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Associate Pastor Jeremy Preece

Welcome to Truth Matters Church, we are very excited to launch our new expository study in the book of Romans. All right, I'm Jeremy and this is Pastor Alex and, Alex, would you mind opening us up in prayer?

Pastor Alex Catarroja

Oh, absolutely. My pleasure. Lord, we want to take a moment to acknowledge you. sitting on the throne, ruling on high Lord, in the world that we live in, oftentimes, it doesn't seem that you are on the throne. But Lord, we know that you are on a throne, and that you're ruling and reigning. And that for a time, Lord, you've allowed, you know, chaos and evil. And really, just, you're allowing life to take its course. And Lord, we want to take a moment to ask for your wisdom, to ask for your Holy Spirit to be our teacher. Lord, we are about to endeavor into a study in your marvelous book, the book of Romans, which is very instructive, especially in the time and culture that we're in today, Lord, is very instructive for us in what the true gospel messages and how we can share in Christ's victory at the end. So Lord, be our teacher. Through these several studies, we pray in us these things in Jesus name. Amen. Amen.

Associate Pastor Jeremy Preece

Thank you so much, Alex. Well, as you like to expose it, this the scriptures, one of the most important things is finding out the who, what, where, when, and why exactly. A particular passage of scripture is, is before us. So today, we're going to cover quite a bit of history about Paul and about his ministry. So why don't we start with a bit about Oh, who is Pat, who is Apostle Paul? Yeah.

Pastor Alex Catarroja

And actually, Jeremy, I do think that it's very fitting to start off with what we call, you know, historical backgrounds and things like that. Because quite frankly, we can't really understand the Bible, unless we know what the background is, what the context is, what the culture was at that time. And if we lack that information, and you read the Bible, we're really robbing ourselves of the treasures, because we know that the Bible was written in a specific time to a specific people for a specific purpose. And in order for us to understand what the Christian faith is, and to grow in the faith, we do need to understand all those elements. And then we know that once we've rightly divided the truth, and taking into account, the context and settings, that truth is what's going to transcend all time. So we're reading an ancient book to an ancient people at an ancient time, however, the truth communicated again, it's applicable. And what's interesting is it's not only applicable, going forward, as we will see, it's also an applicable going back because God's truth is timeless. So that's part of the purpose for doing a lot of these things. That's not very pleasant, quite frankly, and I think it's natural if

Associate Pastor Jeremy Preece

It's easier to just get right in and start reading.



Pastor Alex Catarroja

Yeah, or, and you can find yourself maybe even falling asleep, because a lot his background is like, Oh, you know, it doesn't apply today. And we have no idea. But I want to caution us in letting ourselves go there. Again, it's very important that we get the setting and all those things. And then as you'll see, and the goal, really, an expository preaching is to explain the Bible in its right context. With the Bible itself, obviously, there will be some historical documents and references and things like that, that'll help. Also, you know, fill in some of the blanks, but we need all of that, in order for us to really dig deep into God's word. Unfortunately, there's a lot of, I guess, you can say ministries and churches that may call themselves expositors, or expository teaching and preaching. And by definition, that means to explain the Bible with the Bible in its context. And, and that's how the Old Testament authors and the New Testament authors, that's how they interpreted and read scripture was the they allowed the scripture to interpret itself. So it's very important to follow that model to, to learn from the biblical authors themselves, and how did they handle the text. And that's part of what we're going to endeavor to do as well as we as we dig deep into the book of Romans.

Associate Pastor Jeremy Preece

And as you and I talk frequently, context is so critical to properly interpreting scripture because if you take it out of context, it can literally mean something totally different.

Pastor Alex Catarroja

And that's where you get into error and in extreme cases, heresy. If you take the context and you twist it, or you or you take it out of context, and you twist the truth that's perverting the truth. You are undoing. What was the truth, and now you've made it something else. And we know that if you have the wrong truth, it would, okay. There's no such thing as wrong trip. Yeah, the wrong information. And something that is holding itself out to be true. If it's not true, then you're finding yourself believing in something that's false. And worst case scenario, if you don't have God's truth, then there is no opportunity to be saved. And we will find ourselves in the same situation. And, and as we will see, when we get into Romans, in our natural condition, and where we are all headed, if we don't come to grips with what God's truth reveals,

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amen, you know, and I think it's very interesting too, as you talk about truth. So many of the New Testament epistles are corrective. It's it's the apostles writing to churches, who were in error they had they had gone astray, they had left the their first love, they had taken on certain traditions and spiritual rights, and all this self righteousness. And the apostles were constantly pulling them back to you know, this is the foundation.

