

Title:        **“MY GOSPEL” AND “THE MYSTERY”**

Text:         Romans 16:24-27

Subject:     *The Gospel of Christ Identified*

Date:         Tuesday Evening — March 30, 2010

Tape #        Z-83b

Reading:     *Bob Duff and David Burge*

Introduction:

I received a letter from one of our Free-Grace-Radio listeners on Saturday, asking, — “Can you explain Romans 16:25? **What does Paul mean by ‘my gospel’? What is the ‘mystery’ he is referring to?**” I thought those two questions deserved thoughtful answers. So, I took a good bit of the day yesterday answering that letter. When I finished, I knew I had my message for you tonight. So I want you to open your Bibles to Romans 16. The title of my message is — **“MY GOSPEL” AND “THE MYSTERY”** We will begin at Romans 16:24.

**“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.”** (v. 24). — Paul’s letter to the saints at Rome has many striking things by which it is distinguished from all his other inspired letters. One of those distinctions is that he closes this epistle with four benedictions. This one, the one that follows in verses 25-27, one in verse 20, and another in Romans 15:33. Let’s look at each of them briefly.

**“THE GOD OF PEACE”**

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1. *“Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen”* (Romans 15:33).

In Romans 15:5 our great God is called “the God of patience” because he is patient, long-suffering, forbearing and good and because he teaches his people patience. In verse 13 the Apostle calls him “the God of hope” because our hope is in God our Savior. — “The Lord is my Portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him” (Lamentations 3:24).

**WE HOPE IN...**

- **His Mercies** — *“This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. It is of the LORD’S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not”* (Lamentations 3:21-22). — *“Though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies.”* (Lamentations 3:32).
- **His Unfailing Love** — *“Because his compassions fail not”* (Lamentations 3:22).
- **His Faithfulness** — His mercies and his compassions are fresh every day and we have hope because our God is

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faithful. — *“They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness”* (Lamentations 3:23).

- **His Goodness** — *“The LORD is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him”* (Lamentations 3:25).
- **His Salvation** — *“It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD”* (Lamentations 3:26).

Our God, the Triune Jehovah, is the God of all hope; and he is **“the God of peace”** because peace between man and God is altogether his work, his accomplishment and his gift.

**BRUISING SATAN**

**Read Romans 16:20.** This is Paul’ second benediction of grace, pronounced by Divine Inspiration to all God’s elect.

2. *“And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen”* (Romans 16:20).

Here, the Apostle assures us that *“the God of peace shall bruise Satan under”* our *“feet shortly!”* He who bruised Satan under his feet at Calvary shall soon bruise Satan

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under our feet! What a blessed, sweet, comforting promise of grace from the God of peace!

- He declares that his thoughts toward us are thoughts of peace.
- He made for us a covenant of peace in the council of peace before the worlds were made.
- In that covenant Christ was appointed the Peacemaker; and the Lord God, the Triune Jehovah, laid upon him the chastisement of our peace.
- By his blood he obtained peace.
- And by his Holy Spirit he gives us peace by the blood and righteousness of our Savior, giving us faith in Christ.

**“And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you!”**

— Though for now we are and must be tried with Satan’s temptations, harassed with his accusations, tormented with his devices and groan by reason of his companions, the Canaanites of flesh and sin who dwell within, soon, very soon, the God of peace will make our peace complete, for he shall bruise Satan beneath our feet! What can be said to that, except — **“AMEN!”**?

**ASSURED GRACE**

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I’ve got to move on, or I’ll never get to my message. Look at the third benediction (Romans 16:24).

3. **“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen”** (Romans 16:24).

I am sure you noticed that this is exactly what Paul said at the end of his second benediction in verse 20. Why did he repeat the exact same benediction, the exact words, here?

- Perhaps he was simply saying, “Amen, Amen, Amen!” — *“And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you! — Amen!”* — *“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. — Amen!”*
- Perhaps he repeats these words, as one often does, when describing, or even mentioning, that which is indescribably wondrous, great and delightful to him. — Certainly that is the case here. Paul could never mention with sufficient frequency the name of our God, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the wonders of his grace!

**GOD’S CHOSEN MEANS**

Now read verses 25-27, Paul’s fourth benediction to us in these two chapters that close the Book of Romans. Here we see the means God has chosen by which he always

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performs his wonders of grace in his elect. Here is God’s method of operation in the souls of his elect.

4. **“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.”**

Again, I must hurry, just skimming the surface of our text, or I won’t get done. Look at these sweet, blessed assurances of grace, assurances given to every believing sinner, assurances by which “*the God of patience,*” “*the God of hope,*” “*the God of peace*” gives us patience, hope and peace while we wait for him to bruise Satan under our feet.

