Outlining the Text of Scripture

This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy. 1 Corinthians 4:1-2

The Big Idea

Outlining the Bible is the primary means to prepare one to teach the precepts of Scripture in a clear and logical way. This is designed for the pastor, Bible study leader, or curriculum writer to learn how to examine the text and then draw out what is there in a logical and systematic way. In this way, we can develop well crafted sermons and studies that are personally edifying and impacting to our congregation. This form of study can even be used by a mature Christian wanting more out of the Word for personal edification. Outlining will enable one to “exegete” and then write out what the Bible is saying.

“Exegesis” is digging out from the passage the principles and ideas that are represented there. This helps prevents someone from adding his own thinking, prejudices, and ideas into the mix that would take away from what God is actually saying. Our responsibility is to ponder upon, examine, and expound on God’s Word, not add in what is not there. Nor, are we to leave out what we do not want and thus miss what He clearly has for us. Exegesis is a tool to help you stay focused and centered upon Him and His precepts and then be edified so you can edify others.

“Outlining” is taking what we have learned and then laying it out in an orderly and efficient way so we can understand it better. Doing this will enable the teacher to impart it to others in a more profound and impacting way. Keep in mind that Scripture is the source of biblical teaching; all we do is tap into it and pour out His most precious precepts for all to drink.

Why Should We Make an Outline?

An outline is an essential tool. It can be used for any form of text, whether it is a Bible passage or any other form of literature—from Shakespeare to a textbook to a magazine article. This is the way any good writer or researcher goes about preparing and organizing his materials.

I developed this curriculum for you to use from over twenty years of research. I sought out the principles and resources that a good “sermonizer” uses to teach. Why is one preacher bad and another good when they come from the same seminary and denomination? From my original mentorship under Francis Schaeffer, study under Ray Stedman, and interviewing hundreds of excellent Bible teachers including Charles Swindoll and R.C. Sproul for my book, Into Thy Word, it has been my quest to see what “secrets” and means can best be utilized to learn and then teach His Word. I discovered that an outline is essential, after a good inductive and or exegetical study, to lay out what we are to learn and then to teach. By the way, every good preacher is first a learner before they become a teacher! Being a learner, doing an inductive approach, and then outlining are the common denominators of what a good Bible-centered pastor does to prepare. There are no shortcuts to good Biblical messaging. We need, your congregation needs the right essential elements and tools to produce sermons. Outlining is essential for a Bible teacher use to prepare their lesson. Outlining will be your primary means of producing quality, Bible-centered lessons, talks, sermons, or even research papers.

The Basic Idea of an Outline

Outlining the Bible is not very different from outlining any other form of writing. Thus, there are many ways in which you can do it. I will give you several ways to do this; you may come up with some of your own. The main purpose is to break down and isolate from the text the various ideas or categories it is representing. Consequently, each paragraph may have several ideas that relate or add to the main theme of the paragraph. The task of outlining is to isolate and then lay out these ideas in a systematic and logical manner. The goal is to represent and teach the passage in the way it is intended, in its context and power. (If this is for a class project or assignment, first find out from your professor/teacher the form he wants, and use it; follow the assignment and class guidelines, even if you know a better or easier way).

Where to Begin

To start out, just recall what you may have learned in those grammar lessons in school, which is to simply go through the passage and pull out the themes, concepts, illustrations, and ideas presented. First, look for a general theme, then sub-themes and ideas, such as where each idea begins and ends, and how it is sustained. Search for the principal themes and the logical order of each subjunctive idea; then, when you see another principal/primary theme, you can place it in the next category or section.

An outline is basically an aid to help lay out the precepts and reasons of your sermon, study, or paper in a systematic, easy to use and easy to read structure. It helps you as the writer and another person as the reader to identify the general ideas and key thoughts of your line of reasoning. The basic consideration is for you to define the main idea and then the subordinate ideas.