Pastor Alex Catarroja

Absolutely, Jeremy and what you'll find when you when you read, especially the New Testament Scriptures, false teaching, false doctrine, has always been a problem. So what was happening in the early church, and really contending for the faith once and for all, and trusted to the saints, that mantra that continues to this day, in fact, I would suggest that the culture that we



live in, especially here in the West, is completely dark. And it's completely devoid of God's Word and truth. Because people in the culture wants to suppress the truth of God that is written in every human heart. And we'll get into that in Romans chapter one. And what in this battle for truth, again, started with a church throughout church history, even to where we are today is still is still a reality. And that's part of the reason why, again, we're starting this This podcast is because it is our conviction that truth is, is what truly sets you free. And unfortunately, as I mentioned, there's there's not many churches that are in ministries that are truly exposing the scriptures, as was modeled for us by the by the writers of Scripture. So the only way to combat error and truth is to rightly divide the word of truth. And again, that's what we're gonna do as we as we, as we, as we launch in this study.

Associate Pastor Jeremy Preece

That's, that's great. So where would you like begin? You want to talk about Paul?

Pastor Alex Catarroja

Yeah. So as Yeah, so sa I said, I mean, again, now let's, we're going to the for our initial podcast, what we're going to do is we're going to introduce the book of Romans. Because, you know, many of us, especially for those of us who have been in the faith for some time in a book of Romans is very familiar to many of us. And what we'll do is we'll, for the next maybe session or two, depending on how long it'll take, what we'll do is we'll allow me to introduce the book of Romans to us so that we can, again, have that setting and background and context so that once we open up the actual book, and start reading it, the foundation has been laid, and then we can go verse by verse, and start to glean a lot of these truths.

Associate Pastor Jeremy Preece

So we're not even going to get to Romans one, one today.

Pastor Alex Catarroja

No. Yes, they're important backgrounds important. And trust me, just just hang in there. You know, take in whatever you can. I know a lot of this is probably going to go over us and that's understandable. But just just stay, just stay committed. Stay engaged, try to eliminate distractions, if you could try to engage with what's being shared, and especially when it gets to the Scripture and begin wrestling with that and then allow God to do his work in our hearts. Yeah.

Associate Pastor Jeremy Preece

And I think as you know, and I know we read scripture in context as best we possibly can it when you know the background, you know, the history you find that the book, the epistle makes so much more sense it comes to life in a brand new way that perhaps wouldn't if you just opened it up and kind of did Bible roulette and said I'm going to start reading here in chapter three. It doesn't make any sense.

Pastor Alex Catarroja



Absolutely. And again, that's that's the whole reason why we're gonna go we're gonna do the unpleasant things to for many of us and and, again, stick through it and Lord willing You'll see the benefit of why we're going through such great lengths. And then again, our goal, our goal is not for you to hear my opinion, your opinion, the goal of this ministry is to proclaim God's truth and allow that truth to accomplish its work in purpose. And that work in purpose is the salvation of souls. So our goal is not to hear us, but to hear God and we'll do our best to try to bring the Bible to life. Amen, amen. Amen. Let's get started.