**Seven things are stated here that need to be sounded out loud and clear in this generation of religious tomfoolery.** Today, preachers and churches everywhere pander to the whims of men and prostitute the gospel for a dime or smile. Preaching has become passé and Gospel preaching forbidden in today’s churches. Instead of preaching we

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have puppet shows, drama, movies, specialized ministries, family counseling, financial counseling, fellowship suppers, bingo and recreation!

Preachers don't have time to study and pray and preach. They're busy chasing ambulances, sipping tea and gossiping with old women, playing golf, or making money. So rather than worshipping God, preachers everywhere are cutting down the number of services, “so that families can spend more time together.” — You won't spend better time with your family than you spend right here, hearing the Gospel, worshipping God, singing his praise and seeking his face. **Look at what God the Holy Spirit teaches us in this Inspired Benediction of grace. — SEVEN THINGS.**

1. The Lord your God, the Triune Jehovah, has the omnipotent power, the Divine might, to “**stablish you,**” to firmly fix you, to stabilize you and make you constant, strong and unwavering. — It takes omnipotent, irresistible grace to do this work!
2. He will do it “**according to,**” not just by, but “*according to my gospel.*” God establishes his elect according to the rich promises of the Gospel.
3. Now, watch this: — The Lord God has the power to fix you in your appointed place in his church, in his

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kingdom, in his family. He has the power to set you firmly, like a steel post in concrete in his house. He does this “*according to my gospel,*” — “*and the preaching of Jesus Christ.*” — **God establishes his elect in his kingdom the same way he saves them, by the preaching of the Gospel of his dear Son, the Lord Jesus Christ** (Ephesians 4:8-16).

4. This Gospel we preach is **the unveiled mystery of God** in the Holy Scriptures. — It is “*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.*”
5. **The mystery of God is now made manifest, openly declared, by the commandment of God, to all nations.** — “*Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature!*” — “*Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you!*” (Galatians 3:1; See 1 Corinthians 2:1-7; 2 Corinthians 4:3-7)

(1 Corinthians 2:1-7) “And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. 2 For I determined not to know any thing among you,



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save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. 3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. 4 And my speech and my preaching *was* not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: 5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. 6 ¶ Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: 7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, *even* the hidden *wisdom*, which God ordained before the world unto our glory.”

(2 Corinthians 4:3-7) “But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. 5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake. 6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.”

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6. Look at our text again (the last line of verse 26). — The Gospel of the grace of God that we preach is preached and made known to all nations **“for the obedience of faith.”** — We preach the Gospel for the glory of God so that sinners might be saved by believing the Gospel, by trusting the Lord Jesus Christ.
7. This is all for and to the glory of our great god. — **“To God only wise be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen!”**

**“MY GOSPEL”**

Now, let me answer the two questions I was asked about this passage, and I will be done. — “Can you explain Romans 16:25? **What does Paul mean by ‘my gospel’? What is the ‘mystery’ he is referring to?**”

Paul refers to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ as “*my gospel*” because it was the Gospel committed to his trust and the Gospel he preached. Calling it “*my gospel*,” as he did in three places (Romans 2:16; 16:25; 2 Timothy 2:8), Paul distinguished it from the false Gospels of the countless false prophets of his day.

**Without question, there is only one true Gospel.** Every other Gospel is a false gospel. Those who preach a false

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gospel are false prophets; and those who believe a false gospel are yet lost, under the wrath and curse of God (Read Galatians 1:6-8). Serious as that charge is, it cannot be ignored or denied.

(Galatians 1:6-8) “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: 7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.”

**That one true Gospel, the Gospel of God, is the Gospel of salvation by grace alone.** By that statement I mean that salvation comes to helpless, depraved, lost and justly condemned sinners only by

- God the Father’s sovereign, eternal election (Ephesians 1:3-6; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; John 15:16),
- Christ’s particular, effectual, substitutionary redemption of his people (Isaiah 53:8-11; John 10:11, 15; Galatians 3:13; Hebrews 9:12)
- and God the Holy Spirit’s irresistible, effectual call and omnipotent, regenerating grace (Psalm 65:4; 110:3; John 6: 63; Romans 9:16).

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**Salvation is the free, unconditional gift of God’s eternal, immutable grace.** It is not in any way determined by or dependent upon the will, works or worth of the sinner (2 Timothy 1:9-10; Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 9:11-16). — **That which was done in eternity cannot be dependent upon creatures of time!**

(2 Timothy 1:8-11) “Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; 9 Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, 10 But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: 11 Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.”

