

Sunday Morning Sermon

November 08, 2020

“The Gospel of God” (Part II)

Romans 1:1-7

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¹ 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, 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. ⁵ Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name, ⁶ among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ;

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

The title of our sermon this morning is “The Gospel of God.” This is part 2. Romans chapter 1, this passage that reaches from... we’re getting way ahead of ourselves. Romans chapter 7, that’s going to be 2022. Right now, we’re in 2020... (laughing) Romans chapter 1, verses 1 through 7. And in these sermons now, we are considering Paul’s introduction of this letter to the church at Rome. This is Part 2 considering the promise and the person of the Gospel in Romans chapter 1, specifically in verses 2 through 4. The Gospel, which is the good news, is that good news which God promised before through His prophets in Holy Scripture. Now that promise, that promise of the Gospel promised before, concerns a Person; His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. So, we’re going to be spending time in the next few weeks learning from the introduction of His Person.

Let’s begin with this. The guiding and directing principle of history is not chance or fate. It’s not accident or evolution. It is promise. The governing principle of all of human history is not fortune or luck. It is promise. God has made a promise and history is about its fulfillment. In the opening chapters of the Biblical record we find Adam and Eve cowering in fear among the trees of the garden, hiding from the presence of the Lord. The penalty for disobedience was death. And Adam and Eve had disobeyed the Lord God who had made them. And though they didn’t lie dead at the foot of the tree that very moment, a spiritual death had certainly taken hold of them. They’d been brought under the power, as it were, they had been brought under the dominion of sin and of death. The Bible would describe them as dead in trespasses and sins. They were now walking according to the prince of the power of the air. They were walking according to the spirit who even now works in the sons of disobedience. They became, that day, by nature, children of wrath, sons of the devil, seed of the serpent.

The death wasn’t only the punishment that would put an end to their physical life. Death was now a human condition that works itself out in the life of a sinner. The spiritually dead condition is horrific! Flip the page and look at Romans chapter 3, verse 9. The spiritually dead condition is tragic! Romans chapter 3, verse 9, apart from life in Christ we are all under the death sentence of sin.

Verse 10: ***There (are) none who are righteous, no, not one;*** – In other words, the whole world is guilty before God.

Verse 11: ***There (are) none who understand;*** – That means our *mind* is corrupted and our understanding is darkened.

Verse 11: ***There (are) none who seek after God.*** That means our *will* is corrupted – none who seek Him.

Verse 12: ***They have all turned aside;*** – That means our *actions* are ungodly. And notice how many – “all.” There are none righteous. There are none who... “I seek after God.” No, you don’t! “I do good.” No, you don’t! There are none! ***All*** have turned aside.

Verse 13: ***Their throat is an open tomb;*** – It means their *words* are sinful.

Verse 13: There is poison under our lips. Our – ***mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.***

Verse 15: ***(Our) feet are swift to shed blood;*** (In other words, our *way* is corrupted.) ***Destruction and misery are in (our) ways...the way of peace we have not known.***

Verse 18: ***There is no fear of God before (our) eyes*** – In other words, our heart attitude is godless from head to toe, so to speak. Throat, lips, mouth, feet, ways, eyes.

Spiritual death-rot has laid hold of man and it is pervasive. So, pervasive in fact that the Lord Himself said in Mark chapter 7 that it’s what comes out of the heart of man, out of his own heart, that defiles him. James would say that your heart desires – ***give birth to sin; and sin...brings forth death.*** In other words, man apart from the Lord Jesus Christ is a cesspool of death and iniquity. Do you see? That’s how the Bible describes us apart from grace, apart from mercy. So, death then, took hold of Adam and Eve that day in the garden. That’s where it all began. Romans chapter 5, verse 12: ***through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—***

Now in addition to experiencing that spiritual death, Adam and Eve would eventually physically die as well; as would all of those descendants of Adam. The universality of death is a testimony to the curse of God. People walk around in unbelief and yet everywhere they look, people are dying – death, destruction, decay, corruption, pollution, death. It’s a testimony to God’s wrath and judgment against sin. The universality of death points to the curse of God. And sin would condemn Adam and Eve and all their descendants to an eternal death as well. Death in the torments of hell. The smoke of their torment rising forever. Physical death points to an eternal death.

