

The Greatest Letter Ever Written

An Expository Journey Through the **Epistle of Romans**

Romans 1:2-7

3-Paul's Salutation

August 21, 2022

Romans 1:2-7

2 which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures,
3 concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh,
4 who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead,
according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord,
5 through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of
faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake,
6 among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ;
7 to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints: Grace to you and peace from God
our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

According to verse 2- the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ that we have today was promised by God to Mankind by the Prophets as recorded in the Old Testament. Paul wrote,

which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures,

There are over 300 specific Old Testament Prophecies concerning Jesus' Birth; His sinless Life; His Ministry; His Death; Resurrection; Ascension; and Second Coming. That is more than all the other figures of the Bible combined.

Now to be sure- some of the Prophecies are "general" in nature and are linked to Jesus *spiritually*. But many are so specific as to defy logic. Subjects such as both His parents' Genealogy (prophesied before they were born); the city of His Birth; His physical appearance; His Crucifixion (600 years before Crucifixion was invented), etc. are covered by Old Testament Prophecies.

What makes this even more astounding is that Mankind has in its possession a complete copy of the entire Old Testament (with the exception of the Book of Esther) which was written, published, and distributed as far West as Great Britain and as far East as India- 200 years before the Birth of Jesus Christ. One copy that was found in 1948- (over 269 years after the Old Testament was published in the King James Version and over 1,513 years after the Latin Vulgate was finished) and there are no differences, errors, or omissions!

The amount of these Prophecies and the detail of them leave no doubt that Jesus was and is the most unique Person in all of human History. There is also no doubt that the Man- Jesus Christ was and is the Promise of God to the world.

Romans 1:3&4

3 concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh,

4 who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord,

All of the Old Testament is a Portrait of Jesus Christ. Every Book shows the reader one or more Characteristics of Jesus. And every major Character in the Old Testament is a “type” of Christ in one or more of His Characteristics or Attributes. So, to read the Old Testament and not see Jesus- is to truly be blind.

Now Jesus was Royalty from two different ways. He was a direct descendant of King David, and He was the Son of God. He had claim to the Throne of Israel through both of His parents; and He had claim to the Throne in Heaven through his Father, God. And Jesus’ “Sonship” was declared openly and in the sight of all the people- who were both Good and Evil.

But Paul goes on to say in verse 4 that Jesus was also declared to be the Son of God with Power. And His Resurrection sets Jesus apart from every other person of History; and His dual Position as both truly Man and truly God makes Jesus Christ the most unique Person to have ever lived.

And Paul was “moved” to write that the Power that identified Jesus was according to the “Spirit of Holiness” which transcends human Comprehension. So, unlike anyone else- Jesus was 100% God and 100% man at the same time; in the same body; without Conflict or Contradiction. His full and true Humanity allowed Jesus to be tempted and caused Him to be subservient to His Father while on earth. But His full and true Deity made Jesus to be Holy; Pure; and perfectly Sinless while in His robe of Flesh.

Jesus Christ’s Deity is the single greatest Controversy in all of human History. And the Debate about Jesus’ Deity is the Source of all the major Cults and of all the other of the world’s Religions- because if Jesus is exactly Who He said that He was, then every other Religion and all the Cults are Wrong and False and Base and found to be Light when weighed in the balances. The Deity of Jesus Christ was a central Theme in Paul’s Ministry and was proved beyond all doubt and debate with the Resurrection.

It is interesting to note that the word that Paul used here for the English word, “dead” is in its *plural* form- showing us that although Paul was always talking about the Resurrection of Jesus Christ- he also is reminding us that we too shall be resurrected in a new body and that with God there is no respect of persons.

The word "**declared**" in verse 4 is a Greek word (*horizoe* Strong’s # 3724) which means: *to mark off; or to appoint* and is the very *same* root word used for "**set apart**" in verse 1.

So, what Paul meant to say was that Jesus Christ rose from the dead, never to die again. And this “marked off” His Humiliation (Crucifixion) from His Exaltation (Resurrection).

Now this “marking off” did not make Jesus to be the Son of God but "declared" Him to be what He eternally already was- the Son of God; God the Son; or the second Person of the Trinity.

Now the term "**with power**" describes the Son of God- not the declaration or the marking off. This further looks at the Uniqueness of His Resurrection and it gave Him Power as the God-Man forever in both Heaven and on Earth. And Jesus continues in His Uniqueness even now; and that Quality of unique Existence is with Divine Power.

