

1. 1:1-7 Introduction and greeting.
 - a. 1:1 Author: Paul the Apostle
 - i. A bondservant of Christ, (slave to, belonging to Christ)
 1. All Christians truly belong to Christ as gifts from God the Father to His Son. (John 17:6-12, 6:39-40)
 - a. Purchased and redeemed by His blood. (1 Cor 6:19-20, Acts 20:28, Gal 3:13)
 - b. Part of His own body. (1 Cor 6:15)
 - c. Is there any greater honor than to be called one of Christ's sheep, whom He personally watches over as the Good Shepherd? (John 10:1-16)
 - d. And yet, while we have been purchased, Christ does not see us in this way. We are His friends. And brothers through adoption. (John 15:15)
 - e. Forever set free from the power of sin. We willingly give ourselves to Christ as slaves to righteousness, which comes from Him. (Rom 6:16,20-22)
 - ii. Called to be an apostle
 1. Directly by Christ (Acts 9:1-15, Gal 1:1)
 2. Into the office of Apostle. The New Testament version of a prophet. He received direct revelation from Jesus and preached this message. (Gal 1:11-12)
 3. In a similar manner, the church and every individual Christian is called out of the world. Out of darkness and into light. (1 Peter 2:9)
 - iii. Separated to the gospel of God
 1. Paul gave the rest of his life for this purpose. To spread the gospel of God.
 2. The gospel isn't just good news, but God's revealed plan for our salvation.
 - b. 1:2 This gospel was promised through His prophets and Holy Scripture.
 - i. Though it is called the New Testament, the gospel is not new and had been foretold throughout the Old Testament, though veiled in parts. (Col 1:26-27)
 - ii. Gen 3:15 is the first mention of this gospel. When the serpent is told by God that the seed of the woman would bruise His head.
 - c. 1:3 The gospel is about Jesus, our Lord. The promised Christ, descendant of David in the flesh.
 - i. 2 Sam 7:12-13 God promised to establish the throne of David forever. Jesus is the Son of David, directly descended. Luke's gospel traces the line all the way from Adam. (Matthew 1:1-17, Luke 3:23-38)
 - ii. Jesus is Lord over all. All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Him. (Mat 28:18) Every knee will bow to Him and every tongue will confess that He is Lord.
 - d. 1:4 Powerfully demonstrated to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead.
 - i. Amongst other signs, the resurrection proved beyond doubt that Jesus was the Son of God. (John 10:25-30, Acts 2:24)
 - ii. Christ prophesied His own death and resurrection, proving His knowledge of the divine plan. (Mark 8:31)
 - iii. According to this verse He was raised from the dead by the Holy Spirit. But all members of the trinity were involved. (Gal 1:1, 1 Peter 3:18, John 10:18)
 - e. 1:5-7 Through Christ there is grace as well as instruction for His saints.
 - i. The apostles were sent with declarative authority to bring people to the obedience of faith throughout all the world. (Mat 28:16-20)
 - ii. Paul addresses the epistle to the saints in Rome, beloved of God.
 1. All true believers are saints. Set apart and justified by His blood.

2. The beloved Son was Jesus (Mat 3:17, 17:5), but through His Spirit we are also beloved and adopted into His family. (Rom 8:15-16, Eph 1:5)
- iii. Grace and peace from God and Christ. Can there be any greater comfort outside of God's grace and peace?
2. 1:8-15 Paul desires to visit Rome and details his thoughts concerning them.
 - a. Notice the general spirit of grace and praise from verse 1 through 9. In this short space, Paul honors God, gives instruction, and encourages these saints whom he has not yet even met. What have we lost in modern communication?
 - b. 1:8-10 He offers prayers for these believers. Giving thanks to God for their faith. This is something to be emulated. We should pray for all the saints. "Your kingdom come, Your will be done." (Mat 6:10)
 - c. Rome was known for their faith and Paul asked God to find a way to get to them. The irony being that when he does finally reach Rome, it is as a prisoner.
 - d. 1:11-12 His desire to visit was for their benefit as well as his own.
 - i. To impart some spiritual gift:
 1. Paul had been given the power to perform miraculous signs. (Acts 19:11-12)
 2. He wished to go to Rome and strengthen them however he could to help establish them, to check and secure a firm foundation for them, as the early church was under constant threat from within and without.
 - ii. He was hoping and expecting mutual encouragement, something that should be familiar amongst believers as we are all members of the same body of Christ. (1 Cor 12:12-14, Rom 12:4-5)
 - iii. 1:13-15 Though he has been hindered in his desire to visit the saints in Rome, he wishes to visit that he might have some fruit among them as He has had with other Gentiles.
 1. 1:13 Notice his care for what might seem a trivial thing. Their feelings and thoughts regarding His lack of visit. He takes the time to assure them, he wanted to come sooner, but was prevented.
 2. The fruit spoken of here is the work of conversion.
 3. 1:14 It is for this reason that Paul owes a debt to the Greeks and barbarians. For though his commission is from Christ, it is thanks to them that it is being fulfilled.
 4. 1:15 Therefore he is eager to go to Rome. Ready to preach to everyone. Something that does not sound appealing to most ears, especially under the circumstances he endured. But he understood the importance.
3. 1:16-17 The gospel of Christ is the power of God to salvation.
 - a. 1:16 He is not ashamed of this gospel.
 - i. Though it is foolishness to those who are perishing, it is the power to us who are being saved. (1 Cor 1:18-28)
 - ii. Neither can we be ashamed. For Jesus says "whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels." (Luke 9:26)
 - b. God's power is on display in the resurrection and revealed in multiple aspects through the Gospel of Christ. This is why he was so eager to preach. He knows that it isn't empty philosophy.
 - c. This salvation is available to everyone who believes, but the Jew first, because the promises, prophets and Christ came through them. (Mark 16:16, John 3:16, Acts 13:38-39, Rom 10:9-13)
 - d. The gospel reveals and grants the righteousness of God to those who will live by faith. (Eph 2:4-10)

