



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Romans 1:1-7

"The Messiah that Paul Preached"

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] Romans chapter 1, verse 1 through verse 7,

"Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, (Which he had promised before by his prophets in the Holy Scriptures,) Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead: By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name: Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ: 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."

Let's bow together in a moment of prayer.

[Prayer removed from audio]

[Message] Those are some great promises that you are making in your singing. Hope you realize what you're singing, "Faith of our fathers . . . We will be true to thee till death."

The subject for this morning as we turn to the exposition of the Epistle to the Romans is, "The Christ that Paul Preached." I think that in reading through the Epistle to the Romans and, surely all Christians have at one time or another read through this greatest of the Pauline epistles, the relevance of Romans should be self-evident. It unfolds God's method for man's salvation.

One of the more liberal students of the word of God, but a man who also has a very conservative sounding name, Professor John Knox, has said, "Whoever is interested in Christianity must necessarily be interested in the Epistle to the Romans. History leaves him no alternative." C. H. Dodd, another liberal student of the Epistle to the Romans, has said that it is the first great work of Christianity theology. And Robert Haldane, a very conservative and strong teacher of the Epistle to the Romans in his book on Romans has said, "It's the only part of Scripture which contains a detailed and systematic exposition of the doctrines of Christianity."

Overshadowing all of these comments, to some, is the great practical value of the Epistle to the Romans or the great effect that it's had in the lives of outstanding men down through the years. Most of us know that it was through the Epistle to the Romans in chapter 13 and verse 13 and 14 that Augustine traces his conversion. And so, that great teacher of the principle of grace traced his understanding of the divine truth to the Epistle to the Romans.

Godet, one of the better commentators on the Epistle to the Romans, has gone so far as to say, "It is probable that every great spiritual revival in the church of Jesus Christ is connected as effect and cause with a deeper understanding of this book," the Epistle to the Romans." John Wesley in Aldersgate Street as Luther's preface to the Romans was being read, long after he had been ordained as a Methodist minister and had actually been a missionary to the United States of America, said this, "About a quarter before nine (While he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ), I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation. And an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins even mine and saved me from the law of sin and death." And so, back to Luther's commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, John Wesley traces his own conversion. I know that through the years, many of you who

have studied the Epistle to the Romans or have been in classes in Romans have known of others who have come to faith in Jesus Christ.

Many years ago, I remember, in Dallas teaching the Epistle to the Romans in a home Bible class and through that class an individual came to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now her husband had not come to faith in Christ and they moved from Dallas shortly after that, went to Florida. And in a church in Florida, an evangelical church, they went in this particular church. They went to the adult Sunday School class and Romans was being taught. And it was not long after that that I received a letter from this lady and she told of the conversion of her husband. This letter was not written to me, but a friend who showed it to me. And in the course of it were the words, "Tell Lewis that Romans did it again." [Laughter] So, the Epistle to the Romans is an epistle that is not only a systematic exposition of the faith of the Apostle Paul and, of course, of us who follow in his steps. It's also a tremendous practical significant and God has used it down through the years for the conversion of a great many people and for the start of great works of grace in the hearts of men.

In the introduction to the Epistle to the Romans, and that's what we want to look at this morning, we have a description of the Jesus Christ that Paul preached. It's one of his slighted, but classic statements and in it the Lord Jesus is seen to be a man, but more than a man. It's amazing to me the things that people say about Jesus Christ and the things that they say making the claim that they have some contact with Holy Scripture.

Lord Beaverbrook said that he is the divine propagandist. He has been called the uniquely free man. He has been called the man for others. He has been said to be the fall guy in the profane world. One thing that is characteristic of comments concerning the Lord Jesus Christ is that they frequently say of him that he was a very good man. One gains the impression that that's the general opinion that liberals have of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was a very good man.

Now there are thousands, I think, of people, who take that position. And that kind of view of him has filtered down to the church and to the pews of the church. And if you just go down the pews of an ordinary congregation of professing Christians and ask concerning Jesus Christ, many of

them would take that view, that he was a very good man, or a very unusual man, or even a divine kind of man. But, the idea that he was just as much God as the Father is God that is strange to them.

W. E. Sangster once said, "An infallible mark of a good man is that he has a keen sense of guilt...the better he is, the more he is conscious of his own failure. But by unanimous testimony, Jesus Christ had no sense of guilt. He never prayed, 'Father, forgive Me', he prayed, 'Father, forgive them.' All of His ministry was devoted to others and to their needs. He never once made any confession of his own guilt. He said, 'I do always those things that please the Father.' And, furthermore, he even challenged men. He said, 'Which of you convicteth Me of sin?' Nobody took up the challenge! If He was a merely good man, then He should have had a sense of sin—but He didn't, and that points us to the fact that He was more than a man."

And in this introduction to the Epistle to the Romans that is exactly what we discover, he is more than a man. But, in the final analysis, the best way to vindicate a text or to vindicate an opinion is to truly investigate it. And so, we turn to the text of the Epistle to the Romans. Like the Son of God himself, it has been conceived by the Holy Spirit in the mind of the apostolic author and born as the spotless word of God.

Now the apostle begins by saying, "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God." Now remember the situation out of which this epistle came. The apostle is on his third missionary journey. The details are given in the 20th chapter of the Book of Acts. It's the winter of the year of fifty-four and fifty-five A.D. The city is Corinth; the Vanity Fair or the Paris of the ancient world, and the apostle is staying in the house of a man by the name of Gaius.