Now the word that has been translated into English here as “**power**” is a Greek word (*dunamis*; Strong’s # 1411), which is a noun indicating it was received by Jesus from His Father. In the New Testament, “*dunamis*” always refers to an explosive, supernatural Power. And it is God’s Will that this very same Power come to believers through the Holy Spirit.

The Acts 1:6-8

6 So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?"

7 He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority;

8 but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

The "**Authority**" that Jesus was referring to in **The Acts 1:7** is from a Greek word (*exousia*; Strong's # 1849), which means: *authority or right*. And the "power" used in **The Acts 1:8** is *dunamis*- which is this explosive, supernatural Power that God gives to the believer so that the Gospel can be preached to the lost world. So, the "Authority" of verse 7 and the "Power" of verse 8 are NOT the same word- even though several translations try to make it so. God's Authority and whatever Power we receive are NOT the same and will NEVER be the same.

But in **Philippians 3:7-11**, this "Power" is made available to the Believer in Christ- but in a way that is NOT usually associated with the word, "Power":

Philippians 3:7-11

7 But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

8 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ,

9 and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith,

10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;

11 in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

... so, Believers do NOT have raw Power. We have the "Power of Jesus' Resurrection". We have Power- but ONLY in relation to Jesus' Resurrection. And that means that the Power we have is not ours alone. It is always in connection to the Resurrection of Jesus.

So, while it is simple to say we serve a risen Savior- the significance of that Statement is as complex as it is powerful. The Cross demonstrated the Love of God for us, and the Resurrection demonstrates that the Power of God that is also for us.

The Power of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is revealed in what happened after Christ was seated at the "Right Hand" of God – and the Holy Spirit came to indwell every believer.

Romans 1:5

through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake,

Paul received his Calling and his Ministry by the same Power and Spirit that allowed for the Resurrection of Jesus from the dead. And that allowed for Paul to count his Ministry as a Favor; a Blessing to himself- rather than as a Burden or a Toil.

The Obedience of Faith

The phrase, “**to bring about the obedience of faith**” indicates another unique Concept of Christianity. Christianity doesn’t merely ask its followers to “believe” certain aspects or to simply “ascent” to a prescribed mode of academic Articles or religious Doctrine. Christianity also demands that those who “name the Name of Christ” would strive to **OBEY** what God has commanded. And that Obedience, which is expected, is simply not possible without the new Nature that is given to those who have experienced the Miracle of the New Birth. And that makes the “**Obedience of Faith**” to be both Miraculous and Supernatural- as well as very Practical. And it also makes it both Personal and Precious.

Now, normally, the result of our “**Obedience**” is “**Righteousness.**” And I was very surprised to find that “**Righteousness**” is the single most common Feature of the **Epistle to the Romans**. I would have never thought that. I thought that “**Grace**” would probably be mentioned more often- but it isn’t. So, the primary Goal of the Apostle in writing this Epistle- is that Believers would be “**Righteous**”- or in “right standing” with God through humble and joyful Obedience.

But we must acknowledge that our Obedience is NOT without Fault or Failure. There are times when we are Obedient. But there are other times when we are not- even though we are saved. So, what do we make of this? This is where the “Obedience of Faith” comes in.

Notice that Paul begins this Epistle with a reference to the “Obedience of Faith”:

Romans 1:1-6

**1 Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,
2 which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures,
3 concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh,
4 who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead,
according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord,
5 through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake,
6 among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ;**

... and Paul also ended this Epistle with the same reference:

Romans 16:25-27

**25 Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past,
26 but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith;
27 to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen.**

So, what is the “Obedience of Faith”? Is it saved people obeying God through believing in Him? Sort of. The “Obedience of Faith”- is us obeying God by and through our Faith in Jesus and in His finished Work. In other words, we are NOT saved by striving to keep God’s Commandments. We are saved (Justified) by Faith- and by Faith ALONE! Now to be “Justified” is to possess two things:

1. Forgiveness
2. Righteousness

But the Issue is- “*How do we obtain both the Forgiveness of Sins and the Righteousness we need to enter into Heaven?*” You see, in order for any of us to go to Heaven and stand in God’s Presence- we must be just as Righteous as God is.

Now, normally, we would simply develop our own Righteousness through our Obedience to God’s Law (the Mosaic Law). But the Bible is crystal clear that we CAN’T develop our own Righteousness in that way. Why not? Because in order to develop our own Righteousness so that it qualifies us to enter into God’s Presence- it MUST be *perfect* Righteousness; *flawless* Righteousness- a Righteousness that has no *fault* or *deficit* to it. But that would mean that our Obedience to God must also be perfect as well.

