

# The Greatest Letter Ever Written

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

### **Romans 1:2-7**

#### **3-Paul's Salutation**

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September 25, 2022

#### **Romans 1:1b-7**

**1 ... 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;**  
**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. Nobody is- precisely because nobody can keep God’s Commandments-

perfectly. And that means 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 not only need to be forgiven- but we also must become just as Righteous as God is.

Now, normally, we would simply “develop” our *own, personal* 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, ONLY a perfect Obedience brings forth a perfect Righteousness. But 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 while we are commanded to obey God- without fault- the Limitations of our Flesh prohibit us from accomplishing 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 personal Righteousness. So, it is by having Faith or trusting in two things:

1. Who Jesus is
2. What Jesus has done

... that allows us to receive the Forgiveness of Sins and the Righteousness we need to enter into Heaven (Justification).

But then AFTER we have been justified- we are *commanded* by God to obey and be Righteous. But how are we to obey God? We have already said that the Limitations of our Flesh prohibit us from obtaining a perfect Obedience. So, is that still true AFTER I have been justified? Yes. But with the new Nature (we received in the Miracle of the New Birth) and in being Justified- God gives us the Will (Desire) and the Power (Ability) to *strive* for Obedience.

### **Philippians 2:12&13**

**12 So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling;**

**13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.**

The “**working out**” of our Salvation (v.12), is us striving to obey God and His Word and Will. So, the Apostle teaches here in verse 12- that we are commanded to “**work out**” our Salvation in an attitude of “fear and trembling” (Humility).

But please notice in verse 13 that the *Catalyst*; the *Origination*; the *Source*; the *Genesis* of this “*working out*” of our Salvation (striving to obey) is the fact that it is:

**... God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure**

So, BECAUSE God Himself is at work IN us to give us two things:

1. The Will (Desire)
2. The Power (Ability/Work)

... we then, as already born again and justified people- strive to obey God (**work out our Salvation**).

We must understand that God is NOT “**at work**” in the lost person to enable and empower him to obey God’s moral Commandments. He is ONLY at work for this kind of Obedience in those who are already saved. God is, however, at work in those who are lost (those who have been chosen for Salvation)- unto the “*Obedience of Faith*” (trusting in Jesus) so they may be Saved. So, these two verses in Philippians deal with those who have already been born again and justified. Those who have already been saved are commanded by God to obey God’s Word and Will.

**Ephesians 2:8-10**

**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.**

**10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.**

Verses 8&9 are very familiar verses that deal with the Issue of Salvation. And the Apostle was “moved” by God the Holy Spirit to write that Salvation is “BY” the Grace of God; and it is made effective to each individual “THROUGH” the “Gift of *saving* Faith” (**and that** [Faith is] **not of yourselves, it is the gift of God**- which means that Salvation is wholly a sovereign Work of God alone to unworthy rebels.

But now that we have been saved “BY” the Grace of God and “THROUGH” the Gift of saving Faith- what are we told?

**For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.**

So, those who have already experienced the Miracle of the New Birth (regeneration) and who have already been Justified (By Faith alone)- have now been made into something the Apostle calls,

“*God’s Workmanship*”

So, as fully born again and justified people, we are the “*Product*”; the “*Result*”; of ALL that God through Jesus has done *for* us; and *in* us; and *to* us. And Paul uses the term, “**Workmanship**”- which has to do with the “*finished Product*” of the skilled craftsman (Workman). So, we are the finished Product of the Work of Jesus that displays or shows all of the Skill; and all of the Grace; and all of the Glory; and all of the Work; of Jesus- in saving us.

So, how should that finished Product live their Lives? Paul tells us:

**... we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.**

So, we have been saved- so that we may “show” or “reveal” or “prove” or “display” the Glory of God in Jesus Christ in saving us. So, we are saved so that by our Salvation- we may display how glorious Jesus is. But how do we “show” or “reveal” or “display” or “prove” how glorious Jesus is? By engaging in what Paul called,

**“good works”**

So, we have been “**created in Christ Jesus for good works**”. We have been saved- without *our own* “Works”- so that, AFTER we are saved- we will engage in *these* “Good Works”. So, every single saved person has certain “Good Works” that God has “**prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them**”. And those “Good Works” are unique to them. And these Good Works have been “Ordained” by God for that individual.