1. How to Do a Basic Outline: First, there is a main thought or principle.

a. Here is where you place your first supporting concept, precept, or idea.

b. Here is where you place your second supporting concept, precept, or idea.

i. Here is where you place your further supporting idea, example, or illustration.

ii. Here is where you place more of the ideas and principles you have gleaned from the text.

2. Main Thought: A structured outline typically uses a descending numbered structure to disseminate (distribute, lay out) the information you have researched and learned.

a. Supporting Concept: The numbers are in a logical indention and order to indicate various levels of subsidiary interrelation (describing precepts in a descending logical order from major idea to lesser points from the main ideas).

b. Supporting idea: Look at it as a “story arc” from your Major Idea, then the supporting ideas, and in each subordinate idea category and the further details thereof.

3. Why Do an Outline? There are many good reasons for outlining.

a. An outline helps your learning and teaching progress

i. An outline helps you organize your thoughts and ideas

ii. An outline will show the flow of principles, the conflict, transformations, and resolutions.

b. An outline guides your ideas into coherent groupings

i. An outline helps you organize the precepts of Scripture

ii. An outline shows the logical relationship between ideas

iii. An outline has a logical, ordered overview and flow of arguments

c. An outline will help you prove your point or show you when and where you are in error

d. An outline will help show the developments in your labor.

i. An outline will help you learn and teach better.

ii. An outline will help you grow in humility and cultivate Fruit because you are focused on His precepts and not your own (1 Pet. 5:6).

4. How to Construct and Outline: Basically, you are making a framework with the following components (Main or General Idea):

a. Start with an introductory paragraph or sentence (First supporting concept, precept, or idea)

i. Keep it short and concise (Further supporting idea, example, or illustration)

ii. Stay true to your subject (Further supporting idea, example, or illustration)

b. Write out supporting ideas (Further details or ideas)

c. Write out further details or ideas

d. Have a concluding paragraph or sentence (Second supporting concept, precept, or idea)

· There are also many different ways to bullet-point or number your outline. (Main Thought)

o If this is for academic purposes find out the official school or teachers requirements and follow thusly (Supporting Thoughts)

§ Input your examples or ideas

§ More examples or supporting ideas

o Further details or illustrations

· Second Main Thought

o Details or examples or illustrations

§ Supporting ideas

§ More ideas

1. How to Do an Outline of Scripture: principal idea/theme (Remember, formatting can became distorted during conversion from Word to HTML)

a. First make use of steps II & III from Into Thy Word. (principal idea/theme)

b. This is where you make use of Observation. Carefully go over the text to see what is going on, the "who, what, where, when, how, and why." This will pull out facts through the nature of Scripture and help avoid presumptions and fallacies, because God’s Word speaks for itself.)

2. Read the Text in Its Context Several Times. (Sub-Themes and Ideas)

a. For example, if you are studying the Book of John, begin with reading the whole book. Then, read the chapter you are outlining at least three times in a good translation such as the NIV; NASB, or NKJV. (Additional Sub-Themes)

b. You can start by reading a paraphrase for your overview then go to the good translation. (further Sub-Themes)

i. Make sure you are going into your relationship with God’s Word in a meaningful manner (see step I).

ii. If you start too hastily, thinking you already know the passage, you will not gain the insights and depth because your haste will make waste. (Sub-themes)

iii. Even Billy Graham, R.C. Sproul, and Chuck Swindoll, as well as other great and experienced exegetes with many times more experience than what you or I may have, do it this way! (Further sub-themes)

iv. Never let your pride clog your vision and keep you in the dark or from discovering all you can. (Even further sub-themes)

3. Write a Summary for the Passage in Your Own Words (Third Main Idea/Principle - Idea/Theme). If you are stuck, try reading it in various translations. If you know the original languages, then you know what to do. Do not forget to check out a paraphrase such as the New Living Bible, CEV, Phillips, Moffit, or the Message.

a. Then you may start to look for the principal theme and idea. (First Idea/Principle - Idea/Theme)

b. Start with an introduction; it needs to state the main topic or idea of the outline. This is the general principle/idea that represents the passage you are studying.

c. Then write a short description of that idea. (Third Idea)

i. Make sure it is accurate to the text. (Sub-Themes and Ideas).

ii. Make sure you write down the verses next to each idea.

d. The chapter and verses were added by the publisher and are not part of the original text nor are they inspired. So, do not constrain yourself to them. You will find that sometimes they cut off key ideas in mid-thought that are still in “thread,” that is, still going on.

