

# Evergreen Presbyterian Church

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**Sermon Title:** “Who is Speaking?”

**Sermon Text:** Romans 1:1

**Rom. 1:1** Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,

**Rom. 1:2** which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures,

**Rom. 1:3** concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh

**Rom. 1:4** and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord,

**Rom. 1:5** through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations,

**Rom. 1:6** including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

**Main Point:** The author of the letter to the Romans was a devoted Hebrew whose life was changed when Jesus called him to be his slave whose whole life meant being set apart for the Gospel of Jesus.

**Outline:**

1. Paul...
2. ...Slave of Jesus, called to be an Apostle...
3. ...Set Apart For the Gospel

## Introduction

You all know by this point, if you've heard my preaching and just casual conversation with folks for the last few months that I have been incredibly excited about this series on the book of Romans. Back in December I sat down and did a few things. For one, I read through the book of Romans repeatedly. For another, I gathered up my many commentaries on Romans – I have over a dozen of them – and began to read them.

But then I did something else. I essentially went through the entire book for myself and mapped out how one would preach through this book. And I looked at which texts would be most appropriate, what doctrines we'd be introduced to as we went along, what the main point of each sermon was, and also an outline of each sermon. And after about three weeks I felt confident that we had a real way forward through this book. This book will introduce us to incredibly important topics – dare I say, topics that are central to the gospel of God, but also questions that so many Christians honestly wonder about:

- What is the Gospel?
- What is peace with God, and how can I have it?
- What is the wrath of God, and why should I believe that it's real?
- What does it look like to live in the midst of other believers?
- What is legalism? What is antinomianism? How do they both grow out of the same corrupt assumptions, and how can we avoid those errors?
- What is self-deception, and why do we do it to ourselves?
- What does Paul say about sin and what it does to us?
- Why does God hate moralism so much, and why is it opposed to the gospel?
- What should the relationship be between Jews and Gentiles, now that Jesus has come? If Jews have rejected Jesus, their messiah, why should Christians vehemently oppose antisemitism?
- What is God's law, and why can't it save a sinner?
- What does it mean to be united with Christ, and why is it so central to the gospel, and also helping us to avoid antinomianism and legalism?
- Why is the forgiveness of God a bigger theological problem than the wrath of God?

- How can God be righteous and let sinners get away without being punished for their sins?
- How does the gospel humble us and take away our bragging rights?
- What is original sin? In a time when so many seem willing to reject it, does the Bible actually teach it? If so, what does it mean, and how is it fair?
- If I can be forgiven, then do I have any motivation for pursuing a holy life?
- Who am I? What is my real identity? How should I think of myself?
- If I am released by the Gospel from the rigid demands of the law, then what is the point of God's law anymore?
- Why is life as a Christian still hard, and why does sin seem to win out so much in my experience? If God has changed me in Christ, then why am I still tempted?
- What hope is there for someone who has come to Jesus and still sees so much sin in his life? Where can someone like that turn?
- If I have the Spirit of Jesus Christ, then what does that look like in practice?
- What does being united to Christ do to my suffering, and how does it transfigure that suffering into something glorious?
- If God gave his covenant to the Jewish people, but most of them aren't believers in Jesus, does that mean that the promise God made to Abraham didn't come true after all?
- How do people actually hear and believe the gospel that we preach in the first place?
- How can I be confident when I share the gospel that I won't fall flat on my face, or end up disappointing God?
- What does it look like in practice to be devoted to this God who has given us such a glorious rescue in his son?
- How should our devotion to God be lived out with our family, our friends, our neighbors, our government?
- What is division in the church, what is its source, and how can Christians avoid it?

And these questions are just the tip of this iceberg when it comes to what Romans gives us. This book is rich.

Not only is it rich, but its riches have been felt and experienced through all of church history.

Calvin said of Romans, “When one gains the knowledge of this epistle, he has an entrance opened to him to all the most hidden treasures of Scripture.”

St. Augustine was converted by reading a passage from Romans 13.

Luther was converted, in part through his own preaching of this book, in which he said that the doors of paradise swung open as he walked through this book.