So, a perfect Obedience brings forth a perfect Righteousness. And an imperfect Obedience does NOT bring about ANY Righteousness at all! Because there is no such thing as being *partially* Righteous; or *somewhat* Righteous; or *kinda-sorta* Righteous; or *almost* Righteous. We are either *completely* Righteous or we are *completely* Unrighteous- and there is NO middle ground. So, as far as Righteousness is concerned- it is truly “*All or Nothing*”.

Yet no human can obey God- *perfectly*. Why not? Because we are “*Fallen*”. We bear the same Nature as Adam did- AFTER he fell. And as people, who are “*Fallen*” we are NOT able to obey God perfectly because of the Limitations of our Flesh. And that is true- even after we have been born again.

So, our Dilemma is that we are commanded to obey God- without fault- yet the Limitations of our Flesh prohibit us from doing that. And as a result- we simply CANNOT develop a perfect Righteousness. So, what do we do?

We MUST trust or have Faith in Jesus’ Obedience. You see, Jesus did obey God- perfectly. And as such- He DID earn or develop His own perfect Righteousness. And it is by having Faith or trusting in Who Jesus is and in What Jesus has done- that allows us to receive the Forgiveness of Sins and the Righteousness we need to enter into Heaven (Justification).

So, the “*Obedience of Faith*” is us trusting or hoping or having Faith in Jesus’ Obedience as the “*Ground*” or the “*Motivation*” or the “*Catalyst*” for us to struggle to obey God and His Word. And that means at least two things:

1. Imperfect Obedience does NOT damn us
2. Our Struggle to obey God- is glorifying to God

Our Obedience will NEVER be perfect. It will ALWAYS have flaws in it. And God knows that. But as we struggle to obey God- based on our Faith in Jesus’ perfect Obedience- God is honored and glorified. Because the ONLY reason we engaged in the Struggle to obey- was because we so valued God and His Word. And that is what honors and glorifies God- us seeing Him and His Word as worthy of the Struggle.

Why Paul preached the Gospel

The fact that Paul was called to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles and not just to the Jews, tells us that this Ministry is “**among all the Gentiles**”. And ALL that the Apostle said or did was for one overarching Goal:

... for His name's sake

... or for the Glory of God!

Being Called by God

Romans 1:6

among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ;

Notice that this is different than simply being “called” to preach or “called” to do something else for God. Paul says that we, who are saved, are “the” called of Jesus Christ. So, what does it mean to be “the” called of Jesus Christ? It simply means that we were chosen or “elected” by God to be saved before we were ever born.

Isaiah 65:9

“I will bring forth offspring from Jacob, And an heir of My mountains from Judah; Even My chosen ones shall inherit it, And My servants will dwell there.

Ephesians 1:3-12

**3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,
4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love
5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,
6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.
7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace
8 which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight
9 He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him
10 with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him
11 also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,
12 to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory.**

1Peter 1:1&2

**1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen
2 according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure.**

To be “called” to Salvation means that we were predestinated in Christ to be brought or adopted into the very Family of God by a sovereign Act of a loving God and without any participation on our part at all.

Ephesians 1:4-6

4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love

5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,

6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

2Thessalonians 2:13-14

13 But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.

14 It was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 8:29-32

29 For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;

30 and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?

32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?

Ephesians 2:4-9

4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

7 so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;

9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Each saint joins with millions of saints from all over the world and those who have passed on from all time in the “Common Faith” of the local and universal Church that is both visible and invisible.

Romans 1:7a

to all who are beloved of God in Rome...

Here we finally get to who this Book was originally written. Paul

wrote this Epistle to those Gentile believers, who lived in the city of Rome in the 1st Century, who were “**beloved of God**”; or those, to whom God has “set His Love”. So, this is referring to those who were saved and who were no longer Strangers and Aliens to God and to the “Things of the Spirit of God” (**1Corinthians 2:14**).

Ephesians 2:19-22

19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household,

20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone,

21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord,

22 in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

And he wrote this Epistle to all of the saints- to everyone of them who believed- whether they were Gentile or Jew; whether they were poor or rich; whether they were male or female. The Apostles taught that it was Sin to value one saint at the expense of another.

