



# Romans

**Right With God**

# Paul, Proud Of Them

**Lesson Seven**

*Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex Curriculum*

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### Paul, Proud Of Them

Have you ever made an acquaintance by long distance? Maybe you had a relative who lived a long way off and you had never met them. Sometimes we can get to know someone by reputation, even correspond with that person by text or by phone, and not actually meet them face to face. You kind of know them, but wouldn't recognize them if you saw them. You would probably want to meet such a person face to face.

That is the situation with Paul and the church at Rome. They knew of him and he knew of them. However, they, with a few exceptions, had never met face to face. Paul really wanted that to happen. And, we can be pretty sure that the folks at Rome wanted it to happen, also.

***Read Romans 1:8-12.***

Paul, as he normally did, expressed thanks to God for those he addressed in his letter. He thanked God for them and their faith.\* Paul became known in the early church as the apostle of faith. To Paul, faith was basic. There was no relationship with God without faith. Faith was the most important Christian virtue. And, it seems, any time Paul encountered faith, he was eager to commend it.

Can you imagine what it would be like to have the apostle of faith praise your faith? We might compare it to a world-champion baseball player saying that you play baseball very well. Or, the boss of the company saying that you are doing a good job. Or, your favorite teacher saying that you are a very good student. He said that their faith was well known. These people must have taken great pride in hearing that not only had Paul heard of their faith, but he knew that their faith was celebrated in churches all over the world.

After thanking God for their faith, Paul speaks of his prayer for them. He calls on God to be his witness. This is an indicator of the depth and determination of his prayer. He is calling on God who knows all, the God who called him and whom he serves with his whole heart.

What at testimony! How many of us can say that we are serving God with our whole heart? And, remember, Paul has called on God to be witness to what he is saying, and his whole-hearted task for God is preaching the Gospel. He would not dare lie under those circumstances. Human effort, even that of great missionaries like Paul, is very limited. But, Paul wanted to make the best of all that God had given him in talent and opportunity.

Now, you may say that you aren't called on to preach the Gospel like Paul was. However, every Christian is challenged by God to tell others about Jesus.

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Paul said that as he prayed for them, he specifically asked God for the privilege of coming to them, in Rome. He put it as a need to succeed in coming to them. This may mean that he had tried in the past, and failed. It probably, however, means that his desire and his schedule hadn't worked together. Paul said he had not had permission or leadership of God's Holy Spirit to go to Rome

You know that waiting on God's Spirit is sometimes a very difficult thing. It is difficult for some of us to fit our plans into our understanding of God's will...to subject our passions and desires to the Spirit of God. However, it is always the very best thing to do. And, things really change for us when we begin to submit our plans to God's Spirit. We often find ourselves on a different road, doing different things, relating to different people, supporting different causes, and loyal to different principles.

**Scripture Memory: "I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported over the world." Romans 1:8**

\*Underlined statements in this Teacher's Guide appear in the Student Worksheet with blanks to be filled in by the student during the lesson. Words in the Student Worksheet may not appear exactly as printed in the Teacher's Guide.

### **For the Teacher:**

**Lesson Goal: To encourage students to see how Paul encouraged the church at Rome.**

1. Paul's salutation has already been long and now, instead of moving on to his theme, he lingers over introductory matters. Doubtless he felt the need of getting as well acquainted as possible. He decided to unburden his heart about what these folks meant to him. He is revealing his pastoral concern, demonstrating his gracious sensitivity in dealing with God's saints.
2. Paul said that the whole Christian world knew of the faith of the church at Rome. He said this to another church: the church at Thessalonica – I Thessalonians 1:8.
3. Note that Paul's thanks are to his God and through Jesus Christ. It seems that he is letting the Romans see his style of prayer. It is personal: "my God." It is by faith through Jesus Christ. Jesus is his intercessor before God.
4. The people in Rome undoubtedly knew that Paul went to the riverside, to jail, to Mars Hill, to people's homes, to the courts of the land, and to anywhere else to preach. So, when he says that his whole heart is focused on telling other people the Good News, the people in Rome believed it.
5. In Acts 16 Luke recorded Paul's intention to preach in Asia, Bithynia and Mysia, but was told not to do so by God's Holy Spirit. It is obvious that Paul was very sensitive to the leadership of God's Spirit; and in this passage, Paul is saying that he had not had permission or leadership of God's Holy Spirit to go to Rome.
6. In the next lesson, we will continue to discuss Paul's desire to go to Rome and meet with the church there. It was a very strong desire in the heart of the great apostle.

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### *Student Worksheet*

## Paul, Proud of Them

=Paul expressed thanks to God for those he addressed in his \_\_\_\_\_. He thanked God for them and their \_\_\_\_\_.

=To Paul, faith was \_\_\_\_\_. There was no relationship with God without \_\_\_\_\_.

=Now, you may say that you aren't called on to preach the \_\_\_\_\_ like Paul was.

However, every Christian is challenged by God to tell others about \_\_\_\_\_.

=You know that waiting on God's \_\_\_\_\_ is sometimes a very difficult thing. It is difficult for some of us to fit our plans into our understanding of God's \_\_\_\_\_...to subject our passions and desires to the \_\_\_\_\_ of God. However, it is the \_\_\_\_\_ thing to do.

=Things really change for us when we begin to submit our \_\_\_\_\_ to God's Spirit

=We often find ourselves on a different \_\_\_\_\_, doing different \_\_\_\_\_.

**Scripture Memory: "I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported over the world." Romans 1:8**

#### **A Roman Road to Salvation:**

Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Everyone is a sinner and needs salvation.

Romans 6:23a "For the wages of sin is death." The law of God is unchangeable. If someone sins the penalty must be paid, and that payment is death.

Romans 5:8 "But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners Christ died for us." God loves us so much, according to John 3:16, that He sent His Son, Jesus, to die for our sins.

Romans 6:23b "But the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." The debt for sin is spiritual death, but God, through the death of Jesus on the cross, paid that debt and now everyone can have eternal life. See also, II Corinthians 5:21

Romans 1:9, 10 "That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved." To personally receive the gift of God, eternal life in Christ Jesus, you trust God to be what He says He is. Believing that "God raised Him (Jesus) from the dead" is to accept all that the Bible says about God and His Son, Jesus. Then you speak (confess) the words, "Jesus is Lord," as a statement of faith. Believing "with your heart" means that you believe with your mind and with all that you are.

Romans 10:13 "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." You have the promise of God Himself that if you do what Romans 10:9, 10 says, you will become God's child and have eternal life.

Romans 12:1, 2 "I urge you brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will." Becoming a Christian is a life-long act of faith and worship.