

## [Romans 1:2 – 13]

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~ Our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God is examining the Gospel manifesto to the world in the epistle the apostle Paul wrote to the Romans. This letter will speak directly to the hearts of all who will listen; but, at the same time, it is so extremely personal that it was written only for you, my beloved reader who loves the Lord Jesus Christ. Just as Paul wrote specifically to believers in the city of Rome whom he had personally formed relationships with, in order to win them to Christ, I write likewise specifically to you in this safari. I may not have led you to Christ, but if I cannot lead you closer to Him, then I have failed miserably.

Our previous report took us only through verse four. If you read both reports from Romans thus far, I am sure you now understand the overwhelming importance of this section of Scripture. If not, then again, I have failed you. Dr. William Kelley made this statement, *"... take any part of the Old Testament and compare it to these opening words of Romans and you'll discover how immense and evident the difference is of the main character and scope. There is nothing comparable in neither the five books of Moses nor the historical books that follow. In vain will we search the Psalms or the poetic books of the Bible for anything that even approaches a parallel. Not even the prophets prescribe or predict such a state of the glorious things that are spoken of for the nation Israel regarding mercy from God; which will never fail to reach and bless poor Gentiles, bringing deliverance and joy in this long travailing world, and lower creation in general! Nothing else in the Word of God resembles the tone of even only the preface and salutation of this epistle to the Roman saints."*

Well, that's the reason we are spending so much time with this lesson – because it is just that wonderful! We seemed to have rushed our last report, because there is so much spiritual truth to discover. The Gospel was promised aforetime by the prophets in the Old Testament, and this is the Gospel of God in the New Testament, because He originated it – not Paul. As we saw, this Gospel is all about the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ and nothing else. There is a difference between religion and genuine

Christianity, friends. Christianity is a *PERSON*, and that Person is Jesus Christ! This epistle concerns Him....

## ***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;***

~ Christ is from the human line of King David according to the flesh. When we consider the genealogies given to us in Matthew and Luke, we can only conclude Jesus was virgin born. Well, this is His humanity. Jesus was declared, marked out and made our "*horizon*" – as we have seen – not *TO BE* but *AS* the Son of God; with power from on high. All of this has been revealed according to the Spirit of Holiness by the resurrection from the dead. The resurrection of Christ Jesus confirms and proves everything to our understanding, friends. Our expedition through the entire Word of God has implicitly and explicitly maintained the fact that this Book of the Bible is all about Jesus Christ. In fact, our safari seeks to find Christ in His deity and glory on every single page of Scripture; and that's not always easy to do.

We have seen Jesus in the days of His flesh, walking the face of His earth. He was – and is – despised and rejected completely by man in His day, and today. We saw His humanity as He wearily sat down to rest by a well in Samaria; subsequently being brought to ignominy and shame and, ultimately, death upon a cursed cross. However, even in that wretched state there came a time He was raised from the dead. Jesus was accurate when He said, "*ye are from beneath but I am from above; ye are of this world but I am not of this world!*" That's when His body came forth from the grave declaring death cannot keep Him.

Remember, at His first miracle during the wedding in Canaan, He said to Mary, "*woman, my hour has not yet come.*" Hanging there on the cross He looked down at her and said, "*woman, behold your Son!*" Then His hour *HAD* come! The days of walking through the treacherous and dusty roads of this world were over for Him at that time. And Jesus had already told the apostles this would happen and that He would be coming back from the dead in mighty power.

There is another great truth here because we can see Him presently as the resurrected Christ. We can see Christ physically seated at the right hand of God in the Heavens making intercession for us at this moment, His church – believers – and bringing them power and comfort. The statement has been made that there is a Man in the Glory – even though the church today has lost sight of Him. That just happens to be something today that desperately needs to be recovered. What does the Lord Jesus Christ mean to *YOU* today, friends? Is the True and Living Christ a Person that you are having regular contact with? Another thing we see by His resurrection is that He is coming as the Judge! He is going to put down sin and reign in righteousness on this earth. Christ is going to judge the earth and judge mankind....

***4 And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:***

***5 By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name:***

~ Those are the things Paul said to glib Athenian philosophers in his day. We ought not think the Son of God is as gold or silver graven in art by man's device. The time of this ignorance, God winked at, but now commands all men everywhere to repent. God has appointed a day in which He will judge this world; judging a righteous judgment by that Man Whom He hath ordained whereof He hath given assurance unto all men in that He has raised Him from the dead! It is an absolute and a solemn fact. Period. Christ has been raised from the dead. You and I will appear before Him when our flesh perishes. We'll either be raised unto everlasting life, or unto everlasting torment. We will either stand before Him as one who has trusted Him as our Savior; or we will stand before Him in judgment of our sins. If you have rejected Him, condemnation *MUST* be upon you; according to His Holy decree. That is the pledge Jesus made by oath, sworn by Himself....

***6 Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:***

~ We can never stand before God in our own righteousness, my beloved. If we even attempt that, we have *already* been consigned to a lost eternity! Only when we trust Him as our Savior can we be delivered from death and from hell, and the terrible and terrifying torments the grave holds. I find myself having a difficult time explaining how important and how thrilling this all really is. When the unbeliever laughs at death, I know they are either insincere or insane. The only question is: which?