4. Then List All Of the Various Ideas/Points in Sequence. (Fourth Main Idea/Principle - Idea/Theme)

a. This is where you use “Interpretation” (Steps IV, V, & VI) after you have finished the outline! This is taking what is said and finding out what the text means, how to interpret literally in the correct context.

b. This is where the supporting information and details go. This is called your Sub-Topic; these are commonly listed under the idea/topic with each piece of information listed separately.

c. Always, always go in the sequence of the text. Do not jump around!

i. Go verse to verse.

ii. In your teaching, you can call attention to other supporting verses from other parts of the Bible and use illustrations.

d. Never take out of God’s Word what is not there, or read in your will as His.

e. Each sub-topic describes the main ideas from the paragraph/passage.

i. When supporting information is listed under a sub-topic, there is a sequence that follows a logical order, especially in the Epistles.

ii. In the narrative passages, you will also find a logical order of events. However, Hebrew literature does sometimes jump the points around. It is best just to stick to the text and in the opening, summary, or conclusion, to draw attention to the general context.

iii. By being aware of the different genres of the Bible (that is types of literature), you will be able to outline more effectively. (See Appendix A from Into Thy Word.)

f. There are normally two ideas of information that should be listed. If there is only one piece of information to support a sub-topic, traditionally that information is included in the sub-topic.

i. Do not be so concerned with your form that you neglect your principal duty, which is to exegete the text in a logical and systematic way.

ii. Outlining, like any new activity, will take practice. Be persistent and do not get frustrated. It will take time and practice!

g. Being true to the Lord’s Word and the Divine Author’s intent is paramount!

5. Write a Summary and Conclusion to Your Passage. (Fifth Main Idea/Principle - Idea/Theme)

a. This is where you use Application after you finished the outline (Steps V & VI)! This is taking the plain meaning and putting it to practical use. This is the, how shall I respond to the Word—what sin will I get rid of, to what commands will I yield, what pitfalls to avoid, in what actions to engage, and what promises to keep.

b. The summary should be done first. However, you can incorporate it in your teaching at the end.

c. As you dig into God’s Word, you are to be listening for His voice, so you can trust and obey His voice

i. Always make sure you are surrendered to His Truth and not your truth!

ii. Beware that false knowledge puffs up, or gives us pride (1 Cor. 1:8; Col. 2:18).

iii. Beware that false or misleading teaching will cause strife and conflict.

OUTLINE EXAMPLES

Text Outline of James 1:1-3

Text: James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations: Greetings. Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. (NIV)

James, (Proposition)

A servant of God (Predicate)

of the Lord Jesus Christ, (Primary Object)

To the twelve tribes (Secondary Object)

scattered among the nations

Greetings.

Consider it pure joy (Subject)

my brothers,

whenever you face trials of many kinds,

because you know that the testing of your faith

develops perseverance.

(Grammar terms apply more to theme and precepts than to actual English standard grammar, because Scripture was not originally written in English but in Hebrew and Greek, all having different grammar settings.)

James Chapter 1 Conceptual Outline Example (the concepts and precepts):

Theme: How do we react to pressure? Faith will not break when it is real, even when times are dire. We are stable because of who we are in Christ and not because of our circumstances.

