

SBC – Aug. 6, 2023
Romans 1:5-7 (NKJV)
“The Obedience Of Faith”

2

Prayer:

Slide # 1

Romans

Theme: The Righteousness of God – The Gospel of God

Outline:

- **Prologue:** 1:1-17
- **Doctrinal:** 1:18-8:39
 - God's holiness – man's sinfulness – 1:18-3:20
 - Justification by grace through faith – 3:21-5:21
 - Sanctification of the believer – 6:1-8:39
- **Dispensational:** 9:1-11:36 (The place of Israel and the church)
- **Practical:** 12:1-15:33 (Duties and privileges of the believer)
- **Epilogue:** 16:1-27

Romans 1:1-7 is one sentence in the Greek. We find here in this single sentence the main thrust of the entire book. Right out of the gate in verse 1 Paul mentions “**the gospel of God**” which is the BIG IDEA that carries the entire sentence.

It is to this gospel that Paul as an apostle was separated to. It is this gospel that was prophetically promised in the OT Scriptures. And this gospel is about God's Son – Jesus Christ our Lord Who was born of the seed of David and declared to the Son of God in the resurrection.

Paul now continues his thought in regard to this gospel concerning the resurrected Christ and how we must respond in order to be saved.

Romans 1:5–7 (NKJV)

5 Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name,

It is through the resurrected Christ that Paul says he has received grace and apostleship. The “**we**” here is thought to be what we call an “**editorial we**” or the “**we of apostolic authority**”. Because of what Paul goes on to say regarding the “nations” (lit. “Gentiles”) it is thought that essentially only Paul is in view as he uniquely is specifically called “**an apostle to the Gentiles**” (Rom. 11:13; cf. Acts 9:15, 22:21; Gal. 1:16).

Note back in verse one Paul links his calling to be an apostle to being separated to the gospel. And then here in verse 5 he closely links “grace and apostleship”. The linkage is such that the sense here seems to in essence be the “grace of apostleship”.

Grace is received and never earned. Paul was not a self-appointed man but rather positioned as an apostle solely by God's grace. Grace is God's unmerited favor. It was the risen Christ that gave specially gifted men to the Church as seen in Eph. 4:10-11.

Slide # 2

Ephesians 4:10–11 (NKJV)

10 He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)

11 And **He Himself gave** some to be **apostles**, some **prophets**, some **evangelists**, and some **pastors and teachers**,

This text refers to specially gifted people and not to an office. And they are uniquely given to the Church by Christ. They are quite literally Christ's gift to the Church. Each one of these gifted people have a special role in relation to the ministry of the Word. The apostles and their close associates had a special revelatory role as they laid the foundation of New Testament truth that the Church then builds on going forward. You only lay a foundation ONCE. The foundation is the NT we now build on and it is complete.

Slide # 3

Ephesians 2:20 (NKJV)

20 having been built on the **foundation of the apostles** and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone,

Ephesians 3:5 (NKJV)

5 which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has **now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets:**

The grace here in Romans 1:5 that links with apostleship is not saving grace, but grace related to special apostolic service (cf. Rom. 15:15-16; 1 Cor. 15:9-10; Gal. 1:15; 2:9; 1 Tim. 1:12-14).

Slide # 4

Ephesians 3:8 (NKJV)

8 To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, **this grace was given**, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,

What God calls a person to do He graces them to do. Paul was privileged to be an apostle and he was spiritually fitted for the task.

And to what end was he graced to be an apostle – well for the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles. Note that the definite article is not in the Greek. It does not literally say “**for obedience to the faith**” (as in referring to the body of truth called the faith), but rather “**for obedience to faith**” as in the sense of personal subjective faith. The goal of Paul’s apostleship was to bring people to personal faith in Christ through the gospel.

This is very important in properly understanding the book of Romans, and in understanding the nature of what is involved in a saving faith commitment.

Paul both begins and ends the book of Romans with this KEY emphasis on the obedience of faith. These are the two book ends of the book and in essence give the purpose statement for Christ giving Paul the grace of apostleship (cf. Rom. 15:15-16). It was to the end that people come to the obedience of faith.

Slide # 5

Romans 1:5 (ESV)

5 through whom we have received grace and apostleship **to bring about the obedience of faith** for the sake of his name among all the nations,

Romans 16:25–26 (ESV)

25 Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages

26 but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, **to bring about the obedience of faith**—

And in between these two bookends Paul throughout the book of Romans consistently depicts the act of saving faith as being a response of obedience.