4. 1:18-32 Paul now begins to lay down the foundation of his doctrine. That God's wrath is fully justified and deserved. Notice the abrupt change in his tone. Immediately after a pleasant greeting, and declaring that the just shall live by faith, we come to the serious reality of divine wrath. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Proverbs 9:10)
 - a. 1:18-19 Though it is not popular to preach the wrath of God in some churches today, it is nonetheless a reality spoken of throughout Scripture. Can you imagine, even briefly, the horror of the all powerful God doling out His wrath and punishment? What does it look like and how could any man stand against it?
 - i. We see some powerful examples of God's wrath in the Old Testament. The story of Noah is a perfect example of this. (Gen 6:5-7) Every living creature on the face of the earth was destroyed except those on the ark.
 - ii. The wrath of God is promised to all sinners in hell. And Jesus spoke of this frequently. (Mat 5:21-22 & 27-29, Mat 8:10-12, Mat 10:28, Mat 18:8, Mat 23:33, Mat 25:31-46)
 - iii. The only way to stand against God's wrath is through His mercy and grace. This began before time and the creation of the world. (Eph 1:3-6) And was promised to mankind through the Seed of the woman. (Gen 3:15) Finally fulfilled in the death and resurrection of Christ. (John 19:28-30, 1 John 4:10)
 - iv. "revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness." There is nothing hidden from the Lord and all will be punished according to their deeds. (Hebrews 4:13)
 1. There are many different forms of ungodliness and unrighteousness. Ungodliness may be seen as anything that lacks the consideration of the Holy and living God. I.e. Atheism, pride, prayerlessness, lack of due recognition to His expressed will. Whereas unrighteousness may be more of the actual lawless deeds of man. I.e. murder, rape, theft.
 2. It is not simply that people are unaware, but that they actively suppress the truth and knowledge of God. We know this to be a vain exercise as no man will escape the judgment of God. (2 Cor 5:10-11)
 - v. God's wrath is righteous and deserved. His law has been written on our hearts and made known to all men. Therefore to reject God is a deliberate and willful act of disrespect and ingratitude. But this is what we all do and why we need God's mercy.
 1. This is speaking of general revelation as opposed to special revelation which came in the form of His prophets, His Son and Holy Scripture.
 - b. 1:20 From the beginning of time, God's work has revealed His nature. His power, wisdom and order. These attributes are seen and understood by His creation. "The heavens declare the glory of God" (Psalm 19:1)
 - i. This does not mean all things can be understood. But the evidence for the creator is seen everywhere. (Isa 40:21-25, Job 36:22-31)
 - ii. Have you ever stood on the ocean shore or in front of a vast array of mountains? Proper perspective puts us in a place of lowliness, how truly small we are compared to His majesty.

- iii. Our intellect and pride can be dangerous things, but God will humble the proud. (Mat 23:12)
 - iv. Now that the word has become flesh and Jesus has come to the earth, there is even less excuse to those who have heard the gospel. This is not to say that there ever was any excuse to begin with as we will see in the next verse. (John 15:22)
- c. 1:21 They knew God, therefore there is no excuse at all for those who reject God. Atheist or agnostic, to claim ignorance or claim there is no evidence is to call God a liar.
- i. Everyone is aware of God, but instead of giving Him the due glory and thanksgiving, they reject Him and set their attention on the benign, the useless.
 - ii. As a result, all of their thoughts from that moment forward are empty and blind because they have no truth or light. Though this is not a preventative for them and in their foolishness, love the darkness. (John 3:19)
 - iii. Even Christians can be guilty of this. We commit sins of omission through lack of knowledge or desire to understand His word. Neglect of duty, unfruitfulness or unfaithfulness.
- d. 1:22 Those who prop themselves up against God and His wisdom only show how much of a fool they truly are. (Proverb 26:12)
- i. Without fear of the Lord, there is no true wisdom. Psalm 14:1 - "The fool has said in his heart, 'there is no God.'"(1 Cor 3:19)
 - ii. This becomes our permanent state of existence. When we reject God, we profess ourselves to be wiser than our creator and our entire world is built on lies. Even to the point that we create false gods in imitation of our suppressed knowledge.
- e. 1:23 Through this self deception mankind has routinely created idol after idol. Giving the due glory of God to corrupt man and lifeless statues of animals. (Exo 32:1-4)
- i. This is a violation of the first and second commandment of God. (Exo 20:1-6)
 - ii. Though idols are nothing but the work of men's hands, unaware and unworthy of worship, man still goes through the motions to appease their conscience, praying in vain to lumps of wood. (Isa 45:18-20, Zec 10:2)
- f. 1:24-25 Man is created in the image of God. When we reject God, we inevitably reject ourselves believing we are smarter than we truly are. Therefore, in His divine wisdom God allows those who reject Him to fulfill their lustful desires. Which ultimately dishonors themselves.
- i. Given up to uncleanness, in the lust of their hearts, they dishonor their own bodies.
 - 1. How filthy is man's heart? We have countless perverse examples throughout history made publicly known. How much worse is that which is hidden?
 - 2. As Christians our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. Any sin against the body of a believer is directly against the Spirit as well. (1 Cor 6:17-20)