

GOD REVEALED IN JESUS - Studies 1 - 7

During this year we will be looking at different sections of Paul's letter to the Christians in Rome. His concern at this time was the conflict raised by the converted Jews over the terms of salvation. The central theme is justification by faith but in the letter Paul discusses all the major themes of the Christian faith.

While our situation today may be different, Paul's clear discussions can help us to respond to similar concerns and of people wanting to depend on things like church membership, baptism or spiritual gifts as the way of salvation.

Study 1

Good News!

Romans 1:1-17

INTRODUCTION

5 MINUTES

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS 30 MINS

AIM: That we will have confidence to introduce ourselves to others as Christians called by God.

The church in Rome was strong and growing; everybody was talking about how Christianity had spread into this cosmopolitan capital city

Paul had not met the Christians in Rome so he takes time at the beginning of his letter to introduce himself to them. He wants to establish a good relationship with them and open the way for his main theme. He has had news about them, he prays for them regularly and longs to visit them.

He makes it plain to them that he does not come with any new message as some are suggesting. It is the same Gospel that was promised by God in the Old Testament. He wants them to know for certain that this Christian gospel message is not a collection of rules and regulations, but 'good news of great joy' (Luke 2:10).

Read Romans 1:1-7

Introduction and greetings:

1. What is the meaning of the three different ways that Paul uses to describe himself (v.1)?

2. What three main points does Paul make about the nature of the gospel message (vv.1b - 4)?

Explain why each is one just as important for us today as it was for those Christians in Rome.

3. Paul was certain that it was God who had appointed him to the ministry of calling people to faith in Jesus Christ (v.5).

How does he encourage the faith of these believers in Rome (vv.6-7)

Read Romans 1:8-17

A missionary heart:

4. How do you think these Christians will be encouraged by Paul's loving concern and deep desire to visit them (vv.8-13)?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS CONT.	<p>Paul was proud of the message God had committed to him, not as something to boast about but so important to him that he had to share it. It had the power to save and change lives, not just for wise people as the Greeks believed, or just for the religious people as the Jews thought, but for everyone who accepted God's message.</p> <p>It is important that we capture something of Paul's passion to share the message of salvation with others. What message do you have to share?</p>
<p>5. What has prevented Paul from making that visit so far (v.10)?</p> <p>Give an example of the way God's will is the motivation for a) your prayers and b) your actions.</p> <p>6. How does Paul explain the reason for his willingness and his eagerness to share the good news of the gospel message (vv.16-17)?</p>	
TEACHING SUMMARY 5 MINUTES	APPLICATION 20 MINUTES
<p>Paul was an important church leader but he has a deep concern for ordinary members. He wants these Christians to know that he prays for them regularly and longs to pay them a visit.</p> <p>This visit was important to him, not because of any desire for the wealth or fame from preaching in the capital city. He wanted the opportunity to be a channel of blessing and encouragement to the church and to share the good news of the Gospel with the people of the city. Like many other outstanding Christian leaders who have been blessed by the faith of 'ordinary' believers, Paul was not too proud to realise that he too would be encouraged by the faith of these Christians on his visit to Rome.</p> <p>So far God had not allowed this visit to take place, but Paul continues to pray that it will be possible in God's time and in God's way. A concern for God's planning and God's timing should be the guiding principle in all our actions and our prayers.</p>	<p>Divide into groups of 4-5 members for discussion.</p> <p>1. Describe a time when you were with a group of people who were surprised to hear that you were a Christian.</p> <p>What was the result of that witness</p> <p>a) for you?</p> <p>b) for the group?</p> <p>2. Ask members of the group to say how they would describe the 'Good News' to someone who does not attend church.</p> <p>Look out for ways to demonstrate your faith in words and actions this week!</p> <p>Read Romans 1:18-32 before next week.</p> <p>SING: "I know whom I have believed..."</p> <p>PRAYER:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Thank God for the wonderful gift of salvation in Christ. * Pray for help to recapture the joy of your salvation and the desire to share it with other people. <p>MEMORY VERSE: Romans 1:16</p>
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