

Title: The Wonderful Gospel!

Text: Romans 1:5-7

Romans 1:5-7 NKJV - "Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name, among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ; 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."

As we continue through our study in the book of Romans, we are going to look at two important things today. Paul is going to show us the purpose of the Gospel, and then he's going to tell us about our identity as people from the Gospel!

• **The Gospel Purpose vs 5 - "Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name"**

- Paul made clear that through the Gospel, he had received the grace of God and his apostolic calling to take the Gospel to the nations. The word Missionary is the latin form of "Apostle", which means "one who is sent."
- Paul had a special purpose in his life, to take the Gospel to the gentiles. In the original Greek, the word for nations is the same word for gentiles.
- But Paul says "we have received". Though we are not called to the office of apostleship like Paul, Peter and John, a special office that was only given to them, and is not meant for today. We are ALL called to be missionaries for the Gospel.
- The Gospel Purpose, you could say, is to be preached and proclaimed throughout the whole earth. The scriptures make this clear!
 - **Matthew 28:18-20 NKJV - "18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen."**
 - Jesus gave the mission of the great commission, not just to those who would be his apostles, uniquely called to build the foundations of the church like Peter & John, but to all the disciples gathered. This is a mission given to all those who call on His name.
 - **Acts 1:8 NKJV - "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."**
 - Again, Jesus isn't just addressing the apostles, but all the believers who were present. Just like Paul states in Romans 1:5, that God has already given us the grace and calling to preach the Gospel, so Jesus promises we will be given the power through the Spirit to preach the Gospel!
- When writing to the Church of Colossae, as he was telling them of the wonderful Gospel they believed, Paul made clear that it had gotten to them as it had also gone out to the whole world!
 - **Colossians 1:5-7 NKJV - "because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel, which has come to you, as it has also in all the world, and is bringing forth fruit, as it is also among you since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth; as you also learned from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf"**
 - Notice that Paul didn't take the Gospel to Colossae, in fact, he wasn't the one who took it to Rome, nor was it Peter or any of the others. The Gospel spread to Rome, and many house churches were formed, by people who had heard it likely at Pentecost, and in other cities.

- Paul talks about Epaphras as the one who brought the Gospel to the Colossians. This shows, it's a team effort by all believers, not a single labor of one leader.
- When writing to the Corinthians, Paul declared we were all ambassadors for Christ.
 - **2 Corinthians 5:20 NKJV - "Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God."**
 - Ambassadors represent their leader to other nations. Christians are to represent Jesus to the world!
- And in 1 Timothy 3:15, Paul told Timothy that the church was the pillar and ground of the truth:
 - **1 Timothy 3:15 NKJV - "but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."**
 - The Church isn't a building, this facility is a place we meet, but it is NOT the church. The church is us, the people. Whether it's 2 of us in a park bench, 6 of us at a mall food court, or 500 of us in a big building, that's the church, the people regardless of how many. Paul says the Church is the pillar and ground of the truth.
 - Pillars were the place where people would place or stand during important decrees. They would put a poster or scroll with important information, or stand in front of it to declare to all who pass by. The Church is to be the pillar, the place where the truth is proclaimed and shown for all to see. What is that truth? When you read the rest of 1 Timothy 3, you realize it's the Gospel message!
 - **1 Timothy 3:16 NKJV - "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory."**
 - We are all called to proclaim the Gospel. You don't have to be called to ministry to preach the Gospel. It is not just for the Pastor or the Evangelist. We are all called to share & proclaim the message of the Glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ! To proclaim who He is, what He has done, and what He is still doing! So what is that Gospel?
 - **1 Corinthians 15:3-4 NKJV - "For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures"**
 - Jesus died for the sins of the world! Achieving absolute forgiveness, and rising again in power to defeat death, and offer us salvation, which is life through the Spirit, to be able to have a relationship with Him. This is the idea that Paul says just before he tells us we are ambassadors!
 - **2 Corinthians 5:18-19 NKJV - "Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation."**
 - **Colossians 1:13-14 NKJV - "He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins."**
 - **1 John 2:2 NKJV - "And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world."**
 - **1 John 3:5 NKJV - "And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin."**

- **John 1:29 NKJV - "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"**
- **2 Timothy 1:10 AMP - "but now [that extraordinary purpose and grace] has been fully disclosed and realized by us through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus who [through His incarnation and earthly ministry] abolished death [making it null and void] and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,"**
- **Romans 8:11 NKJV - "But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you."**
- **Romans 5:10 NKJV - "For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."**

○ This is the message Paul boldly declared. It is the message we are to proclaim. Because this is the purpose of the Gospel. And as it is proclaimed and believed, then it transforms! All those who believe this Gospel, become people of the Gospel!

• **The Gospel People vs 6-7 - "among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ; 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."**

○ Those who believe the Gospel, also become a special people.

- **Titus 2:11-14 NKJV - For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, 12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, 13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.**
- **1 Peter 2:9-10 NKJV - "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy."**

○ You have a new nationality, with a new leader, been given a new nature, and a new identity. This is your reality. In Romans 6-7, Paul mentions three parts of our identity specifically.

○ **A Selected people (the called of Jesus Christ):**

- In these verses, there are three times where the idea of "called" is given
 - Verse 5 talks about how we're called to take the Gospel to the nations.
 - Verse 6 we are called of Jesus Christ.
 - Verse 7 says we are called saints.
- Jesus has called us, chosen us as His own. We just read in 1 Peter 2 how we are chosen. The Lord, in love has chosen us. When you are a Christian, you are part of the chosen. The Church is God's chosen people, this special people that He Himself is purifying and transforming. When you believe the Gospel, you learn that He has chosen you.
- If you ever feel unwanted, like you don't fit in anywhere, like no one really cares, remember that Jesus has CHOSEN YOU in His love!
- **Ephesians 1:4 NKJV - "just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love"**
- **Romans 8:28 NKJV - "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."**
- **2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 NKJV - "But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, to which**

He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."