Slide # 6

Romans 6:17 (NKJV)

17 But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet **you obeyed from the heart** that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.

Romans 10:3 (NKJV)

3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have **not submitted** to the righteousness of God.

Slide # 7**Romans 10:16 (NKJV)**

16 But they have **not all obeyed the gospel**. For Isaiah says, "LORD, who has believed our report?"

Romans 15:18 (NKJV)

18 For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, **to make the Gentiles obedient—**

Slide # 8**Romans 1:8 (NKJV)**

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

Romans 16:19 (NKJV)

19 For **your obedience has become known to all**. Therefore I am glad on your behalf; but I want you to be wise in what is good, and simple concerning evil.

Not only is this emphasis on obedience in conjunction with saving faith emphasized in Romans but is also seen in the rest of the NT as well.

Slide # 9**Acts 6:7 (NKJV)**

7 Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests **were obedient to the faith.**

2 Thessalonians 1:8 (NKJV)

8 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who **do not obey the gospel** of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 1:22 (NKJV)

22 Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart,

The word “obedience” (Gk. hupakoe) here in Romans 1:5 is a combination of 2 Greek words (cf. Rom. 1:5; 5:19; 6:16; 15:18; 16:19, 26).

Slide # 10

Obedience = Hupakoe

Hupo = under – Akouo = hear

Literally meaning: “**hear under**” with the idea of listening and submitting to that which is heard.

Justifying faith is itself an act of obedience. God commands all men everywhere to repent (Acts 17:30). It is God’s commandment that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ” (1 Jn. 3:23). It is not a suggestion – but a command to be obeyed.

Slide # 11

Some understand this as the obedience which faith produces; but the usual import of the expression, as well as the connection in this place, determines it to apply to the belief of the Gospel. Obedience is no doubt an effect produced by that belief; but the office of an Apostle was, in the first place, to persuade men to believe the Gospel. ... It was given that men might believe and be saved. The obedience, then, here referred to, signifies submission to the doctrine of the Gospel. (Haldane, R. An Exposition of Romans) – **Robert Haldane**

The heart of Paul’s gospel ministry was to see people come to saving faith – which response he here calls “**the obedience of faith**”. He didn’t say “the faith” but rather just “faith” in the sense of subjective personal faith. This was the core of Paul’s frontline apostolic ministry – to share the gospel and to take the gospel where it never been before (Rom. 15:20).

Slide # 12

Acts 20:21 (NKJV)

21 testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

Acts 26:17-18 (NKJV)

17 I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the **Gentiles, to whom I now send you,**

18 to **open** their eyes, in order to **turn** them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified **by faith in Me.**'

Also, note that the whole context of this emphasis on “obedience to faith” is set in relation to Paul’s apostolic GOSPEL ministry. It is the gospel of God that drives the entire first 7 verses of the letter.

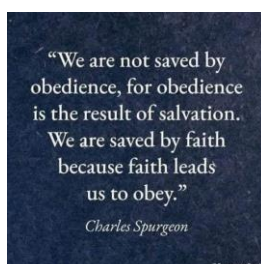
There are 3 key points Paul is making in these first 7 verses. First is the fact of the gospel which his apostleship was separated unto. Everything builds on this. Second then is the substance of the gospel which is found in the person of Christ. Thirdly, is the saving response to the gospel which Paul here terms “the obedience of faith”. The heart of Paul’s whole ministry was the gospel of Christ and bringing people to faith.

All of this argues strongly that the obedience of faith in view is referring to personal saving faith.

Paul could have just said that his apostleship was with a view to faith among the Gentiles, but he clarified it as being “***for obedience to faith***”. The addition of “***for obedience to***” speaks to the very nature of saving faith – showing it involves a volitional element. Obedience inherently involves an element of submission, or yielding, involving the will.

The gospel is the truth that must be obeyed. This is consistent with Paul emphasizing in Romans 10:9-10 that it is “with the heart one believes”.

I am not one to readily quibble with Charles Spurgeon – the prince of preachers, but there is a quote of his that I think needs to be clarified.

Slide # 13

Slide # 14

We are not saved by the obedience OF WORKS, for the obedience OF WORKS is the result of salvation. However, we are saved by the OBEDIENCE OF FAITH.

