OT itself (cf. John 5:39–47; Lk. 24:25–27, 44–47; Acts 8:32–35). Said Martin Luther:

“The Christian religion is not the result of a blind accident or of a fate determined by stars, as many empty-headed people have arrogantly assumed, but it was by God’s definite plan and deliberate predetermination that it should turn out so” (145–6).

b. its *substance*, or, whom does the gospel concern? (the NT person)—vv. 3–4

Jesus Christ **is** Christianity. J. N. D. Anderson, director of the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies at the University of London, has noted that

“in Confucianism and Buddhism it is the teaching and principles of Confucius and the Buddha which represent the essence of the religion, rather than the teacher who first enunciated them or the facts of his life and death. Even in Islam, the towering figure of Muhammad finds its paramount importance in the divine revelation which it believes was given to mankind through him” (*Christianity: The Witness of History*, 38).

By contrast, Christianity **is** Christ. John Stott explains:

“The person and work of Christ are the rock upon which the Christian religion is built. If he is not who he said he was, and if he did not do what he said he had come to do, the foundation is undermined and the whole superstructure will collapse. Take Christ from Christianity, and you disembowel it; there is practically nothing left. Christ is the center of Christianity; all else is circumference” (*Basic Christianity*, 21).

1) the gospel of God concerns “His (God’s) Son”—vv. 3–4a

a) his humiliation & humanity—v. 3

b) his exaltation & deity—v. 4a

These two verses are central to Paul’s *Christology*. Two fundamental truths are asserted of “His (God’s) Son”, and their close parallelism is impossible to miss:

“*who was born*” / “*who was appointed*”

“*from the seed of David*” / “*Son of God with power*”

“*according to the flesh*” / “*according to the spirit of holiness*”

There are three primary competing views of this passage:

1) One view takes v. 3 as descriptive of Christ’s *humanity* or his human nature, whereas v. 4 describes his *deity* or his divine nature. Thus the contrast is between the two components of Christ’s person. He is one person with two natures: one human (hence *flesh*) and one divine (hence *spirit*; not a reference to the HS).

2) According to this view, the contrast between “flesh” and “spirit” is between the outward and the inward. Externally Jesus may be said to have descended from the seed of David. Internally he was perfected in the spirit (or by the Spirit) which fitted him to be the Son of God with power.

3) The most likely view contends that the focus of the contrast between v. 3 and v. 4 is not between his human nature and his divine nature but rather between his *humiliation* and his *exaltation*. In other words, the contrast is not between two different components in Christ's person but between *two successive stages or phases in Christ's experience*. Cf. Phil. 2:5–11.

*Humiliation* = his birth, earthly life and ministry, sufferings.

*Exaltation* = resurrection, ascension, enthronement.

According to this view, *flesh* refers not so much to the body (far less to the sinful nature) but to the present, natural, earthly realm in which we live. The *flesh/spirit* contrast is **historical**; it is a contrast between this present, fallen, earthly, temporal world in which we live, and the future, redeemed, heavenly, eternal world which is yet to come.

The phrase “according to the *flesh*” refers not so much to Christ's human nature but to the historical realm/environment with which humanity is necessarily associated. The eternal Son of God entered the sphere of the *flesh*, i.e., this present, fallen, evil age. But as v. 4 goes on to point out, by virtue of his resurrection he has entered the sphere of the *spirit*, the new age, the heavenly realm where he now lives and reigns.

**N.B.** The word translated “declared” (NASB) is significant. It is the Greek word *horizo*, from which we get the English term “horizon”. Some insist it means that the resurrection *marks out* or *declares* Jesus to be the Son of God. But in its 7 other occurrences in the NT it means *to determine, to appoint, to fix* (Lk. 22:22; Acts 2:23; 10:42; 11:29; 17:26, 31; Heb. 4:7). In some sense, then, Christ Jesus was **appointed** Son of God by virtue of his resurrection from the dead.

