Light Reading/Deep Reading of the Bible Romans 1

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(Peter Lok)駱沅祺

lokpeter@outlook.com
Bibleao.com

Romans 1

A Brief Bible Reading: Romans 1 is an epistle written by the apostle Paul in the New Testament to the Christian church in Rome. This epistle is widely regarded as one of Paul's most theologically in-depth and logically rigorous epistles (Romans 1) and is an important beginning of the book, which is divided into several sections:

1. Introductions and greetings

Paul introduced himself as a servant of Jesus Christ, called as an apostle, and sent to preach the gospel of God.

Emphasize that this gospel has been prophesied in the Bible by the prophets about Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Grace and peace to the believers in Rome.

2. Thanksgiving and zeal for evangelism

Paul thanked God that the faith of the believers in Rome had been preached.

Expressing his desire to travel to Rome to meet them so that they could build up faith in each other.

He thought that both Greeks, foreigners, wise and foolish people were willing to preach the gospel.

3. The central message of the gospel

One of the key verses: "I am not ashamed of the gospel; For this gospel is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes."

Emphasizing that the righteous are justified by faith and the righteous will live by faith.

4. God's wrath reveals unrighteousness in mankind

Describes how human beings know God, but instead of glorifying Him, they worship idols.

As a result, God allowed them to fall into lust, leading to all sorts of moral and social depravity.

Including all kinds of injustice, greed, malice, jealousy, murder, etc.

Finally, these people know God's judgment, but they still do these things, even if they like others to do the same.

Thematic focus

The power and universality of the gospel

The beginning of the doctrine of justification by faith

God's judgment on ungodliness and unrighteousness

How does Paul understand the phrase "in debt to all"?

The phrase "in debt to all" appears in Romans 1:14:

"Whether it be a Greek, a foreigner, a wise man or a foolish, I am in debt to them." (Romans 1:14)

1. Scriptural background understanding

Paul received the gospel from God to pass it on to the world.

So, he owes all who have not yet heard the gospel - until it is preached to them.

[1Corinthians 9:16], "If I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast about, for I am a last resort; Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel."

Explanation 2: Moral Responsibility and Mission Sense (Mainstream View)

"Debt" means that Paul was well aware of God's call to evangelism and his life's commitment.

So he saw it as a "duty" or a "predestined debt."

Regardless of what the object is; Culture, education, and background are the same, and he is willing to love and serve and preach the gospel.

We pray

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank You for giving us the precious gospel so that we can receive salvation by faith.

Lord, help us not to be ashamed of the gospel, to be held back by the eyes of the world, from the criticism of men, or from our own fears, and to bear bold witness to Your power in our lives.

Lord, we acknowledge that sometimes we are weak, and we are silent or withdrawn in the face of doubt, pressure, or challenge.

Give us the faith and strength that comes from you so that we can live out the righteousness and joy that comes through faith in our lives, in our workplaces, and in our families.

Lord, may we see compassion and burden in our hearts when we see those around us who do not yet know You, knowing that the gospel we have is the hope You have entrusted us to share. May we live our lives proud of the gospel and let us be witnesses of Your grace and spread Your love and truth to the ends of the earth.

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ I pray, amen.

Romans 1

Common English Bible

Greeting

1 From Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for God's good news. ²⁻³ God promised this good news about his Son ahead of time through his prophets in the holy scriptures. His Son was descended from David. ⁴ He was publicly identified as God's Son with power through his resurrection from the dead, which was based on the Spirit of holiness. This Son is Jesus Christ our Lord. ⁵ Through him we have received God's grace and our appointment to be apostles. This was to bring all Gentiles to faithful obedience for his name's sake. ⁶ You who are called by Jesus Christ are also included among these Gentiles.

⁷ To those in Rome who are dearly loved by God and called to be God's people.

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thanksgiving and Paul's plans to visit

⁸ First of all, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because the news about your faithfulness is being spread throughout the whole world. ⁹ I serve God in my spirit by preaching the good news about God's Son, and God is my witness that I continually mention you ¹⁰ in all my prayers. I'm always asking that somehow, by God's will, I might succeed in visiting you at last. ¹¹ I really want to see you to pass along some spiritual gift to you so that you can be strengthened. ¹² What I mean is that we can mutually

encourage each other while I am with you. We can be encouraged by the faithfulness we find in each other, both your faithfulness and mine.

¹³ I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that I planned to visit you many times, although I have been prevented from coming until now. I want to harvest some fruit among you, just as I have done among the other Gentiles. ¹⁴ I have a responsibility both to Greeks and to those who don't speak Greek, both to the wise and to the foolish.