John Wesley, the great evangelist said that he felt his heart strangely warmed as he listened to a Lutheran minister reading from the book of Romans.

This book has had its impact on God’s people throughout history. So many, when they encounter this book, are changed by it. Has it changed you? Have you had your encounter with Romans?

Has the message of this book changed *you*?

Have you had your own real encounter with Paul’s letter Romans? Or like many Christians, have you met this book only in certain iconic memory verses and in snippets?

Have you sat down for yourself and really followed the Apostle’s argument and spent time really digging in and being pressed upon, and challenged, and yes convicted (that’s what Paul wants) by this book?

God by his grace, is giving that opportunity now as we start this series.

This book is important. But this book is also a challenge. Even other *Apostles* felt challenged by reading Paul’s letters. Listen to this. In 2 Peter 3:15, Peter makes this passing comment about Paul:

“our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures” (2 Peter 3:15-16).

I want to say two things. First of all, notice how Peter speaks of Paul's writings. Peter knows they are in circulation by the time he has written his own letter, and he says that people often twist Paul's letters "as they do the other Scriptures." This language of "other scriptures" is intended to include Paul's own letters as Scripture. Peter recognizes the authority of Paul's writings and places them alongside of the Psalms and the Torah and the other Scriptures of the church.

So for Peter, the writings of Paul are absolutely worth the effort to understand. But he also says "there are some things in them that are hard to understand." I hope that's an encouragement for you. If you've perhaps started reading Romans and thought, "This is a bit too much for me," or maybe you sort of faked it and said, "Yeah, incredible letter," but all the while you secretly wondered what on earth everyone else saw in this letter... well this series is for you. But you're not alone in the challenge. You can join Peter, at least. Right?

Because this letter is a challenge, we will be tip-toeing at times. Other times, we'll be moving at a brisk pace. But just know that my hope is not to rush through this letter. I won't take 15 years and then still not finish it like Martyn Lloyd-Jones. My goal is comprehension and blessing.

This series will be a failure through if we end up coming away with *only* an intellectual sense of the argument Paul makes here. The point of all of this is that you would receive the blessings of God by your encounter with this precious, God-breathed, joy-filled, life-giving, evangelism-motivating book. My goal in this whole series is what I think Paul's goal is in this book: that you would not only understand the gospel, but that you would be drawn to Jesus Christ himself.

One of the things you will hear me say throughout this series is that by faith we are united to Jesus not a doctrine.

We are united to Jesus, not a theological topic.

We are united to Jesus by faith, and saved through faith in *him* alone, not faith in a doctrine.

You will never hear me *minimize* doctrine in this series. I won't. It's too precious. We're about to discuss a lot of doctrine and why it matters for our lives. But that

doctrine is always in the service of knowing Jesus Christ; it is not meant to supplant him.

So I want to begin as naturally as I can here simply by dipping our toes into the water and reading the first verse.

You will notice as we go through Romans, that in the bulletin, I will be including the larger context around our passage each week, but when I put it in the bulletin I'm going to sort of grey out the surrounding texts that I'm not preaching but that I hope will still help give context as we read each week. I want you to always keep the context before and after our reading in mind.

Today, our three points are really just a read-through of this introductory verse. The first point is "Paul," the second point is "Slave of Jesus, called to be an Apostle...", and the third point is "...Set Apart for the Gospel."

It really is important who is writing this letter, and who exactly it is that is speaking to us. And so let's start there this morning.

## **1. Paul**

First, we are introduced to Paul himself.

Paul is a Hebrew, and his Hebrew name is Saul, but he addresses the Romans with his Roman name, Paul.

You may have heard it said that when he was converted, Saul became Paul. The truth is a little more mundane than that. Paul is the Greek form of the name Saul, which is a Hebrew name. You'll notice that in Hebrew contexts in Acts he is called Saul, and in Greek contexts (which is the whole second half of Acts) he is called by his Roman name, Paul. That's just a function of where he finds himself. When he's with the Hebrews he is Saul, and when he's with the Greeks he is Paul.

