

Romans 1 "Step by Step"

Step by Step is a verse by verse study through the Bible. With this approach we trust that God, in the person of the Holy Spirit, will emphasize specific points and passages to each person; training us in the Word and teaching us how to live with purpose and identity.

1:1 Bondservant-The word *duolos*, which we translate servant, properly means a slave, one who is the entire property of his master. Voluntary or involuntary, in the case of a Christian, it is voluntary. 'Entirely the property of Jesus Christ.'

Apostle-One who is sent out with a purpose & orders. *Separated to the gospel*

V2,3- Paul was carrying out the Old Testament message of the Messiah. The prophets spoke of the One to come, Paul confirmed the promises God gave them.

V3- Jesus- Humanity and Deity! Humanity according to His promise through the family line He mapped out. Deity- "*His Son Jesus Christ our Lord.*"

V4- His *power* revealed in the miracles performed. *Holiness* speaks of wholeness in person and manner of living. His death speaks to Him being fully man, the resurrection reveals He is God. The resurrection declared God brought victory for humanity! (1Corinthians 15:54-57)

V5- *Grace and apostleship* are received, not earned. You don't work for a 'gift' you merely receive it. These gifts have a purpose; *for obedience to the faith*. This obedience is love-based, meaning it is our response to His love for us. Believing Him and what He has done will have a real life expression. When we receive His Lordship we are choosing to obey Him and share (express) His love with those around us in real life ways rather than in religious ways.

V6, 7- Paul embraced the unity we have in Christ. We are all equally loved by God, invited as His set apart ones. *Grace..and peace...* Because of His *grace* to us we have *peace* within us.

Beloved of God- This is who you are, embrace it!

V8- Paul was constant in prayer and thankful for the work God was doing throughout the whole world. When you are thankful to God you are thinking of God.

V9, 10- Our prayer lives are deepened as we learn to pray for others. Also prayerful consideration of others stirs us to reconnect or reach out to people.

V10- Paul eagerness to go to Rome was confined to traveling within God's will for his life. There are many detours and dead ends when we wander from the path God directs us to.

V11, 12- The word *impart* speaks of participating, sharing with one another. Paul recognized that when God's people get together to honor God and surrender to Him then God unites us in purpose and power.

V13- Don't give up, but don't force your way either! What do we do? Go back to v8-12.

God's desire is that all disciples would bear the fruit of the Spirit. (Galatians 5:22-26)

V14,15- Transformed by God's love Paul sensed an obligation, an indebtedness to all who had not heard of the love of Jesus Christ. Paul then turned his reckoning of God's love into an action, that is he prayerfully chose to do something to get the word out to people!

V16-This verse reveals 2 reasons Paul was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ;

1. *It is the power of God to salvation!* Church doesn't save you, living right doesn't save you! It is the good news of Jesus that brings salvation!
2. *Salvation is for everyone who believes!* No one is 'too far' for God's love to reach!

V17- First we believe unto salvation and then continuing in faith (*from faith to faith*) we live unto sanctification. If we try to live 'righteously' before we are born again then we separate from God through our self-efforts, also known as becoming religious.

V18-32. Verse 17 speaks of the righteousness that comes from faith in God through Jesus Christ. Now Paul addresses the unrighteousness of people who will not trust in God.

Wrath- God's righteous indignation in response to man's rebellion. The remainder of chapter 1 deals with the reality and result of men rebelling against God. This rebellion required God to bring His judgement/justice/wrath upon them. Adam Clarke commented this way; "Those who refuse to be saved in the way revealed by his mercy must be consumed in the way revealed by his justice."

V18, 19- *suppress the truth.* It is not ignorance but arrogance that pushes truth away. Men know what is right but choose to 'hold down' the truth. (James 1:14-16)

V20- Creation; the order, the variety, the complexity... these all reveal the power and presence of God. No opinions or seemingly intelligent explanations about origin can remove the evidence of His presence. No excuses!

V21- Because people turn from the light of His presence, *their foolish hearts were darkened.* It is a clear picture; when people turn from the light they walk deeper into darkness.

V22- When people try to elevate their own wisdom above the wisdom of God they prove themselves to be fools.

V23- Since the garden of Eden man has moved away from the glory of God and toward manmade images and ideas about God.

V24, 25- God has 'stepped out of the way' and allowed man a temporary time of pursuing whatever their selfish hearts would turn to. This foolish move on man's part has separated him from God who is worthy of our praise and worship.

V26, 27- God has allowed man to go against His instruction and warning. When you disobey once, the next time becomes easier, continuing until you can't believe how far you have went. But remember, there is a price to pay for sin; relationally, physically, emotionally, and in ways we never even thought of.

V28- God has allowed sin to run its course. When people set aside the knowledge of God they function with *a debased mind.* The result is that they *do things which are not fitting.*

V29-31- Sin leads to more sin to the point it is overflowing in all different ways.

V32- Man knows his pending judgement and yet he not only continues in sin, he gives a 'thumbs up' to others who are sinning!

Here is how the paraphrase translation called The Message words verses 28-32; "Since they didn't bother to acknowledge God, God quit bothering them and let them run loose. And then all hell broke loose: rampant evil, grabbing and grasping, vicious backstabbing. They made life hell on earth with their envy, wanton killing, bickering, and cheating. Look at them: mean-spirited, venomous, fork-tongued God-bashers. Bullies, swaggerers, insufferable windbags! They keep inventing new ways of wrecking lives. They ditch their parents when they get in the way. Stupid, slimy, cruel, cold-blooded. And it's not as if they don't know better. They know perfectly well they're spitting in God's face. And they don't care—worse, they hand out prizes to those who do the worst things best!"
