



PART 1: PREACHING TO THE CHOIR

INTRODUCTION – Rethinking The Whole Story

WHAT IS PAUL'S MOTIVATION?

- Not “systematic theology” (no Christology, eschatology, or ecclesiology).
- Focus is on Jewish-Gentile relations and the role of Mosaic Law.
- A Pharisee who met Jesus (**Acts 8-9; Philipians 3**).
- An Apostle to the Gentiles.
- Big city? Strategic church? Must go.
- A man on a mission.
- Fundraising for ministry in Spain (**15:24, 28**).

WHAT IS THE ROMANS' SITUATION?

- Church begun by Jews (**Acts 2:5-41, see v. 10**)
- Primarily Jewish church for 2 decades.
- Met in homes (**Romans 16:5-15** – 5 to 7 house churches mentioned or implied)
- Jewish expulsion from Rome (**Acts 18:2; Suetonius**)
- Edict of Claudius, 49 CE.
- Nero comes to power (54 CE); Jews return to Rome.
- The clash of cultures.
- Paul writes in 57 CE.
- Need for racial reconciliation and cross-cultural sensitivity training.
- The Gospel offers horizontal as well as vertical oneness.
- Expect to see practical guidelines for unity.

WHAT IS OUR INCLINATION?

- Reading Romans like a Reformer...
- Reading Romans like a 21st Century Westerner...
- Reading Romans like a 1st Century Jewish Christ-follower...

Look To The Book

John 4:21-24; Philipians 3:3
Isaiah 52:7

Romans 1:1-17

“GOSPEL”: THE GOOD NEWS MESSAGE OF...

- God's grace (**Acts 20:24**)
- Jesus' death and resurrection – and implications (**1 Corinthians 15:1-8**)
- The Kingdom of God (**Matthew 4:23; Luke 9:2 & 6; Acts 8:12**)
 - Which is an irreligious (non-law, Spirit-directed) Kingdom (**Rom. 14:17**)

JEWS FIRST...

- Jesus' Emphasis – **Matthew 10:5-6; 15:24; John 1:11; 10:16**
- Early Church – **Acts 1:8:3:26**
- Paul's Pattern – **Acts 13:45-46; 28:25, 28**

So What?

TAKE OUT #1:

Faith is a holistic response to God's _____ (**1:5, 17; 16:26**).

TAKE OUT #2:

To be a “saint” is to have a holy _____.

TAKE OUT #3:

Even _____ need to hear the Gospel.

CONCLUSION – Leaving The Results Up To God

Romans 15:24, 28

Paul never...

But he did...

HOME CHURCH QUESTIONS...

WARMING UP & REVIEW...

1. Use your notes to review this week's message, point by point. As you go, talk about what challenged, perplexed or encouraged you.

LOOK TO THE BOOK...

2. Read Paul's theme for his letter to the Romans in **1:16-17**. a) What things tempt you to be ashamed about sharing the Gospel with others? How do (or could) you overcome this? b) What do you think is the significance of the Gospel *being* God's power for salvation rather than just *having or being accompanied by* God's power? c) What might be the ongoing significance of the Gospel being “for the Jew first” (see Scriptures listed in notes)? d) What do you think is the central message of **verse 17**?
3. Read ahead. What questions does the rest of **chapter 1** raise for you?

SO WHAT?...

4. *Role Play!*... There are many different ways we could communicate the “Gospel” to someone today. First read **1 Corinthians 9:19-23**. Then take turns explaining the “Good News” of Jesus in your own words (invent different contexts – people, places, ways the topic comes up). What are the strengths and weaknesses of each approach?
5. Pray for each other about making the most of every opportunity to proclaim the Gospel this week.

Bruxy Cavey @ THE MEETING HOUSE – Sunday, January 30 / February 6, 2005