

Series: Romans

Title: The Making of Christ's Servants

Text: Romans 1: 1-7

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Romans 1: 1: Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called *to be* an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, 2: (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) 3: Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; 4: And declared *to be* the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead: 5: By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name: 6: Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ: 7: To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called *to be* saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul begins this epistle by declaring who he is—*Romans 1: 1: Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ*. Men like to speak of themselves as being free and having a free will. What would a man be free from? What would our will be free from?

Truth is, all men are divided into one of two categories: we are either the servant of the devil unto sin or the servant of the Lord Jesus Christ unto righteousness.

Romans 6: 16: Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

Matthew 6:24: No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

But all men serve one or the other. All those God saves were once under the power of the devil as his slaves, the spirit that is now in those who are still under the devils power:

Ephesians 2: 2: Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past...

The only thing an unregenerate, natural born sinner can do is sin—first and foremost by hating Christ and his gospel.

John 8:34: Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

Christ said the Spirit will convince his people of sin because ye believe not on me. Those who commit sin are those who deny Christ, deny the gospel, attempt to come to God by their will and their religious deeds.

But those born of Christ—though we are sinners and yet sin—in the new man we are the servants of Christ and in the new man we can only bring forth good fruit, that is, we can only believe on Christ and love our brethren. We cannot stop doing so by the power and grace of God.

Matthew 7: 17: Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. 18: A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

All men are in one of these two categories: all either the servant of the devil unto sin; or the servant of Christ unto righteousness. But no man is free, we all yield to one of these two. So Paul begins by declaring which category he was in—“*the servant of Christ*”

So how does one go from being a servant of the devil unto sin to being a servant of Christ unto righteousness?

Proposition: When we see how Paul was made a servant of Christ we see how all God’s elect are made servants it is by being called and separated.

Divisions: I. Who calls and separates us? II. From what are we called and separated? III. Unto what are we called and separated?

WHO CALLS AND SEPARATES US?

Romans 1: 1: Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called *to be* an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,...6: [speaking to believers, he says] Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ: 7: To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called *to be* saints:...

Servants of Christ are made by the sinner being called and separated by God.

All who are called were “*beloved of God.*” It means we were loved before of God. In eternity, before the foundation of the world, God, by sovereign grace, chose, called and separated his people whom he loved in Christ. Scriptures calls it election.

Ephesians 1: 1: Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: 2: Grace *be* to you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ. 3: Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: 4: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

God the Father blessed his elect with all spiritual blessings when he chose us in Christ. It means right then:

Romans 8: 29: whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30: Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. 31: What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?

That sounds like he saved us before we needed saving! That is exactly right! God told Jeremiah,

Jeremiah 1: 5: Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, *and* I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.

Those who believe do so because before we were ever born God ordained us to believe.

Ephesians 2:10: For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath BEFORE ORDAINED that we should walk in them.

That is why when Paul preached the gospel to the Gentiles, scripture says, “*as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.*” (Acts 13:48) This is what scripture means when it says that God, “*Declar[ed] the end*

from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.” (Is 46: 10)

Men speak of God giving all men a chance to be saved. When a wise man builds a house, he leaves nothing to chance. From the beginning, he figures where every dollar will go. He has plans. He knows the end from the beginning. If changeable men do so, you can be sure that God our Father does. But unlike men, God says, “*My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.*” We have to change our plans. But God is sovereign. What he determined from the beginning he brings to pass without ever having to change his plans.

Ephesians 1:11: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

Since God predestinated us to experience his salvation, in his set time, he calls each one and separates us in regeneration. All who shall be saved by God, shall be called and separated by God through the gospel of Christ in regeneration. The apostle Paul said,

Galatians 1: 15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called *me* by his grace, 16 To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:

So the first thing is it is God who calls and separates his people. Man does not do it. It is God who calls and separates his people.

FROM WHAT ARE WE CALLED AND SEPARATED?

We called and separated from our vain ways. God separates his child of grace from the darkness of our sinful flesh, from the power of Satan, from this present evil world, from our idol gods and our false gospels.

The apostle Paul, when he was Saul of Tarsus, had been a Pharisee—“the separate ones”—those who distinguished themselves from others. The Pharisee’s made themselves separate and distinct from others by outward observance of external rituals, by outward forms they considered holiness such as, ceremonial washings, fastings, prayers, and alms giving. And they prided themselves on their good works. While they claimed to believe and look for the coming Messiah, they were bitter enemies of the true Messiah who had come. They hated the Lord Jesus and his cause. Sadly, that is a description of most in religion in our day. It was a description of us and it was a description of Paul.

Paul had separated himself and had all his confidence was in his flesh—in natural, external, outward religious things. He said,

Philippians 3: 4:…If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: 5: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, *of* the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; 6: Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

Yet, by all his works, Paul had not separated himself at all. The very religious men and sinful men he claimed to be separate from, he was one with. He proved it because he would sooner embrace the lies of the Sadducees before he would embrace those truly called and separated unto Christ and his gospel. By all his religious works, the only one he further separated himself from was God.

Isaiah 59: 2: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear.