Pastor Alex Catarroja

You know, let's get started. Okay, so one of the first things we want to do to introduce the book of Romans is to know who wrote Romans. And for those of us especially who's been in the Christian faith, for some time, it's no surprise that the author identifies himself as the Apostle Paul. And what you'll notice in Paul's letters, is he customarily identifies himself in the beginning of the letter. So we here in the West, and at this time, and in this culture, you know, oftentimes if you write a letter, or if you were to send an email, you would write who it was from at the end. That's how we're used to it here in our culture. Well, back in ancient time, in the days of Paul, it was actually customarily to introduce who or to introduce yourself in the beginning of the letter. And you'll see that again, that's customary in Paul's letters. So he identifies himself as the Apostle Paul. And the good thing is, as far as the early church is concerned, there hasn't been any refutation in terms of authorship of Pauline authorship. The early church unanimously attributed that this book of Romans is from the Apostle Paul himself. And something that you'll find with the Apostle Paul, is that he does have a particular style and grammar and his letters, as you will see, when Paul writes, he is very polished. And we'll get into a little more about Paul's background on why that is. And again, just kind of a little bit of a tidbit here. But again, what's customary of Paul is to introduce himself at the beginning of the letter. And there has been some discussion or dialogue throughout, you know, an early church even to today about authorship of the book of Hebrews, for example. And in the early church, there has been some dialogue in the early church about you know, who wrote the book of Hebrews. And there were times where it was attributed to the Apostle Paul. But again, if you take like the book of Hebrews, for example, and how it's written, and you take, like, let's say, the book of Romans, which we're about to study, what you'll see there's a very, very contrasting style, in terms of writing. And that's one of the beauties of, you know, when we're seeing the scriptures, inspired, inspired, it's men moved by God, writing God's words, is when when God use, let's say, the apostle Paul, to write and like this very book here, that he is still pull. So however polished he was, whatever his personality is, whatever his style and grammar is, that, that, because he was moved by the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit was inspiring that writing, he was still who he is. So all that is to say, when you look at the different books of the Bible, and you will see the personalities of the different biblical authors as well come out in their writing, like, and here's what's something that just came off the top of my head, like, when you read the Gospel of Mark, for example, read mark, he's very abrupt at one point, and he kind of moves to the next it's just he just kind of gets straight to the point, consolidated, and he goes on to the next point. And then when you get to like, Luke, you're like, No, he's, again, he's an historian. And he tends to write a lot of the details. So God uses the personalities of the people that he used to write inspired scripture, to, into the scriptures himself. Again, it's not man who wrote it. Ultimately,



when we're reading the Bible, ultimately, it's by it's the mouth of God, it is the word of God. However, he does use, again, human agents to record that's all that is to say, when we get to Paul, and you look at the authorship of his letters, you will see that, again, he and he says it's from him, and he often sciences letters, and you will see that it's consistent with all of the different letters he wrote. And, and that is the case

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I'm glad you brought that up, I've heard it I don't know the official term for it. But I've heard it used that God would actually almost use a robot to write scripture, you might know the official term for that, where it was very autonomous, where the person was not involved. There was his hand writing it for God. But as we've seen through Scripture, there's a personality thread throughout each book through s epistle and Moses had a different personality than Jeremiah and so forth. So I'm really glad you brought that up.

Pastor Alex Catarroja

And actually, even on that note, you know, this idea when we get into our will in our personalities of who we are As individuals and human beings, and one of the beauty about God and His Majesty is, you know, we're all uniquely created, there's only one you there's only one me, even within twins or triplets, quadruplets, or what have you, yeah, you look the same, and you have a lot of common, you know, likes and hobbies and things like that and interests, but you're still unique at your very core. So we're not robots, when God created what created Adam, and Eve and then every human being that came thereafter, every human being, we do, we are uniquely endowed with the image of God in that, you know, we are a human being and, and without getting too sidetracked here and as we know the fall marred all that but originally man was created to was created in the image of God, you know, perfectly moral perfectly, you know, upstanding, you know, without sin. In, in, we know the story of the fallen, what happened there, but this whole idea of, of us being robots, even when we come to faith in Christ, you know, again, it's us exercising our will, you know, US turning from our sins, but ultimately, we know that that takes the work of God in our hearts to bring about, you know, that that desire and that longing and that new birth. So we're in by no means whether in our creation, or whether it's the, you know, the authors of Scripture, writing his word, by no means were they just robots in God's plan of redemption. Excellent. So let's, let's continue into continuing to look at the authorship of the book of Romans. Here. Here's a little tidbit. And you know, again, if you're, if we're in a kind of a little Bible quiz, or trivia, and if you're able to get this this would be kudos, this will tell me that you are most likely a student of Scripture, you say you just catch things that others don't. But the book of Romans actually wasn't written by Paul. Now he is the author. He is the one who these are Paul's words, inspired by the Holy Spirit. But if you look at Romans 16:22, it says there it was transcribed by a man named Turkey, as it says there I tortillas who write this letter greet you in the Lord. And that's just a little tidbit there. In case you were wondering, you know, so if I were to say, who wrote the book of Romans, you can say, Well, God wrote it. Paul wrote it to us wrote it in there. All right.