1Corinthians 12:12-27

12 For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ.

13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

14 For the body is not one member, but many.

15 If the foot says, "Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body.

16 And if the ear says, "Because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body.

17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be?

18 But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired.

19 If they were all one member, where would the body be?

20 But now there are many members, but one body.

21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; or again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you."

22 On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary;

23 and those members of the body which we deem less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor, and our less presentable members become much more presentable,

24 whereas our more presentable members have no need of it. But God has so composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked,

25 so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another.

26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.

27 Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it.

James 2:1-5

1 My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with an attitude of personal favoritism.

2 For if a man comes into your assembly with a gold ring and dressed in fine clothes, and there also comes in a poor man in dirty clothes,

3 and you pay special attention to the one who is wearing the fine clothes, and say, "You sit here in a good place," and you say to the poor man, "You stand over there, or sit down by my footstool,"

4 have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil motives?

5 Listen, my beloved brethren: did not God choose the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?

Galatians 3:27-29

27 For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

29 And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise.

The "Beloved" of God

Romans 1:7

... beloved of God...

Paul calls the saints who are in Rome an interesting term- "**beloved**". This is more than merely a term of affection- but also a term used to set apart those who love Jesus enough to actually follow Him- from those who simply believe that Jesus existed.

Ephesians 1:3-12

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love

5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,

6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace

8 which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight

9 He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him

10 with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him

11 also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,

12 to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory.

All of the Apostles referred to those who believed as “**beloved**”. This term denotes the Affection which God Himself has toward the believer. But it also describes the Affection with which we should have toward all the other believers. The word that was translated into English as “**beloved**”, is the Greek word, *agapeetos* (ag-ah-peat-os), which literally means: *esteemed, dear, or favorite*.

Those whom God has chosen for salvation are those whom God loves and it is this love that was the basis by which God chose them. It is by virtue of God’s love towards those whom He chose which reconciles them to God and judges them worthy of eternal life

We, who are saved, are not simply members of a religious institution. We, who are saved, have a personal relationship with the Creator of the Universe through His Son, Jesus Christ, which is not based upon our ability to bring anything to the table that God has need of- but simply based upon God’s love for us.

1John 4:10-11

10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us , and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

Romans 1:7

... called to be saints:

God did not call us to be sinful- he called us to be saints. He called us to walk with Him. He called us to serve Him. He called us to share in his kingdom. He called us to be identified with Jesus- not the world.

2 Corinthians 6:14-18

14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

Jesus united the word, “called” with the word, “chosen”.

Matthew 22:14

14 For many are called, but few are chosen.

When Paul said that we were “**called to be saints**”, he is referring to the fact that those who are saved are chosen by God to be saved by a Sovereign act of God’s own Will.

1 Peter 2:9-10

9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

Our calling; our choosing; our predestination was done by God before He created the world.

Ephesians 1:4-6

4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

Those whom God calls and chooses and predestinates- He will draw to Himself and save. Those whom God saves will be kept by God until they go to heaven.

Romans 8:30

30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified .

Romans 1:7

... Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

We must understand that Grace and Peace are not emotions or feelings, but they are states of being. A person does not “get” Peace, but rather Peace gets the person. True genuine Peace does not exist outside of Jesus. Those who serve Christ are renown for the Peace that they possess- even in times of personal crisis.

This Peace has certain unique characteristics:

1. Godly Peace is not the same peace that comes from the world

John 14:27

27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

John 16:33

33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

2. Godly Peace will keep our minds from turmoil

Philippians 4:7

7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

3. Godly Peace will help bring us into God's Presence

Hebrews 12:14

14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

Romans 1:8

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ ...

In ten of Paul's thirteen letters, he states that his relationship to others is one that causes him to be thankful. Other than the Lord Jesus when He was on the Cross, Paul is the only New Testament character that speaks of God as "my God". This shows us the intensely personal relationship Paul had with God. God was not at a distance for Paul; He was close, He was his Father and his Friend. Not only does the believer have a right to offer prayers to God because of Jesus Christ, but also he has a right to claim God as "my God" because of Jesus Christ. There is nothing that we have and nothing that we can do in our relationship with God that is not through Jesus Christ.

This brings us to a major point of Christian Doctrine:

Our approach to God is based upon our acceptance of the Person and Work of Jesus Christ.

We have no other claim to God other than through the Lord Jesus Christ.

This phrase, "**I thank my God through Jesus Christ**", also demonstrates the divine order for prayer. All prayers are to be offered to the Father, in the name of the Son, and in the power of the infilling of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 1:8

... that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world".

