



## World Christian Fellowship

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### Romans 05

#### The Messenger- Identity-Slave

**Romans 1:1**, *Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God*

God called a unique man to be the major spokesman for the good news.

Paul, he was that man, the preacher of the good news.

Uniquely was committed to him the mysteries, that which was hidden from the past generations and peoples and now revealed.

**Ephesians 3:8-12**, *To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, <sup>9</sup>and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; <sup>10</sup>to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the*

*heavenly places,<sup>11</sup> according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord,<sup>12</sup> in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.*

**Colossians 1:24-26**, *I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church,<sup>25</sup> of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God,<sup>26</sup> the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints.*

Paul was God's keynote speaker for the heralding of the good news. Remarkable Jew with Greek education and Roman citizenship, that man with incredible abilities as a leader, a fighter, highly motivated, determined, articulate, brilliant, specially called and converted by God Himself.

Paul who completed three missionary journeys proclaiming the good news from Jerusalem to Macedonia and crisscrossing that territory.

Paul, that unique servant who could do miracles and yet could not rid himself of his own thorn in the flesh.

Paul who could break prisons to bits as he did in Philippi and yet himself was a prisoner.

Every preacher who is ever preached since has depended on Paul's sermons for his material. Thirteen books of the New Testament, the legacy of this man through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

## Why this letter?

### Why did Paul write Romans?

He wanted to go there for several reasons.

For their sake.

**Romans 1:11-12**, *For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established— <sup>12</sup>that is, that I may be encouraged together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.*

Paul wanted to go there for their sake because they had not been founded by an apostle.

**Romans 15:20**, *And so I have made it my aim to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man's foundation,*

They had not been founded by an apostle but most likely had been founded by some travelers who had come from all over to celebrate the Pentecost when the church was founded by the Holy Spirit.

**Acts 2:10**, *Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,*

In the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit descended there were sojourners from Rome there. In the marvelous conversion of the 3,000 and then the 5,000 and who knows how many thousand that happened in a few weeks.

Some of those sojourners from Rome, no doubt, took the gospel back. So, there had been no apostolic establishing.

Paul sensed in his heart that the strategic location of the Roman church in the capital of the empire and he knew they needed to be solidified and he said, "I want to come in order to impart to you some spiritual gift in order to establish you."

**Romans 1:15**, *So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also.*

Not only for the church do I want to come, but for the lost. His heart literally could see the tremendous potential of reaching Rome for Christ.

**Romans 15:32**, *that I may come to you with joy by the will of God, and may be refreshed together with you.*

Paul wanted to go for the sake of the church, for the sake of the lost, for his own sake.

Paul wanted them to know him for several reasons.

### **They could pray for Paul**

**Romans 15:30**, *Now I beg you, brethren, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and through the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in prayers to God for me,*

He wanted people praying for him.

Paul wanted them to know him because he had another plan in mind.

**Romans 15:28**, *Therefore, when I have performed this and have sealed to them this fruit, I shall go by way of you to Spain.*

He had this great dream of going on to Spain. There were spiritual reasons to build the church, establish the church, win the lost, refresh himself, to gain their prayer support. He wanted them to know him. He longed to go there.

Paul wanted them to provide resources. He wanted to build up that strategic church.

The letter really was to be an introduction of himself as an apostle, of his doctrine, so they would have no question about it.

So, Paul writes a monumental thesis to establish them in the truth, to show that he was truly an apostle, to give them confidence in himself, and just in case he never gets there, to give them the absolute last word on the gospel of Jesus Christ so they will be established.

Paul tells us three things about himself in verse 1.

## 1. Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ.

The word is slave! **Doulos**

Jewish context for Paul's thinking.

**Exodus 21:5-6**, *But if the servant plainly says, 'I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free,'<sup>6</sup> then his master shall bring him to the judges. He shall also bring him to the door, or to the doorpost, and his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him forever.*

This portion of the scripture deals with the servant-master relationship among God's people as God gives some laws to them.

In other words, if the servant says

- I do not serve because I have to,
- I do not serve because I am forced to,
- I do not serve because I am paid to,

- I do not serve because I am afraid not to,
- I serve because I love my master, therefore I will never go free.

He became known as a bond slave.

That is really the essence of the word ***doulos*** used in Romans 1, bond slave.

His master would bore his ear through with an awl and he shall serve him forever. If you said, I want to serve out of love, and I will never leave because I love you, then you were taken to the door and right here where ladies get their ear pierced, which is insignificant, a very significant thing happened, that ear lobe was pressed against the wood and it was drilled and permanently the mark was there:

I am a slave of love.

This is the essence of what is behind Romans 1:1.

Paul is saying that I am a bond slave. This is something that I have chosen out of love, not fear.

There were millions of slaves in the Roman Empire. Perhaps they all did not understand this Jewish concept. Perhaps some of them did.

Surely some of them served out of love. But most of the slaves in the Roman world, in the Greek culture, were looked down on. They were treated not as persons but as objects, tools.

If you wanted to, you could kill your slaves. It was inconsequential. Therefore, some Bible commentators are saying in this passage that Paul is using ***doulos*** only in its Jewish sense, that he is speaking only about the affirmation of his love and he is speaking about the dignity of such service.

In the Hebrew use of the concept of servant, someone in the highest ranks could be called a servant. Kings had servants, ministers who ministered to their royal needs. So, in a Hebrew sense, a servant could be a lofty term of great honor and great dignity.