And I would suggest to you that these “Good Works” that have been specifically ordained (created) for each one of us- are the “Fruit” or the “Proof” or the “Result” of our Salvation. And so, we are to “*give ourselves*” to those “Good Works”. We are to live our Lives- so as to “*accomplish*” those created Good Works. And that “*giving ourselves*” to those Good Works- IS- our Obedience. And it is that Obedience that *develops* our own, personal Righteousness. SO, when Paul said,

**... so that we would walk in them**

... he was talking about us yielding to the Good Works that God has created for us to accomplish in this Life- AFTER we are saved. So, the word, “**walk**” as used *primarily* in the New Testament has to do with our “normal daily Life.” So, the normal, daily Life of a saved person sees him constantly yielding (Obeying) to the “Good Works” that God has created for that individual before. And the ONLY way we can yield to those Good Works- is to “give ourselves” to them. And THAT is part of the Obedience that God expects from those who are saved.

The other part of the Obedience that is expected of saved people is the “Moral Commandments of God”- spelled out in the Ten Commandments and elsewhere throughout the entire Bible. ALL saved people are to obey these Commandments.

**How Should Saved People Obey?**

But this brings up the Issue of just “*how*” saved people are supposed to obey God’s Moral Commandments and the specific “Good Works” that God has ordained for them. Our Flesh is still “Fallen” and we are still Human. And that means that, even though we are saved- we still CANNOT obey-perfectly. True. So, saved people “STRIVE” or “STRUGGLE” to obey.

Saved people struggle against the Lusts of their unredeemed flesh (fed by the world and the devil)- by the Power of the Holy Spirit- to be found joyfully and humbly submitted to the Authority of Scripture (in their daily Lives)- all to the Glory of God

The unsaved World; our own unredeemed Flesh; and the devil work against us in our Effort to obey. And that is why we have to struggle. But God will help us to obey MORE than we disobey. And as we grow in Grace and in the Knowledge of Jesus Christ- our Obedience will get better and better.

And that means that our own, personal Righteousness will also get better and better. Now keep in mind- the Righteousness that is getting better and better is our own, personal, intrinsic Righteousness. It is NOT the Righteousness that allows us to go to Heaven. That is a spotless and perfect Righteousness that God imputes or credits to us by Faith alone. And that spotless Righteousness came from Jesus living a sinless Life while He was here on the earth. And that perfect Righteousness is an “external” Righteousness; or an “alien” Righteousness- in that it doesn’t belong to us; and it NEVER belongs to us. It is a “forensic” Righteousness that God credits to our Account- so that when God looks at us- He allows us entrance into Heaven- based on seeing the perfect Righteousness of Jesus draped over us. So, in reality, we hold two Positions with God:

1. Sinful
2. Righteous

We are *personally* Sinful; but we are *forensically* Righteous. And the Latin phrase that illustrated this phenomenon is:

Simil iustus et Peccator

... which means we are “*Simultaneously Just (Righteous) and a Sinner*”.

Now when Jesus was on the Cross- He was just the opposite. Jesus was *personally* SINLESS and *forensically* SINFUL.

## **2Corinthians 5:21**

**He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.**

So, the Righteousness that we develop through our struggle to obey- will NEVER be good enough to allow us entrance into Heaven. This Righteousness is designed to display or show or reveal or prove how glorious Jesus is.

So, just *how* should we strive or struggle to obey God? I would suggest to you that are three different ways that saved people can struggle to obey God:

1. Fearful Obedience
2. Forced Obedience
3. Joyful Obedience



Obedying God out of Fear (*Fearful Obedience*) that if we don't obey- God will send us to Hell- does NOT accurately or fully display the Greatness and Beauty and Magnificence of God. All it proves to the world- is that we are scared of Hell.

But obeying God because we have a sense of "*Obligation*" or "*Duty*" to obey Him (*Forced Obedience*)- does NOT bring God much Glory either. All that tells the world is that the Reason we should all obey God is because He told us to and so, we are supposed to. And look, God DID tell us to. And we DO have an Obligation and a Duty to obey Him. And we ARE "supposed to".

But we must press into something better than a "*Forced or Fearful Obedience*"- because the Bible talks about something much better than that.