It was into that miserable condition in the garden, that very day that God announced the promise; that God came in grace and in mercy and announced a promise. Before the grip of physical death would finally take them, returning them to the dust from whence they came, the Lord spoke words of hope in the hearing of Adam and Eve. Genesis chapter 3, verse 15 – listen to the words that the Lord spoke to Satan: ***“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”*** We’re speaking of a singular Seed. ***“...I will put enmity (I will make an enemy of you and her Seed) He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”***

Now Adam understood a future descendant of the woman would be an enemy of Satan, an enemy of his sin-wrecked offspring, and that descendant of the woman would be wounded by the seed of the serpent. He would suffer at their hands but Satan would be defeated. The head of the serpent would be crushed.

Adam understood the promise to mean that their spiritual death, their physical death, their eternal death wouldn't be the final word. God had promised life. Do you see? The promise of a seed was a promise of life. And He promised that through the work of His... this descendant of the woman. This Promised Seed would be a Savior. Standing in contrast with the sentence of death against their sin, Adam named his wife "Eve" which means "life." Her name means "life!" Adam named his wife "Eve," a word meaning "life," and she would be the mother of all living. It was a name that expressed Adam's faith in God for the promise. Adam expressed faith in God for the promise naming his wife "life."

The people of God would live through faith in the person and work of this promised Savior. It was announced here in Genesis chapter 3, verse 15 at the very beginning of history. It would be through His own death, the death of the Seed, the suffering of the Seed, that Adam's sin, Eve's sin, and the sin of all those who trusted in Him through faith; it would be through His own death, His own work, that their sin would be atoned for. It would be through repentant faith. Repentant faith would be the means through which the promise could be fulfilled for them in particular. Justice would in fact be upheld and the penalty of death rightly demanded by God's Law would be poured out on that Promised Seed. It would be in the shadow of the cross then that Jesus Christ would say later, John chapter 12, verse 31: ***"Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself."***

It's the revelation of this promise, it's the development of this promise, it's the fulfillment of promise that then is the focus of the entirety of the Bible, Old Testament to New Testament. Do you see? And that promise concerns a Person; Jesus Christ our Lord, the Promised Seed of the woman. The whole Bible is about that promise coming to fulfillment in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ then becomes the focus of the Old Testament and New Testament Scriptures.

That's why Matthew begins his Gospel account, chapter 1, verse 22 – listen to Matthew: ***So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us."*** Matthew quotes Isaiah chapter 7, verse 14. Isaiah, the prophet who wrote those words seven hundred years before the time of Jesus Christ.

That's why Mark begins his Gospel account quoting from Malachi chapter 3, speaking of the one who would be a forerunner to the Messiah.

That's why Luke begins his Gospel account in chapter 3 with a genealogy of Jesus Christ. Listen, a genealogy of the Seed that goes back through Zerubbabel and David, to Judah and Isaac, to Abraham and to Noah, to the son of Adam the Son of God. Do you see?

That's why John begins his Gospel account with: ***In the beginning was the Word (Jesus Christ), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He (Jesus Christ, the Promised Seed) was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.***

Jesus Christ isn't merely a New Testament convention. He's not merely a secondary invention. Jesus Christ wasn't an afterthought. Jesus Christ was there in the beginning. He is the promise of God.

Notice verse 3. Paul begins his letter to this church at Rome: ***Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God which He promised before through His***

prophets in the Holy Scriptures, (and this promise is a promise) ***concerning His Son*** (God's Son) ***Jesus Christ our Lord***, –

The whole of the Bible is about Jesus Christ, the Person of Jesus Christ, the work of Jesus Christ in fulfillment of this glorious promise of the Gospel, this promise of God.

In Genesis, He is the Promised Seed of the woman who would crush the head of the serpent.

In Genesis, He is the promised descendant of Abraham through whom all the nations of the world would be blessed.

In Genesis, He is the One in whom Abraham put his faith and trust and it was accounted, credited to Abraham as righteousness.

In Genesis chapter 49, verse 10: He is Shiloh, the One to whom shall be the obedience of the people.

In Deuteronomy chapter 18, verse 15: He is the Promised Prophet, the One like Moses, raised up from among their brethren; the One whom they will hear lest they die.