When he wrote this letter, he *could* have called himself Saul, but that Hebrew name would have seemed more foreign to the mostly Gentile Romans. He seems to be putting into practice the principle he explains in 1 Cor. 9:19-23 of becoming "all things to all men that he might indeed win some."

Paul didn't do this so as to change the gospel or to compromise anything in the faith, but simply to remove a needless offense. And as we go about our

lives, we need to consider whether there is anything in how we talk to others or even about ourselves that is *needlessly* offensive. I'm not talking about sinning so you will fit in, I'm just talking about things you do that scare people off.

I think that many Christians and church members sometimes forget what it is like to be a church visitor, for example. If we as a church expect people to visit us, we need to be on the lookout for things that we can do to make visitors more comfortable, and avoid things that unnecessarily make people uncomfortable. Let's be all things to all people that we might win some, as Paul did. This is what Paul is doing when he calls himself by his Greek name around Gentiles.

But back to Paul. Paul, as you may know, was a Pharisee and a persecutor of the church. We're introduced to him in Acts 7 approving of the stoning of Stephen – the first martyr of the Christian church.

Paul, then, would have been perhaps the most surprising converts in the entire history of the church. This is a man with no interest or motivation in following Jesus – and actually, an animosity toward Jesus and his gospel.

This was a man who had advanced very far in his Judaism and who was respected by his peers. By all worldly calculations he ought to have stayed the course and he would have been respected and beloved by his fellow Jews. And yet while he was on the way to persecute Jesus' church in Damascus, something happened.

Listen to how Luke relates what happened in Acts chapter 9:

“Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?” And he said, “Who are you, Lord?” And he said, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.” (Acts 9:3-6)

After this he went to the home of Ananias, who was terrified of Paul because of his reputation. And yet God spoke to Paul through Ananias. And this is what God said to Ananias, and presumably Ananias also shared with Paul:

“Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel” (Acts 9:15-16).

So God lays out his whole reason for calling Paul from the very outset: this man is an instrument to carry Jesus’ name into the world – not just the Jewish world, but the Gentile world.

And here Paul is now, many years later, writing to this church of mostly Gentiles in Rome. We will talk more about the church of Rome in two weeks, but it’s still important that you understand why he’s writing this.

There are at least two motivating factors in his writing this letter that we can discern.

At the end of the letter in chapter 15 (and we will eventually get there by God’s grace) Paul expresses this deep desire that he has to go to Spain to evangelize. But he needs the assistance and help of a church with resources. But here he is, writing to the Romans. This means then that his letter serves two important purposes.

So one purpose in writing this letter is that it will bless the church of Rome. It speaks the gospel to them which they are meant to embody and live out in a hostile culture and city – and in such a central and important city at that. What does it mean to be in Christ, and to live that out? Paul wants them to know. This is a letter that – if it takes hold – will pay dividends for the *whole* church, not just the Roman Christians. And we do continue to be blessed by it.

And the second purpose of this letter is that in a sense it’s like a “try-out” where Paul is showing the Romans the sort of gospel preaching they will be supporting if they help Paul later in his efforts to go to Spain. His ambition, he tells us elsewhere, is to preach Christ where he has not yet been named. He is filled with a desire to get this word out into the world, and to bless the people of Spain. But to do that, he can’t go alone and unsupported. It has to be a work of the whole church. He is given them a chance to partner with him in this future work if it’s able to happen.



And so he writes to them, introducing himself, introducing the gospel that he preaches everywhere he goes... this same gospel that will sustain and help the Roman Christians.

## **2. ...Slave of Jesus, called to be an Apostle**

Second, he introduces himself as a Slave of Jesus, Called to be an Apostle.

Paul does introduce himself, and we will get to how he introduces himself. But notice that even though the first 5 verses are meant to introduce Paul, 4 of those 5 verses are telling you more about the Jesus who *called* Paul than they actually are about Paul.

It would seem that in Paul's mind, there is no better way to know Paul than to know Jesus Christ. If he can get you to know Jesus, you'll know everything important that there is to know about Paul. Jesus is everything to Paul, and he is everything worth knowing in Paul.

What a thing to aspire to: to be so Christ besoughted that in a sense you realize that you are playing barely a supporting role even in your own life such that you could say, "This may be my life, but it's really Jesus' life. It really belongs to him."

