

Romans 1:1-5

1:1a - *Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle...*

Paul, a *servant*, a debtor to both Greeks and barbarians, to the wise and unwise (Rom. 1:14). Necessity was laid upon Paul, for a dispensation of the gospel was committed to him (1 Corinth. 9:16-17)

Paul was called as a freeman, that is, free in regards to righteousness (Rom. 6:20), as the chief persecutor of the church, thus he became Christ's servant (Rom. 6:22, 1 Corinth. 7:22-23).

Paul is a pattern of salvation to sinners (1 Tim. 1:16), called to be saints, saved not *by* works, but *for* good works (Eph. 2:8-10).

Paul was appointed an apostle *directly* by Jesus Christ—not *of* men, neither *by* man (Gal. 1:1). He personally saw Jesus (1 Corinth. 9:1, 15:8), and was commissioned *after* Christ's resurrection, Paul's life and ministry itself being a testimony of that resurrection.

His apostleship was unique, as he was the apostle of the gentiles (2 Tim. 1:11, Rom. 11:13, Gal. 2:8), and this was by the *commandment of God* (1 Tim. 1:1).

Paul was not one of the twelve. Matthias was the legitimate replacement of Judas (Acts 1:26, 2:14); neither did Paul include himself as part of the twelve (1 Cor. 15:5, 8).

Paul received his gospel from Christ directly (Gal. 1:12); he laid the foundation of Jesus Christ according to God's secret purpose, the Church the Body of Christ (1 Corinth. 3:10-11, Rom. 16:25).

1:1b ...*Separated unto the gospel of God* - Paul was separated from the womb of his mother Israel, which *answereth to the Jerusalem that now is, and is in bondage with her children* (Gal. 1:15, Gal. 4:25), as one born out of due time (1 Cor. 15:8), unto God's purpose.

Gal. 1:15-16a says,

But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen...

As one born out of due time, he was a "premature birth," as Israel has not yet attained their prophesied salvation; but we, he writes, *have NOW received the atonement* (Rom. 5:11).

Paul was separated from the Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children, which will become that mother of harlots spoken of in Revelation 17, and separated to the gospel of God, to preach God's Son among the *heathen* (gentiles and unbelieving Jews).

Romans 1:2

...Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures)...

This gospel of God, was promised before in the scriptures of the prophets, and is defined for us in the following verses:

Romans 1:3-4

(It concerns) *His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.*

Jesus Christ was declared to be the Son of God *by His resurrection from the dead*. Consider the words of Paul in Acts 13:

...And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. (Acts 13:32-33)

Paul here attributes the Father's statement in Psalm 2, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*, to the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. This is because the

resurrection demonstrated that death itself had no legal right over Him, as He was perfectly without sin, and that He also had the power of eternal life in Himself, being both Lord and Christ.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ was and is the proof and legal declaration that He is the Son of God.

The *glad tidings* that God promised to their fathers, that Paul mentions in Acts 13:32, are the glad tidings of resurrection, and that Jesus is the prophesied Seed of David (Isaiah 9:6-7, Jer. 23:5-6, Jer. 33:15), who was prophesied to die (Psalm 22:15-16, Dan. 9:26, Is. 53:9), to be buried (Is. 53:9), and resurrect from the dead (Psalm 16:9-10). His death was even said to be an offering for sin (Is. 53:10).

These truths were able to be searched out in the Old Testament, they were spoken of by the prophets. This is why Peter uses the same phrase, *gospel of God*, in 1 Peter 4:17.

The content of this gospel was not the mystery Paul refers to later in his epistles, it was what God purposed to do *by this gospel* that Paul refers to as the mystery—namely, that God was going to use it to offer salvation by grace through faith alone, without a new covenant, to Jews and gentiles, due to Israel's fall from their privileged standing with God, and to make from them both *one new man*, the Church the Body of Christ. These are what Paul calls the *unsearchable* riches of Christ in Ephesians 3:8, because they were,

...from the beginning of the world... hid in God... (Eph. 3:9)

Though the revelations given to Paul by Jesus contained mystery information that could not be known by studying the Old Testament scriptures (Eph. 3:1-9), namely, the timing and manner by which salvation would go to the gentiles, and the character of that salvation—the foundations of these further revelations *are the prophetic scriptures* which testify of Christ.

The mystery truths given to Paul by Christ, though not prophesied in the Old Testament, are *witnessed by the Law and the Prophets* (Rom. 3:21).

The Law was a schoolmaster to lead us to Christ (Gal. 3:24), a witness to our unrighteousness and need of a savior.

For example, God is a righteous judge who will render to every man according to his deeds (Psalm 62:12, quoted in Romans 2:6). The prophet Habakkuk in Hab. 2:4 testifies that the just shall live by his faith, which Paul quotes in Rom. 1:17.

We will see Paul quote extensively from the Old Testament in the Book of Romans to prove that what God is doing today is perfectly in line with His nature and character.

1:5 - ...*By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name:*

It is by the resurrected Christ, declared to be the Son of God, that Paul says he has received *grace*—he not only received grace *personally*, as one who was persecuting those who were in Christ before him, but he received God's message and mission of grace to the world, what he calls the dispensation of grace in Ephesians 3:2.

Paul was the first to receive this particular kind of grace (1 Tim. 1:16), and was the administrator of this grace.

The obedience of man is always in regard to God's revealed will. God has revealed different things to different people throughout history. The first way we are obedient to *the faith* as we will see later in the book of Romans, is by first accepting our status as sinners who are condemned by our works (Rom. 3:10, 23), and to accept God's offer of salvation by faith alone (Rom. 3:21-28, Rom. 4:5)—that is, to cease from trying to earn God's favor, as we have already been concluded to be sinners.

This is the beginning of our obedience to the faith. As we will see later in Romans, the first step in obedience is to simply believe, and the work God has appointed us to and the sanctification that takes place to produce that work will also take place through the power of faith. The works of the flesh will not produce the work God is trying to accomplish in and through us.