I once received a letter from a lady who asked, “**How can I be sure the Gospel you preach is the only true Gospel?**” That is a fair, honest and reasonable question. It is a question you would be wise to ask and a question every preacher should be required to answer. This is my answer: I

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know that the Gospel of salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone is the only true Gospel because...

1. **This is the only Gospel revealed in all the Holy Scriptures** (Luke 24:44-47; Acts 13:38-39). — The Gospel of God is the good news of heaven concerning God’s Son and redemption accomplished by him (Romans 1:1-4, 16-17; 1 Corinthians 15:1-3).

(Romans 1:1-4) “Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called *to be* an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, 2 (Which 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.”

(Romans 1:16-17) “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. 17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”

(1 Corinthians 15:1-3) “Moreover, brethren, I declare

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unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. 3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.”

2. **This is the only Gospel that glorifies God in all his holy attributes** (Romans 3:24-26; Psalm 85:10-11). — *“By mercy and truth iniquity is purged”* (Proverbs 16:6).

(Romans 3:24-26) “Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25 Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; 26 To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”

(Psalms 85:10-11) “Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed *each other*. 11 Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven.”

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3. **This is the only Gospel that honors, magnifies and satisfies all the demands of God’s holy law** (Romans 3:31).

(Romans 3:31) “Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.”

4. **This is the only Gospel that offers hope to helpless, guilty sinners who can do nothing for themselves** (Ephesians 2:1-5).

- Ezekiel’s Infant
- The Valley of Dry Bones
- Lazarus

5. **This is the only Gospel that gives all the glory of salvation to the triune God alone** (1 Corinthians 1:29-31).

(1 Corinthians 1:29-31) **God saves sinners by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, without works** — “That no flesh should glory in his presence. 30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: 31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”

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6. **This is the only Gospel that completely forbids the boasting of the flesh** (1 Corinthians 4:7; Psalm 115:1).

(1 Corinthians 4:7) “For who maketh thee to differ *from another?* and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive *it*, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received *it?*”

(Psalms 115:1) “Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, *and* for thy truth’s sake.”

7. **This is the only Gospel that compels saved sinners to consecrate themselves to God with grateful, devoted hearts** (1 Corinthians 6:9-11, 19-20).

(1 Corinthians 6:9-11) “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”



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(1 Corinthians 6:19-20) “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

This is, as Paul put it, “*my Gospel.*” It is the Gospel I believe, the Gospel by which I am saved and the Gospel I preach incessantly. — “*Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed!*”

**“THE MYSTERY”**

Then, I was asked, “What is ‘the mystery?’ \_ Back in Romans 16:25-26, Paul tells us plainly that “*the mystery which was kept secret since the world began,*” is the “*revelation*” (the unveiling) of Jesus Christ by the preaching of the Gospel.

(Romans 16:25-26) “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

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all nations for the obedience of faith:”

The mystery of the Gospel was not altogether hidden and unknown. Multitudes in the Old Testament ear were saved by the revelation of Christ, just as we are; but the wondrous mystery of the Gospel was hidden under types and shadows of the law, until Christ came. Now, in and by Christ, the mystery is unveiled and fully revealed (Hebrews 1:1-3).

(Hebrews 1:1-3) “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; 3 Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.”

I will have to come back to the mystery another day; but I have to show you three things about “*the mystery*.”

1. **The Gospel of Christ is the unveiling of the mystery of redemption, grace and salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, the incarnate God** (1 Timothy 3:16). — This is the “*mystery of God*” that must be “*finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets*” (Revelation 10:7).

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(1 Timothy 3:16) “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.”

2. **The mystery of the Gospel, that which is unveiled by the Gospel, is the wondrous union of Christ and his church** (Ephesians 5:32; Galatians 2:20; Colossians 1:26-27).

(Ephesians 5:25-32) “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. 28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: 30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. 31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and

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the church.”

(Galatians 2:20) “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

(Colossians 1:25-29) “Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; 26 *Even* the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: 27 To whom God would make known what *is* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: 28 Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: 29 Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.”

3. **The mystery of God, plainly unveiled by the Gospel, is the mystery of resurrection glory and eternal life in, with and by our Lord Jesus Christ** (1 Corinthians 15:51-57). — Job knew it, believed it and rejoiced in it. Christ displayed it! And the Gospel declares it.

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(1 Corinthians 15:51-57) “Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. 55 O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? 56 The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. 57 But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

(Romans 16:24-27) “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.”