For those of you who believe in Jesus Christ, are there people in your life who know you well who would say, "He or she isn't perfect, but I've seen the hope of glory in this person. This is a person who has Christ in them."

Are there people who at least see the inkling, the first signs of Christ when they think of you? Paul says, "Yes, I am important to the plot here, but I'd rather you know Jesus."

But even before we get to talking about Paul, remember that we as Christians have a core identity that is not primarily centered around us. This doesn't mean that we don't have a life, but even that life really belongs to Jesus. Paul will say later that the life we have should actually be given back. The language he uses is "living sacrifice."

In Christ, God's people have a deep and lasting identity that is by grace and not works (I can't wait to open this up more next week).

But the flipside of this is, if you are not a Christian yet, without a transcendent source of meaning, your identity will only be made up only of your family history, your deeds, your preferences, actions, jobs, and relationships. All of those things are important, but apart from God, they still only give you a thin purpose that can be easily broken or lost. Every one of those things can change or be taken from you.

But *Paul* knows an identity that can't be lost or stolen or cast off. And he wants every person to have the same thing. In Christ you are given an identity that follows you and defines you wherever you live, whatever you do, or however your life shakes out. Whether you keep your home or lose it in a wildfire. God gives his people a durable identity, and one that can never be lost.

Okay, but Paul does actually introduce himself here. But you might actually wonder why it even matters who it is who is writing. Why can't Paul just start by talking about the gospel. After all, Count Zinzendorf (the leader of the Moravians) famously said, "Preach the gospel, die and be forgotten." But here Paul is talking about himself anyway.

Why is this so personal? Well for starters, this is how ancient letters were written. When you open an email today, the first thing you see is who is speaking to you. That's a bit like the ancient world: they were used to introducing themselves first and then telling you what they had to say.

But it's not only social conventions going on here. It actually is important *who* this man is who is writing to them.

Let me just say a couple of things on this point. I think it highlights the importance of Paul as an Apostle that he doesn't identify a co-author to this letter.

Think about this: this letter is very unusual in the sense that usually Paul has a writing partner. 1 Corinthians is co-written by Sosthenes. 2 Corinthians is co-written by Timothy. The same goes for Philipians, Colossians, and Philemon. 1 & 2 Thessalonians are also co-written by Silas and Timothy. But here in Romans he has a secretary taking down the letter, and he identifies him as Tychicus, but he only signs this letter as being from Paul alone. Why?

Well part of the reason is that Paul is serving here in two capacities that he points out.

The first is, he's writing as a slave.

In other words, the Romans are getting a letter from someone who is absolutely bonded to Jesus and lives in total servitude to him. This is not a man out to serve himself. He is writing this letter to them on behalf of the king of kings and Lord of Lords, not even really and truly at his own behest. This is not being written out of self-service, but from someone who has yielded himself completely to the Lord Jesus Christ. This is not a selfish letter. This is a giving and generous letter from the heart of God, through Paul, to the Romans. Since he is a slave of Jesus it is as though they are receiving a letter not ultimately from Paul, but from Jesus himself.

But the second capacity he is writing in is that of an Apostle.

That's why he tells the Romans that the letter they are receiving is from someone who is "called to be an Apostle." To be an Apostle was not only an incredible privilege, but it was also incredibly exclusive.

An Apostle was someone who not only personally had known Jesus, but who was also called by Jesus directly to this task of being his spokesman and messenger into the world. The calling of an Apostle was unique to the time following the resurrection. There are people who wrongly believe that there are still Apostles today.

I remember being in the airport years ago, and a lady introduced herself to me as an Apostle. She very much believed that such people are still around today. But of course, this woman was not an eyewitness of the life and resurrection of Jesus, and I feel confident in also saying that she was not called by Jesus Christ in the same way as Peter and James and John and Bartholomew and the rest of them were.

