

Romans 02 – Prophets Witness God’s Gospel

Dr. Leon L. Sanders
Romans 1:1-4

Epilogue

- Introduction lesson described the controversy of Paul
 - Paul’s unique apostleship separate from the Eleven
 - Paul’s unique mission separate from Peter’s (Jews)
 - Paul’s difficulty in gaining acceptance as an apostle
- This controversy continues: New Perspective on Paul
 - Redefining Paul’s letters to excuse 1st century Judaism
 - Redefining Reformation to return to *cultural nomism*

Epilogue Continued

- Paul understands the Gospel cannot infiltrate into the world from Jerusalem; Jews rejected God’s Messiah
 - Judaism was an *approved, legal* religion in Roman Empire
 - Jews insist The Way was a *new* religion (Lk 11:47-50; Ac 7)
 - Jews not above murdering God’s prophets as of old
- Paul’s method: Work from a major city or town into rural areas; work from Rome into all the empire

Prescript–Not Unique to Paul

- Paul wrote in Greco-Roman style
 - Prescript
 - Body
 - Postscript
- Romans prescript most formal of his letters; other prescripts were shorter & Thessalonica letters informal

Purpose of the Prescript

- The prescript had the following functions specially in diplomatic, religious and legal communications
 - Identified the writer (Law of Identify)
 - Supported the authority of the writer (Titles)
 - Defined the body of the letter (Purpose)
- We will study Paul's formal prescript to grasp Paul's purpose(s) in writing to Rome this *systematic theology*

Slave: Not Servant

- Modern concept of a hired servant unknown in ancient world; slavery at all strata of society
 - Paul opens with the declarative: He is a **slave** of Christ
 - The concept of a **bond slave** is seen only in Christ who was pierced for God's Gospel for us (Isa 21:1-6; Is 42:1-4; 53:1-12)
 - Paul, a Roman citizen, declares he is a **slave** to Christ
 - This message is not from him but from God, his master

Slave to Jesus Christ

- No one legitimized themselves based on being a slave
 - Roman ex-slaves wore a special hat proudly advertising their freedom; revived in French Revolution: Pileus
- Christ, God's Son and **slave**, sent by the Father to secure salvation for man by dying on stauros as sinner
- Disciple not above the teacher; all believers are slaves as the Son is a slave; Paul's identity in Jesus (Mt 23:8-12; Jn 12:49-50)



Being free is the antithesis of Christ's teachings in this world
We are free from being enslaved to sin; but, we are not free from the Father nor His Son
Freedom becomes an excuse to sin because it is adrift from the Son (Ga 5:13-15)

Paul Did Not Call Himself

- Paul clearly wants the Romans to understand he did not call himself to his apostleship (Ac 9:1-18)
 - He was called by Christ to whom he is enslaved
 - He is not doing his will; i.e., for his gain, but fulfilling the mission Christ gave to him: Go to the Gentiles
 - This compels him to write to the Roman Church instructing them in God's Gospel; he wants *nothing* from them: This is not his gospel

Slave can only bring the message given to him/her; just as Christ spoke only God's message
Paul clearly communicates that everything he will write is from God through Christ and not from him

Itinerant Teachers Common

- In the ancient world, as today, there were many itinerant *teachers* of various forms of *wisdoms*
 - Philosophers peddling their views of reality
 - Rhetoricians teaching people arts of persuasion
 - Sophists teaching various forms of *wisdom*
 - Mystery religions from the East that vied for attention
- These looked for money and power for the teachers

Many Sought to Use God for Gain

- In the ancient world, as today, many sought to use God
 - Simon, user of *spirits* to use natural forces to control people, accepted the Gospel from Philip (Ac 8:4-20)
 - When Peter came to authenticate the Gospel, he laid hands on believers, they received the Holy Spirit as the apostles had on Pentecost; sign of God's approval (Ac 2:1-4)
 - Simon tried to *buy* this gift to keep power over others; Peter severely reprimanded him; God will not be used

God Set Paul Apart

- God separated Paul for this ministry: Gospel of God
 - In our last lesson I differentiated between
 - Christ's Gospel
 - Paul's Gospel
 - However, there is only ONE gospel: the Father's
 - Father sent the Son to proclaim and purchase the Gospel
 - One Father; therefore, only one gospel in history (Ep 4:4-6)

God's Gospel Not a Mystery

- In the Bible, a mystery is that which God has planned but not yet revealed until the proper time (Ep 3:7-11; 5:28-32)
 - However, *New Covenant* was not a mystery but revealed in the Old Testament
 - Nearly every aspect of God's Gospel in Christ was revealed by the Prophets; except body of Christ: Church
 - We will survey one prophetic book to realize God's clarity of His Gospel before Christ bodily appeared

