

“Romans, Dispensationally Considered – Part 1

Introduction:

- ***The Word, the Words and the Words of Truth – 1 Corinthians:***

1 Corinthians 2:9-14

9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

10 But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

- ***The Themes (by the Words Used):***

- ***Law (78)***
- ***Justification (65)***
- ***Faith (59)***
- ***Sin and Sins (48)***
- ***Death (46)***
- ***Righteousness (39)***
- ***Spirit (34)***
- ***Flesh (25)***
- ***Grace (24)***
- ***Reckon (20)***
- ***Gospel (14)***
- ***Wrath (12)***

I. The Salutation to the Letter Sets the Stage for What Follows:

[READ] Romans 1:1 Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, ... [Take note of these important words here, “the gospel of God”.]

- ***Paul is able to write as well that this gospel of God is His Gospel. Indeed. We will have much to say about that as we proceed. In fact, Paul keeps on revealing more and more about that until he reaches the very end of this letter where he adds, praise God:***

[READ] Romans 16:24-27

24 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,

26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:

27 To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

- ***Indeed then this good news is “Paul’s” in such a special way and we would do well to consider exactly how that was. Just and outline of that today will be enough to get us started:***
- ***For the context for that gospel is pointed to there in the first verses where we see the man Paul, as all mankind, living under the condemnation of unrighteous sinners who are apart from the knowledge and glory of God and exalt not the holiness and righteousness of Almighty God but rather the depravity of their own hearts and minds. Saul was such a sinner indeed when the Lord intersected with him though he had lived and taught as a pharisee and indeed not just any pharisee, for as he tells the Jews gathered in Jerusalem at his first defense:***

Acts 22:3 “I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day.”

- ***Those first words in Romans therefore set the stage so well for what follows, for it was God himself who made Saul his servant and called him as an apostle and sent him forth as the bearer of this wondrous***

good news of his grace: “Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God ...”. So Paul was himself the subject of this saving power as we see revealed in 1 Timothy 1:

[READ] 1 Timothy 1:15-16

15 *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief [really “first”, as the same Gk. Word is translated in the next verse].*

16 *Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.*

- *So Paul was our forerunner or pattern in this matter of salvation by grace through faith alone as Almighty God intersects with our lives to accomplish his mighty and glorious purpose in our free and full salvation. He is our example.*
- *Back to the Romans, Verse 5 — “By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name ...”: Verses 2 - 4 are parenthetical (please change the second parenthesis from what the KJV has).*

So it was the ascended Christ Jesus who called Paul by his grace and established him as apostle of the Gentiles, the nations, of this sin-cursed planet. Praise God. This letter therefore is authoritative indeed, not only for the Roman believers but for us as well.

- *And then, going on, regarding this good news for it is referred to often here in this beginning chapter:*

Romans 1:9 *For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers; [“The gospel of his Son”]*

Romans 1:15 *So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. [“The gospel”]*

Romans 1:16 *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. [“The gospel of Christ”]*

- *So this gospel was referred to in multiple ways here, “the gospel of God”, “the gospel of his Son”, “the gospel of Christ” or simply, “the gospel”. Other words are also found in this letter such as “the gospel of peace” [10:15] and “my gospel” [2:16, 16:25]. Each of these descriptive terms illuminate another dimension of this eternally transforming truth as we shall further see in future studies.*
- *So in summary here, what is this letter all about? First of all it is about the gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ. But there is much to that as he writes here. And the context of his use of this simple word is intended by the Holy Spirit to give us understanding of that gospel that as he writes here saved him and called him into this “apostleship for the Gentiles, the nations”. It is of course therefore this word of the living God and these very words of God that Paul has written here. For it is the gospel of God, the gospel of Jesus Christ, the gospel of his son, or simply THE gospel. And it is Paul’s Gospel! Amen. For his is our example of salvation by grace through faith alone. Again, Amen.*

II. But Exactly Who Was and Is This Jesus Christ That Made All the Difference to Paul?

- *The next verses say so much:*

[READ] Romans 1:2-4

2 (Which [better, “who” as verse 3 explains] he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,)

3 Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;

4 And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:

- *He continues here to introduce the letter to its recipients but in a most amazing way indeed, by first writing so very much in just a few words about the real subject of his writing, his precious savior, the Lord Jesus. But who was this Jesus Christ that had made all the difference to the man Saul, now called Paul?*
 - *Verse 2 — “(Which [better, “who” as verse 3 explains] he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,)...”: From Genesis chapter 3 onwards, the very theme of the Old Testament had been exactly this, the Seed of the Woman, Gen. 3:15-16.*

- **Verse 3** — “Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh ...”: ***Now we see the two-fold division between the flesh and the spirit. Firstly according to the flesh, Christ was “made” of the “seed of David”. This is a reference to the genealogy of course. The Lord God had called out Abram from the Ur of the Chaldees and promised to him an offspring though a son that he and his wife Sarai would at God’s appointed time bring forth. That led to the birth of Isaac and then Jacob and Esau and through Jacob twelve sons that gave ultimately the Twelve Tribes. On multiple occasions prophecy revealed that through one of these tribes, that of Judah, God would send forth his son, Israel’s Messiah. Prophecies given to King David narrowed that down to his son Solomon and the Royal Line continued through his offspring. So here Paul identifies our Lord Jesus as that promised one so long awaited by believing Jews and Gentile proselytes. He was brought into this world through David by the power and ordination of Almighty God.***

- **Verse 4** — “And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead ...”: ***But the revelation according to the fleshly and merely human domain was not all there was, for he goes on now to the realm of the spirit!! The resurrection had made now all the difference. That signified so much to Paul though he does not explain himself further here. It “marked out” or as the KJV renders it, “declared” that this Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Mary, was indeed the promised one of Genesis 3:15-16. The rest of this part of the sentence referencing the spirit has content beyond our abilities, of course, as does all scripture, and may the Holy Spirit give us understanding in due time. This word translated “holiness” is only used by Paul and in only two other places, 2 Cor. 7:1 and 1 Thess. 3:13. The word has an even stronger emphasis on its root meaning of simply “holy”, but emphasizes the quality or character of that spirit as holy indeed! See 1 Cor. 15:24 & 25 for other teaching on this. For Paul this was important and in fact forms the basis for much of his teaching on the Christian Life. For we all share his resurrection quality of life by the same spirit.***

- ***This contrast between flesh and spirit will be so important as we continue in the letter, Dispensationally Considered! And***

there is so much more here in these few words but we must go on today to see from the mountain tops of the revelation Paul gives here the whole scope of this letter.

III. The Salutation to the Letter Sets the Stage for What Follows:

[READ] Rom. 1:6-7

6 Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:

7 To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

- *A most wonderful salutation indeed! Remarkably distinctive too, considering all that as been written leading up to it. That the believers are saints, set apart to God, sanctified, and suitably blessed for that high and holy calling planned for us all. Grace and peace are indeed the realm in which the saints of God dwell under his unsearchable and unlimited grace. Amen?*

Summary & Application:

- *We begin here next time, Lord Willing, verses 16-18. Enjoy!*