In 2 Samuel chapter 7, verse 12: He is the descendant of David, the Promised Seed who would rule from the throne of His kingdom forever.

In Psalm 110: He is the promised Son of David, yet David calls Him LORD, the One who will judge the nations.

Psalm 2: He is enthroned as the Lord's anointed.

Psalm 8: All things are placed under His feet.

Psalm 16: Speaks concerning His resurrection from the dead.

Psalm 22: Speaks of His rejection by men, His suffering at their hands, His crucifixion. He says, ***"They pierced my Hands and My feet."*** (Centuries before Jesus Christ came – "They would pierce My hands and My feet.) ***They divide My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots."***

Psalm 34: His bones would not be broken.

Psalm 45: Speaks of His exaltation. Refers to his deity as God the Son.

Psalm 68: Speaks of His ascension.

Psalm 72: Speaks of His reign.

Psalm 78: He would teach in parables.

Psalm 89: He is the fulfillment of God's promise to David.

This is just a small representative list. This doesn't even include all of them. He is the focus of the Old Testament Scriptures, written centuries before He came.

Isaiah chapter 7: Speaks of His virgin birth.

Isaiah chapter 9, verse 6: ***For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given;*** (That's interesting, isn't it? The Child born, a Son of God given.) ***and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God*** (God incarnate), ***Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.***

Isaiah chapter 11: He'll be a descendant of Jesse, from the tribe of Judah. In the last days, He will gather His people.

Isaiah 42: He is the servant of the Lord. He will bring forth justice for the Gentiles. He will save the nations.

Isaiah 49: He will restore Israel and save the Gentiles.

Isaiah 53: He is the One who suffers, bearing the sins of His people. ***He is despised and rejected by men... wounded for our transgressions...bruised for our iniquities -***

Isaiah chapter 60 and Matthew chapter 2 describe the visit of the wise men.

Micah chapter 5, verse 2 tells us the exact location of His birth.

Zechariah chapter 9 describes His triumphal entry into Jerusalem on a donkey.

Zechariah 11: He will be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver.

Zechariah 12: His crucifixion.

Zechariah 13: His disciples would be scattered.

And that's just a small representative list. There are hundreds.

That's why Philip, when he found the Lord Jesus Christ and went and found Nathanael, he said to Nathanael: ***"We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."***

That's why Peter told Cornelius in Acts chapter 10, verse 43: ***"To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins."***

What were the prophets witnessing to? That through Jesus Christ there is forgiveness of sins. And that's in the Old Testament Scriptures. The Gospel of God was promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures. And that good news concerns His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. The Old Testament is full of Jesus Christ. The Old Testament points forward to His coming – continuously pointing forward to the coming of this Promised Seed – while the New Testament looks back at His coming and explains the magnificence, explains the significance of all that He fulfilled.

We haven't even begun to talk about all the types, all the shadows, all the pictures, all the illustrations, specifically in reference to Him. His Priesthood according to the order of Melchizedek, the entirety of the sacrificial system, the temple, the dwelling place of God, on and on and on and on. The Gospel of God was

promised before in the Old Testament Scriptures. And that Old Testament promise concerns a Person who fulfills that promise through His person and work as revealed in the New Testament.

So, having introduced himself in verse 1, having introduced the subject of his letter at the end of verse 1 – the Gospel of God, including the promise of the Gospel (verse 2) and the Person of the Gospel (verse 3) – Paul now undertakes to introduce this Person more completely and more fully to us in verse 3. We say “more completely,” but the economy of words here is staggering! It’s astonishing! In so few words these verses are packed with significance about who Jesus Christ is and what Jesus Christ has done. And frankly, what the Old Testament has revealed Jesus Christ would be and would do.

Paul has been – ***separated to the Gospel of God which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, concerning His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord (verse 3), who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, and (verse 4) declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.***

Point 1 on your notes: we’ve been called by Paul to “Trust the promise of the Gospel.” It’s been promised from the beginning. Point 2: Paul is now calling us to “Trust the Person of the Gospel.” The Person of the Gospel is none other than Jesus Christ, the One who died at Calvary for the sins of the world.