All through the Bible we see something that I call, a "*Joyful Obedience*"; a "*Glad Obedience*". The Bible clearly and repeatedly reveals an Obedience to God's Word; and God's Will; and God's Law; and God's Commandments that causes the "*obedient ones*" to be *happier* than if they had NOT obeyed. Loving and following Jesus should make us the happiest people on earth. And that is what is missing in far too many Lives today.

The false gods of the Hindus and Buddhists are vicious and mean gods that don't love the people. The various Man-made deities illustrated in the *Bhagavad-Gita* care NOTHING for the people who follow them. The false god of the Muslims expects ten year- old girls to strap bombs to their bodies to blow up a bus or a train so they can kill as many Jews as possible. I have no respect for an evil deity like that. None.

But the 66 Books of the Holy Bible reveals a Good and Kind and Merciful God, Who not only *demands* Obedience- but also promises a Joy that the world can't give or take away. So, the ONLY way to display or show the entire world how glorious our God really is- is for us to ENJOY obeying Him. And that is a "*Joyful Obedience*". Five hundred years ago- at the height of the Protestant Reformation- godly men got together to pen down the Westminster Confession of Faith. And the very first Question and Answer is:

**Q:** What is the chief Duty of Man?

**A:** The chief Duty of Man is to know God; love God; and enjoy Him forever.

... and in 2022, I would edit the Answer to say,

The chief Duty of Man is to know God; love God; BY enjoying Him forever.

... because the ONLY correct Way to *know* and *love* God- is BY *enjoying* Him!

So, in reality- the ONLY way for saved people to actually obey God is by us receiving the *fullness* of our own JOY by and through our Obedience to Him. Other than that- we really aren't obeying Him as much as we *ought* to- in the first place. And Joyful Obedience is measured when we can truly say, "NOTHING MAKES US HAPPIER THAN TO OBEY GOD!"

So, if we have either "*Fearful*" or "*Forced Obedience*"- we are NOT glorifying God as much as we should and could. We MUST press into a "*Joyful Obedience*".

But now I want to show you something about the **Epistle to the Romans**. We are going over this Book now in our early morning Bible Study. So, I want to show you how important our Obedience was to the Apostle Paul. So, please look at **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;**

... now look at the *last* Chapter of **Romans** and read **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, Paul begins and ends this Masterpiece with a type of Obedience, that he called, the “*Obedience of Faith*”. Now we have already seen a “*Righteousness of Faith*”- but now we see the underlying Obedience that *produces* the Righteousness; and this Obedience is also of Faith.

So, I see this in two different ways:

1. The “Obedience of Faith” is lost people obeying God by believing in Jesus.
2. The “Obedience of Faith” is also saved people- who strive to please and love the Lord by struggling to obey His Commandments and the specific “Good Works” that God has prepared for them (**Ephesians 2:10**). This Obedience is NOT based on our own Will-power or Strength; but is predicated on having already believed in Jesus; and having now a Desire (Love) to glorify Him (Faith).

... and I would suggest to you that the “*Obedience of Faith*” for saved people IS the “*Joyful Obedience*” that God desires from us.

So, in one sense, the “*Obedience of Faith*” is us obeying what God told us to do- namely trust or hope or have Faith in Jesus’ Obedience as the “*Ground*” or the “*Motivation*” or the “*Catalyst*” for the Righteousness that we need in order to enter into Heaven. And that means at least two things:

1. *Imperfect* Obedience does NOT damn us
2. The *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- even though we will NEVER attain perfect Righteousness this way. But how is God glorified- even when we don’t attain to a flawless Obedience? 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 being *worthy* of the Struggle.

**Why Paul preached the Gospel**

Here is what Paul taught about the Gospel here at the Beginning of **Romans**:

### **Romans 1:1b-6**

**... the gospel of God, which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, 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, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake, among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ;**

So, from this we see that the Gospel:

- Was promised through the Prophets in the Old Testament Scriptures
- Concerns Jesus

... so, the biblical Gospel was promised through the Old Testament Scriptures by the Prophets- and it is about Jesus.

