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# Romans

**...and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. Romans 1:4**

Paul completes the opening portion of his statement which comes prior to naming the addressees of his letter. To ensure context let us quote the entire thought –

“Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God 2 which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, 3 concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born 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.”

This final portion states that Jesus Christ is “declared to be the Son of God...by the resurrection of the dead.” This has wrongly led to the belief and occasional teaching that Jesus was only officially declared to be God’s Son because of the resurrection. This is not Paul’s intent here. Jesus is hinted as the Son of God even in the Old Testament and explicitly noted as such throughout the gospel accounts.

What this is stating is that the resurrection is the sure proof of the fact. His conception by the Holy Spirit in a virgin’s womb is all that is needed to assure us that Jesus is the God/Man. However, His resurrection proves it. Here are the necessary points and two syllogisms which work backward from the resurrection to demonstrate this –

Adam sinned and through him all have received his fallen state. The Bible treats this as an axiom. We are, as Jesus said in John 3:18 “condemned already.” Sin transfers through the man, but not through the woman (symbolized by the rite of circumcision – cutting away the sin nature). Thus there was a need for a man to be born of a woman, but not of a man. This was hinted at in Genesis 3:15. This Man is Jesus.

Jesus was born of God and Mary and therefore He was born without inheriting Adam’s sin. And yet He is fully human. The resurrection is 100% conditional upon the virgin birth. No virgin birth equals no resurrection because inherited sin would disqualify that. This is why babies don’t resurrect even though they have never committed intentional sin.

However, the virgin birth doesn’t guarantee the resurrection. Nor does living a sinless life if one isn’t virgin born. Both the virgin birth and a sinless life are conditions for the resurrection. If Jesus wasn’t born of a virgin, then He would have inherited Adam’s sin. But even if He was born of a virgin, He would still need to live perfectly sinless throughout His entire life.

1) The resurrection is conditional upon a sinless life.

A sinless life is conditional upon the virgin birth.

Therefore, the resurrection proves the virgin birth.

2) The resurrection proves the virgin birth.

The virgin birth proves Jesus was born of God and of Mary.

Therefore, Jesus is God’s Son – the God/Man.

The resurrection is the definitive declaration that Jesus Christ is “the Son of God with power.”

Within this verse is also the note that this is “according to the Spirit of holiness.” This is probably speaking of the fact that Jesus is both divine and human rather than of the Holy Spirit. His divine nature, perfectly demonstrated in His sinless humanity, resulted in the resurrection. Either way, because both Jesus and the Holy Spirit are fully God, the end result comes out the same. Within the Godhead, Jesus Christ is the second member of the Trinity. Therefore His Spirit is divine and the Holy Spirit testifies to this.

**Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name... Romans 1:5**

“Through Him” is speaking of Jesus – the One born of the seed of David as a human being and who is “the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.” It is through this God/Man that Paul has “received grace.” Grace is unmerited divine assistance which is given to us and which will carry us through every need and step of our spiritual life in Christ. It is a virtue which comes externally from God and without our assistance. It cannot be earned because it is unmerited. This is the heart of the gospel message. What we can’t do for ourselves, God did for us through His Son.

Paul also states he received “apostleship.” It must be understood that this letter is written from Paul as an apostle to those who are “the called of Jesus Christ” (v 6) and “saints” (v 7). He is not stating that we are all apostles. Apostleship is a commission and is designated for a certain group of people at a certain time in redemptive history; sometimes called the “apostolic age.”

Jesus founded His church and anointed a group of men to establish it and then to receive and retransmit His message, which is the Holy Bible. The apostolic age ended with the sealing of the book of Revelation, because the purpose of the age ended at that time. Far too often, people attempt to claim titles to which they have no right. Such is the case with the title of “apostle.”

Paul continues by stating that he and those so commissioned have received this grace and their apostleship “for obedience to the faith among all the nations for His name...” Obedience to the faith is the gospel message, not the works associated with it but the very basis for any works – belief.

The gospel is one of faith which comes by grace (Ephesians 2:8, 9). The calling comes first and it is united with faith. Only then is a title bestowed. In Paul’s case, he is an apostle. The designation came after salvation not before, and therefore his commitment to the gospel message preceded his commitment to carry out the task of proclaiming it.

This is the logical progression for each person who is called. The grace is given, the faith is exercised, the title is granted, and the carrying out of the task is conducted. Far too often, the logical progression is violated and therefore confusion or cunning takes over. How many carry out the task without the calling? How many claim the calling without the faith? How many claim the faith without having received the grace?

If we follow the logical and necessary steps of the faith, we will keep from straying and our doctrine will be pure. It is “obedience to the faith” which will bring honor to Christ. Let us not skip steps or run ahead without the proper foundation lest we bring reproach upon the glorious name of our Lord.