Moses Was a Prophet

- Moses told the people God would raise up a prophet like himself since the people did not want to interact with the Father (Ex 20; De 18:15-19)
 - Moses was the Law Covenant intercessor
 - Christ is the New Covenant intercessor (He 7:23-28)
 - Who can stand before the Father, except a braggart: Job (Job 31:35-37)

Isaiah Replete With Revelations

- Paul wrote of God's prophets revealing the truth of His Gospel; Isaiah is replete with Messianic revelations
 - To the unbelieving, pious Davidic king Ahaz, God gave His own sign: Child will be born to a virgin and shall be called Immanuel - God with us (Is 7:10-14)
 - This child will sit on the throne of David and his rule will last forever based only on God's righteousness (Is 9:6-7)

Isaiah's Messianic Revelations

- He will be a rod {correction} from the stump of Jesse and a shoot {life} from David's root bearing fruit (Is 11:1-9)
 - God's Holy Spirit will be on Him (Is 42:1-4)
- With joy will you draw water {salvation} from the wells provided by the Holy One of Israel (Is 12)
 - Jesus offered this water to Samaritan woman (Jo 4:7-26; 2:37-39)
 - Jesus shouted this out on last day of Tabernacle (Sukkot)

Teacher Pays for Sin

- Isaiah spoke that a Teacher shall guide the people in truth as God determined from "of old" (Is 25:1, 30:18-22, Ep 1:5-10)
 - Jesus alone was Teacher and Lord (Mt 23:8-12, Jo 13:12-17)
 - God's people hear His voice and rejoice: God reigns (Is 52:6-7)
- God crushed Him who was innocent for our transgression; He shall see and be satisfied accounting many as righteous (Is 53)

Christ clearly taught that any who believe in Him are not teachers but life-long disciples, always learning. Unlike the Pharisaical Rabbis who prided themselves on their knowledge of God, while they rejected God

Stone of Offense: Cornerstone

- Christ shall be a Rock of offense, those who stumble on Him (His message from God) shall be broken (Is 8:13-15)
 - God laid a cornerstone in Zion (Christ), a tested, sure stone based on righteousness and justice (Is 28:16-17)
 - Christ will make the blind see and the deaf hear (Is 29:18)
 - God looks to those who are repentant of sin (Is 66:1-2)
 - One's sin, rejection of life, separates us from God (Is 59:1-13)

The Penalty for Sinfulness

- God warned of death for sin at the beginning and He has not changed (Ge 2:16-17, Nu 23:19)
 - A burning place has been prepared which God's breath (Seraphim: Ministering spirits) kindles (Is 30:33, Lk 16:22-24; He 1:14; Re 20:10, 14-15)
 - Though the body dies, the worm (sinful soul) does not and its fire (search for righteousness) is not quenched (Is 66:24)
- Dead in Christ shall live with new bodies (Is 26:19, 1Co 15:42-49)

There Will Be a New Earth

- Just as God created Lake of Fire for sinners, He will create a new heavens and earth for the saved (Is 65:17; Re 21:1-4)
 - God will wipe away every tear and they will not remember their former lives of sin (Is 25:8-9)
- Salvation belongs to all who believe, God shows no partiality between Jew and Gentile (Is 45:21-23; 55:14; 56:3-5)
 - Saved shall receive a new name & a new song (Is 42:10; Re 2:17; 3:12; 5:6-10)

God's Gospel: *New Covenant*

- Paul understood God's Gospel is the *New Covenant* of Isaiah and Jeremiah, established in eternity past (Is 59:21; Jer 31:31-34)
 - Whereas the Church was a mystery; the Law Covenant was a parenthesis in time until man could be prepared to receive God's salvation through Christ (Gal 4:1-7)
 - Covenant given to Abraham fulfilled in *New Covenant*, first to the Jews then to the Gentiles (Ro 1:16; Gal 3:15-29)

God's Gospel Always Revealed

- God has not hidden His Gospel of salvation
 - He spoke of it when sin came (Gen 3:15)
 - His covenant to Abraham is the foundation of salvation
 - Law was a parenthesis; Jews were a public example of righteousness vs. self-righteousness before God and man
- This Gospel reveals to the Romans and to all who read this letter God's cornerstone of Christ's body: ἐκκλησία

God prepared the ancient world to receive Christ's message through the Law Covenant: Axial Age
Isaiah was the pinnacle of the Axial Age prophets preparing the world for Messiah; he even gave His name
Law: 1) Show sinfulness of people; 2) Show God's mercy via Christ His Son dying in the sinner's stead