- Obedience of faith = Salvation
- Obedience of works = Fruit of Salvation

In this age we are now under a “**law of faith**” (as Paul terms it in Romans 3:27); and God’s law of faith demands that people now in faith submit to the gospel truth of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Slide # 15

The object of the apostleship received through Christ is obedience of faith, *i.e.*, the obedience which consists in faith (but *cf.* Acts 6:7) among all the Gentiles. – **Expositor’s Greek Testament**

Paul’s entire apostolic mission was to bring people to be submissively obedient to the gospel. It is the element of obedience that defines the very nature of saving faith as explained by Paul (*cf.* Acts 20:21; 26:17-18).

It is not without interest that this epistle, which puts such stress on the free salvation won for us by Christ’s atoning act, should also stress the importance of obedient response. – **Leon Morris**

Yes, indeed that is of great interest and what exactly is the nuance of this emphasis? Well, note the context of what Paul has first and foremost laid out in this all important foundational sentence regarding the gospel. Note the flow of thought is what proper understanding is all about.

Slide # 16

v. 1 **Apostle**...separated to the gospel of God

v. 3...concerning His Son Jesus Christ **our Lord**

v. 4...declared to be the **Son of God** with power

v. 5 **Apostleship** for the obedience of faith

*The apostolic COMMISSION is the gospel for the obedience of faith and its SUBJECT is “Jesus Christ our Lord” – “the Son of God”.

So ‘obedience of faith’ is [Paul’s] definition of the response which the gospel demands. ... A true and living faith in Jesus Christ includes within itself an element of submission (cf. 10:3), especially because its object is ‘Jesus Christ our Lord’ (4). – **John Stott**

This is the salient point that Paul makes in his opening statement! Jesus is our Lord-God and Paul’s apostleship existed to bring people to the obedience of faith in Him. This obedience of faith recognizes Jesus as personal Lord and Savior! This and nothing short of this is the obedience of faith.

Having shown that saving faith involves the obedience of faith let me make a couple of applications.

- 1) This definition of saving faith destroys easy believism which refuses to recognize any element of submissive obedience in the act of saving faith. It sees faith as a purely passive concept of relying upon but not that of submission to Christ’s Lordship. But obedience by its very nature is an act of the will involving an element of submission. And the context is strongly Lordship!
- 2) This definition of saving faith refutes a hyper deterministic theology that says faith is just a gift and that no human response is involved. Obedience of faith is clearly a human response. God doesn’t just zap people with faith. Yes, He in grace works to bring people to faith, but there is also the element of human responsibility and human response. It’s called “***the obedience of faith***”.

Some strong Calvinists see the notion of demanding the obedience of faith for salvation as being a work. They call it things like “***decisional regeneration***”. Well, obedience does involve a decision. Regeneration is all God’s doing, but faith involves human response. They say that the very act of believing is a work. But that is not how Paul defines it. Paul presents grace and works as an antithesis as well as faith and works, but he never places faith in opposition to grace.

Slide # 17

Romans 4:16 (NKJV)

16 Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all

Faith is not works, but rather faith is according to grace! To call people to believe is not works.

To think that God just zaps people with faith flies in the face of all that the NT teaches regarding human responsibility. People have to come to the knowledge of the truth (which God desires all to do – 1 Tim. 2:3-4) and then they have to OBEY that truth by putting their faith in Christ as Lord and Savior.

We are not saved by works, but we are saved by faith – by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8-9). We are not saved by the obedience of works, but we are saved by the obedience of faith – which is according to grace – not contrary to it. Jesus the Lord alone is Savior, but faith is the God ordained means of appropriation.

Paul's apostolic calling was special because he had a unique role in relation to the Gentiles. In Romans 11:13 Paul said, "***I am an apostle to the Gentiles***" (cf. Gal. 1:16; 2:8; Eph. 3:1). When he says his apostleship was for the obedience of faith among all nations it more literally reads "***among all the Gentiles***" (cf. NASB).

Slide # 18

Romans 1:13 (NKJV)

13 Now I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that I often planned to come to you (but was hindered until now), that I might have some fruit among you also, **just as among the other Gentiles.**

And the reason behind Paul's special apostleship for the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles is for the sake of Jesus. It is for His name. His name stands for His whole person – all that He is. Bringing Gentiles to the obedience of faith was all for Jesus! Paul's apostleship was on behalf of Christ's name. It was all about Jesus!