Associate Pastor Jeremy Preece

And if we ever go on Jeopardy, that question will no doubt come up.



Pastor Alex Catarroja

Exactly. Okay, you know what that and let's, let's learn a little more about Paul and the author. As we'll know, Paul, is also known as Saul. And Saul was born in Tarsus in Sicilia, and you'll see there, Tarsus of Sicilia was part of Rome. And that's where Paul got his Roman citizenship. And if you follow his, his journey in the book of Acts after his conversion, and especially when he was falsely accused by the Jews, and he was arrested and everything, and he appealed to Caesar, that he, he exercised his Roman citizenship to appeal to Caesar. So that did come into play his citizenship. But if you're wondering, that's how Paul got it back, then you could have purchased your citizenship. But in Paul's case, he did not purchase a citizenship, he was born a Roman citizen. Also, you know, for those of us as we're studying, not even just Romans, or just let's just see the New Testament and the rest of the epistles of Saul. And when you see the name Saul, Saul was his Roman name. And then Paul, as we more commonly know, him, is his Hebrew name. And one tidbit here too, as well, when you read the New Testament scripture, you know, Luke began referring to Saul as Paul, when he went on his first missionary journey. So a good way to remember it was when you're reading scripture, if you see Saul, we're referring to him as Saul. Just know that that was before he was sent out on his first missionary journey to plant churches. So it was his pre missionary journey, name, if you will. And then when you read Scripture, and if he's referred to as Paul, you know that that means that he is the Apostle Paul going on his missionary journey. And that's another tidbit too. And Paul, when he would go on his missionary journeys, what he would often do is he would first when he would go to town in town, he would first look for a synagogue, where the Jews would meet and gather in corporate worship. And that's where you know that was was customary for Paul, so he would know himself as his Hebrew name Paul, not Saul. So that that's another tidbit. Excellent. More about Paul and this is probably the I guess you can say the the more significant part Paul is that he was actually encountered, he met and talk to Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus. And that's recorded for us in Acts chapter nine. And what I'd like to do is I'd actually like to go ahead and read that passage. Again, this is, you know, familiar for many of us, especially if we've been in the faith for for some time, but it's also is always good to get a reminder of Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus. Again, if you want to get technical, it was Saul's conversion at the time. And it would be Acts chapter nine. And I'd like to read beginning in verse one. Now Saul's still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord went to the high priest, and asked for letters from him to the synagogues at Damascus. So that if he was if he found any belonging to the way, both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. And as he was traveling, here's where we get the encounter. It happened that he was approaching Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. And he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying 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 get up and enter the city, and it will be told you what you must do. The men who traveled with him stood speechless, hearing the voice, but seeing no one saw got up from the ground, and through his, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing. And leading him by the hand, they brought him into the mascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank. Now there was a disciple at Damascus named undeniably, and the Lord sets him in a vision and an is and he said, Here I am, Lord. And the Lord sets him get up and go to the street called straight, and



inquire at the house of Judas for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying, and he has seen in the vision a man named and an eye is coming in, and lay his hands on him, so that he might regain his sight. But an is answered, Lord, I have heard many from many about this man, how much harm he did to your saints at Jerusalem. And here he is, he has authority from the chief priests, to bind all who call on your name. But the Lord said to him, Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine, to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel, for I will show him how much he must suffer from my namesake. So Anand is departed and entered the house. And after laying his hands on him, said, Brother, Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming, has sent me so that you may regain your sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit. And immediately there fell from his eyes, something like scales, and he regained his sight. And he got up and was baptized, and he took food and was strengthened. So one of the biggest credentials that Paul has going for him, I guess, you can say, is that he was encountered by the risen Christ. And, and his conversion is very dramatic in Scripture, in that he actually had letters from the chief priests, and he had the authority to go and look for Christians that have scattered to bound them, and to bring them back and to get them persecuted ultimately, to be killed. So he is he was going on his way to persecute Christians. And then he meets Jesus Christ. And so he was seeking God,

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He wasn't looking for Jesus, Jesus showed up and said, you now.