God's righteousness is revealed

¹⁵ That's why I'm ready to preach the gospel also to you who are in Rome. ¹⁶ I'm not ashamed of the gospel: it is God's own power for salvation to all who have faith in God, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷ God's righteousness is being revealed in the gospel, from faithfulness^[a] for faith, ^[b] as it is written, *The righteous person will live by faith*. ^[c]

Gentiles are without excuse

¹⁸ God's wrath is being revealed from heaven against all the ungodly behavior and the injustice of human beings who silence the truth with injustice. ¹⁹ This is because what is known about God should be plain to them because God made it plain to them. ²⁰ Ever since the creation of the world, God's invisible qualities—God's eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, because they are understood through the things God has made. So humans are without excuse. ²¹ Although they knew God, they didn't honor God as God or thank him. Instead, their reasoning became pointless, and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² While they were claiming to be wise, they made fools of themselves. ²³ They exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images that look like mortal humans: birds, animals, and reptiles. ²⁴ So God abandoned them to their hearts' desires, which led to the moral corruption of degrading their own bodies with each other. ²⁵ They traded God's truth for a lie, and they worshipped and served the creation instead of the creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

²⁶ That's why God abandoned them to degrading lust. Their females traded natural sexual relations for unnatural sexual relations. ²⁷ Also, in the same way, the males traded natural sexual relations with females, and burned with lust for each other. Males performed shameful actions with males, and they were paid back with the penalty they deserved for their mistake in their own bodies. ²⁸ Since they didn't think it was worthwhile to acknowledge God, God abandoned them to a defective mind to do inappropriate things. ²⁹ So they were filled with all injustice, wicked behavior, greed, and evil behavior. They are full of jealousy, murder, fighting, deception, and malice. They are gossips, ³⁰ they slander people, and they hate God. They are rude and proud, and they brag. They invent ways to be evil, and they are disobedient to their parents. ³¹ They are without understanding, disloyal, without affection, and without mercy. ³² Though they know God's decision that those who persist in such practices deserve death, they not only keep doing these things but also approve others who practice them.

The key focus of **Romans 1** is to introduce the **main theme of the entire epistle**: the **righteousness of God** and **humanity's need for salvation**.

Here's a breakdown of the central focus and structure:

1. Introduction and Greeting (Romans 1:1-7)

• Paul introduces himself as a servant of Christ and an apostle.

- He emphasizes the **gospel of God**, promised through the prophets, concerning Jesus Christ.
- The gospel is for all nations, including the Roman believers.

2. Thanksgiving and Paul's Desire to Visit Rome (Romans 1:8–15)

- Paul expresses gratitude for the Roman Christians and shares his longing to visit them.
- His mission is to preach the gospel to **both Jews and Gentiles**.

3. Theme Statement (Romans 1:16-17)

This is the heart of the chapter — and arguably the entire letter:

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.

For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last..."

(Romans 1:16–17, NIV)

This announces:

- The **power of the gospel** to save.
- The universal need for salvation.
- The revelation of God's righteousness through faith.

4. God's Wrath Against Sinful Humanity (Romans 1:18–32)

- Paul contrasts the righteousness of God with the **unrighteousness of humanity**.
- He describes how people suppress the truth, reject God, and turn to idolatry and immorality.
- This leads to God's **righteous judgment** and the **consequences of sin**.

In Summary:

The key focus of Romans 1 is:

- The revelation of God's righteousness through the gospel (vv. 16–17),
- And the **need for this righteousness** due to the **sinfulness and rebellion of humanity** (vv. 18–32).

It sets up the argument for why **all people** — Jew and Gentile alike — need the salvation that comes by **faith in Jesus Christ**.

Lead a Small Group Bible Study on Romans 1

1. Start with Prayer

- Ask God to open hearts and minds to His Word.
- Invite the Holy Spirit to guide the conversation.

2. Read the Passage Together

- You can read Romans 1:1–17 (focus on the gospel), or the full chapter (including humanity's sinfulness).
- Have group members read aloud in turns, or silently.

Suggested Structure for Discussion

Section 1: Romans 1:1–17 — The Power of the Gospel

Key Focus:

Paul introduces himself and the gospel. The core message is found in verses 16–17.

Questions:

- 1. What do we learn about Paul's identity and mission in verses 1–7?
- 2. How does Paul describe the gospel? What makes it powerful (v. 16)?
- 3. What does "the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith" mean (v. 17)?
- 4. Why do you think Paul says he's "not ashamed" of the gospel? What might cause people to be ashamed of it today?
- 5. How does this passage shape your view of the gospel or your willingness to share it?

Section 2: Romans 1:18–32 — God's Wrath Against Sin

Key Focus:

Humanity's rejection of God and the consequences of sin.

Questions:

- 1. What does it mean that people "suppress the truth" (v. 18)? How does that happen today?
- 2. What evidence of God is mentioned in verses 19–20?
- 3. How does idolatry show up in modern life (v. 23)?
- 4. What are some consequences of turning away from God, as seen in this passage (vv. 24–32)?
- 5. How do these verses make you feel about humanity's need for the gospel?

/ Wrap-Up Questions (Application & Prayer)

What part of this chapter challenged or encouraged you the most?

- How does this passage change the way you think about sharing your faith?
- Is there an area where you feel tempted to suppress truth in your life?
- How can we pray for each other this week in light of what we've learned?

Tips for Leading the Discussion:

- Ask open-ended questions—avoid yes/no questions.
- Don't feel pressure to answer everything—point back to Scripture.
- Give space for quiet members, but don't force people to speak.
- Stay on track gently if the conversation drifts.