I. Trials are a part of life.

1:1: Greetings

1:2-4: Seeking Jesus to deal with problems! We can declare them joy (Matt. 5:11-12; Luke 6:22-23)

1:5: Seeking wisdom to deal with life; receiving from God (Matt. 7:7; Luke 11:19)

1: 6—8: Asking for faith and not doubting (Matt. 21:-22; Mark 11:22-24)

II. Temptations will come.

1: 9-11: Humbleness; seeking the proper perspective on life (Matt. 13:6; 23:12; Mark 4:7: Luke 14:11; 18:14)

III. How will you handle trials and guard against impurity?

1:12: Importance of perseverance (Matt. 5:11-12)

1:13-18: Holding on to the goodness of God (Matt. 7:12; 19:16; Luke 6:27, 35)

IV. We have to be doers of the Word, not just hearers.

1:19-20: The importance of listening (Matt. 7:11; Luke 6:46-49).

1:21-27: Our call to be compassionate toward those who hurt (Matt. 25:34-36)

Specific Inductive Outline of James 1:1-3

The General Idea (What Does It Say): James begins his Epistle in a very direct and blunt way.

Seek Jesus to deal with problems!

The key to dealing with our problems is to keep our eyes upon Christ, allowing Him to be not only Savior, but also Lord.

The Background: James is addressing the new Church.

They were starting to become complacent when suddenly Steven was martyred (Acts 7:54-60).

A wake up call is being pronounced that Christianity is dangerous and requires a level of faith that some may not be willing to give.

What Does it Mean: James simply tells us we can actually profit from trials.

He starts out his book by massive humbleness in confessing who Jesus is:

James realized that his life and purpose was all about who God is, and not who he is (The passages in parentheses are cross references—most Bibles have them—and other places in Scripture where the precepts can be found. These can be used to draw out more information: Psalm 15; 101; 2 Thess. 1:12; Titus 2:13; 2 Peter 1:1).

James’ desire was to communicate with passion, conviction, clarity, and truth.

We are to look at whatever situation we face and say this is good, this will better me, or this will help me. I may not understand it, but I can trust God.

He is there and He will carry me through it!

Key Words: (Look them up and define them; then, use the ones that support your theme to fit in your message.)

James is a form of Jacob—Gen. 49 (see introductory article).

Bondservant, in Greek times, meant the lowest form of a slave, totally at the master’s disposal and even expendable. For us, it means total, surrendered devotion to the Lord.

Twelve tribes refers to all those who are Jewish.

Count it joy refers to declaring our situation as happy and fulfilling. It is to change our mindset and focus. It is realizing the sovereignty of God and that He is in control, even when life seems to be turned upside down and inside out!

Trials refer to persecution or any harsh circumstance, adversity, or temptation.

Testing refers to the circumstances that God allows so we will learn perseverance, produce our Fruit, and further prove and develop our faith.

Applications (How I am changed; how I can challenge others to change): We are called to declare our situation—whatever it may be—as joy!

It is not a question of if we have problems, but when, as we all will face them.

As Christians, we are all bothers and sisters under God. We are family, and need to treat others in Him with the same reverence and endearment as Christ has treated us!

Joy will allow us to enjoy our relationship with Christ and with others.

Joy helps us develop authentic happiness that comes from and with harmony with God and others.

Joy helps us understand God’s perspective and gives us the confidence and patience to endure anything!

Joy is not happiness, because we may not be content and pleased with it; rather, joy is hope; it is our hope.

Our pleasure comes from knowing He is in charge and cares for us (Psalm 34:1-8; 1 Thess. 5:18)!

This gives us our maturity, our character, and enables our Fruit to benefit others. These are for our direct benefit and growth that He works out both for our benefit and for His glory (Romans 5:3; chap. 8).

(See more on our James Study, James 1:1-4 on the Bible Study Channel)

Outlining the Different Genres (types) of Literature

See the article, Genres in the Bible found in our “Bible Study Methods Page” for the background information.

The Bible is Literature, as is any book filled with language. It has: Law, History, Wisdom, Poetry, Gospel, Epistles, Prophecy, and Apocalyptic Literature.

· Law is "God's law;” it is the expression of His sovereign will and Character.

· History - Narrative. Almost every Old Testament book contains history. Some books of the Bible are grouped together and are commonly referred to as the "History". Even the Epistles have history, as they chronicle events.