Now I want you to notice with me, those two descriptions, now that we see in verse 3 and verse 4, Paul references two aspects of the Lord’s person and work in introducing Jesus Christ. First, Paul references His incarnation or His humiliation, His earthly life, in verse 3. He is the Son of God – ***who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh*** – Second, Paul references His exaltation in verse 4. He was – ***declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.*** So now Paul sets before us this central Person of the Gospel through His incarnation and through His exaltation. The heart of the Christian faith here communicated in two simple statements. It’s astounding!

Look first at His incarnation, verse 3: Jesus Christ our Lord, the promised Person of the Gospel, was – ***born of the seed of David according to the flesh***, – Let’s unpack what Paul is speaking of there. The word “born” is the Greek word γίνομαι (gínomai) – it’s a participle. It literally means “having become.” If Paul wanted to convey a simple birth, Paul would have used another Greek word that would have been more suitable here, another Greek word that’s very commonly used. But that’s not the word that Paul chose to use here. Paul used γίνομαι (gínomai). Jesus Christ “became” the seed of David according to the flesh. That’s interesting, isn’t it? Literally translated, the text would read this: “Having become the seed of David according to the flesh, He was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection of the dead.”

In other words, the One who is the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord, became the seed of David, or came into human existence, as it were, as the seed of David according to, or on the basis of, the flesh – on the grounds of the flesh, or according to, on the basis of the flesh. In other words, what Paul is communicating by the use of this word is that the One who was with God in the beginning (John chapter, 1 verse 1) the One who was God, became (γίνομαι – gínomai) flesh. Same word used there in John chapter 1. He became flesh and dwelt among us (John chapter 1, verse 14) the seed of David.

Now think with me about the implications of that. The eternal Son of God, coequal, co-eternal with the Father, not counting equality with God something to be grasped, began to be something that He was not before. He became. Paul was speaking of the incarnation of God the Son. Do you see? He became the seed of David according to the flesh. This is all over the Scriptures. Galatians chapter 4, verse 4: ***when the***

fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born (The word is γίνομαι (gínomai), the same word) **born of a woman**, (literally: became “out of” or “from” woman) **born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.** God sent forth His Son. The One who was God’s Son, is God’s Son, and will forever be God’s Son, was sent forth and He became “out of” or “from” a woman. Do you see? In other words, God the Son became man. God the Son became man according to the flesh, or on the basis of the flesh.

Philippians chapter 2, verse 6: “(Jesus Christ) **who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and** (γίνομαι – gínomai) **coming** (or becoming) **in the likeness of men.**”

I remember reading an article from B.B. Warfield on this passage speaking of the form of God. The form of God isn’t just that Jesus Christ was like God, or that He, quote unquote, “looked like God,” or had some characteristics that God also had. “Being in the form of God” meant that Jesus Christ had all the essential characteristics of deity. He was Himself God. He had the essential matter, the essential form, the essential substance, the essential essence of God Himself. So, to say that He was in the form of God is a claim to Jesus Christ’s deity. He is God in the flesh. He did not count it robbery to be equal with God because He had the essential essence of deity; He is God. But He made Himself of no reputation, taking the essential form of a slave.

He took upon Himself the essential qualities, the essential characteristics of being a bondservant and became, (γίνομαι – gínomai), in the likeness of men. That’s what Paul means by modifying the phrase in Romans chapter 1, verse 3: **according to the flesh** – It means that Jesus Christ came into being in the likeness of our essential humanity. Not merely looking like us, not merely having some of the characteristics that we also have – he had hair and skin and bone and blood. It wasn’t just that He wrapped Himself in a cloak of flesh. He took upon Himself the essential characteristics of our human nature, took upon Himself the essential characteristics of our humanity, not just with a body, but with an essential humanity.

Hebrews chapter 2, verse 14, listen: **Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same**, (Notice the emphasis – “He Himself.” God the Son took upon Himself our essential humanity, so) **that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil**, (He intends to crush the head of the serpent) **and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham.** Does that include Jews only – the seed of Abraham? No! You and I are the seed of Abraham by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. You are the seed of Abraham by faith. Those who with Abraham trust in Jesus Christ, the Promised Seed, for the promise of God.

