

Called and Beloved

Week 1 | Romans 1:1–7, 14–17 | September 13, 2026

Use this study on your own or with a group. Individuals: write and reflect on the questions. Groups: discuss them together, allowing time for personal reflection.

Begin with prayer.

As you work through the four questions below, ask: What **in the passage** supports your answers?

Read and notice

Read Romans 1:1–7 and 14–17.

Between these sections, Paul thanks God for the Roman believers and hopes to visit so they can encourage one another's faith. Notice repeated words and descriptions of Jesus and his people.

What word or phrase catches your attention? What questions come to mind after reading the passage?

1. Who is God?

In verses 2–4, what do God's promises and the description of his Son reveal about God's character and nature? What does the greeting in verse 7 add?

2. What has God done?

What did God promise (verse 2)? What happened to Jesus (verse 4)? What does the gospel do (verses 16 and 17)? Why is Paul confident in the gospel? What challenges your confidence in the gospel?

3. What does the passage say about who we are?

How does Paul describe himself in Romans 1:1? How does he describe the believers in verses 6–7? What do they receive from God?

Verse 7 says these believers are loved by God and called to be holy, set apart for God and his purposes. How are God's love and the way we live connected? Do we live for Christ to earn his love or because he loves us?

Read Romans 1:11–12. What does Paul hope to receive from other believers? How does this challenge the idea that faith is something we live out alone?

4. So what?

What most shapes how you see yourself: your successes, mistakes, responsibilities, or what others think? You might think of grades, work, family life, or a changing role. How might belonging to Christ change the way you see these things?

Picture this: *You can face a disappointing grade, a setback at work, a changing role in your family, or a challenging conversation without letting it define who you are, because you belong to Christ.*

Whether you're studying, working, caring for someone, or retired, where do you feel pressure to prove your worth? Choose one situation this week. What would trusting and following Jesus look like in that situation? How can we respond to his grace rather than trying to earn his love?

Picture this: *You are part of a church where your age, job, or popularity does not decide how much you matter, because we belong to the same Lord. A place where we are reminded that we are loved because God has chosen to love us, not because of anything we have done to earn or deserve it. How might you help this picture be true of our church?*

Who in our church could you learn from or encourage this week (someone your age, older, or younger)? What is one way to receive from others, not only help them?

After studying the passage today, ***what might be your next faithful step in response?***

This week: Return to the passage and your next faithful step. Tell someone how their faith has encouraged yours.

For further study of identity, see Genesis 1:26–2:4.

Connecting to Sunday

We are building a shared understanding of the gospel and a common way to explain it. To help us, we have created a Gospel Catechism—a series of questions and answers for learning and remembering together. This week, Q1, Q3, and Q4 connect with our passage and Sunday's message. Q2 asks why we need salvation; we will return to it when we explore sin and our need for grace more fully.

Q1: What is the gospel?

The gospel is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes (Romans 1:16–17).

Q3: What was God's plan?

God promised to rescue his people and restore his creation; a promise passed down from generation to generation.

Q4: How did God fulfill his promise?

The Father sent his eternal Son, who became human. In Jesus Christ, the kingdom of God has come near. Jesus lived a sinless life, died for our sins, rose victorious, and reigns as Lord.

During the week, you can practice these answers as a way to remember and share what you are learning.

Catechism references: Q3—Isaiah 52:7–10; 65:17–25. Q4—John 1:1–3, 14; Mark 1:14–15; 1 Corinthians 15:3–4; Ephesians 1:20–22.

Closing Prayer

Thank God for what you have seen of him. Name where you struggle to trust God or what you struggle to trust God with. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you respond in faith and obedience, and pray for someone who needs encouragement.