Contrary to the lady I met in the airport, there are no Apostles today. The Apostles were unique and served an important role in the early church, cementing the teaching of Jesus, doing miracles, and rapidly taking the gospel as eyewitnesses to the rest of the world to tell what they had seen and heard. In Scripture, then we know of 13 Apostles: the 12 original Apostles, including Matthias who replaced Judas, and then Paul. Paul stands out because he saw Jesus after his resurrection

on the road to Damascus. There are still disciples today, of course, but not Apostles.

You are not an Apostle of Jesus of course. But are you his disciple? Do you live as a follower who sits at Jesus' feet and learns from his word. I can tell you that Paul wants that for you, and so does Jesus. This is why he says in John 15:8, "By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples." And earlier in the same gospel he said, "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." You are not an Apostle, but are you a disciple of Jesus?

There were times when Paul felt that it was extremely important to defend his status as an apostle. We see this in 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, and Galatians. In all of these cases people were suggesting that Paul could be ignored or dismissed, but each time Paul said, "Actually no, you can't because I'm not just some person who is giving you his opinion, I am an Apostle of Jesus, and the other Apostles have testified that I am one of them as well."

Why does Paul's status as an Apostle matter? Because the office of an Apostle was someone who taught with the authority of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit. When you are reading this letter, then, Paul is being very clear, you are hearing from Jesus himself.

I may or may not have had to say to my children, "You cannot talk to me like I'm one of your peers. I am your Father." It's not good to have to do that but sometimes it might be necessary. This is Paul saying, "This letter is not just any letter. This is not just another piece of mail. Listen closely. Jesus himself is speaking in this letter through me. I'm writing here as his slave."

You need to know... this is a gospel message that God wants you to hear. He not only sent his son to proclaim it, but he sent Apostles to preach it, to write about it, and to pass on to us. This letter which has changed the lives of so many was not man's idea, but it was written by a messenger of God and at the behest of Christ's Holy Spirit.

### **3. ...Set Apart For the Gospel**

### Third, Paul identifies himself as “set apart for the gospel.”

I read earlier those words that God spoke to Ananias, that Paul was someone whose task and the remainder of whose life would be devoted to one thing: the gospel and carrying it into the world.

Let me see if I can summarize what Paul does in this letter. Over the next year or more, we’re going to look at the trees, but right now I’m giving you the forest that is this letter.

In this letter Paul moves through this series of arguments intended to show how God glorifies himself in the salvation of sinners like you and me, and how we can know that salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone. First, he argues that we as his readers must know that we are sinners, and he labors to make us see this about ourselves, whether we are well-behaved Jews or libertarian Gentiles. As we look at the first two chapters, Paul will personally be writing to convince you that you are a sinner – whether you are a well-behaved moralist or a well-meaning Gentile, the first two chapters are meant to make you realize that you are a sinner.

Then he writes to say that once you realize your sin, you must do what God’s people have always done throughout history, which is turn in faith to the Savior, Jesus Christ. Abraham and those in the Old Testament looked forward to the coming Savior, Jesus Christ, even as we from this side of the cross and resurrection look *back* to the Savior Jesus Christ.

He will then press hard on us to see that turning in faith is the opposite of coming to God with our works or our baptism or our circumcision, or with our ceremonies or with our own human efforts. Instead, he wants us to know, he tried that, he walked that path, and he found nothing but condemnation there. He then shines a light on the Christian’s true identity: who we really are in Jesus is, we are dead to sin and buried with Jesus. And he tells us that is totally incompatible with a life of sin. Once we are in Jesus Paul will press us to see that we are now someone else – someone new – and we shouldn’t see sin as being part of our identity any longer. That part of us is now dead and buried.

From there he will remind us that while we battle sin in this life, the true hope that we have is in Jesus Christ... that when we are in Jesus Christ, we can never be condemned, and now we can serve God without fear of condemnation any longer.

And then he will persuade us that not only do we have a duty to share that same gospel with all people, but that we now have a duty to live as those who are devoted to God now, living sacrifices, submissive to our brothers and sisters, to our neighbors, and yes, even to the governing authorities.

In all of these things, Paul is granting us a beautiful view of the incredible hope of the gospel. This is what Paul was set apart for as a minister, and it is the gospel that he preached. And it's the gospel we're going to see unfolded for us as we move forward.

