

Series: Romans

Title: Christ Preaching His Preacher

Text: Rom 15: 20-25

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Romans 15: 17: I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God.

The apostle Paul would not glory in himself. He gloried only in the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ worked in Paul and in those to whom Paul preached.

Romans 15: 18: For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, 19: Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God;

Paul would not dare take the glory that belongs to Christ alone. Christ worked in Paul making Paul obedient—in word and deed. Through Paul's preaching Christ made the Gentiles obedient by word and deed. These mighty signs and wonders Christ worked was by the power of the Spirit of God—the signs and wonder such as healing and raising the dead. Those gifts were passed only “by the laying on of the hands of the apostles.” So when the apostles died so did those gifts. Now we have the scriptures. We do not need extra signs and miracles.

Romans 15: 19...so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. 20: Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation: 21: But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand. 22: For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you. 23: But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you; 24: Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your *company*.

Subject: Christ Preaching his Preacher

Proposition: Christ is Head of the church: he sends his messenger, makes his messenger fully preach the gospel of Christ and makes the blind to see.

CHRIST FULFILLS ALL SCRIPTURE

Romans 15: 20: Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation: 21: But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.

The Spirit of God gave prophecy that Christ would prosper in all that he did in this earth. He prospered in redeeming his elect. Also, Christ prospers in calling out his people. Paul quotes from Isaiah 52.

Isaiah 52: 13: Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.

“*Behold, my Servant.*” The Lord Jesus Christ, as Mediator, as the Godman, our Savior, is the Servant of God. (Isa. 42:1; John 10:16-18). He was a Servant chosen by God, called by God and sent by God. But his servitude was a matter of voluntary willing humiliation and subordination.

Notice, God says “*My Servant shall deal prudently.*” These words can be translated three ways. One, the Lord Jesus is himself wise and prudent as a man in all things. Two, it might be translated, “He shall cause to understand,” or “He shall make others wise and prudent.” Christ is the wisdom of God made of God unto us Wisdom. By the power of his Spirit, through the ministry of the Word he makes chosen sinners wise unto salvation. Three, these words could be translated, “shall prosper,” as in the marginal reference.

Isaiah 53:10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

Christ prosperously fulfilled the law for his people and for God. He prosperously destroyed all his enemies and ours. Our Redeemer prosperously accomplished redemption of his particular people. He prosperously advocates and makes intercession for his people right now from heaven. Our Lord Jesus prosperously goes forth in the gospel conquering and to conquer through the ministry of his word.

God declares In Isaiah 52 that in proportion to his humiliation so shall Christ be exalted and so shall he prosper and sprinkle many nations—those he redeemed

Isaiah 52: 14: As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: 15: So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for *that* which had not been told them shall they see; and *that* which they had not heard shall they consider.

Our Savior came lower than any man. His form was marred more than any man on the cross, not only at the hands of men, but by the unyielding justice of God. He bore the wrath of God in place of his people and satisfied justice—think on that brethren. By Christ God is both just and the Justifier of his people. By the depth of his humility he glorified God to the highest. God the Father has glorified the GodMan to the Highest. Christ did not die in vain and he is not now dead but alive. He is exalted to God's right hand of God with all power over all ruling and reigning and filling all things in his church.

Ephesians 1: 20: Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, 21: Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: 22: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, 23: Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. 2: 1: And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and in sins.

So Paul is declaring in our text that it was Christ working in him. It was by Christ's power that Paul preached the full gospel of Christ. It was by Christ that his Gentile people were made obedient in word and deed.

“So shall he sprinkle many nations.” The doctrine of the gospel falling like dew from heaven upon those he redeemed in all nations. This whole work is done through the preaching of the gospel. It speaks of the grace of the Spirit compared to water—the washing of regeneration when Christ sends the Holy Spirit. It speaks of the blood of Christ applied to his people for cleansing of our sins. The blood of Christ purges our conscious. We hear of Christ's accomplished redemption and the efficacy of his blood makes us believe on him.