Outlining these first two types is easy; just outline as you would any text. Mostly, they break down in a logical and sequential order.

· Wisdom Literature focuses on questions about the meaning of life.

· Poetry is found mostly in the Old Testament and is similar to modern poetry.

In outlining Hebrew Wisdom and Poetry, you need to know that a lot of its power and meaning have become lost in the translation to English. In the original language it rhymes, it is a song, it is funny, and it is powerfully compelling. So, in English, we are left with it being “figurative,” that is, communicating a word picture that we have to research and discover the plain meaning it had when it was written.

Poetry is also repetitive and parallels ideas and/or contrasts them. There are three major types of Hebrew poetry:

“Synonymous Parallelism:” This type repeats phrases and ideas to convey its message more powerfully. So, the idea is expressed two or more times in a similar way.

For example: Psalm 5:1-2

Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my sighing. Listen to my cry for help, my King and my God, for to you I pray. Vs. 3

In the morning, O LORD, you hear my voice; In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation. Each of these stanzas is an idea expressed in the same and yet a different way.

“Synthetic Parallelism:” In this type of poem, the writer is adding further exclamation to convey his idea. Each stanza is adding to the point.

For Example Psalm 1:1

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked

or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. Psalm 5: 8-9

Lead me, O LORD, in your righteousness because of my enemies--make straight your way before me. Not a word from their mouth can be trusted; their heart is filled with destruction. Their throat is an open grave; with their tongue they speak deceit. These rhymes lead to a conclusion: vs. 10

Declare them guilty, O God! Let their intrigues be their downfall. Banish them for their many sins, for they have rebelled against you.

“Antithetic Parallelism:” This form contrasts the idea with the opposite or with another. The first stanza may be a positive statement and the second, a negative. This is very common in Proverbs.

For Example Proverbs 10:1-8

The proverbs of Solomon: A wise son brings joy to his father, but a foolish son grief to his mother. Ill-gotten treasures are of no value, but righteousness delivers from death. The LORD does not let the righteous go hungry but he thwarts the craving of the wicked.

Lazy hands make a man poor, but diligent hands bring wealth.

He who gathers crops in summer is a wise son, but he who sleeps during harvest is a disgraceful son.

Blessings crown the head of the righteous, but violence overwhelms the mouth of the wicked.

The memory of the righteous will be a blessing, but the name of the wicked will rot.

The wise in heart accept commands, but a chattering fool comes to ruin.

· Gospel means the "good news" that we received through salvation by the work and life of God’s Son.

The Gospels follow a similar outlining as the narrative writing, yet have aspects of all the genres. The biggest difference is in the Parables. There are four (4) essential guidelines to understanding Parables:

Be aware of the context!

Why is Jesus telling this Parable?

Is there an explanation to it, such as with the Parable of the Sower?

What are the essential points?

The Parables are usually figurative, so what is it about?

Are there additional supporting ideas?

Details that are relevant and support the point(s)?

Is there more than one point? Consider the Parable of the Prodigal Son where the brother is an essential point that most people miss!

Is there irrelevant information?

For example, are there details that do not relate to the central point?

· Prophecy is the type of literature that is often associated with predicting the future; however, it is also God's words of "get with it or else.”

· Apocalyptic Writing is a more specific form of Prophecy. Apocalyptic writing is a type of literature that warns us of future events for which full meaning is hidden from us for the time being. Apocalyptic writing is almost a "secret," giving us glimpses through the use of symbols and imagery of what is to come. We may not know the meanings now, but time will flush it out. Apocalyptic writings are found in Isaiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, Zechariah, and Revelation.

