

ROMANS 1:1-7

Introduction:

Welcome to Wednesday Grow Encourage Learn group. As we start this year, we will be studying the book of Romans. Some of us may have read the Book of Romans a few times and others may be reading this for the first time.

One of the aspects of living a fruitful Christian life is having a solid grounding in the Christian world view. Most Christians today, are brought into direct touch with other religious options, at work, school, social gatherings or the media in ways that did not happen in the past. In the cauldron of contemporary pluralism, so many of us can flounder and not be able to articulate what exactly their Christian convictions are in the rough and tumble of conversation or debate.

If we are to be prepared to respond to the array of religious options or worldviews in our culture and to live consistent Christian lives, we must operate from the biblical understanding of God, the world and human beings. We need to present and articulate clearly, lovingly and persuasively the Christian belief and our interpretation of reality.¹

The Book of Romans is one of the most interesting and engaging books of the Bible because it shapes the way we think about Christianity. Through the writings of Paul, God has brought His eternal message into our personal situation and teaches us the practice of faith.

Let's pray together for insight into God's word.

Let's now read Romans 1:1-7

1. As we read the first few verses of the Book of Romans, we are given immediate clues to identify what the literary genre is and the way we should read it. Let's identify what type of literature the Book of Romans is. Is it poetry, wisdom literature, a letter, narrative, treaty or apocalyptic? Why is it important to understand the literary genre?
2. What do we see written in verse 1 in the way Paul identifies himself? Paul identifies his master, his office and his purpose. What does he say about each of these? If you were writing a letter to a church, how would you identify yourself in today's context?
3. In verses 2-4, Paul also describes how the gospel is rooted firmly in the Old Testament. He does this by writing two parallels about the nature of Jesus Christ. Can you identify how Paul did this? What does this tell us about the nature of Jesus Christ?

¹ Douglas J. Moo. *The NIV Application Commentary* (Zondervan Publishing Company Grand Rapids) 2000; 15-17

4. In verses 5-6, Paul elaborates on his apostolic status. What does this term mean? Has this term been misused in other contexts?

5. Let's read Acts 9 to see this experience of Paul's conversion.

6. What then is Paul's primary mission?

7. What are Gentiles called to? Let's also read Romans 16:25-27 to see if this term is used again. What does the term 'Obedience that comes from faith' mean?

8. In verse 7, we finally can identify the recipients of the letter. Who are they?

9. If Paul wrote a letter to Tahmoor Baptist Church today, how would he introduce himself and identify us?

10. When we evaluate the first seven verses of the Book of Romans, what do you think is the priority in Paul's writing?

11. What have you learnt tonight, how have you been encouraged, how do you see your Bible knowledge and application growing?

Let's spend some time in prayer.