

Preachers are sometimes admonished in homiletic literature (books about preaching) to get the doctrine out of the way quickly and get to the application. This *is not* the correct emphasis. “Doctrine is the vital element in the existence of the church. The church itself is in a sense only doctrine assimilated.”¹

Applications of Romans 1:1-4: **General Bearing and Common Duties**

General Bearing: The manner in which a person carries or conducts himself; his deportment.

“There are three things which are majestic in pace—Yes, four which are stately in walk (general bearing): A lion, which is **mighty** among beasts **and does not turn away from any.**” Proverbs 30:29,30a

Oliver Cromwell's men said he had at times his “battle-face”. Complete dedication will bring you into an intense “*good fight*.” What the Spirit wants you to see in Romans 1:1-4 is a clear look at the lofty enthronement the Son of God entered by His resurrection.

Such a look tends to transform one's general bearing. **Fearless confidence is a desirable disposition.** Job's friend cruelly mocked him when Job's general bearing collapsed: Job 18:4,11-13,18.

What would a clear look do for many depressed children of God? For many withering marriages? For many individual lives of actual children of God that are “good for nothing”? Matthew 5:13

How many Christians are weak, wandering, and pummeled? How many preachers are really cowards? How many husbands? How many wives? How many teens?

Common Duties: II Thessalonians 1:11 Note the phrase, “The work of faith with power.” What does the Spirit want you to see in Romans 1:1-4? See anything?

Is Christianity Really Worth Complete Dedication?

1 Frederic Godet *Commentary on I Corinthians* p.749

Is Christianity Really Worth Complete Dedication?

Romans 1:1-4 APRIL 17th, 2022 Lance's 28th Birthday

Paul calls himself a “servant” (a completely dedicated person) of Jesus Christ called to spread the “gospel of God”: vs. 1. We too are called to be completely dedicated servants as well. Lots of people know that true Christianity means an *all-in-complete-dedication*. Practically everyone interested in the gospel at all, sooner or later, asks themselves, is it worth it?

Yes, if we are seeing and hearing what God is actually saying about Christ, about us, and about the world we inhabit, it's worth it. If we do not see and hear well it won't be long before we are doubting that Christianity is worth complete dedication. The subject of the gospel is God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Consider Him.

In the history of interpretation Romans 1:3,4 has mostly been interpreted as referring to the different aspects, the humanity and the deity, of the person of Christ. “Two things must be found in Christ, in order that we may obtain salvation in him, ...divinity and humanity. Hence the Apostle expressly mentioned both....”² True, but not the main point being made.

These verses have to do with **two successive stages** of the historical process by which the Son of God became the subject of the Gospel. “The gospel of God” vs.1, which was “promised in the holy scriptures” vs.2, concerns, or has for its subject, “his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.” Consider Him very carefully. Pay attention. He's worth it.

Stage #1 vs.3.“...made (*born*: NASB/NKJV) of the seed of David” points to a *historical beginning*. The subject of this beginning has just previously been identified in the same verse as the eternal, preexistent, Son of God. Before Abraham was I AM: John 8:58. His human existence began in Bethlehem, David's city, born to David's actual physical ancestor, Mary.

God *promised* David that this would happen. A *historical beginning* happened exactly according to promise. The eternal Son

2 John Calvin note #4 p. 6 in John Murray *THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS*

of God whose goings forth have been from everlasting, drew from Mary, a full human nature in its entirety. What a life he lived! What a death he died! How glorious the results by the resurrection from the dead *especially if we have eyes to see the actual state of things!*

Stage #2 vs.4 “declared³ to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead”

The word declared “*points to an investiture*” (The act or formal ceremony of conferring upon one the authority of a high office) which had a historical beginning parallel to the beginning mentioned in verse 3. In other words, “declared” is not a proof, or an announcement, that Jesus is not only man but also God.

“Declared” in this context means “ordained” or “appointed” to be the Son of God—*with power*—into an exalted *session*. A “session” is defined as: A sitting; the sitting of a court, council, legislature, etc., for the transaction of business; the time or term during which such body transacts business.

Much hinges in understanding this passage by grasping the phrase “with power”. “Declared (appointed, ordained—*investitured*) the Son of God **with power**...by the resurrection from the dead.” Remember these verses have to do with ***two successive historical stages*** by which the Son of God became the subject of the Gospel.

What the Holy Spirit wants you to see in Romans 1:1-4 is a clear look at the phase upon which the Son of God entered by His resurrection: Ephesians 1:20-23; I Peter 3:21,22; et al. You are called to sit with Christ in His present session: Ephesians 2:5,6; Colossians 3:1-4. Position determines experience.

For example, are you picking up what Paul is laying down in Romans 6:3-7? This is *grace reigning now*. A clear look, coupled with understanding of what you are seeing will aid you immensely in

3 translated elsewhere in the New Testament “determined” (Luke 22:22; Acts 11:29); “determinate” KJV “predeterminate” NASB (Acts 2:23) “which was ordained” (Acts 10:42) “and hath determined” “hath ordained” (Acts 17:26,31); “he *limiteth* a certain day” KJV “he *fixes* a certain day” NASB (Hebrews 4:7).

your battle for *freedom from sin*: Romans 6:7. Don't we need *freedom from sin* more than we need freedom from the Biden administration, Rinos, and George Soros?

What the Holy Spirit wants you to see in Romans 1:1-4 is a clear look at the phase upon which the Son of God entered by successive stages through His resurrection: Ephesians 1:20-23; et al. A clear look, coupled with understanding of what you are seeing will aid you immensely in your ceaseless fight with the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Look, Ye Saints! The Sight Is Glorious

Look ye saints! The sight is glorious: See the Man of Sorrows now;
From the fight returned victorious, Every knee to Him shall bow:
Crown Him! Crown Him! Crowns become the Victor's brow.

Crown the Savior! Angels, crown Him! Rich the trophies Jesus brings;
In the seat of power enthrone Him, While the vault of heaven rings:
Crown! Crown Him! Crown the Savior King of kings.

Sinners in derision crowned Him, Mocking thus the Savior's claim;
Saints and angels crowd around Him, Own His title, praise his name:
Crown Him! Crown him! Spread abroad the Victor's fame!

Hark! Those bursts of acclamation! Hark! Those loud triumphant chords!
Jesus takes the highest station—O what joy the sight affords!
Crown Him! Crown Him! King of kings and Lord of lords!

Difficulties encompass interpreting “according to the spirit of holiness” because it occurs nowhere else in the New Testament⁴ We are to understand the phrase “spirit of holiness” not as referring to the Holy Spirit, but to the spiritual nature of Him who is divine as well as human: “...the last Adam became a life-giving spirit” (I Cor 15:45).

Homiletic Principles:

Doctrine well explained, strengthens application impact.

4 Ibid. Murray p.10 There are many sentences in this paper that should be footnoted to Murray's commentary. I am indebted to Murray for practically every substantive idea in the paper. If anything is helpful thank John Murray.