So Paul is declaring that he was Christ's chosen vessel to the Gentiles. Through Paul's preaching Christ fulfilled this prophecy. So in our text, the Apostle Paul tells us that this refers to him being sent to places where they had not heard the gospel yet.

Rom 15: 20: Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation: 21 But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.

Some use Paul's words to teach that the church should not support missionaries. They say, 'The gospel has already been preached in that place, the foundation has been laid, we can't build on another man's foundation.' But that is not what Paul meant at all.

Christ chose Paul as the apostle to the Gentiles—to go forth where the gospel had not been preached to preach the gospel which they had never heard. Through Paul Christ established churches where no churches had been. The foundation that was laid by Paul is Christ: they heard the full gospel of Christ: God's electing grace *in* Christ, particular redemption by Christ's blood and by Christ he sent the Spirit of God who irresistibly calls each one Christ redeemed. Through the gospel Christ preserves his people unto

glory and shall not lose one. So Paul urged believers to live for the glory of Christ—not to simply play religion—but so that we might preach his name throughout the world and be used of Christ to call out each and every one of his redeemed. This is that which Christ must and shall do! Paul, as the apostle of the Gentiles, was sent where the gospel had not been preached, but Paul did not forbid others building on the foundation he had laid as long as they built with the same gospel.

1 Corinthians 3: 10: According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. 11: For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12: Now if any man build upon this foundation [make sure it is more Christ] gold, silver, precious stones, [and not] wood, hay, stubble; 13: Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

Do you see how Satan tries to cloud the gospel? Men try to support some covetous doctrine when our text glorifies Christ as Head over his church, as the exalted, triumphant Redeemer, establishing churches in the Gentile world using his chosen vessel Paul.

EXAMPLE OF CHRIST AS HEAD OF THE CHURCH

Romans 15: 22: For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you. 23: But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you; 24: Whosoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your *company*.

Christ is Head over the church. Here we have an example. Christ sends his messenger where he will deliver out his lost sheep. But Christ also hinders his preacher. The same as Christ opened the door for Paul to preach to his Gentile people “*from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum*”—up to that point, Christ also hindered Paul from coming to preach to the brethren at Rome. Christ sends his preacher some places and forbids him to go to others

Acts 16: 6: Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, 7: After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not. 8: And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas. 9: And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. 10 And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

Christ knows where his lost sheep are scattered about in the nations. He sends the gospel to them and draws them to hear it. Let's see another example.

Acts 18: 5: And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews *that Jesus was* Christ. 6: And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook *his* raiment, and said unto them, Your blood *be* upon your own heads; I *am* clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles. 7: And he departed thence, and entered into a certain *man's* house, named Justus, *one* that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue. 8: And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized. 9: Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: 10: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city. 11: And he continued *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

We are Gentiles here. So thank God that Christ has sheep among the Gentiles as well as among the Jews. The satisfied justice of God demands Christ bring them into the fold.

John 10:16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

Paul also trusted that Christ was now sending him to Rome. He trusted Christ. Paul trusted that now it was Christ's will for him to go to Rome. As we know from scripture, it was Christ's will for him to go to Rome.

Acts 23: 11 And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.

But Paul went to Rome, not in the way Paul expected. Christ had Paul arrested at Jerusalem and the Roman guard delivered him to Rome. On the way on the ship Christ called out some of his redeemed through Paul's preaching. But Christ had Paul put under house arrest so that Paul preached the gospel there and Christ called out some of his lost sheep.

Acts 28: 23: And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening. 24 And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not.

I always love this as an illustration of how Christ knows where his sheep are and calls them out. On the way on the ship, Christ said,

Ac 27:24: Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.

Then at some point at Rome, Paul made his appeal to Caesar and preached the gospel to them. And what did Christ do? Christ saved some of his redeemed even in Caesar's house.

Philippians 4:22 All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household.

If you are sitting under the gospel then do not take that as a light thing. Christ has ruled all things in this world to put the gospel here and ruled each of our steps to have us under his gospel. The greatest blessing Christ can give to a people is to send one of his gospel preachers to them and call them to faith in him! Believe on him!

Amen!