The purpose of Paul's apostleship was to promote the obedience of faith; the scope was in relation to all Gentiles; and the motive was for Christ's sake.

Slide # 19

Acts 9:15–16 (NKJV)

15 But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine **to bear My name** before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel.

16 For I will show him how many things he must suffer **for My name's sake.**

In the first 5 verses of Romans there are seven key truths brought out about the gospel. 1) It finds its origin in God – it is the gospel of God; 2) Paul's apostleship was for the promotion of this gospel; 3) its attestation is the prophetic OT Scriptures; 4) its substance is God's Son who is our Lord; 5) its purpose is to bring people to the obedience of faith; 6) its scope includes all the Gentiles; and 7) its ultimate goal is for the name (cause) of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Slide# 20

Romans 1:1-5

SEVEN PREPOSITIONS OF THE GOSPEL

OF God
THROUGH Paul's apostleship
ACCORDING to the prophetic Scriptures
ABOUT Christ
UNTO the obedience of faith
FOR the all the Gentiles
FOR the sake of Christ's name

6 among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ;

Paul has just mentioned the "Gentiles" in verse 5 and now he says, "***among who you also are the called of Jesus Christ***". This implies that the Church in Rome was predominately Gentile at this point. However, we know from the contents of the letter that it was comprised of both Jew and Gentile believers in terms of background (cf. Rom. 2:17-29; 4:1; 7:1 – Jews; 1:13; 11:13-24; 15:15-21 – Gentiles).

These Gentile believers in Rome who have come to the obedience of faith are termed "***the called of Jesus Christ***". Paul uses this same word "called" in verse 1 to refer to his own special calling as an apostle.

As a footnote; note that in Acts 9:15 Jesus said Paul was "a chosen vessel" and then in Romans 1:1 Paul says he was "called to be an apostle". The idea of chosen and called are essentially interchangeable in this regard.

The word “**called**” simply means “**summoned**”. They were summoned by Jesus Christ. The “called” as used by Paul always refers to those who have responded in saving faith to the gospel. As used by Paul it is always refers to an effectual call. So the called are those who have heard the gospel call of Jesus and responded to it with the obedience of faith. The called are those who have answered the call. They have responded in saving faith!

In calling them “**the called**” Paul is indicating that it was God who took in the **initiative** in saving them. God is always in the initiator. When Adam fell in sin it wasn’t Adam who went looking for God. Rather, it was God Who called to Adam, “**Where are you?**” (Gen. 3:9).

This is always the direction. God always must take the initiative because in our depravity, “**There is none who seeks after God**” (Rom. 3:11). Apart from divine intervention there is no hope! God is the One Who calls. Jesus said, “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.” (Jn. 10:27).

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

To all who are in Rome refers to all those who have responded to the obedience of faith – that is the called of Jesus Christ. It is thought that Paul addresses them this way “**all who are in Rome**” because it seems probable that there were several different assemblies of believers in Rome and not just a single church. The language in Romans 16 may suggest that Paul has in view a number of “**home church**” groups (cf. Rom. 16:5; 10-11; 14).

Remember Rome was a city thought to have more than a million people, so very possibly there were a number of different church groups represented.

Paul further refers to them as “**beloved of God**”. God loves the whole world (all the people of the world) as seen in John 3:16. But it is the called – the saints, who are called “**beloved of God**” (cf. Rom. 1:7; 12:19; 16:5, 8, 9, 12). The unsaved are never called “beloved”.

A man, even may, and should, love his neighbors; but his wife and children are “his beloved.” – **William Newell**

As God’s people we uniquely know the special intimate reality of God’s love. We enter into the reality of it.

Fellow believers, we are loved by God! We need to get used to this, but we should never get over it. – **R. Kent Hughes**

And then Paul says these believers are “called to be saints”. Actually, the words “**to be**” are not in the Greek. More literally he just says, “called saints” (Gk. hagios).

The word *saints* means “*set apart ones*” or “*holy ones*”. In the NT all believers are positionally called “saints”. This refers to positional sanctification. The moment you believe in Christ you are instantly set apart to Christ as being holy. Instantly the blood of Jesus forever cleanses you from all sin. This is your position forever. You are forever a saint.

Slide # 21

Hebrews 10:14 (NKJV)

14 For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.

This verse contains the truth of both positional sanctification (perfected forever) and also practical sanctification (being sanctified). Positionally we are perfected forever, but in our practice we are growing to be more like Christ. In our practice we won't be perfect until we get to glory. We are in process. But our position as perfected saints never changes.