The incarnation doesn’t mean that Jesus merely took upon Himself a body, as if deity simply wrapped itself in a cloak of flesh. No. Jesus Christ became, γίνομαι (gínomai), He became human. He became human. Flesh in Scripture refers not merely to our physicality but to our essential humanity. There are aspects of the flesh that we’ll talk about that Jesus did not take upon Himself – could not if Jesus were to be our Mediator.

But flesh often refers to our weakness, refers to our frailty, refers to our vulnerability. Jesus didn’t merely wrap Himself in a cloak of flesh. Jesus Christ had a human soul. He expressed human emotions. He experienced human desires. He lived with human limitations. Jesus Christ grew tired. Jesus Christ grew hungry. Jesus Christ grew in stature and in favor with God and with men. Jesus Christ had to learn. Jesus

Christ took on our essential humanity. As critical as it is for us to affirm that Jesus Christ is fully God, it is as critical for us to unhesitatingly affirm that Jesus Christ is fully man. In the words of our confession:

“...two whole, perfect, and distinct natures (the divine nature and a human nature) were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion; which person (Jesus Christ) is very God and very man, yet one Christ, the only mediator between God and man.”

Without conversion: Without one turning into the other, Jesus Christ God, did not turn into Jesus Christ man. Two separate distinct natures joined inseparably in one Person.

Without composition: They didn't mingle the two natures and create a third thing, something new. Jesus Christ has the distinct person as God and a distinct personhood as human, as man. Two natures inseparably joined together in one person.

Without confusion: They didn't mingle together such that we can't see distinctions between God and man. As much as we have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same. That's what Hebrews chapter 2 is saying.

Now that takes place with two very important distinctions. 1) It's with this distinction – being distinguished from you and I – His human nature was inseparably joined to His divine nature. We are fully human. Jesus Christ is fully man and fully God. And 2) Jesus Christ was without sin. Hebrews chapter 4, verse 15: ***In all ways tempted as we are, yet without sin.*** (Now why is this important? Why was it necessary for Jesus Christ to become a man? And why a sinless man? Listen to the words of Hebrews chapter 2, verse 17) ***Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, (so) that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, (in order) to make propitiation for the sins of the people.***

Now listen, put together the logic there, the train of thought in Hebrews chapter 2, verse 17. Why did Jesus Christ have to become a human like us? So that He might serve as our merciful and faithful High Priest. So that He could make an offering for us to satisfy the wrath of God that was against us for our sin, and the offering that He would make for us would be the offering of Himself in death. So, it was necessary that Jesus Christ be a man like us to represent us. Not just any man – a sinless man. If He weren't sinless, He would have to pay for His own sins. He would need a sacrifice for Himself. He would need to atone for His own sins. He must be the Christ must be sinless.

How did God accomplish this if He took upon Himself our humanity? If He took upon Himself our essential humanity, how did Christ accomplish a sinless nature in the Lord Jesus Christ? How did God accomplish this? ***Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel – “God with us.”***

Our sin nature, our inward corruption is communicated to us through ordinary generation; communicated to us through our father, so to speak, ultimately, our father Adam. That wasn't communicated to Jesus Christ. That's the miracle and the infinite wisdom of God in the virgin birth! If you have no virgin birth you have no sinless Savior. Do you see? He needed to die our eternal death for us and be made like His brethren in order to do it. As our Priest, Hebrews says, ***He...put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.***

The word “propitiation” refers to satisfaction. Jesus Christ satisfies, or He propitiates God's justice. He takes away God's wrath from us. He averts His wrath from us. Now that doesn't mean that Jesus Christ

merely acts as a shield standing between us and the wrath of God. No. God exhausts His wrath upon Jesus Christ in His body, in His person, on the tree, as He hangs there for you and I, dying for our sin, taking the punishment that we deserve, in full strength, at that time on Calvary's cross! He exhausts the wrath of God upon Himself for all the sins that you and I have committed. All of that wrath directed at us, He Himself takes it. He propitiates the wrath of God rightly reserved for us; rightly directed at us because of our sin. Jesus Christ is not just a shield. Jesus Christ drank the cup on God's wrath to the dregs for you and I. When our punishment is poured out on Jesus Christ, it is propitiated, it is taken away from us.