Pastor Alex Catarroja

Exactly, and one of the and one of the truth, there's so much truth here. But one of the truths also is, you know, Jesus identifies with believers as his body, right, and where his bride and then the scripture has a lot of titles, descriptions of how it describes the relationship between believers and Jesus Christ. But here's the truth from that encounter, when Christians get persecuted, and that can include you and me that persecuted is I know, it's loose, you know, persecuted, I want to take that to the actual literal persecution in that you are harassed to the point of you know, being beaten, and ultimately, you know, could lead up to death row SATs. That's Yeah, real suffering. Yeah. That persecution because oh, you know, what, uh, you know, you're a believer and, you know, there are some Those detractors or whatever, and you think you're getting persecuted for your faith because you stand, you know, you stand for certain truths or convictions not that I'm talking about persecution. Here. I'm talking about actual assault, physical harm. Ultimately,

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there's still a lot happening in many parts of the world. It hasn't totally encroached on America. No, this is very common and very many countries.

Pastor Alex Catarroja

No, absolutely. Yeah. So again, throughout church, history, believers have been persecuted. And as you as you said, Even today, in various parts of the country where you can't, you can't publicly profess your faith in Christ in certain countries, because you could get killed. And that's the reality for some of us. But the truth here is, when Christians get persecuted, you're



persecuting, or that person or that group, or whatever it is, is persecuting Jesus himself. And that's what Paul says, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me. And so you see the connection between Christ and His believers. So as we saw in Paul's encounter with Christ, there was such an encounter that, and the light struck him so much that he was blind at that, at the sight of his light, and he was blind, and he didn't eat or drink for three days. And here, here's another thing that's interesting. If you continue to read the story, and you read Acts, chapter nine, I know I cut it off, right after he regained his sight, and received the Holy Spirit is, remember, he went there to persecute Christians. And he was going to the synagogues with the letter of approval. So that if there is, especially if there's any Jews, among them, that held to that name, that he would take them back, and you know, arrested and everything, but he went to the synagogue that he preached Christ. So we're talking about he did a complete 180 he went there, and kind of like how you said, God, Jesus, yep, you now, you know, you're, you're persecuting me, he goes, not anymore. And I will show you how much you must suffer for my namesake. And he was, you know, Jesus's personal, chosen instrument to bring the gospel first to the Jews. And as we'll see, to the Gentiles. And let's look a little bit more about Paul's credentials. Again, what we're trying to do is we're trying to glean as much as we could, from, in this case, the author of the book of Romans. And as I mentioned, again, he was Jesus's chosen instrument to suffer and preach the gospel for his namesake. And another tidbit about Paul. So there's 27 New Testament books, you know, for myself a good way for me to remember how many Old Testament versus New Testament books there are, as we know that easy we know how many books of the Bible there are, we know that there's 66 books in the Bible. But if you want to know how many books are Old Testament, and how many are New Testament, we know that there's 39 books in the Old Testament, and three times nine is 27. So a good way for us to remember, okay, you know that whatever the number of Old Testament books, you have to multiply those two numbers by and, and those two needs to add up to 66. So 39, and then again, three times nine is 27, plus 27, is 66. And of the 27 books in the New Testament, the apostle Paul wrote, nearly half he wrote about me, he wrote 13 books out of the 27. Here's another thing about Paul. So when Paul began his ministry, his gospel ministry, there, there could have been some questions about, okay, we know that the pillars of the church at that time, you know, were Jesus's disciples who became apostles, of course, less Judas. And we know also, by that time, that the Lord's brother James was also an apostle. So there was pillars in the church, who, in Jerusalem, who, again, were the pillars, they're there, they're the ones they're the, the, the Apostles of the gospel, I guess you can say. So another thing about Paul, because remember, he had a personal encounter from Christ, again, apart from the pillars of the church. And then Paul immediately began to preach the gospel, and we know that he received the Holy Spirit. And then he was God, Christ chosen instrument and he went from and then again, on this missionary journeys, he would go town to town, preach the gospel and established churches. So there could have been some reservation about his legitimacy or like, okay, we know that the Lord Jesus Christ, personally, you know, spit, you know, he was with his disciples, He spent time with them for about three years or so, you know, he was their rabbi, their teacher, you know, he he spent his life with the disciples, the disciples who became apostles, so they're already rapidly They already knew. But then the Apostle Paul, there could have been question about really his legitimacy as an apostle. So the one of the things about Paul, is that there was a point where he did go to the leaders in Jerusalem. And he presented to them. First of all, he