And then from verses 3b- 6, Paul talked about Who Jesus was:

- Who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh
- Who was declared the Son of God with Power by the Resurrection from the dead (according to the Spirit of Holiness)
- Through whom we have received Grace and Apostleship (to bring about the Obedience of Faith among all the Gentiles) for His Name's Sake
- Among whom you also are “the called” of Jesus Christ

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

### **The “Obedience of Faith” among all the Gentiles- for His Name's Sake**

... or so that the Gentiles would trust in Jesus - 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.

### **The “Beloved” of God**

#### **Romans 1:7b**

**... beloved of God...**

Paul calls the saints, who are in Rome, an interesting term- “**beloved**”. And this is more than merely a term of Paul’s own 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 each 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 a Greek word, (*agapeetos*) 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

You see, we, who are saved, are not simply members of some religious Institution. We, who are saved, have a personal Relationship with the Creator of the Universe through His Son, Jesus Christ. And this Relationship is not based on our Ability to “bring anything to the Table” that God has need of- but simply based upon God’s great Love for us.

**1John 4:10&11**

**10 In this 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 also ought to love one another.**

**Called to be Saints**

**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 love and obey Him. He called us to share in His Kingdom. He called us to be identified with Jesus- rather than the world.

**2Corinthians 6:14-18**

**14 Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?**

**15 Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever?**

**16 Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE.**

**17 "Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE," says the Lord. "AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAR; And I will welcome you.**

**18 "And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me," Says the Lord Almighty.**

Jesus is the One, Who *united* the word, “**called**” with the word, “**chosen**”.

**Matthew 22:14**

**For many are called, but few are chosen.**

Every human on earth has been “called” by God- to Salvation. Every single person has been “Called” to find the highest level of Joy and Satisfaction in loving and obeying Jesus Christ. And this is what is called, the “*General Call*” of all human beings.

Yet ONLY those, who have been chosen by God for Salvation (predestined) will actually respond *favorably* to that General Call. The Rest will reject it. So, if ONLY the chosen will respond- why did God call *everyone*? God calls ALL so that NONE will be able to find Fault with God in Salvation. Not a single human can say that God did not call them to Salvation. Yet when asked why they didn’t respond favorably to that Call- the ONLY Answer the Damned will be able to give is, “*Because I didn’t want to*”.

But when those chosen for Salvation are asked why they DID respond favorably to that General Call- the ONLY Answer they will be able to give is, “*Because You allowed me to by Your Grace*.”

So, by setting up Salvation like this- the Damned has to accept full Responsibility for their Unwillingness to answer the Call to Salvation favorably; while God will receive all the Glory for the favorable Response that those chosen gave to the General Call to Salvation.

Now the fact that God calls ALL but ONLY saves those who are chosen- may sound very Harsh to those, who believe that Salvation is for the Glory of Man. Yet it sounds Proper and Correct to those, who believe that Salvation is for the Glory of God. So, a “Man-centered” Theology makes God look terrible in the way He set up Salvation. While a “God-centered” Theology makes God look magnificent in calling ALL but choosing less than all. So, the “Fix” for those, who think God is somehow wrong or bad for the way He set up Salvation- is NOT for God to alter His Will. It is for those, who see Man at the Center of all that God does- to repent and embrace a Theology that has God at the Center.

So, 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.

### **1Peter 2:9-10**

**9 But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;**

**10 for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY.**

Our Calling; our being chosen; our Predestination was done by God before He created the world.

### **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.**

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**

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

### **Paul's Apostolic Blessing**

#### **Romans 1:7b**

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

We must understand that Grace and Peace are not mere 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**

**Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.**

##### **John 16:33**

**These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."**

#### **2. Godly Peace will keep our minds from turmoil**

##### **Philippians 4:7**

**And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**

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

##### **Hebrews 12:14**

**Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.**

### **The Thanksgiving of the Apostle**

#### **Romans 1:8a**

**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, God was Paul's Father and his Friend. Not only does the believer have a right to offer Prayers to God because of Jesus Christ, but 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 1:8b**

**... because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world.**

This Testimony of the Faith of the people of the Church at Rome is paramount to our understanding of Christianity today.

The entire “known world” (the Roman Empire) 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!**

And 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.

**Paul Continues to Address the Saints at Rome**

**Romans 1:9&10**

**9 For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the preaching of the gospel of His Son, is my witness as to how unceasingly I make mention of you,**

**10 always in my prayers making request, if perhaps now at last by the will of God I may succeed in coming to 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 such thing 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.

## Notes