

# THE WILD ABUNDANCE OF SALVATION POWER

## Outline of Romans chapter 1 (first of two parts)

- 1:1-7
  - Paul's apostolic calling by Christ the King is expressed in the wild, abundant overflow of grace and peace
    - *"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."* (1:7)<sup>1</sup>
- 1:8-15
  - Paul expresses his care and love for the young church in Rome. He has not yet visited them, and he really wants to!
    - *"I am longing to see you so that I may share with you some spiritual gift to strengthen you—or rather so that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine."* (1:11–12).
- 1:16-17
  - This is the theme and summary of this letter (or epistle). Paul's eagerness to come to Rome is to proclaim the gospel. *"I am not ashamed!"* he says.
  - So: What is the gospel?
    - *"It is the power of God for salvation"* (16)
    - Salvation is the key aim that the gospel points at.
    - Bringing about salvation requires God's power. This means it is a mighty task which requires a full dose of divine passion and strength.
  - Who is it for?
    - *"to everyone who has faith"* (16)
    - This is more about the one to whom you entrust yourself and less about the force or strength of your faith.
    - You have faith *in* Christ. It is directional. It is about the calibre of the one in whom you are putting your trust. In this case, Jesus is utterly trustworthy and capable of working salvation!
  - Further, it is:
    - *"to the Jew first and also to the Greek."* (16)
    - This locates Romans in the context of the wider Biblical story.
      - The Old Testament or Hebrew Bible is the backdrop to this epistle and the backdrop to Jesus. The Jews are the people of God, and through them God has been faithfully active, working out salvation purposes for the whole world.
      - See the calling of Abram:
        - *"I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing."* (Genesis 12:2)
  - Why is the gospel powerful?

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<sup>1</sup> The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

- *“For in it the righteousness of God is revealed.”* (17)
- Righteousness. δικαιοσύνη. dikaiosynē. *Dik-ah-yos-oo*
  - Related to words like justice and rightness.
  - The phrase covenant justice is a way to intentionally link to the Hebrew backdrop to our western concept of justice.
  - This is related to God’s faithfulness, God’s mercy, God’s love.
  - Righteousness is an essential aspect of who God is.
  - It is a status we as believers can obtain through Christ.
- How do we receive or obtain this righteousness of God?
  - It is revealed *“through faith for faith.”* (17)
  - The translation of this word has a slightly different emphasis than the faith written about above in verse 16.
  - There is more of a sense in this case of what you as a person bring to the table. It is about belief, conviction. Seeing a glimpse of what God is doing and taking the risk that there is more to see. It is stepping out of the boat to get to Jesus. It’s tasting the goodness of God and going after it with everything you’ve got. There’s a revelation part to it, God is inviting, calling, awakening, stirring. You might get a sense that there’s new life just around the corner, that there is a narrow gate to enter through and it just might open to the way of life. This is what it means to receive the life of God, to believe in the call of Christ, and to enter into the adventure of faith.
  - *“...as it is written, ‘The just shall live by faith.’”* (17)