shared with him, obviously, his testimony and that Jesus appeared to him and gave in and has given him this task to bring the gospel to the nation's really. And the pillars of the church at that time, he along with Barnabas, they did receive the right hand of fellowship by the other apostles. So it's very important that there was that support and acceptance because if Peter, for example, rejected Paul, and we know that Peter definitely was, you know, he was one of the disciples became apostles, we know he was one of the true apostles, then obviously, then we couldn't count Paul as an apostle. But again, he presented his story in his as far as his encounter with Christ, and what was given to him. And now there was that acceptance and right hand of fellowship, they're saying, okay, Paul, we acknowledge that Christ has chosen you to bring the gospel to the Gentiles. So then the apostles in Jerusalem, they're like, we're gonna focus here on the Jews, and you go with our blessing and take this gospel to the Gentiles. So that that's one that's another thing of Paul's credentials.

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And there was specific requirements for apostleship. Well, there still large there still are, yeah, that didn't change at all. And Peter, and those elders of the church would have absolutely known that Paul would have had to meet specific requirements to be an actual apostle of Jesus Christ.

Pastor Alex Catarroja

Correct. And then the scripture does tell us that in Paul's own words, right, there were signs of a true apostle. So first of all, you know, one of the requirements without getting into every single one of them. But one of the requirements is you had to have seen Jesus. And yet I've seen him resurrected. That was one of the requirements you didn't see the risen Christ, you are already not eligible to be an apostle, another qualification to be an apostle, you had to be specifically chosen by God, just as Jesus, Han chose his disciples, you Everyone follow me every single one of them, including Judas. Yes. Interestingly enough, it's a whole nother. That's a whole, but he picked him. And we know the story that he was the center perdition and that, ultimately, he would be betrayed and all that, but that was part of God's that's that was factored in as part of God's plan, I should say. So, so one of the requirements is you had to have been hand selected by God as well. And we know, in the Apostle Paul, on the road to Damascus, Jesus says, You are my chosen instrument, there you go. So he's seen the risen Christ. He's, he's been given and he was chosen, he seen the risen Christ, and he was chosen by Christ. And he was given the task to bring the gospel to the ends of the earth, ultimately, we'll see that that does tie in to the book of Romans. But there was a there was also marks of a true apostle, oftentimes, especially in the early church, how can you validate that you are an actual apostle of Christ, and in the office of an apostle, one of the other marks or signs that you were specifically in, in specially chosen by God for that office, was in signs and wonders. So when you read the Old Man's like when you read the New Testament, especially when you get to the book of Acts, and the the birth of the church at Pentecost, and what transpired thereafter, what you'll see is the off the signs and miracles is that you know, even whether it's in the speaking of tongues or languages, when you would, when you would follow acts, you will also see in the acts of the apostle, that's why it's called acts in those acts of the apostles would also include signs and wonders, you'll see a special divine healing miracles. Yeah, and and things along those lines. I



don't want to get too much into the weeds there. But to answer your question, yeah, there were requirements to be an apostle. Let's look at a little bit more of Paul's credentials. And then what we can do is we can, we can kind of adjourn and then we can get into more of the backgrounds in our in our next session. But let's continue on a little further here. And looking at Paul's credentials. in Paul's own words, he calls himself a Hebrew of Hebrews, and that's recorded for us in Philippians three, and here's a description of why. So Hebrew, Hebrew, or he's a Jew of Jews, you know, another way of saying it, so Hebrew is their language and they're also called by that, but Paul, he was circumcised on the eighth day, meaning Paul As an Orthodox Jew, he took on the sign of circumcision. And that sign of circumcision, when you get back into the Old Testament, and when you get back into the book of Genesis and the call of Abraham, in Genesis 17, you'll see there that God gave Abraham, the sign of circumcision. And that sign was to point to the covenant that God was making with Abraham and his descendants. And the way to signify that covenant. It was an actual circumcision, right? That was performed on the male Jews. And that would happen on the eighth day as prescribed in Leviticus 12. Three. But Paul calls himself again, Hebrew of Hebrews circumcising the eighth day of the tribe of Benjamin. And again, if you follow, you follow the the Jewish history and their origins, we know that the the Jewish race started, you know, really with Abraham, but we know he had two sons, but from, you know, from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, from that line from Jacob, he, his name was changed to Israel. And, and as we know, Jacob had 12 sons, and from those 12 sons ultimately derived the 12 tribes of Israel, but one of his sons, one of Jacob's sons, was Benjamin. And Paul came from that line. So again, he is a true Orthodox Jew, with lineage tying to ultimately, the tribe of Benjamin,

Associate Pastor Jeremy Preece

Which back in that day, was incredibly, your pedigrees very important.