This would appear to create a theological problem, for how can the eternally pre-existent Son be *appointed* Son of God? But note: Paul does not say Jesus was appointed Son of God, but Son of God **with power**. Paul is describing an event in history whereby Jesus was instated in a position of sovereignty and invested with power (cf. Acts 13:33; Phil. 2:9–11). At the resurrection and exaltation Jesus began a new **phase** of divine sonship. While on earth Jesus was certainly the Son of God. But he was not the *Son-of-God-with-power*. Paul is not saying Jesus became the Son at the time of the resurrection (the heresy of Adoptionism). After all, it is the *Son* who is *appointed* Son. “The tautologous nature of this statement,” Moo explains, “reveals that being appointed Son has to do not with a change of essence—as if a man or human Messiah becomes the Son of God for the first time—but with a change in status or function.... [Thus] the transition from v. 3 to v. 4 ... is not a transition from a human Messiah to a divine Son of God (adoptionism) but from the Son as Messiah to the Son as both Messiah *and* powerful, reigning Lord” (41). It is a transition from the Son of God in weakness and

frailty and submission and humiliation to the Son of God in power and strength and authority and exaltation.

2) the gospel of God concerns “Jesus Christ our Lord”—v. 4b

a) his deity

b) his dominion

Paul’s use of *Lord* with reference to Jesus is eternally significant. *Lord* translates the Hebrew *YHWH* more than 6,000x in the LXX. To speak of Jesus as *Lord* is to identify him with YHWH, God of Israel! It also points to his absolute sovereign right of rule over us: over our minds, wills, emotions, lives, time, money, talents, over all.

3. The *motivation* of the gospel—1:5-7

a. the *power*—v. 5a

b. the *purpose*—vv. 5b-6

The phrase “obedience of faith” may mean one of three things, depending on how one interprets the genitive “of faith”: 1) If it is an *objective* genitive the translation would be, “obedience directed toward, or in, [the] faith,” in which case “faith” would refer to a body of doctrine or the message of the gospel. 2) If it is a *subjective* genitive the translation would be, “obedience that comes from or is produced by faith” (cf. Rom. 15:18). 3) If it is an *appositional* or *epexegetical* genitive the translation would be “the obedience *which is* faith.” Belief in the gospel can be described as an act of obedience, as indicated by the parallel phrases in Romans 10:16 (“But not all *obeyed the gospel*. For Isaiah said, ‘Lord, who has *believed* our report?’ ”). I prefer option two. That faith in the gospel to which Paul calls us is the kind that obeys. Thus, if your so-called “faith” does not obey, is it “saving” faith?

However, note well that the salvation of the Gentiles was not the ultimate purpose of Paul’s mission. He sought to bring them to the obedience of faith “for His name’s sake” (v. 5b). First, foremost, and fundamental to Paul’s endeavors was honor and praise for the glory of Christ’s name. Said Stott: “The highest of missionary motives is neither obedience to the Great Commission (important as that is), nor love for sinners who are alienated and perishing (strong as that incentive is, especially when we contemplate the wrath of God, verse 18), but rather zeal—burning and passionate zeal—for the glory of Jesus Christ” (53).

c. the *people*—v. 7

# FAILURE

WHY YOUR RELIGION WON'T WORK

VENTURE  
DARE TO DO SOMETHING

Study Notes

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Paul sends this epistle to the “people”, *all* the people of Rome. He doesn’t send it to “The Society of Ivory Tower Theologians” or to those with an IQ of 150 and higher. The point is that Romans is *not too difficult for the average believer*. It is for *you and me*. Question: Why was this section titled the *Motivation* of the gospel? Answer: Everything Paul did was **for His name’s sake** (v. 5). “Ultimately, Paul ministers not for personal gain or even the benefit of his converts, but for the glory and benefit of Jesus Christ his Lord” (Moo/45). Note also that being a “saint” is a matter of *divine calling*, not human performance.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Storms, S. (2016). [Biblical Studies: Romans](#) (Ro 1:1–7). Edmond, OK: Sam Storms.