The Church at Corinth had all kinds of problems in their practice, but they were still saints.

Slide # 22

1 Corinthians 1:2 (NKJV)

2 To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

Some years back a certain Pope died. The headlines said, “***The Vatican clears John Paul for sainthood.***” How sad! Only God can change a sinner into a saint and that must happen BEFORE a person dies. Whatever state we die in there we will remain forever. People either die in sin or they die in Christ – all depending on whether they have come to the obedience of faith or not.

According to the Bible there are the saints (believers) and there are the aints. Everyone is one of those two categories. How often do we hear a professing believer say, "**Well, I am no saint.**" That is the equivalent of saying, "**Well, I am no Christian**".

In Christ, we are new creations - all things have become new (cf. 2 Cor. 5:17). The NT no longer sees the identity of the believer as that of being a SINNER. We were sinners but now we have been converted to being saints (cf. 1 Tim. 1:15-16). That is now our POSITION in Christ.

The word sinner is essentially interchangeable with "ungodly". We were ungodly sinners, but now in Christ we are saints (cf. Rom. 5:6-8). In practice we may still sin (cf. 1 Jn. 2:1-2) but our IDENTITY is now that of being a saint (cf. Rom. 6). As believers we are saints who may sin - we are not sinners who occasionally saint. By the way, "A Sinning Saint" is really a contradiction. We are not living consistent with who we are!

The issue for believers is to now live consistently with who we truly are as SAINTS! Yes, we all stumble in many ways, and yet He Who has begun a good work in us will continue it (Ja. 3:2; Phil. 1:6). God disciplines all His children (no exceptions) to build holiness into their lives (cf. Heb. 12:7-11). Isn't it amazing that we are called saints – all of us, even with all our imperfections, weaknesses, and struggles.

When Paul writes to 'all God's beloved in Rome who are called to be saints', he is writing, not to people likely to figure in stained-glass windows, but to a somewhat motley collection of shop-keepers, minor civil servants, converted prostitutes, prize-fighters and slaves. These are the people called to be God's 'holy ones'" – **S. Clive Thexton**

Slide # 23

The word [saint] is never used of any individual believer. It is always plural when used of believers, and the plural points to believers as a group, a community set apart for God. – **Leon Morris**

Isn't that interesting? Saints are always pictured as being a group. This is the very nature of the Church. We are a forever family intended by God to be together – to function together. The word "Church" literally means "called out assembly". You don't get saved in isolation. Immediately you are made a part of the family of God and God intends for us to function in that regard. We will do so for all eternity!

The word “saints” means “set apart ones” but the emphasis is not so much a separation FROM something as it is a separation TO God. The notion is that of belonging to God.

We used to belong to the rebel world system, we use to belong to the devil as his children, but now in the obedience of faith we are set apart to God. He has taken us out of the world and placed us in Christ. Our position has changed. Everything has changed. All the relationships of life are now different. Our relationship with the world, our relationship with sin, our relationship with the devil, our relationship with God and His people. We now as saints live under a whole new arrangement with Christ as our Master.

Slide # 24

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV)

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is **a new creation**; old things have passed away; behold, **all things have become new.**

And then finally after his long gospel introduction Paul gets to his standard salutation at the end of verse 7.

He says, “***Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.***”.

Paul in essence seems to have coined this greeting. In every one of his epistles these two words (grace and peace) appear together (cf. Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:3; Eph. 1:2; Phil. 1:2; Col. 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:2; 1 Tim. 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:2; Titus 1:4; and Phm 3).

Commonly in Paul’s day a Gentile writing a letter would begin with the Greek ***chairein*** which meant “greetings”. This word looked and sounded somewhat like the word for grace but is distinct from it.

So Paul changed it up a bit and started all his letters with the Greek word “Charis” which means “GRACE”.

Slide # 25

Chairein = Greetings

Charis = Grace

To this tweaked Gentile-based greeting Paul then added the traditional Jewish salutation of **peace** which corresponds to the Hebrew “Shalom”. Thus, many believe “**grace and peace**” became a Christianized form of the Aaronic blessing found in Numbers 6:24-26.