## **Conclusion**

If you've heard me share this before, I hope you'll bear with me. But I had become an atheist in 1995 (30 years ago!) after a negative experience at a Christian summer camp when I was 13 years old. I had become an atheist, and for more than three years or so I absolutely did not believe in God or Jesus or the Bible. I continued to go to church but I definitely did not believe.

But by early 1999, I had a gradual change of heart. I had been reading apologetic works and had begun to realize that perhaps I had harshly judged Christians. I became convinced that there were good reasons to believe that God existed after all.

A few months later, after some reading and studying I became convinced that there was good evidence for the resurrection of Jesus. In fact, I distinctly remember the moment when I looked up from my book and thought, "Wow. He really did rise from the dead."

I really did come to believe that Jesus rose from the dead. And yet I wasn't a Christian yet. But I started to think very carefully... if God was real after all, and if Jesus was raised from the dead, shouldn't I actually read Jesus' teachings about himself and what those who witnessed his resurrection said about him? In fact, I thought that I'd have to be an idiot not to!

And so I decided to begin with the book of Romans. And as I read the book, I saw unfolded for me everything that Jesus had come to accomplish and to teach. I'd heard these things before, but that was back when I wasn't open to it and didn't have the eyes to see or the ears to hear.

But the difference was that this time I was open to it. God had already softened my heart, and he had used the arguments to do that for me (he doesn't do it that way for everyone, but he did it for me). I really think he used them to show me just how closed minded I was.

And so as I read this letter, I saw my sin. I saw my inability to keep God's law. I saw what God held out to me in Christ. I saw that he had done this for Abraham already, then he had done it for Paul, and that he would do it for me as well. And I hadn't gotten very far into the letter before I could feel my heart changing. I began to really want this thing Paul was talking about. And as my eyes read these words, I was changed forever: "Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

This is what struck me. I could have Jesus Christ, and in having Jesus Christ, I could have peace with God. Me? Have peace with God? I had blasphemed Jesus. Laughed at the very idea of him. Mocked his people in my heart while I sat in church. I judged these well-meaning church-going men and women and despised them in my heart. I didn't have peace with God. I'd been his enemy and hated him.

I could feel it in my heart that I had been wrestling and resisting all these years. I could also see the futility of my life of just keeping out of trouble.

In spite of my atheism by all appearances I had basically been a good kid. Later I would tell my parents that I had been an atheist since 1995, and they refused to believe it. But even as a little atheist, I had behaved myself because I still feared my parents. I'd basically been a well behaved little pagan because I feared the consequences of doing wrong.

But when I read those words, I knew that I would never be able to stand before God and say, "I knew you existed, but I didn't come. I knew that you raised Jesus up, but I didn't listen." And I knew now (because of this letter) that I couldn't say,

“I’ve basically been good enough.” And so that moment, for the first time, at age 17, I rested in Jesus Christ and finally knew that peace.

I have resisted preaching this book for many years. I’ve preached through many books: Revelation, Ruth, 1 John, Mark, Philippians, Judges, the book of Acts, 1 Peter, and Daniel.

But I have resisted Romans. Why? I think it’s because I probably love it too much. I’m afraid to dishonor such a precious book. I’ve been afraid of not doing it justice. I’ve feared preaching this letter and failing to convey the gravity and beauty of this majestic, wonderful, glorious book, and I’m so glad that God gave it to us. I can’t imagine a world without this wonderful letter, and so I have fled from preaching it.

And so I do feel motivated (probably related to the fact that I’m not going to live forever) to finally preach the letter that I probably love more than all other New Testament letters. I hope that when we finish this sermon series that you love this book as much as I do.

This letter has changed many people: Augustine, Luther, John Newton. John Newton, that former slaver and later author of “Amazing Grace” made it a few verses further than I did. When he read these words from Romans 5:8, his life of sin was broken forever: “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

This is the gospel that Paul and his whole life have been set apart for. This gospel didn’t just change Paul, or Augustine, or Luther or Newton, or me. It’s a message that is for you, too. And if you believe its message, then you too can receive Jesus Christ and rest in him and finally find peace with God.

*Let’s pray.*