- But not only has He chosen you, He also declares you BELOVED!
- **A Beloved people (beloved of God):**
 - The Beatles have that famous song "all you need is love". In another song, they said how they needed somebody to love. Estimates say that there have been around 100 million recorded love songs that we know of.
 - People often say how they don't feel loved, or are desperate to find someone who loves them. Yet the scriptures show us that God has declared us beloved. That He loves us powerfully and fully. The scriptures are full of showing His perfect, sacrificial love.
 - In both Spanish and English, we have a limited amount of words for love. I love you, te amo. I adore you, te adoro. But the greeks had four unique words for love!
 - **Eros** - Physical erotic love between partners.
 - **Phileo** - Brotherly love amongst friends and companions.
 - **Storge** - Familial love, parental love.
 - **Agape** - is a word Christians invented to explain the Love of God! It describes a love that is sacrificial, unconditional, no strings attached, and powerful because it is a love by choice. God chooses to love just because. He loves you because He chooses to, not out of anything you can give Him. This is the love described in the scriptures.
 - **John 3:16 NKJV - "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."**
 - **Jeremiah 31:3 NKJV - "The LORD has appeared of old to me, saying: "Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you."**
- It is interesting to note that whenever in the New Testament, it refers to God's love, it nearly if not always points to the Gospel, that God gave His Son for us!
 - **Galatians 2:20 NKJV - "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."**
 - **Romans 5:8 NKJV - "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."**
 - **1 John 4:9-10 NKJV - "In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. 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."**
 - Jesus died for us, to absorb God's wrath, to remove sin, to draw us near to God and reconcile us. He rose again to defeat death and bring us to life, and fully remove the gap between man and God so we may receive life and have a relationship with God personally. He did this because of His love. This love transforms us, and John tells us in the next verse
 - **1 John 4:11 NKJV - "Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another."**
 - As the Love of God is poured into us, it should overflow into loving others naturally, not because of law or command, but as natural effect of His love towards us.
 - John, who's nickname was the apostle of love, and who tradition says when he was old and could no longer move by himself, would look at the other Christians and simply say "little children, love one another", declared that God's very nature, is perfect love.

- **1 John 4:8 NKJV - "He who does not love does not know God, for God is love."**
- **1 John 4:16 NKJV - "And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him"**
- You ARE LOVED by God! That is a reality. He loves you, and nothing can change that. This is why Paul triumphantly declares in:
 - **Romans 8:38-39 NKJV - "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."**
- A good picture I've heard is this, God's grace and love for you and towards you is like an endless ocean or Niagara Falls. It is deep, and powerful and unstoppable. But it doesn't crush us, it covers us and submerges us. It soaks us completely through. You can never do something that God's love and grace cannot cover. This is your reality Christian. Believe it by faith, as it is there for you to embrace.
- **A Separated people (called to be saints):**
 - This is a bad translation, as the words "to be" aren't in the Greek. Paul simply says that Christians are CALLED saints!
 - Saints isn't the idea of Roman Catholic, people who fulfilled a certain number of miracles, and the pope canonized them. Saints isn't some special forces of extra amazing Christians. You don't go through several test to see if you pass a Saint test and get the Saint badge. We are ALL ALREADY SAINTS. Putting saint in front of your name may sound weird, but it isn't inaccurate of your reality in Christ.
 - The Word is "Haggios" which can also be translated as "Holy" or "Separated".
 - To be Holy in the Bible is a very simple idea. It means to be separated to a specific purpose. For example, if you golf, you may have a specific club that has one very specific job, you would say that is a "holy" golf club. Or maybe at home your grandmother has a spoon that you can only use to make her special pasta sauce. She thinks if you use it for anything else you'll ruin it for ever, well that is a "holy" spoon, it is separated only for making pasta sauce.
 - Well, as part of your identity in Christ as a believer, you are separated, you are Holy. We already saw this idea in both 2 Peter and Titus
 - **Titus 2:14 NKJV - "who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works."**
 - **2 Peter 2:9 NKJV - "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light"**
 - There are also verses where the scriptures tell us we've been made and declared Holy by God through Jesus!
 - **Colossians 1:21-22 NKJV - "And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight"**
 - **Ephesians 5:27 NKJV - "that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish."**
 - You ARE Holy. You are separated for God, and seen as perfectly clean before God. You may not feel that way, but this is your identity IN CHRIST! Jesus lives in you, and because of that He has given you His holiness, His righteousness. He has separated you

for His own special work, and He has made it so when God the Father looks at you He sees you with all the beauty and perfection of everything Jesus is and does. That is your identity.

- This identity is the reality of all those who by faith believe the Glorious Gospel of Christ. He wants you to see yourself in this way, to understand, to believe it, and to embrace it.
- This is the Gospel we preach, one with the power to transform everyone who believes, that has achieved the reconciliation between man and God by dealing with the problem of sin, and offering new life through the resurrection, where you receive a new identity and purpose through a personal relationship with Him.
- I'll wrap up with this song that I love. It is a hymn that has been adapted by a rock band called Ascend the Hill. It is by far one of my favorite songs, I want you to hear the lyrics, it's an indie Christian band they don't know what music videos are. But listen to the song lyrics and meditate on the Gospel, and how it displays the love of God for you, and then we'll close out in worship.