*Because the sinless Savior died,
my sinful soul is counted free;
For God, the Just, is satisfied
to look on Him and pardon me.*

Brothers and sisters, without the incarnation there is no salvation! Calvin said this regarding the incarnation:

"The case was certainly desperate, if the Godhead itself did not descend to us, it being impossible for us to ascend (to Him). Thus the Son of God became (gínomai), our Emmanuel, God (tabernacled) with us; and in such a way, that by mutual union his divinity and our nature might be combined; otherwise, neither was the proximity near enough, nor the affinity strong enough, to give us hope that God would dwell with us;

so great was the repugnance between our pollution and the spotless purity of God. Had man remained free from all taint, he was of too humble a condition to penetrate to God without a Mediator. What, then, must it have been, when by fatal ruin he was plunged into death and hell, defiled by so many stains, made loathsome by corruption; in fine, overwhelmed with every curse?

Do you see how hopeless it would be?

It is not without cause, therefore, that Paul, when he would set forth Christ as the Mediator, distinctly declares him to be man. There is, says he, "one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus,"

1 Timothy chapter 3, verse 16: ***And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up in glory.***

Why did He do it? Why did He so it?! To save you from your sins! To save you from your sins. To give a bride to the Son who is worthy of such glory, worthy of such love, worthy of such devotion, and worship, and praise, and honor, and dominion, and might, and power! Do you see? To be an offering for sin. To take the wrath of God for you. Won't you believe Him? Won't you in light of that turn from your sin and trust Him alone? Won't you follow Jesus Christ the Son of God who gave all of that that you might have life?

Referring to His incarnation, His humiliation, Paul notes that Jesus was born. He became. He became a man according to or on the basis of the flesh.

Consider with me that third description of Paul then in verse 3. Christ was – ***born of the seed of David*** – Jesus Christ came into the world, He assumed our humanity as the Promised Seed of David. The "Son of David" is a common reference to Jesus Christ throughout the synoptic gospels. The synoptic gospels are Matthew, Mark, and Luke. As we begin to read through the gospels, we see there was a great expectation

among the people of a coming Seed of David. The Messiah would come. The Christ, the Anointed One, He would be of the seed of David. At the preaching and teaching of Jesus Christ, witnessing His miracles, the people in and around Judea at the time of Jesus Christ in the 1st century began to associate this Promised Seed of David with Jesus Christ.

Matthew chapter 12, verse 22 – they hadn't seen anyone like Him. Never had they seen anyone like this. Great multitudes were following Him. Matthew records that He had healed them all. One was brought to Him that was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, cast out the demon so that the man could see and speak. Verse 23: ***And all the multitudes were amazed and said, "Could this be the Son of David?"***

Everywhere He went, the multitudes cried out to him: ***"Son of David, have mercy on me!"*** (Do you remember?) ***"Son of David, have mercy on me!"***

He enters the temple in Matthew 21 and the children were crying out in the temple: ***"Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!"*** – "Hosanna" a celebratory exclamation of adoration, of praise, an expression of joy.

Well where did this expectation come from? It began with a promise. It was an extenuating promise or an extended promise of "Thee Promise." It began with a promise that God had made to King David. It's called the Davidic Covenant. Turn with me to 2 Samuel chapter 7. We see here the Davidic promise, the Davidic Covenant. In 2 Samuel 7, David was dwelling in his house, the house that he had made for himself. David was relaxed. He's chilling out, so to speak. God had given him rest from his enemies on every side. David thinks to himself: "I'm dwelling in this house made with cedar, but the ark of God – it was symbolic of the presence of God amongst His people – the ark of God dwells inside tent curtains."

So, David thinks to himself, "I'm going to build a house for God." And David intends to build the temple. But God says: "No, I will build you a house, David." In other words, "I'll build you a dynasty. I'll build you a kingdom that will last forever. Your Son will be the Son of God, and He will build My house, My temple." Now follow along with me in verse 12, the Davidic promise, the Davidic Covenant.