This testimony of the faith of the Church at Rome is paramount to our understanding of Christianity today.

The entire world had heard of the faith of the saints who lived in Rome. The word of the faith of the Church in Rome had reached Paul's ears- **ALTHOUGH PAUL HAD NOT YET MET THEM.**

The testimony of their faith was from several aspects:

- Their faithfulness to God
- Their love to one another
- Their obedience to Christ's commands
- The fruit that they bore

The Church that was in Rome had to be a fantastic church to draw the attention of the Apostle Paul and of God Himself so much so that an epistle was written to them.

Romans 1:9

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;

10 Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you.

Paul said that he served God with his spirit. The word that is translated "spirit" here means with his "life force". Paul was saying that he put the whole force of his life into his service to God. To Paul, there was no thing such as a half hearted effort in his walk with God. It was all or nothing; It was Christ or the world; it was Heaven or hell; it was Light or darkness; it was Truth or error. His feet were sure- his eyes were fixed; his heart was persuaded; and his hand was firmly in the Savior's.

There is a recurring theme in Paul's writings about his life with Jesus- "without ceasing". Paul used this term five times.

1 Thessalonians 1:3-4

3 Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;

4 Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.

1 Thessalonians 2:13

13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

1 Thessalonians 5:17

17 Pray without ceasing.

2 Timothy 1:3

3 I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;

The Bible also makes mention of this attribute by using the word, “continually”.

Psalms 34:1

I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth.

Psalms 71:14

14 But I will hope continually, and will yet praise thee more and more.

Psalms 119:44

44 So shall I keep thy law continually for ever and ever.

Psalms 119:117

117 Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe: and I will have respect unto thy statutes continually.

Proverbs 6:20-21

20 My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

21 Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck.

The Acts 6:4

4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

Hebrews 13:15

15 By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.

So we see that according to Scripture, we are supposed to do several things “without ceasing”, or “continually”.

- Remember works of faith, labors of love and patience of hope in Christ.
- Give thanks to God
- Pray
- Bless the Lord
- Praise God
- Hope
- Keep God’s Law
- Respect God’s statutes
- Bind our godly parent’s laws and commandments on our necks
- Elders are to give themselves continually to prayer and the ministry of God’s Word.

The terms “without ceasing” and “continually” actually mean “without interruption” and “without omission”. The first question that arises is, “*How could Paul pray like this and still get*

anything done?" This question shows a lack of understanding of both the importance of prayer and an inclination to be involved with it. All of those whom God has used greatly in the earth were men of prayer.

It was not uncommon for John Wesley, Dwight Moody, Charles Spurgeon, or Jonathon Edwards and other of the Church Fathers to spend hours every day and even some entire days in prayer- and these men did much for the Lord in the earth. Spurgeon had a church of over 8,000 members. Dwight Moody is credited with leading over 1,000,000 people to Christ. Jonathon Edwards is considered America's greatest theologian and his writings are still studied in seminaries across the country. John Wesley preached over 1,000 sermons to as many as 4,000 at a time. Prayer didn't interfere with what God had called these men to do- prayer enabled them to do it.

If we would simply obey the Bible and begin to "pray without ceasing", we would see and increase in spiritual activity- not a decline.

What is fascinating about this verse is that Paul prayed this way about people he had never met. Would to God that we would pray this hard about people we do know and have met.

Chapter 3 Recap

1. The Gospel of Jesus Christ was promised by God through the Old Testament prophets. True or False
2. All of the Old Testament is a picture of _____.
3. Jesus was:
 Son of _____
 Son of _____
 Son of _____
4. Jesus was declared to be the Son of God with Power. What does the word, "declared" mean? _____
5. The word, "power" is used to mean two different things. What are they?
 _____ and _____

6. Which one of these does the Holy Ghost bring to us? _____
7. What does the word, “beloved” mean? _____

8. What did Paul mean when he said that we were “**called to be saints?**” _____

9. When were we called? _____
10. Paul said that God gives those who are saved two attributes that the world cannot receive. What are they? _____ and _____
11. What four testimonies did the Church at Rome have that drew the attention of the whole world to them?
- A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____
 - D. _____
12. What does the term, “without ceasing” mean? _____

13. What are Christians supposed to do “without ceasing” or “continually”?
- A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____
 - D. _____
 - E. _____
 - F. _____
 - G. _____
 - H. _____
 - I. _____

Notes

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