

The Book Of Romans
The Good News Of God Part 3
Session 5

Romans 1:5-7 (NASB)

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.*

The story is told of a very wealthy man who had many valuable art treasures.

His only son was quite ordinary but was dearly loved. When the son died unexpectedly as a young man, the father was so deeply grieved that he died a few months later.

The fathers will stipulated that at his death all his art works were to be publicly auctioned and that a painting of his son was to be auctioned first.

On the day of the action the specified painting was displayed and the bidding was opened. Because neither the boy nor the artist were well known, a long time passed without a bid being offered.

Finally, a long time servant of the father and friend of the boy timidly bid seventy five cents, all the money he had. When there were no other bids, the painting was given to the servant.

At that point the sale was stopped and an official read the remainder of the will, which specified that whoever cared enough for his son to buy the painting of him would receive all the rest of the estate.

This story illustrates God's provision for fallen mankind.

Anyone who loves and receives His Son, Jesus Christ, will inherit the heavenly Father's estate, as it were.

The good news of God is that everyone who receives His Son by faith is blessed; how? listen

Ephesians 1:3 (NASB)

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,*

That is why Paul could say this;

2 Corinthians 8:9 (NASB)

⁹ *For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich.*

Quoting Isaiah, the apostle declared that the Christian's riches include;

1 Corinthians 2:9 (NASB)

⁹ *but just as it is written, "THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD, AND which HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM."*

And that comes from;

Isaiah 64:4 (NASB)

⁴ *For from days of old they have not heard or perceived by ear, Nor has the eye seen a God besides You, Who acts in behalf of the one who waits for Him.*

Isaiah 65:17 (NASB)

¹⁷ *"For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former things will not be remembered or come to mind.*

In Christ the believer has riches beyond any imagination. The Christian has life that will never end (**John 3:16**), a spring of water that will never dry up (**John 4:14**), a gift that will never be lost (**John 6:37, 39**), a love from which he can never be separated (**Rom 8:39**), a calling that will never be revoked (**Romans 11:29**), a foundation that will never be destroyed (**2Tim 2:19**), and an inheritance that will never diminish (**1Pet 1:4-5**)

In the scripture for this study tonight, **Rom 1:5-7**, Paul continues to summarize the good news, describing it's;

Provision (**v 5a**)

Its Proclamation an purpose (**vv 5b-6**)

And its Privileges (**v 7**)

THE PROVISION OF THE GOOD NEWS

Romans 1:5a (NASB)

⁵ *through whom we have received grace and apostleship*

Paul here mentions two important provisions of the good news of God:

Conversion, which is by God's **grace**, and **vocation**, which is Paul's case was **apostleship**.

It is possible that Paul was speaking of the specific grace of apostleship, but it seems more probable that he was referring to, or at least including the grace by which every believer comes into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Grace is unmerited, unearned favor, in which a believer himself does not and cannot contribute anything of worth.

We are familiar with the verses in Ephesians;

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NASB)

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.*

Grace is God's loving mercy, through which He grants salvation as a gift to those who trust in His Son.

When any person places his trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, God sovereignly breathes into that person His own divine life.

Christians are alive spiritually because they have been born from above, created anew with the very life of God Himself.

A believer has no cause for self-congratulations, because he contributes nothing at all to his salvation.

Human achievement has no place in the divine working of God's saving **grace**.

Romans 3:24 (NASB)

²⁴ *being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;*

This is a redemption in which man's work and man's boasting are totally excluded;

Romans 3:27-28 (NASB)

²⁷ *Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith.*

²⁸ *For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.*

Salvation does not come by baptism, by confirmation, by communion, by church membership, by church attendance, by keeping the Ten Commandments, by trying to live up to the Sermon on the mount, by serving other people, or even by serving God.

It does not come by simply believing that there is a God or that Jesus Christ is His Son.

Even the demons recognize such truths.

It comes only when a person repenting of sin receives by faith the gracious provision of forgiveness offered by God through the atoning work of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The great preacher Donald Barnhouse observed, "love that gives upward is worship, love that goes outward is affection; love that stoops is grace"

In an unimaginable divine condescension, God looked down on sinful, fallen mankind and graciously offered His Son for its redemption.

John 3:16-17 (NASB)

¹⁶ *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.*

¹⁷ *"For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.*

The dying words of one ancient saint were, "Grace is the only thing that can make us like God. I might be dragged through heaven, earth, and hell and I would still be the same sinful, polluted wretch unless God Himself should cleanse me by His grace."

Another provision of the Good News of God is His calling believers into His service, which is a form of **apostleship**. Paul opens the epistle by speaking of himself, and he resumes his personal comments in verses 8-15.

In verses 2-4 he speaks about Jesus Christ.

But from the end of verse 4 through verse 7 he is speaking about believers in general and about those in Rome in particular.

Paul had already mentioned his own calling and office as an apostle in verse 1, and it is therefore reasonable to launch from this reference to his **apostleship** to discuss God's divine calling and sending of all believers.

The Greek term *apostolos*, which normally is simply transliterated as *apostle*, has the basic meaning of "one who is sent".

