

THE BOOK OF ROMANS

"To the Saints"

Romans 1:6, 7

INTRODUCTION

1. What a mighty man Paul was. He is described here as servant and apostle, called and separated (v. 1). Would to God we had more in the pulpits with this sort of pedigree.

2. The Gospel which Paul represented has a number of facets to it: a) its source is God; b) its channel is the prophets; c) its contents are the person of the Lord Jesus Christ; d) its objects are all nations; e) its subjects are all saints.

3. What about these subjects--the saints? How are they described? Look at the inspired text of the Word of God:

1. CALLED OF JESUS CHRIST

The Gospel is for faith-obedience to all the world. Part of that world is the Roman church. That is the import of "among whom ye also. . ." (v. 6). As such, the Romans are "called of Jesus Christ." There is no article before "called." They are "called Jesus Christ's." The believers are connected with Jesus Christ (cf. Rom. 8:39). In the Gospels, called means an invitation to the truth (cf. Matt. 22:14). In the Epistles the word invariably implies both the invitation and its acceptance. Those who slight the invitation are not reckoned among the called. The called participate in His second coming (Rev. 17:14). This is the effectual calling of our infinite God which allows us to realize the high position for which He destined all who put their trust in Christ. "Called"--what a tremendous glory (Rom. 8:30 where all verbs are aorists).

2. BELOVED OF GOD

Here is another precious appellation. It is true that all men are loved by God (John 3:16). As such, God is the universal creator. However, the phrase here refers to the "called" alone. This is the sense of belonging to the Father because of a relationship to Him in His own beloved Son, the Lord Jesus (1 John 1:3). No wonder Paul wrote as he did to Ephesus where it all is attributed to grace (1:6 "accepted" is "grace--which He freely bestowed." Grace is an act of God and not a state into which He brings us). As sinners, God could never draw us to Himself without

contamination. Christ's sacrifice for us is a sanitary measure to keep heaven clean. Hallelujah.

3. CALLED SAINTS

Our old name was sinners; now it is "saints." This is the new name of the redeemed. The difference between the names is the Saviour. "To be" should not be in the text. The Romans were "called saints." It is a reference to one's spiritual position from the moment of conversion. The term also invariably means "consecrated" that is, "separated, dedicated, belonging to God." One must avoid the Roman Catholic idea of sainthood and also the confusion of true saints who do not live in a saintly fashion. Saint comes from the Latin sanctus and means a holy one. But such holiness is not intrinsic; it is found in Christ (the believer's position).

4. OBJECTS OF GRACE

5. RECIPIENTS OF PEACE

Grace is the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man. When one surrenders to grace, peace is experienced (Phil. 4:6, 7). Peace with God was already the portion of the Roman believers (Rom. 5:1). Note that this grace and peace has God the Father as the author and source; Jesus Christ as the mediator and procuror; the Holy Spirit as the maintainer. The juxtaposition of the Father and the Son demonstrate their equality.

CONCLUSION

The Romans, like all believers by extension, have a high position as subjects of the Gospel. They are called, beloved, and saints who may experience grace and peace as none other. All Glory to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.