In outlining Prophecy, you need to be aware of two essential forms of language:

1. Literal (Didactic): This has a simple and direct meaning, such as, what it says is what it means.

a. Interpret this form as it lies. It has a plain meaning. Zechariah 7 is a good example, as are a lot of Isaiah and Jeremiah.

b. This form deals with ethical and moral truths, such as Zechariah, yet it does have some “Figurative” stuff mixed in it too.

c. Always view prophesy first with the attitude that it has a plain meaning until you have clear and compelling reasons to place it in the figurative category. Don’t jump to conclusions or read in what is not there!

d. If you get frustrated with it, put it aside. Most Bible scholars debate the meaning, so it is improbable that you will have a clear insight. Some people are not ready or able to comprehend this part of the Bible, if so, that is OK! Focus on the parts of Scripture that are crystal clear—the other 95%!

1. Figurative (Predictive): This is the category that most of prophecy falls in. Your task is to determine the points and ideas that apply today and the ones that point to tomorrow. Notice the figures of speech, metaphors, and symbolism used. The goal is that it will happen in a point of history, and come to pass in a literal and plain way. We may not understand it until it is right on top of us but by understanding what the symbols meant to the original audience, looking them up in the Old Testament, we are given a description key.

a. Daniel 7-12; Joel 2; Isaiah 11; and Zech. 4 are clear examples of figurative language.

b. In John 2, Jesus predicts the destruction of His body, but His hearers thought He meant the Temple in Jerusalem.

c. Prophecy can be outlined just like the Epistles and Poetry at times.

Outlining Epistles

The Epistles dealt with concerns and false teaching that needed immediate correction. Some Epistles were written in response to questions from the church, or for clarification to another letter, such as 2 Corinthians. In outlining Epistles, you will see that they follow a very straight, logical order. In addition, the Epistles follow a letter style, such as letters of today (except Hebrews and 1 John). Thus, your outline should incorporate the style of the literature of the passage, too. They contain an introduction, statement of purpose, the principle teaching, and then a closing.

1. Introduction: As with any letter, the writer is giving a ‘Hi there" to his readers. Paul usually also thanks people, too. This is just a couple of verses, sometimes two verses (such as 2 Corinthians) and up to seven, as with Romans. Some like to separate the greeting from the thanksgiving; however you proceed is up to you. Thus, when you read commentaries and sermons, you will find various outline styles. Again, style and arrangement is not as important as your content and truthfulness to the text.

2. Statement of Purpose, or the reason for the letter: This is the key to understanding the letter. Why was the letter written—to stop a doctrine gone awry, gossip, giving instruction, or answering questions? Usually, this part is also just a few verses long. This shortness is by no means an indication of its importance. The purpose is essential to understanding the letter in its context.

3. The Body of the letter/the main teaching: This is where the writer instructs his readers concerning the purpose of the letter. In the larger Epistles, there are several themes/ideas that are developed as a “thread” over several verses, a chapter, a few chapters, or throughout the letter. Remember, the chapter and verses were added by the publisher and were not part of the original text, nor are they inspired.

4. The Closing: Virtually all the Epistles have a closing. This can be a doxology, final greetings, a benediction, concluding thoughts, or future plans. The book of Romans has them all.

If you look at different translations, you will find that the publisher has done an outline. Compare his to yours to see if you missed points and ideas. However, you must break down the ideas yourself; do not rely on the publisher’s outline. You are looking for ideas, precepts, principles, and themes. For example, in Romans you have love, judgment, faith, and sin—all intertwining.

Outlining Example Romans chapter 1: (Condensed from Walking by Faith: A Connectional Outline of the Book of Romans, by Richard J. Krejcir © 2000)

It is best to begin your study by outlining the Bible passage yourself without any outside influence. Then, after you have done your own work of observation, you can use the steps of interpretation and application. After you have done your own study, then you may proceed to Greek grammar works (if you are a pastor who knows Greek, or word study books if you do not), and commentaries. Check for insights you may have missed or that can give you added cultural and historical information. (See Appendix C from ‘Into Thy Word’)

Here is an example of some general themes of the book of Romans, an overview, and then a basic outline of Romans 1. Then, there is an example of a finished, polished outline that can be used for teaching or sermons.