God sovereignly chose thirteen men in the early church to the *office* of apostle, giving them unique divine authority to proclaim and miraculously authenticate the gospel.

The writer of Hebrews even refers to Jesus Christ as an apostle (**Heb 3:1**)

But every person who belongs to God through faith in Christ is an apostle in a more general sense of being sent by Him into the world as His messenger and witness.

Thus we are called to serve as well.

A victor at an ancient Greek Olympic game is said to have been asked, "Spartan, what will you gain by this victory?" He replied, "I, sir, shall have the honor to fight on the front line for my king."

That spirit should typify everyone for whom Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior.

THE PROCLAMATION AND PURPOSE OF THE GOOD NEWS

Romans 1:5 (NASB)

⁵ *to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles,*

Like Paul, every believer is called not only to salvation and to service but to witness for Christ in order to bring about the obedience of faith in others.

Notice how Paul uses this phrase again at the end of the letter;

Romans 16:25-26 (NASB)

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;*

A person who claims faith in Jesus Christ but whose pattern of life is utter disobedience to God's Word has never been redeemed and is living a lie.

Faith that does not manifest itself in obedient living is spurious and worthless.

James 1:14-26 (NASB)

¹⁴ *But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.*

¹⁵ *Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.*

¹⁶ *Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.*

¹⁷ *Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.*

¹⁸ *In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.*

¹⁹ *This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger;*

²⁰ *for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God.*

²¹ *Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.*

²² *But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.*

²³ *For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror;*

²⁴ *for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was.*

²⁵ *But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.*

²⁶ *If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless.*

Now listen we are not saved in the least part by works, no matter how seemingly good; but as already noted, we are saved to good works.

That is the purpose of salvation as far as our earthly lives are concerned.

Ephesians 2:10 (NASB)

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

The message of the gospel is to call people to the obedience of faith, which is here used as a synonym for salvation.

It is not that faith plus obedience equals salvation, but that obedient faith equals salvation.

To call men to the **obedience of faith** is to fulfill the Great Commission, to bring men to Jesus Christ and to the observance of everything He commands in His Word.

Matthew 28:19-20 (NASB)

¹⁹ *"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,*

²⁰ *teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*

God has many titles and names in Scripture, but in both testaments He is most frequently referred to as Lord, which speaks of His sovereign right to order and to rule all things and all people, and most especially His own people.

To belong to God in a relationship of **obedience** is to recognize that salvation includes being in submission to His Lordship.

Scripture recognizes no other saving relationship to Him.

Some years ago it was written that a Pastor was riding in a car with a Professor from a well-known Evangelical Seminary, and as they were riding along they passed a unusually large liquor store.

And when the Pastor made a comment about the store the Professor said it was one of a large chain of liquor stores in the city owned by a man that went to his church and was a regular attender of an adult Sunday school class. The Professor also said that the man was a member of a discipleship group, and that he met with the man every week.

The Pastor asked, "doesn't the kind of business he is in bother you?, and the Professor said, "O Yes, we talk about it frequently, but he feels that people who drink are going to buy their liquor somewhere and that it might as well be in his stores"

The Pastor taken back by this asked if the rest of the man's life was in order?, the Professor replied that the man had left his wife and was living with a young woman presently.

The Pastor responded, and he still comes to church and the discipleship class each week?

The Professor sighed and said, Yes, and you know sometimes it's hard for me to understand how a Christian can live like that, to which the Pastor responded, "have you ever considered that he may not be a Christian at all?

Listen, a theology that refuses to recognize the lordship of Jesus Christ for every believer is a theology that contradicts the very essence of biblical Christianity.

Romans 10:9-10 (NASB)

⁹ *that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;*

¹⁰ *for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.*

Peter also declares;

Acts 2:36 (NASB)

³⁶ *"Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified."*

The heart of Jesus teaching in the Sermon on the Mount is that faith without obedience is not saving faith, but is certain evidence that a person is following the wide and delusive road of the world that leads to destruction, rather than the narrow road of God that leads to eternal life.

Matthew 7:13-14 (NASB)

¹³ *"Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it.*

¹⁴ *"For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.*

On the other hand merely calling Jesus Lord, even while doing seemingly important work in His name, is worthless unless those works are done from faith, are done in accord with His Word, and are directed and empowered by His Holy Spirit.

With sobering intensity, Jesus plainly declared that truth;

Matthew 7:22-27 (NASB)

²² *"Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?'*

²³ *"And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'*

²⁴ *"Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock.*

²⁵ *"And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock.*

²⁶ *"Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand.*

²⁷ *"The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell—and great was its fall."*

As you can see Jesus went on to explain, the person who claims Him but lives in continual disobedience of His Word is building a religious house on sand, which will eventually wash away and leave him without God and without hope.

Hebrews 12:14 (NASB)

¹⁴ *Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.*

As with Paul then, who was called uniquely to the Gentiles, but also at times gave the gospel to the Jews as well, we are to proclaim the gospel to all men, Jew and Gentile alike in order to bring them to the obedience of faith.

Next time we will talk of the purpose and the privilege of the Good News