

Romans 1:14-15

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/rom/rom-1/romans-114-15/>

Paul's call from God was to preach the gospel to all Gentiles. He desires to preach the gospel to (or encourage) the believers in Rome.

The Apostle Paul was Jewish, but God called him to be the apostle to the Gentiles (Romans 11:13). This was amazing because Paul was trained as a very strict Pharisee and was therefore to have no dealing with Gentiles. Here he is ministering to them intimately. God often calls us to do things that are very uncomfortable. Paul was called to turn his back on part of his training as a Pharisee, that he might make immense use of his knowledge of the Scriptures.

Paul once was under obligation to follow the rules and regulations of a Pharisee. He now asserts that *I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish* (vs 14).

Paul was *under obligation*, or indebted, *both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish* by his calling to preach the good news and make disciples among the Gentiles. His calling was laid upon him whether or not those to whom he preached were educated (*wise* and *foolish*). It did not matter whether they were civilized (*Greeks*) or uncivilized (*barbarians*). They were Paul's assignment from God and Paul was committed to "do or die" to fulfill that charge.

In 1 Corinthians 9:16, Paul discusses this assignment from God and says "Woe is me if I do not preach the gospel" to the Gentiles.

According to some resources, the word "*barbaros*," translated here *barbarians*, was used by Greeks to refer to anyone who did not speak Greek, or did not speak Greek well. This fits Paul's usage here, because *to Greeks and to barbarians* would therefore include all Gentiles, those fluent in Greek as well as those not fluent.

It did not matter to Paul and does not matter to God how much education or how socially acceptable anyone is. Every person is a creation and image-bearer of God whom Jesus died to save so that they might receive His resurrection life. God desires every person to know Him and walk in faith, by believing His way leads to life (2 Peter 3:9).

Paul then says *So, for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome* (vs 15).

The Apostle Paul was *eager to preach* the good news, *the gospel*, to the believers *in Rome* (v 15) just as he had throughout the world. This statement can be confusing because of the way some readers misunderstand the term "gospel" or "good news." In 1:8, we saw that the believers

receiving this letter already had amazing faith, so much so that their faith was being talked about throughout the entire world. So, they did not need to be taught about the faith which would justify them in God's sight—they already had that faith.

But Paul uses the term *gospel* to include the good news that God's power delivers us from the power of sin in our daily lives. The *gospel* is not limited to merely introducing the reality of the new birth Jesus offers to all who believe in His name and believe He died for their sins. That is vital, but only the beginning of the good news of Jesus.

At the moment one believes, they have a new life in Jesus, a new power in the Spirit, and a new inheritance in God. But this is just the beginning of the new life, and therefore, the beginning of the good news. When Jesus gives us a new life, He frees us from the penalty of sin once and for all (Romans 5:1-2). Never again do we need to worry about eternal separation from God; we are now His children forever (Romans 8:38-39).

But even after our spiritual rebirth, we still live in a fallen world in a fallen body. We still have a tendency to sin (Romans 7:17-18). Part of the new resurrection life of Jesus is the indwelling power of the Spirit enabling us to be freed from the power of sin in our lives.

That is even better “good news.” This good news is something every believer needs to hear and pursue for the rest of their lives. Paul is *eager to preach the gospel* and share this with them. As we will see in this masterful letter, Paul will fully lay out how the good news of God's deliverance from the power of sin in our lives may be appropriated by walking in faith every day. Beginning in the next section, Paul will show the Roman believers how to walk in faith, and experience the righteousness of God.

Biblical Text

14 I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. 15 So, for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.