Pastor Alex Catarroja

It was, it was very important, which is why when you get into the Gospel accounts, and for example, in Matthew, you get through all the lineage here, like I know, for many of us, when we read him, when you read the lineage, and you get to numbers two, and you use read the portions of Scripture, where it gives you the lineage, and a lot of us are like, why, but again, that lineage is very, very important, especially in the Jewish race, in that we know that from that lineage. Also, if you follow from the tribe of Judah, you know, through the line of David, and we know when you look at Jesus's pedigree, and you're looking at his, from his earthly parents, you know, where you follow it through Joseph or Mary, ultimately, their lineage, you know, so from Joseph, for example, we know that if you follow his lineage, he was a son of David, which is, again, one of the requirements to the being the Messiah. So the lineage was very important to the Jews, in many respects, because it is your pedigree and and we see that also with Paul. Another thing about Paul, not only was he from the tribe of Benjamin, but Paul was a fantasy and a good way to look at Pharisees, because especially us here in the West, and we're not, you know, we don't really see Orthodox Judaism, and how it really was. Back in Paul's days, you know, the Pharisees was really the elite experts of the law. So in order to be a faricy, you had to pretty much get to that level. So it was the highest level in Judaism. And when you reach that level, you became a faricy, and expert of the law. So Paul was an Orthodox Jew, he wasn't



just any Orthodox Jew, he wasn't, you know, and also a true Jew from the tribe of Benjamin. But he was also an expert of the law, at least according to the standards that was set for that, for that designation. And as we read again, Paul was also a persecutor of the church. And one of the things that you'll find about Paul, and this ties into his his, you know, when you read Paul's letters, again, he's polished. He has his grammar, everything is just you can tell this, he was an educated man. And one big reason for that. And Paul, you know, calls us out that he was educated under camileo, and Gamaliel. He was considered one of the greatest rabbis in the first century, in Gamaliel, to was a ferrocene, expert of law. And he was very well respected, you know, in the Jewish community in the religious Jewish community, when Gamaliel talked. The Jews. Listen, that's how much respect he had. And that was how Paul was brought under the tutelage of camileo. And what what I like to do is, I'd like to go ahead, and let's pause here. And then what we'll do is in our next session, we'll continue on with Paul's credentials. And well, and what I'd like to do is I want to pick up from camileo. And, you know, read a portion of Scripture that, again, supports that what I just said, and that he was well respected by the Jews, and that when he said something, he again, he would say, and he would have great wisdom, that the Jews did give him a high regard. So why don't we go ahead and pause here and then what we'll do is Let's pick this back up. As you can see with with backgrounds, there's, there's just so much there, I know that we got to get it going just a little bit. But then we also know that there's just so much more. So what we'll do is we'll pick up beginning more about Paul's credentials with respect to camileo. An example of Scripture, and we'll just keep going.

Associate Pastor Jeremy Preece

Excellent. Thank you so much, Alex, you want to close this out in prayer? Yes,

Pastor Alex Catarroja

Absolutely. Oh, Heavenly Father, as we close in prayer, Lord, we haven't even gotten to the main course, Lord, and that is the opening of your word. And Lord, that's what we are endeavoring to do. And we look forward to opening up this marvelous book of Romans, which again, Lord has is very instructive in many ways, whether it's the gospel, how to live in light of the gospel tour, ultimately, ultimate victory in Jesus Christ. And Lord, as we close in prayer, and as we continue to glean the backgrounds and the cultural settings and things like that, in the book of Romans, Lord, we pray that you would just continue to get our hearts ready to intake, whatever it is, we could, and Lord, we're going to trust that you will bring the increase when, when the truth penetrates our heart that you as our loving father would cause it to bear fruit in its due time. So until we meet again, Lord, we again we left, we lift up this ministry, and ask that you continue to work out your will and your way. We ask this in Jesus name, amen.