Slide # 26

Numbers 6:24–26 (NKJV)

24 “The LORD bless you and keep you;

25 The LORD make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you;
[GRACE]

26 The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace.” ’
[PEACE]

Grace refers to God’s unmerited favor. He is not referring to saving grace because he is addressing those who were already believers. Grace here refers to God’s unmerited favor of blessing. Grace always come first – it is always mentioned first because everything flows out of grace. God’s favor is continually upon His children. Continually we have all things working together for our good (Rom. 8:28). As John 1:16 says “**we have all received, grace upon grace**” – grace piled upon grace.

Peace is the idea that all is well – everything is as it should be. This is how it is in Christ for the believer. Ultimately all is well, so that we can sing “It is well with my soul”.

Many think that Paul perhaps united the Greek and Jewish modes of greeting – although he tweaked the Greek one. And perhaps he did this as part of his overall ministry emphasis to show that now in Christ both Jew and Gentile are one and equally receive all the spiritual blessings found in Christ.

But note very carefully that this benediction of grace and peace is not merely from Paul, but rather from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. This greeting is really from God – and Paul is just the messenger! What a great message to convey to God’s people.

“God has a message for you!” “What is it?” “God conveys His grace and peace to you! You are the recipient of His continual bestowal of grace and peace”. How wonderful!

Suppose the greeting would have been, “Be very much afraid, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ your harsh Master!”

Or, “Try harder or else from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”
Thankfully that is not the case!

Rather the message from God was “**Grace and Peace**”. You can go to sleep on that. You can rest in this message from God. Come what may God is ever extending His grace and peace to you as His child. Thirteen times Paul brings out this message from God. Every letter he ever wrote – this is always the message from God to His children. It never changes.

And note that Paul links God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. This shows equality – that they are on the same level. This blessing is equally from both which could only be true if Jesus was equal with God the Father. Just as grace and peace are always together and can never be separated, so also with God the Father and God the Son.

Father carries with it the idea of sovereign care giver and absolute ruler over all. It carries with the ideas of benevolence, love, discipline, and authority. God is the believers spiritual Father.

And note Paul uses the full name of Jesus – the Lord Jesus Christ. This full name is rich with meaning for all true believers. He is our Lord – our sovereign Master, He is Jesus meaning our “God-Savior” and He is the Christ – the special chosen One Who fulfills all God’s promises to His people.

The only people in the world who are the recipients of the blessings mentioned in verses 6 and 7 are those who have come to the obedience of faith.

Slide # 27

Obedience of Faith

- called of Jesus Christ
- beloved of God
- called saints
- grace to you
- peace to you

Romans has my name written all over it. You see I was raised in a Christian home. My godly mother made me memorize Scripture. I knew the truth of the gospel and yet I didn’t personalize it. Still, I wanted to claim I was a Christian. I definitely wanted fire insurance. However, I lived a double life. When I was 21 a newborn Christian (who had previously been an atheist) called me out. He said, “If you are a Christian why are you living the way you live?” And it was through his witness that I got saved.

On Christmas day of 1979 I wrote:

It's been the greatest year of my life. ... Oh, how great it is to be loved. ... May my life be to the honor and glory of Jesus who loves me and who is my MASTER and all the forces in hell can't separate us. AMEN.

When I went home to share with my mom what had happened to me she said, "***This is like night and day***". Exactly! My life was radically changed! It is amazing what a difference the obedience of faith makes!

One day as a new Christian I was reading through Romans and when I came to chapter 10 I read, "***with the heart one believes unto righteousness***". I instantly knew this is what my problem had been. Previously I had an intellectual assent and gave lip service to Christianity but it **wasn't real in my heart!** Even though I had had a form of godliness yet I had never come to the obedience of faith. It was the obedience of faith in which I truly appropriated Jesus as my Master that forever changed my life.

As I grew in faith I came to realize the ultimate issue in the Bible is having the right kind of faith which Paul defines as the obedience of faith. And this has been a major emphasis of my life ever since.

Let me ask you: Have you come to the obedience of faith? Have you from your heart believed on the Lord Jesus Christ? Is He truly your Master – your God-Master and Savior?

The Bible says now is the accepted time and today if you will hear His voice don't harden your heart. The last invitation in the Bible says "Come". No one can do it for you!

Slide # 28

John 3:36 (ESV)

36 Whoever **believes** in the Son has eternal life; whoever does **not obey** the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.

Have you obediently believed on the Son?

If we can help you in any way come and talk with one of us elders.

Come!