**Lesson 1: The Declaration of a Transformed Life**

Text: Romans 1:1-7

**Introduction**

We have been studying the letters of Paul in the approximate order in which he wrote them. Thus far, we have considered Galatians and 1 & 2 Thessalonians. We are looking at each letter as they relate to Christ. For example, Galatians shows us what it means to be “Forever Free in Christ.” Paul’s letter to the Thessalonians explains how we are to start and finish our journey with Christ. In this expository survey of Romans, we will consider how to declare your faith in Christ.

The book of Romans has been greatly blessed by God in transforming lives. “Transform” means to be changed from one state into another. Our English word *metamorphosis* comes from the Greek word used in Romans 12:2. Paul’s life had been transformed by the message of the gospel. The lives of the believers in Rome had been transformed by the power of the gospel. We gather every week because the gospel has transformed our lives as well. Following Christ results in a transformed life! These outlines for our Sunday School Classes are in many ways a summary of Douglas Moo’s commentary on Romans. I found it to be extremely helpful and I am glad to pass it on to you. Let’s venture into this monumental letter to see why Paul was bold to declare his faith in Christ.

1. **Historical setting**
   1. It is most likely that Roman Jews who were saved in Jerusalem during Pentecost brought their new found faith in Christ back to Rome (Acts 2:10). They reached Gentiles living in Rome with the gospel. The audience to Paul’s letter consisted of Jews and Gentiles. It may be possible that the Gentile believers were in the majority at the time of the letter. After over 20 years of dealing with these relations, Paul had significant insights to share.
   2. Paul wrote to give his travel plans and to ask for their support. Paul wrote this letter toward the end of his third missionary journey while in Corinth. He planned to deliver a special love offering to the church in Jerusalem. He felt that this gift would improve relations between the Jews and Gentiles. Next, he planned to visit Rome on his way to Spain (Romans 15:28).
   3. Since Paul had never been to Rome, they needed to be introduced to him and what he preached. The epistle is his declaration or statement of faith in Christ. Therefore, it is relevant to all of us. “God’s work in Christ is the center of history.” (Douglas Moo)
2. **Overview of Romans**
   1. Paul’s Epistle to the Roman believers is focused on the gospel (1:16-17). It explains how God worked so that He might have a relationship with sinful man.
   2. Paul presents an irrefutable case regarding the lost state of all humanity. (1:18-3:20)
   3. Paul proclaims God’s plan of salvation for all who will believe. (3:21-5:21)
   4. Once you are saved, new life begins! You are free from the bondage of sin (Romans 6) and the law! (Romans 7) God conforms you to the image of His dear Son! (Romans 8)
   5. In chapters 9-11, Paul shares his burden for the unbelieving Jews.
   6. The doctrine of God’s saving grace must be applied to your daily living. (Romans 12-16) What we believe should determine how we behave!
   7. “The bulk of Romans focuses on how God has acted in Christ to bring the individual sinner into a new relationship with Himself (chapters 1-4), to provide for that individual’s eternal life in glory (chapters 5-8), and to transform that individual’s life on earth now (12:1-15:13)….God has acted to transform rebellious sinners into obedient saints.” (Douglas Moo)
3. **Introduction of the Letter**
   1. Paul identified himself as a servant of Jesus Christ. (v. 1)
      1. The word *servant* is synonymous with slave. The Romans did not look favorably upon slaves, but Paul was pleased to be a slave of the Lord Jesus Christ. He desired to be dependent upon the Lord and completely obedient to His will.
      2. The title *apostle* means “sent one.” He was a missionary!
      3. Is your life completely submitted to the Lord Jesus Christ? Do you view yourself as His servant? Do you view yourself as a missionary? Is your life focused on the declaration of the gospel?
   2. God’s provision of salvation was not an afterthought on the part of God. (v. 2-4)
      1. All of the Old Testament prophecies regarding the Messiah are meticulously fulfilled in Jesus.
      2. Jesus came into the earth by way of the virgin birth. He is the seed of David according to the flesh (natural descent). This means that He was 100% man.
      3. The fact that He is “declared the Son of God with power” points to His deity. Jesus is 100% God! His resurrection verifies this fact!
   3. Paul was passionate about the gospel message for Jesus’ Name’s sake. (v. 5)
   4. What was the source of strength for believers in such a perverse society? (v. 6-7)
      1. They were loved by God.
      2. They were called to be saints.
      3. As recipients of God’s grace and peace, their lives were transformed.
   5. The gospel can transform lives in a metropolitan city like Rome.
4. **Central Idea: The cultural climate of Paul’s day called for a declaration of faith in Christ through a transformed life.**
5. **Application: The cultural climate of our day calls for a declaration of faith in Christ through transformed lives.** 
   1. Have you believed the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ? When did you trust Christ as your Savior? If you are not able to answer that question, speak with your teacher or another Christian worker to settle that matter today.
   2. Can you make a clear declaration of your faith in Christ? Could you, like Paul, write a letter stating what you believe regarding the sinfulness of man, the salvation available through the Lord Jesus Christ, and the practical application of the gospel to daily living?
   3. Is your life a declaration of the transforming power of the gospel? If not, you need to evaluate your salvation and get serious about your faith in Christ.
   4. Our church is planted in a major metropolitan city. We are strategically located in the center of our nation. Could God use us to make a difference in other cities? Identify other cities that need the gospel. Prayerfully consider how God might want to use you.

**Conclusion**

Metropolitan areas like Rome still need the gospel. Those whose lives have been transformed by the gospel ought to be eager to declare the gospel to other sinners. Your life is to be the declaration of a transformed life.