Verse 12: ***"When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers (David), I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of His kingdom forever."***

Now who was the immediate son that came from David's own body? Solomon. Was Solomon's throne established forever? Verse 14: ***I will be his Father, and he shall be My son (the Son of God). If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. And your house (David) and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever."***

Now the near and physical expression of that promise, the earthly foreshadowing of the fulfillment of this promise was seen in Solomon. Solomon, the son of David built the earthly temple. Solomon as king rules over the greatest earthly expression of the kingdom of God in the history of the nation of Israel. And Israel hadn't seen anything like it before or since. The earthly ministries of the prophet, priest and king during this time were all in place. The temple represented the presence of God among His people. But as glorious as it was by earthly standards, it wouldn't last. The dramatic decline would begin during the reign of Solomon himself. Solomon would take to himself foreign wives, leading him and others into

idolatry. The kings that follow would then plunge Israel into sin and idolatry, leading first to the division of the kingdom – northern and southern tribes – then to exile of the people altogether out of the land of promise. God vomited them out of the land.

And what we begin to see in the history of Israel under the ministry of God’s prophets then, is that original promise to David. Remember it was a kingdom to be established forever. What we begin to see is that original promise given to David repeated over and over again in the ministry of the prophets, speaking of the restoration and the reestablishment of the Davidic throne under a coming Son of David who is the Son of God.

Turn with me to Isaiah chapter 9, verse 6. You guys are gonna have to listen faster, we’ve got more ground to cover. Come on now, hurry. ***For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son (the Son of God) is given. And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,*** (The only way that you could explain that is through the incarnation of Jesus Christ. How is this One – the Son of God, the Son of David – to be Mighty God, Yahweh? It’s because He is God incarnate, Jesus Christ. Do you see?) ***Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, (It will last forever) upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.*** God will not fail to fulfill this promise. It’s a promise concerning the true and final Son of David!

Flip the page Isaiah chapter 11, verse 1: ***There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse,*** (All that remains of the monarchy, all that remains of the seed of David, so to speak, at this time is the stem. The monarchy has been decimated. It appears as though the promise has failed, and he says) ***There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.***

The house or the dynasty promised to David has not been forgotten. The Lord will remember His promise. Verse 10: ***And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, who shall stand as a banner to the people; for the Gentiles shall seek Him, and His resting place shall be glorious.***

Turn to Jeremiah 23. These are the prophets, God’s prosecuting attorneys, speaking to the nation, and encouraging the nation – this sinful rebellious nation – with this promise of a coming seed of David. The one who God would through Him establish the throne of His kingdom forever. Jeremiah chapter 23, look at verse 3. God says: ***“But I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries where I have driven them, and bring them back to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase.***

It reminds us of the words of Jesus Christ in John chapter 10, doesn’t it? of bringing in the flock. ‘There are other sheep which are not of this fold, and I must bring them in also.’ Jesus Christ under the New Covenant, gathering His elect from the four corners of the earth.

But I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries where I have driven them, and bring them back to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase (through the preaching of the Gospel). ***I will*** (verse 4) ***set up shepherds over them who will feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, nor shall they be lacking,” says the Lord.***

Verse 5: ***“Behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord, “that I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; a King shall reign and prosper, and execute judgment and righteousness in the***

earth. In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell safely; now this is His name by which He will be called: The Lord (Yahweh) our Righteousness..."

Jesus Christ is God in the flesh. Do you see? Yahweh our Righteousness!

Turn to Ezekiel chapter 37. Here in the midst of this text referring to New Covenant promises and this covenant of peace that God will establish with His coming Son of David. Ezekiel 37, look at verse 24:

"David My servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd (John chapter 10); they shall also walk in My judgments and observe My statutes, and do them. (New Covenant promise. Verse 25) Then they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob My servant, (Paul says of Abraham in Romans chapter 4 that Abraham was to inherit the worlds.) Then they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob My servant, where your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell there, they, their children, and their children's children, (how long?) forever; and My servant David shall be their prince forever. Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them, (the New Covenant) and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; (A covenant wherein God takes out your heart of stone, gives you a heart of flesh, indwells you with His Spirit, and causes you to walk according to His statutes and judgments and to do them. He says,) I will establish them and multiply them, and I will set My sanctuary in their midst forevermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them; indeed I will be their God, and they shall be My people. The nations also will know that I, the Lord, sanctify (set apart) Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forevermore."' When God dwells with His people.

