

LESSON 1

THE GOSPEL AT THE CROSSROADS

ROMANS 1:1–17



1 Choose a sport and describe what is meant by the fundamentals. What are the fundamentals of faith in Christ?



Read the two pages of introductory material on Romans, Romans 1:1–17, and the following notes:

- ☐ 1:1
 ☐ 1:3–5
 ☐ 1:5, 6
 ☐ 1:6, 7
 ☐ 1:6–12
 ☐ 1:7
 ☐ 1:8
 ☐ 1:9, 10
☐ 1:11, 12
☐ 1:14

2 These opening verses tell us some important facts about the messenger, the message, and the audience of this letter. Summarize what you know about each.

Messenger

Message

Audience

3 Paul's understanding of the gospel is rooted in Old Testament prophecy, Jewish history, and personal experience. What key events in his life formed the foundation of his faith?

4 Why was Paul ideally suited to address this particular body of believers, even though he had never visited them?

5 Why was the Roman church such an important group of believers to influence?

6 Why was Paul thankful for the Roman church?



7 What did Paul want to give the believers in Rome? How might his visit encourage them? If Paul visited your church, how might he be encouraged?

“Believe and obey” summarizes the structure of Romans. The first part of the letter addresses the issue of faith, and the final chapters deal with how we must act out our faith in everyday life. The Christian faith is not intended to provide a way for us to remove ourselves from the opportunities and challenges of life in the real world. Rather, it is to equip and empower us to make a difference there. Just as the believers in Rome found themselves at an important crossroads of social, economic, and political life, we too have each been placed in a unique position to influence our world for Christ. First, we must develop a clear understanding of what faith means to us—then we must let that understanding direct everything we do. What do you need to do in order to seize the opportunities God has given you to influence your world?

8 In what ways do we sometimes seem to be ashamed of the gospel? Why is this, and what should we do about it?



9 What resources does your church have to make an impact on your community? How can the individual believer help?

10 How have churches moved away from the fundamentals of faith? How can this be changed?

11 In what situations do you have opportunities to influence others for Christ by the way you live? How effectively are you using these opportunities? What could you do to strengthen the impact of your witness?

12 When you analyze the foundation of your own faith, where do you see that you need to be strengthened? Plan some steps you will take to review the basics of the Christian life.



A What is the gospel? Summarize its essential elements in terms of man's need, God's response, and the implications of this transaction for the life of faith.

B What is an apostle? How did Paul qualify?

C How was Paul prevented from visiting the Roman church earlier? What does this teach about God's timing?

D Belonging to Christ is a good way of describing both the privileges and the responsibilities of being a Christian. List the most important aspects of each in terms of the life of faith.

E Describe the role and importance of prayer in relation to the spreading and nurturing of the gospel.

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