God saves us by grace. We have all been saved – if we are saved – by grace, because that is God’s *ONLY* means whereby He saves! We would never be able to be saved if God had not been absolutely gracious. “*Apostleship*” in verse five defines those who were *TECHNICALLY* apostles. Even so, every believer is a “*sent one*” and that is what the Greek word “*apostello*” means. It means one has been sent with a message as a witness. We receive grace in apostleship. My friend, your life ought to be counting for something somewhere today. You ought to be doing something to get the Word of God out to the world. Across the globe, men and women have been waiting for a means to get the Word of God taught properly, correctly and completely to the entire world – and today, we just happen to have that opportunity. So, what are *YOU* doing with your grace and apostleship to get the Word of God out to the world today?

This was all done “*for the obedience of faith of all nations for His Name.*” We find this statement again in the last chapter of Romans verse nineteen; regarding the “*obedience of faith!*” That verse tells us our obedience has come abroad unto all men. It is also mentioned again in verse twenty-six of chapter sixteen. God saves us by faith – not by works. However, after we are saved, God is going to talk to us about works. After we are saved, God will be very interested in our obedience unto Him in faith as demonstrated by our works.

See, there is a huge difference between today’s easy-believism and true saving faith. Everyone seems to talk about believing in Jesus, but they serve Satan with their mouth and deeds. If you have a genuine saving faith, it will make you obedient unto the Lord Jesus Christ – you can just write that down. There is a big difference in faiths. You can have faith in the wrong

thing. What is important is the object of said faith. The faith that trusts Christ is a faith that believes Him.

I believe George Washington was our first recorded president and father of the United States of America. I also believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. However, my faith in believing Washington was a great historical figure has never done anything for me. It has *NOTHING* to do with my salvation; and it has less than very little to do with my life. My faith in the Lord Jesus is something else altogether different – because it is saving faith. Saving faith means you and I come to the place where we surrender to the Son of God Who loved us and gave Himself to die for our sins.

We have a whole lot of religious racketeers running around today – even fundamentalists – who give out the basic facts and talk about the pre-millennial coming of Christ. We also have modernistic seducers. Our doctrine is different because it demands a discipline and a *DOING*. If you do not combine *both* aspects of living faith in Christ *and* works for Him, then you can forget about being the salt of the earth! Salt is made up of *two* poisons, by the way; sodium and chloride. If you consume either one of those by themselves you'll be dead momentarily. The only way is to trust and obey; we can never delight in His love until all on the altar we lay. For the favor He shows and the joy He bestows are for those who will trust and obey! My friends, there is no other way to be happy in Jesus until we trust and obey Him.

The reason for the Gospel record is *obedience of faith*! That means saving faith; which is what Paul is talking about. The "*call*" in verse six refers to the elect. The "*called*" are those who heard Him. Some do not hear, and others ignore the call. Jesus made it very clear His sheep hear His voice. Christ knows His sheep and they follow *HIM*! So, if you're following somebody else, or something else, then you haven't heard Him. If that is the case, Jesus is *NOT* your Shepherd. Whosoever will may come. Jesus calls and you either answer or you don't; if you don't answer, you are not the elect. If you answer, you are the elect. Honestly, that's as far as my simple mind can follow the doctrine of election....

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

~ Once again, the words “to be” in verse seven are not in our better manuscripts. Those whom God loves in Rome were called saints. This is the name for every believer. Actually, a “saint” is *NOT* one who has been exalted. A “saint” is one who exalts the Lord Jesus Christ! There is a big difference. “Saint” is a name for every believer today, too. There are only two classes of people in this world – “saints” and “aint’s!”

Men today either believe or they don’t; and there is no other distinction between them. If we have trusted Christ, then we are saints. The designation has nothing to do with our character or contribution. It means we have been set aside for His use and for His good pleasure! Those who are set aside for Christ are the “beloved of God!” In our previous report, Paul was self-labeled as a bond slave of Jesus. Those who are beloved of God are the ones who receive grace and peace by the Lord Jesus Christ. If that is you, then you will gladly make yourself His servant. We’re going to have a lot to learn about grace and peace as we move along, so we won’t develop it right here. All of us either obey some person or something in this world, my friends. Who or what do you obey? ~

***8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.***

***9 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;***

***10 Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you.***

***11 For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established;***

***12 That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.***

~ By the time Paul wrote this epistle, the Gospel had gone out to the entire known world. Everyone knew about the church that had come into existence and about their faith in a resurrected Christ. The empire was saturated with the knowledge that many in Rome were turning to the Lord Jesus. In fact, the emperors were disturbed about this. It won't be long before persecution breaks out like a wildfire upon believers in Rome. Has anyone ever heard about you and your testimony? What's your testimony worth in this world, friends? Anything?

Paul, obviously, had a long prayer list and never stopped praying. He was praying for a prosperous journey to visit believers in Rome. Well, the account of how Paul finally reached Rome doesn't seem like a prosperous journey to me. Traveling as a prisoner, he went through the storm and was shipwrecked – and, if that wasn't enough, he ended up being bitten by a viper. Well, either way, Paul went to Rome by the will of God; because Paul wanted to go there for *ONE* reason: to teach the Word of God! Paul *LOVED* to teach the Word of God because Christ is all that mattered to him.

Any preacher that does not completely love teaching the Word of God becomes a clergy man or an administrator. More realistically, that man becomes a mere promoter! When that happens, they are not a man of God any longer. They sure aren't ministers of the Word of God. Any man who doesn't enjoy preaching needs to do something else. Well, Paul not only communicated something to these people, but these people communicated something to Paul. Everyone was mutually blessed by the Word of God. Paul was always blessed by ministering to others; as will we when we actually learn how....

***13 Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was hindered hitherto) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles ~***