**Example:**

**Genesis 26:24**, *And the Lord appeared to him the same night and said, "I am the God of your father Abraham; do not fear, for I am with you. I will bless you and multiply your descendants for My servant Abraham's sake."*

Abraham was a servant.

**Numbers 12:7**, *Not so with My servant Moses; He is faithful in all My house.*

Moses was a servant.

**Joshua 24:29**, *Now it came to pass after these things that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being one hundred and ten years old.*

Joshua was a servant.

**2 Samuel 7:5**, *“Go and tell My servant David, ‘Thus says the Lord: “Would you build a house for Me to dwell in?”*

David was a servant.

**Isaiah 20:3**, *Then the Lord said, “Just as My servant Isaiah has walked naked and barefoot three years for a sign and a wonder against Egypt and Ethiopia,*

Isaiah was a servant.

**Isaiah 53** says when the **Messiah** comes, He will be a **servant**.

So many commentators feel that what Paul is saying is, "I am a servant of Jesus Christ," as an emphasis of the dignity of his office in a Hebrew sense rather than the demeaning Greek sense.

But I really think that misses the point. Yes, there is a certain exaltation, there is a certain honour, there is a certain marvelous incomprehensible dignity at being called a servant of Jesus Christ. There is a sense in which you wait on the majesty and the royalty of the King of kings and Lord of lords.

It is not true to separate that from what the Gentiles would have understood about that same term. The Greek word itself, ***doulos***, it meant abject slavery, as a bond slave.

No dignity, but humility.

Paul wants us to see it in that sense as well.

Paul chooses two other words to speak of his servitude.

**1 Corinthians 3:5**, *Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one?*

***“diakonos.”***

We get the word "deacon" from it.

It means "table waiter."

If we look in that culture, it really meant “busboy.” But who are we but table waiters by whom you believed?

**1 Corinthians 3:6-8**, *I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. <sup>7</sup>So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase. <sup>8</sup>Now he who plants and he who waters are one, and each one will receive his own reward according to his own labour.*

We are nothing, he says, but table waiters.

**1 Corinthians 4:1**, *Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.*

Paul uses a different word.

He uses the word ***huperetes***. It is the word translated in the authorized, “ministers.”

It is ***huperetes***,

***Huper*** means “under,”

***Etes*** comes from a word that means “to row.”

It is an under rower. They had a trireme ship with three decks. On those lower three decks were three levels of galley slaves who rowed those hulking ships. Paul says, will you remember me as a third level galley slave. That is humility.

You cannot get any lower than that.

There is a Hebrew thought here of dignity, of honour, of respect, but it is marvelously mingled with the humility of the meaning of the Greek term, so that Paul paradoxically finds himself both exalted as the servant of Christ and debased as well. An expression of humility and dignity, and this is an ambivalence that every representative of Jesus Christ carries.

Sometimes when I think of the dignity of what I do, it overwhelms me.

Sometimes when I realize that I stand up and proclaim the gospel of God, when I stand up and proclaim what I have gleaned out of the Word of God and the ministry of Paul and the teaching of the Scripture under the power of the Spirit of God, I realize that there is no higher calling in the world than that.

There is a marvelous dignity, and the Bible says never speak a word against one who represents Christ.

- The Bible says give honor to whom honor is due.
- The Bible says pay them double what you should pay them if they work hard in the Word and doctrine.
- The Bible says respect them.
- The Bible says obey them and submit to them and set your life to follow their example.

It is a lofty thing, yet there is that marvelous spiritual ambivalence that says it is the humblest kind of service. Because you know that whatever it is that you do, you have absolutely no right to do it because of who you are.

Paul was a servant with all that that encompassed. He was a servant of Christ. That meant he had to absolutely obey Jesus Christ.

Yet there was a dignity there that was marvelous.

When we read the book of Acts and find out there are two themes is running through out Apostle Paul's teaching.

Christ must suffer

Jesus is the Christ.

Paul central theme is Jesus is Christ, the Anointed One.

**1 Corinthians 2:2**, *For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*

Paul uses the term, 'Lord Jesus Christ', 'Christ Jesus our Lord,' 'God of our Lord Jesus Christ'

We can see that Jesus Christ is the center of everything for him.

Every Christian is a bond slave of Jesus Christ.

**1 Corinthians 6:19-20**, *Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? <sup>20</sup>For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.*

You have no right to do what you like with your body.

The illustration is that you are a slave in the slave market. Standing naked without righteousness like Joseph, sold into sin

of slavery. You could never find yourself to be release or free from there.

Son of God came at the cost of His own precious blood He has bought you out of that slave market. This is what we call 'Redemption'!

We were under the dominion of Satan and now we have been bought by Lord Jesus Christ!

By saying I am bond slave of Jesus Christ Paul identifying with the Romans saying that I am also one of you.

Everyone of you this is true!!

Peter puts this very beautifully.

**1 Peter 1:18-19**, *knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, <sup>19</sup>but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.*

As a Christian you are not free, but you were bought by Lord Jesus Christ. We belong to HIM and HE is our Master!

Honestly speaking you do not have choice! The moment He redeemed you he is your Lord not just Saviour but who owns you!

Paul when he writes to Corinth, he says that he can not live for himself because the love for Christ compels him.

**2 Corinthians 5:14-15**, *For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; <sup>15</sup>and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.*

Paul's devotion to Christ is unmatched.

**1 Corinthians 9:16**, *For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!*

I am His slave!

I am His willing slave!!

I have given myself to Him!!!

I have lost in my Lord!!!!

Has Christ captivated your heart like that?

Is Jesus the Master of your life?

Does the love of Christ compel you?