Romans Chapter 1: Basic overview: (Summary)

1-5: The apostle shows his apostolic authority and his obedience through surrender to Christ. The grand subject of his ministry is for us to live by faith.

6-7: He is greeting the Christians at Rome.

8-15: Thanking God on their account, and praying for them. He desired to visit and preach the Word to them personally.

16-17: The gospel is the power of God for salvation, and shows the only way of our justification.

18-23: All people of all cultures are exposed to who God is, including His wrath for sin and disobeying the light afforded to them.

24-32: A just, yet appalling description of the Gentile world, as given up, by the just anger and disapproval of God, to the grossest idolatries, the most degrading recklessness, and the most horrendous iniquities.

Basic Biblical outline: (This is a typical “straight from the Bible” outline you need to accomplish before diving into word studies and commentaries. Keep in mind that many good Bible expositors will produce different Bible outlines because there is usually no concrete or best way to produce an outline. Different minds think and process information in different ways. As long as you are true to the text and isolate the ideas in a clear and concise way, you probably are doing well. Once you have completed your outline, compare it to those in Bibles and commentaries.)

1. Greeting/Salutation (1:1-7)

a. Who we are in sin

b. Paul calls himself a "bondservant"

c. Separated to be in Christ’s service

2. Christ is the seed of David

a. As promised by the Scriptures

b. Christ has two natures; He is fully God and fully man

i. Through Christ we have grace

ii. Obedience and faith are required

c. Grace is for all nations

d. Paul sends his blessings

3. Introduction of Paul's Ministry (1:8-15)

a. Thanksgiving of faith, and who Christ is and has done

b. Paul was a missionary to the Gentiles.

4. Paul is a prayer warrior for the Romans

a. Paul desired to be with the Romans to personally encourage them to Christ.

b. Paul's prayerfulness is an expression of his devotion and zeal

c. "Mutual faith" is encouragement, support, and using spiritual gifts, all working as a team

i. Paul realized his indebtedness to Christ

ii. Thus, Paul’s foremost call and passion is to preach the gospel

5. Thesis statement/Main Theme of Romans! (1:16-17)

a. This is the clear statement of God's good news

b. Not being ashamed of who we are in Christ, living out our faith with passion and conviction

c. We are not to be embarrassed of who we are as Christians, nor fear to share our faith!

d. Power is Salvation; it is by the work of Christ alone through the Holy Spirit.

i. This is through God

ii. It is for all, Jew and Gentile

iii. Christians must live by faith!

e. Faith is based on knowledge given by God.

6. We as the Elect are free from our debt of sin

a. But, we are debtors to be witnesses to the lost!

b. Christ's righteousness is given to us

7. Sin is destructive and devastating (1:18-32)

a. Gentiles are without excuse

b. God’s wrath is on us all

i. When Adam fell, the Spirit left him immediately, not gradually!

ii. The wrath of God is to be taken seriously, especially by those who reject Him

iii. We have no excuse; God reveals Himself through His creation.

c. Beware of Sin and making idols that take you away from knowing Him.

i. If you know God, you must also glorify Him

ii. Do not give into sin, especially sexual immorality

iii. Do not exchange the truth for a lie

iv. Do not worship the creation and forsake the Creator

v. Woe to those who know and turn their backs!

d. A laundry list of sin

i. If you persist in sin, you will be given up to it

ii. Pride is in the same sin category as homosexuality!

e. The same God of judgment gave us His Son and delivers us

(For more information see the Romans 1 study on the Bible Study channel, Romans section.)

Conclusion

Now, you will have some more tools for your sermon and teaching arsenal to use as is or as a platform on which to build more. It can be a discipline for your writing so you can place key, biblical precepts in a format you can continue to use, update, and improve upon while maintaining the continuity and logic. Then, make sure you have a file system to store them for future use.

Do not rest in your pride and what you think you know; rest in Him and draw out what He wants you to know!

May God bless you in your endeavors to know and grow in your knowledge and teaching of His Most Precious Word!

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