This is just a small, representative list of texts. These truths are all over the Bible. Through One who is the Son of David, the throne of an everlasting Davidic kingdom will be established. The Son of David will be their King forever! And what does Paul say in Romans chapter 1? He's here! Jesus Christ our Lord. He will shepherd them in righteousness! They will keep His statutes and do them! They will dwell in the land of promise forever! It's a new heavens and a new earth. God will establish a New Covenant, a covenant of peace, a covenant which will be an everlasting covenant! Not like that covenant which is done away with. God will establish them, multiply them through the preaching of His Gospel of grace. A people from every tribe, tongue, and nation; all of those with the faith of Abraham. And He will establish the temple of the Lord in their presence forever! It wouldn't be destroyed like it was when they were cast out of the land into exile. It wouldn't be destroyed as it was in AD 70, when Rome came through and sacked Jerusalem.

I will be their God, and they shall be My people. And it will be an everlasting kingdom.

What is that sanctuary? What is that temple, that tabernacle, that building; what is the dwelling place of God in the Spirit? Is it a rebuilt brick and mortar building on a hill in Jerusalem? Is that what it is? What does Peter say? 1 Peter chapter 2, verse 5: ***You also (brothers and sisters), as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*** – sacrifices of worship.

Paul says, ***"For you are the temple of the living God,"*** a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. When Jesus, the Son of David comes, what does He say? ***"I will build My church, (that's New Covenant Israel) and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."*** Jesus Christ, the Son of David, is building for God a house to dwell in forever. Solomon, just a foreshadowing of all of that glory.

What fueled that 1st century Messianic, Son of David expectation among the people? These promises. Centuries have passed, there is no king until now. Jesus Christ has come. What they only saw through the dim light of a partial revelation, you and I have the benefit of seeing through the blazing light of a full and

complete revelation. Romans chapter 1, verse 3, Paul is pointing out that all of these promises are found to be 'Yes!' and 'Amen!' in the Person of Jesus Christ our Lord – ***who was born*** (became) ***of the seed of David*** (in fulfillment of that Davidic promise) ***according to*** (or on the basis of) ***the flesh*** (God incarnate), ***and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.***

By referring to Jesus Christ as “the Seed of David,” Paul is saying that Jesus Christ is the long-awaited fulfillment of that promise that God had made to King David of a Son to sit on his throne and to establish His kingdom forever! This Seed of David has come.

This morning we've considered His incarnation in verse 3. Next time we're together we'll consider His exaltation in verse 4. The One who has died has now been – ***declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead!***

You know, many of those in the 1st century would miss all of this staggering truth! They just didn't see it. Couldn't see it. They had unmet expectations. They expected the Messiah, the Christ to come as a conquering King to deliver them from oppression under the hands of their oppressors. They didn't realize or didn't stop to think that the greatest oppression is their own sin; the wrath of God, the condemnation that hung over their heads. They would miss all of these truths and they would reject Jesus Christ as God Incarnate. He came to His own, His own received Him not. They would reject Him as the Promised Seed of David, the One who is perfectly suited by God to be Prophet, Priest, and King to His people. The One perfectly suited by God to be Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus. They missed it! And many over the centuries have died in their sin. Many, countless millions and billions have died; an innumerable mass have died in their sins having rejected the promise of God, the grace of God given in the Gospel.

Who do you say that He is? Who do you say that He is? If this is a grand fiction to you, then eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow you die. You'll find the truth of it at the judgment with the rest who don't know Him. Who do you say that He is? If you say with Paul that He is the Christ, the promised Son of David, God the Son who died a perfect sinless sacrifice for sinners – wretched sinners like you and I – who was raised in power according to the Spirit of holiness. If you would say that He is the Christ, the Seed of David, then follow Him. The only acceptable way to do that is through repentant faith in Him. Turning from your sin and rebellion, turning from your life of wretched wickedness against God and turning to Him in faith for His righteousness; the righteousness that you need in order to stand before God justified. You are to trust Him and Him alone. It begins with following Him in repentant faith. Do that now! Why would you falter? Why would you halt? Why would you reject Him? Don't turn back from following after Him. Follow the Son of David, the Son of God. Turn to Him in repentant faith.

And all praise, honor, glory, blessing, dominion, might, and power be to our King Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen? Let's pray together.