Brethren, Paul was like all God's elect. You and I were lost in the darkness of our own depraved hearts and spiritual ignorance. We were all ignorant of God and his providence, ignorant of ourselves and our sin, ignorant of the scriptures and of the gospel, ignorant of Christ and his righteousness. It is from ourselves and our sinful vain false ways that God called and separated us.

Near Knoxville, the Tennessee River flows southward. But near Jackson, it runs north. Yet, even though it has changed directions, it is still the same old muddy water. When a sinner turns his life around himself, gets baptized, joins the church and engages in a frenzy of church activities, if God has not called and separated him then it is the same muddy water flowing in a different direction. Outward reformation is not regeneration. A new lifestyle is not a new nature. An outward form of holiness is not sanctification of the Spirit. To have the form without the power is to be worse off than before—twice dead. Then a man thinks he has life and light, when he is still dead and in darkness.

Not only does God separate us from our vain religious ways, God also separates us from our former life in which we loved sin and walked therein. When God separates his child he makes us love righteousness and love godliness. He makes us hate everything that would bring dishonor on the gospel and on our blessed Redeemer.

Titus 2: 11: For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, 12: Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; 13: Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; 14: Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

2 Corinthians 5: 17: Therefore if any man be in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

WHAT ARE WE CALLED AND SEPARATED UNTO?

Romans 1: 1: Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, 2: (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) 3: Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; 4: And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead: 5: By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name: 6: Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:

Since the last apostle died, no one has been called to be an apostle. But we are all *called to be servants of our Lord Jesus*. Christ calls us to himself to be his servants. We have been made willing bondservants of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Ex 21: 1-6)

“By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name.” Obedience to the faith is to bow and trust the obedience of the Author and Finisher of our faith, Christ Jesus. Christ is our Righteousness. Christ is our Holiness. He set us free from the curse of the law and from our sinful flesh. Now, we are accepted of God and can serve God our Father and his Son the Lord Jesus Christ by the power and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is to be separated unto the specific work he would have each of his people do in his church with the end goal to spread his gospel into all the world—*for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name*:. Christ has left us in this earth to do as he commanded his disciples,

Matthew 28: 19: Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

It is Christ who separates out his preachers. But though you may not be a preacher, make no mistake, it is Christ who separates you to whatever service he has gifted you to perform in his church just as he separated Paul and Barnabas.

Acts 13: 1: Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2: As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. 3: And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid *their* hands on them, they sent *them* away. 4: So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

Whatever Christ has called you to do and gifted you to do in his church, do it with all your might as unto the Lord because he is the one who gave you the privilege. God gives each of his saints gifts and abilities so that his church is complete.

1 Corinthians 12: 4: Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5: And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. 6: And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

We saw it when we began remodeling our building. God had provided someone with a talent to do each job that needed to be done. Each of those talents is given so that, collectively, together we can send forth this gospel into all the world. Here is our purpose in this earth, we are all *separated unto the gospel of God*.

What is the gospel of God that we have been separated unto?—*Romans 1: ...the gospel of God, 2: (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) 3: Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; 4: And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:*

The gospel concerns only the GodMan, Christ Jesus. Everything in the scriptures is concerning Christ. The gospel is not the message of mere morality which this world preaches. It is not church laws, not man's works. The gospel is concerning God's Son!

It is called *the gospel of God* because God is the author of it, God's free and sovereign grace is the cause of it, God's Son is the subject of it and God's glory in the salvation of his elect is the purpose of it.

It is only when we have been saved by the power of the gospel then we are no longer ashamed to confess that it is the power by which God saves all his people.

Romans 1: 16: For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. 17: For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

The gospel is the message of God's righteousness. It is the message of how God can be just and the Justifier of his people. God sent his sinless Son who willingly was made sin for his people. Then our Substitute was willingly made a curse for us. He was separated from God and his people that we might be made one with God by his blood. God is just and God is the Justifier of his people. It is through the preaching of the gospel that God reveals Christ. It is through the preaching of the gospel that God reveals Christ is our

Righteousness. It is all “*to the praise of the glory of his grace wherein he made us accepted in the Beloved.*” (Eph 1: 6)

God has purposed to call and separate each one Christ redeemed through the preaching of this gospel using those he has already called to preach it. Paul said he called us to go forth preaching this gospel “*among all nations, for his name.*” Christ gave us a command:

Mark 16: 15: And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

This is why the apostle Paul declared that it is by the power God to establish us through the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 16:25: Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, 26: But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:

True preachers are made preachers by Christ and sent by Christ and no other way.

Romans 10: 13: For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. 14: How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? 15: And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

Through this gospel Christ calls out his people. Christ told Paul, I am sending you to preach my name for this reason,

Acts 26:18: To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

For every sinner called out of darkness into the light of Christ we have one to thank, God! He chose his people and he chose how they would be called and he calls them,

2 Thessalonians 2: 13: But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: 14: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our Lord Jesus has called us to himself to serve him. He has separated us unto the gospel of God concerning Christ his Son. Our purpose in this earth is to preach his gospel in all the earth. Therefore, let us serve him with all our hearts.

One last question: shall those he has called and separated ever be separated from him again? No way.

Romans 8: 35: Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36: As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37: Nay, in all these things we are

more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38: 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 creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen!