

God's Preacher

By Henry Mahan

Bible Text: Romans 1:1-6

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I want you to open your Bibles with me today to the book of Romans. I am going to be bringing a message from the first chapter of Romans, Romans chapter one, verses one through six. Now, my subject today is God's Preacher, God's Preacher.

These first six verses of Romans chapter one identify four things for us. And you can remember these four things. This will make the message a little easier for you to remember and to, I believe, understand. The first thing that Paul deals with in verse one is God's preaching. He tells us about God's preaching, the man whom God has called and sent to preach his gospel.

And then in the second chapter he talks about, or second verse, he talks about God's gospel. The gospel that that preacher preaches. And then in verse three and four he talks about God's Redeemer, the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. And then in verses four and five he talks about God's people, the people of God.

Now, did you hear me? Listen carefully. We are going to look, first of all, at God's preacher. Now, Romans chapter one, verse one...we will go through verse seven, one through seven. And we will see, first of all, God's preacher and, secondly, God's gospel a, thirdly, God's Savior and, fourthly, God's people. Now this will be interesting. I know that it will be blessing to you so you listen carefully to the message. Now, here in verse one Paul begins this way. "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God." Now here is God's preacher. Paul, called to be an apostle, a bond slave of Jesus Christ, separated to the gospel of God.

Now, first of all, he calls himself Paul. God's servants are not interested in titles. He doesn't call himself Reverend Paul or Dr. Paul or Father Paul or Bishop Paul. He just calls himself Paul because he is not interested in titles and he is not interested in recognition by men.

They came to John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ and they said, "Are you the Christ?" He said, "No." They said, "Oh, well, are you Elijah?" He said, "No." "Are you one of the...are you that prophet?" He said, "No." "Well, who are you?"

Now, he could have identified himself in several ways. He could have said, "Well, I was supernaturally born when my mother and father were both old, very old. I was promised

of God. I am the forerunner of the Messiah.” And even the Messiah himself said that none born of women are greater than I am. He could have said all of these things. But when they said, “Who are you?” He said, “I am a voice. I am a voice crying in the wilderness. Make the straight path. Prepare the way of the Lord.”

Not worthy, Paul said, to be called an apostle. Less than the least of all the saints he said on one occasion. And the chief of sinners. So Paul, no titles, no recognition, just Paul.

And then, secondly, he said, “I am a servant of Jesus Christ.” We are the servants of Jesus Christ. We are the servants of his people. The apostle said on another occasion, he said, “We preach not ourselves. We are not the subject. We preach Jesus Christ and him crucified and ourselves your servants for Christ’s sake.”

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ. And this Word, servant, do you know what it actually is? It is the word “bond slave.” Over in Exodus chapter 21 we have the story of the bond slave, Exodus chapter 21.

Back in the Hebrew days if a man was taken into slavery, he may owe a great debt and can’t pay it or he may be very poor and has to give himself over to be a slave or whatever. But they could only keep a slave for six years. And on the seventh year he could go free. Six years he served. And when the seventh year came then all the slaves were free to go. But this particular man, the Scripture says, if he loves his master and loves his master’s house and wants to continue to be a servant, a willing, loving servant, willingly, lovingly, because he wishes to, then they take him down to the temple and bore a whole in his ear. And he is then a bond slave, a willing, loving bond slave. And that’s what Paul is saying here. This is God’s preacher.

No titles, not seeking recognition. And he says, “I am a bond slave. I am a servant of Jesus Christ, a willing, loving servant of the Son of God and a servant of his people.”

And then, thirdly, he said that “I am called to be an apostle.” Now, in the church of our Lord Jesus Christ the Scripture says there are apostles and there are prophets and there are missionaries and there are pastors and teachers. But all of these have one thing in common. They are all called of God. They are called of God to be an apostle, called of God to be a prophet, called of God to be a missionary, called of God to be a pastor.

Someone may ask me, “Well, preacher, can you describe that call?”

No, I’m sorry I cannot. I just cannot. I can’t tell you what a call to the ministry actually is like. Some people may be able to, I cannot. But I think Paul described it best this way. He said, “God put me in the ministry. Supernaturally, mysteriously, God opened the door. God gave me the message. God gave me the gifts. God sent me on this particular mission. God gave me a stewardship. God gave me a dispensation. I didn’t seek it. I didn’t volunteer for it. I didn’t covet it. It was John Gill said, “I never sought it, thought it nor bought it. But God put me in the ministry.” Called of God to be a preacher of the gospel.

Now, watch this. Paul said, he is identifying God's preacher. He said, "Paul, a bond servant of Jesus Christ, called of God, called of God, supernaturally, mysteriously called of God and sent to his people with his message." And he said, "I am separated unto the gospel of God. Now, listen. The ministry is God's ministry, not ours.

I hear people talk about their ministry. I really don't have a ministry. It is God's ministry. I am in the ministry. I am in the ministry of God. And so are you. All believers are in the ministry. All believers, all children of God are in the ministry. You see, as the body is one and has many members, so the church is one body. It has many members. Christ is the head. But we are all members of the body. We are all in the ministry of our Lord. We are all accomplishing his purpose and his will and his glory and serving his purpose. Everybody is in the ministry. We all serve God in this great house of our Lord. We are different vessels, but we all serve him. We are all in the ministry.

But the pastor, pastor, teacher, the missionary is called to minister the Word of God. He has one calling. He has one goal. He has one obsession. He has one supreme love and that is the gospel. Paul said, "I am separated to the gospel. I am obsessed with the gospel. My one objective is to glorify God in the preaching of his gospel."

You see, back in the book of Acts, chapter six, there arose a problem in the early church. There was some kind of problem about the distribution of food and supplies and things of this nature. And Peter called a people together and he said, Peter and the other apostles, and he said, "Now it is not right for we preachers, pastors, God's servants, preachers, to leave the Word of God and wait on tables. You look out among you seven men of good report, good reputation, integrity, filled with the Holy Spirit. And appoint them over this business. And we will give ourselves to the ministry of the Word and to prayer."

Now, that is God's preacher's goal and objective and obsession. He is separated to the gospel. And if he is not separated to the gospel, then he is a misfit. If he tries to do anything else or be anything else he is a failure at both. God's preacher, a servant of Christ, a bond slave of Jesus Christ, called of God, sent of God and separated to the gospel.

All right. Now, notice in verse two. Here is that gospel that God's servant preaches. Here is that gospel. Separated...now watch this. The last part of verse one says, "I am separated to the gospel of God, the gospel of God, which he promised afore by his prophets in the Holy Scripture."

Verse three, "concerning his Son."

Are you listening? Here is that gospel. It is identified in a three fold way. Paul says, "I am separated to the gospel of God." It is God's gospel. It is not the gospel according to men. It is the gospel of God.

In 1 Timothy one Paul called it the gospel of his glory, the gospel of God's glory, the glorious gospel of God. And this is a test of a man's gospel. Who does it glorify? If it glorifies men, if it glorifies him, if it glorifies you, then it is certainly not God's gospel because God's gospel is the gospel of the glory of God. So when Paul defines his gospel, he said, "I am a preacher. I am separated to the gospel. And that gospel, first of all, is God's gospel. He is the author of that gospel. He planned it. He purposed it before the foundation of the world clear back in the counsel halls of eternity. God purposed this gospel. For Jesus Christ is the lamb slain before the foundation of the world. And God's elect were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation. So he purposed it. And he, not only did he purpose it, but God is the...God executes this gospel. In the fulness of time God sent his Son into the world. He sent his Son. He purposed to send him and he sent him. And not only did he send him into the world, but he sent him to the cross because it says it pleased God to bruise him. It pleased God to make you his people. It pleased God to make Christ our surety. It pleased God that in Christ should all fulness dwell. It pleased God to bruise him.

And then God applies the gospel. "When it pleased God who separated me from my mother's womb to call me by his gospel and reveal to me his Son." God applies this gospel. It is his gospel. He purposed it. He executes it. He applies it and he sustains it.

Further, Scripture says he is able to save them that come to God by him. He is able to keep them. He is able to present them faultless before his throne of glory. And he is able to raise their vile bodies and make them like his own. It is God's gospel.

And then, secondly, it is the ancient gospel. We don't preach a new gospel. We don't preach a gospel of this generation. We preach a gospel that goes back to Abel. Abel brought a lamb and sacrificed that lamb as a blood offering for sin. Abraham, Christ said, saw my day. He rejoiced to see it. He believed and it was counted to him for righteousness.

Oh, they said, "We have Moses."

Christ said, "If you had believed Moses you would have believed me. Moses wrote of me. This is Moses' gospel." You see?

"I am separated to the gospel of God which he promised by his prophets." Abraham, Moses, Jacob, David...one gospel. It is the gospel he promised in the holy Scriptures. It is the gospel he prophesied in the holy Scriptures. It is the gospel he pictured from the passover lamb all the way to the cross, one gospel.

Now, watch this carefully now. Stay with me. God's preacher and the gospel God's preacher preaches, separated to the gospel of God, the gospel which he promised afore by his prophets in the holy Scriptures. And it is the gospel, underscore this, verse three, "concerning his Son."

The gospel is concerning his Son. The gospel has nothing to do with who you are or who I am. The gospel is concerning who Christ is. That's what the gospel is all about. It is concerning his Son, who he is. The gospel has nothing to do with what you or I do. The gospel concerns what he did, who he is and what he did. He came into the world. He took upon himself the likeness of our flesh. He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. He bore our sins in his body. He died and was buried and rose for our justification. He ascended to the right hand of God where he ever lives to make intercession for us.

The gospel is concerning his son. The gospel has nothing to do with what you and I think. The gospel concerns God's thoughts and his acceptance of Christ's work for us. He said he has appointed a day in which he is going to judge the world by that man Jesus Christ whom he hath appointed, whom he hath appointed. And he gave this evidence of the acceptance of Christ. He raised him from the dead.

It is what God thinks. It is God accepting Christ in your place. It is not what you do or what you think about it. God said, "When I see the blood I will pass over you." It is not what you think of the blood.

"Well, I just don't think that's right."

It's not what you think.

"Well, I just don't believe that's the only way."

It's not what you believe.

You see, the gospel is not concerning who you are and what you do and what you think. It concerns his son. It is concerning who he is and what he did and how God looks upon him. We are accepted in the beloved. When God accepts Christ he accepts us. Our forerunner has entered within the veil and is sat down. And God accepted him and us in him.

The gospel has nothing to do with where you are. It concerns where he is. Do you see that?

This is what the great preacher John Flavel preached in his message, "Method of Grace." He said, "Everything that a holy, righteous, almighty God has for a sinner like you and me is in Christ Jesus." And that...those riches and spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus become ours by a union with Christ. God never looks upon us for acceptance and looks upon us for agreement or looks upon us for righteousness. He looks on his Son. And our union with him, he is the heir. We are joint heirs. You see, he is accepted and we are accepted in him. God looks upon him. And that union with Christ comes by faith. And that faith comes by hearing the Word of God and believing it.

You see that? God's preacher. God's preacher, a simple man. God's preacher, a servant. God's preacher, separated to the gospel. And that gospel is a gospel of God. The gospel of his glory, the gospel of his grace. That gospel is concerning his Son. And it is the same gospel that Moses and Abraham and David and Jacob and all the other Old Testament prophets believed and preached.

Now, let's look at the person. He said here in verses three and four it is the gospel concerning his Son who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh and who was declared to be the Son of God with power.

Now, these two things are so important. How is he identified? It said he was made of the seed of David according to the flesh. And he was declared to be the Son of God.

One day our Lord was being questioned by these religious Pharisees, lawyers and Sadducees and other members of the Jewish court and Sanhedrin. They asked him several things and finally when he answered all of their questions and they were...they just were ready to leave him alone he said, "Wait. I have a question. I have a question. What think ye of the Christ? What think ye of the Messiah? Whose Son is he? Whose Son is the Christ?"

Now all these fellows knew that Christ was coming. If you asked, if you asked an orthodox Jew today about the Messiah, chances are he will say, "We are still looking for the Messiah. We are still looking for the Christ. He was promised to the Old Old Testament."

Well, he said to these Pharisees, "Now, who is the Christ? What think ye of the Christ?"

And they answered, "He is the Son of David. The Christ is the Son of David."

That's what the Scripture says. He will be the seed of the woman. He will be of the lineage of Abraham through his son Isaac. He will be of the tribe of Judah, born in Bethlehem. He will be of the root of Jesse and he will be the Son of David.

And they answered truly, "He is the Son of David."

You remember blind Bartimaeus said, "Oh, thou Son of David, have mercy on me."

And these Pharisees said to Jesus of Nazareth, "The Christ will be the Son of David."

And then he said to them, "Then why did David call him Lord? For David said, 'The Lord, said to my Lord sit thou on my right hand till I make thy enemies thy footstool.'"

And they couldn't answer him. And here is what Jesus of Nazareth is saying to them, "How can he be David's son and David's Lord? How can the same man be David's God and David's son?"

Here it is right here. “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God, concerning his Son which he promised afore in the Old Testament Scriptures concerning his Son who was made of the seed of David, the Son of David according to the flesh.”

Jesus Christ in the flesh was a Jew. Son of David, son of Jesse, tribe of Judah, from Abraham, seed of woman.

“But declared to be the Son of God.” He was made of the seed of David according to the flesh. He was declared. He wasn’t made the Son of God. He was already the Son of God. And he was declared to be the Son of God.

This Savior, this Messiah, this Redeemer is the seed of David according to the flesh and the Son of God declared to be the Son of God.

Now, this is essential and this is what John’s gospel deals with. “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld his glory.” God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.

Paul said, “Great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of the angels, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the world and received up into glory.”

You see, in order to be our Savior, in order to redeem us Christ in the flesh had to honor the law. God’s law must be honored. God’s law must be honored and God’s justice must be satisfied.

Well, I can’t honor the law, neither can you. We are sinners. We are sinners. We may admire God’s law and respect God’s law and even love God’s law, but to fulfill God’s law is a whole different matter.

But Christ did perfectly as a man. The Son of God in human flesh, the Son of God and the Son of man in one, perfect man and perfect God. And he honored that law and he satisfied justice. He is the only one who can die and raise himself. He is...he said, “I lay down my life. No man takes my life.”

Some day I am going to die and you are going to die. But we are not going to lay down our lives. We are not going to decide when we are going to die and how we are going to die. Are we? He did. He gave up. he gave up the ghost. He laid down his life. And he raised himself by his own power from the grave. He is the Son of God.

This gospel is concerning the Son of God who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, born of a woman and declared to be the Son of God which he is by right, which he is by essence and equality, one with God. “I and the Father are one.”

Now, watch the people of God. Paul is the preacher. I believe I am a preacher of God, called to be an apostle...a preacher, not an apostle, but a preacher, separated to the gospel of God, the gospel concerning his Son, concerning Christ, made of the seed of David and declared to be the Son of God.

Now here are the people of God. In verse five, six, listen. "By Christ we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for his sake, among whom you also are the called of Christ Jesus, to all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ."

Now here are God's people. First of all, they have received grace. By Christ they have received grace. It is all in him. Grace, grace, grace, God's grace, amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. I was lost but now I am found by God's grace I am free. By his grace I see.

All right. Secondly, these people not only have received grace, but they are obedient to the faith. They believe him. They love him. They walk with him. They are obedient to him.

Thirdly, they are among all nations. He has a people in ever tribe, kindred, nation, tongue under heaven, new creatures in Christ Jesus, Jew and Gentile, bond and free, male and female among all nations. They are called of Christ Jesus. Whom he foreknew he predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son. Whom he predestinated he called. Whom he called he justified. Whom he justified he glorified. We are the called of God, called by his gospel.

And then he says they are beloved. God loves them. God loves his people. Beloved of God. I thank God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord. God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation. And they are called to be saints. And they have grace and peace from our Lord Jesus Christ. And I will tell you this. Grace always comes before peace. People who have peace with God and peace in their hearts and peace with one another are people who know something about the grace of God and have been made recipients of the grace of God.

God's preacher...God's preacher, a humble man, separated to the gospel, God's gospel, it is God's gospel, it is the ancient gospel, it is concerning his Son and his son is the Son of man and the Son of God and his people are a people beloved of God. Who have grace and mercy and peace through Christ Jesus.

Would you like to have this message to share it with someone else or to hear it again yourself? Send two dollars and we will mail it to you. Here is the address on the screen. You write for it and we will mail it to you called "God's Preacher." Until next week, may God bless you.