Now that is evident from the 16th chapter of this epistle and I'd like to turn over there, just for a moment, and read this particular verse and the one preceding in just a moment. In chapter 16, verse 23, the apostle says, "Gaius mine host, and of the whole church, greeteth you. Erastus the chamberlain of the city greeteth you, and Quartus a brother." So the apostle is in the house of Gaius,

and he has a secretary by his side, and the secretary by his side is a man by the name of Tertius, which means simply the third, "I, Tertius (we read in a preceding verse), who wrote this epistle, greet you in the Lord."

I often like to say to people just for fun, Paul didn't write Romans and then, if they get excited over that, then I just turn them to this particular text. Tertius says he wrote it. So here is the amanuensis or the secretary. He is the one who wrote the epistle. The apostle dictated it to him evidently. The bearer of this letter was a woman by the name of Phoebe; we read in the 1st verse of chapter 16, "I commend unto you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea." And so, it is very likely that it was in the hands of Phoebe because he says, "I commend unto you Phoebe." And so, she was the bearer of this epistle.

She took this epistle from Corinth to Rome and evidently she probably went the same way that most people did. They traveled over to the Adriatic Sea. They crossed the sea and then made their way to the city of Rome. That was one boat which no storm could ever have sunk. Now, I'm sure that when she arrived in Rome; however, those who were looking for that letter from the Apostle Paul, having heard about it from her mouth, found that thing in her purse with a great deal of difficulty on account of all the other things that she carried in her purse. But, nevertheless, that boat could never have been sunk. Phoebe was the bearer of the letter. So that's the situation and the church in the city of Rome, a church which the apostle had never visited, heard one morning these very words, "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God."

Now we want to notice some of these words and particularly these opening words because they are very important. Very frequently Paul will give us a little clue about the thing that is upon his mind and heart in the opening introduction. And he does here too, because he speaks of himself as separated unto the gospel of God and all Romans is, is an exposition of the gospel of God. But notice the first expression, "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ."

Now that's a strange thing because we remember the apostle was a Jewish man. He was a Hebrew man with all of the traditions of a Hebrew man. He was very acquainted with the Scriptures. He was skilled in them. He was a man who had advanced in Judaism beyond his contemporaries, he says in the Epistle to the Galatians. And so, he would know all about what it means to be a servant of the Lord God. He would have remembered that this is something that is said of Abraham. It is something that is said of Moses. It is something that is said of Joshua. It is something that is said of David. They were said to be servants of Yahweh. Now here is a man, a Jewish man, a Hebrew man exalting in the fact that he is a servant of Jesus Christ. So although, a Jewish man; although skilled in the things of the Old Testament; although entrenched in those doctrines and familiar with all of these expressions, he doesn't hesitate to say that he is a servant of Jesus Christ. So the very term by which those great men of the Old Testament distinguish themselves as servants of the true God, the apostle uses of Jesus Christ.

It's obvious that he has a view of him that makes the Son a majestic being. He is more than a man. No Hebrew man would want to be the servant of any other person than the Lord God. And so, in this very expression "a servant of Jesus Christ" the apostle confesses the majesty of the Son of God. Now don't miss things like this when you are reading the Bible. This is one of the things that will make the Bible live for you. If you don't understand things like this, the Bible will not live for you and you'll wonder how it is that people can get something out of the Scriptures.

This morning, I came in just a few moments ago, opened a letter, and it's a letter from a young girl from one of the universities here in the state of Texas. And she said, "I've been listening to your tape number so and so on systematic theology and you're right, I can't make heads nor tails of it." And she said, "I want some understanding of it." It is true that if we do not have a relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ then we do not understand the word of God. It is foolishness to us, Paul said. And if we as Christians do not read the Bible, we will discover that when we read it, we don't get the things out of it that God would have us to obtain from it. So read the Scriptures and when you see something like this, ponder it, think about it, "a servant of Jesus Christ." A

Hebrew man acknowledging that his loyalty now is to a person by the name of Jesus Christ. It's obvious he thinks of him as the majestic Son of God.

Now he also speaks of himself as called to be an apostle. Now in the Greek text here the expression would be better rendered "a called apostle." Or since this is a verbal adjective, and since it is in the particular type of construction that it is in, it would be better to translate it, "an apostle by calling." In other words, he's stressing the kind of apostle that he is. One might be an apostle by election, I presume, but he's an apostle by calling. And so, he speaks of the fact that he has been called by God. He will address the saints. He will call them, in verse 6, "the called of Jesus Christ" and then he will talk about the Romans. He will say, "To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints." And so, he is an apostle by calling.

That is, he is an apostle because God spoke to him from heaven. God interrupted him. God, in effect, spoke to him in sovereign grace and transformed him, turned him around. He was persecuting the church of God and wasting it, he says. But God spoke to him from heaven and speaking to him from heaven, called him into the ministry of the word of God. In other words, right from the beginning we have stress upon the fact that the initiative is from the Lord God and that will be characteristic of all of the apostle's thinking. It will be, the salvation of God, is something that has proceeded from God and it is he who has taken the initiative. He took the initiative in the apostle's salvation and he takes the initiative in all of his dealings with us.

In the Book of Jeremiah and chapter 23 and verse 21, there is an interesting text and I'm gonna turn over and read it. It's Jeremiah chapter 23 and verse 21 and the prophet writes, "I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied." And, of course, he is in the context speaking of the false prophets as individuals who have not been sent by the Lord God and yet they are running. I have not spoken to them and yet they have prophesied. And you'll have to pardon this; I know that it's very unpopular today to tell any black stories. But, I like that one about the black preacher who was listening to another young preacher and this young man obviously was a man who thought that he was quite a preacher. But, nevertheless, the older

man and the wiser man had some question about whether he was really a man of God because of his attitude in the pulpit. And finally, at the conclusion of the talk, he went up to him and he says, "Was you sent or did you just went?" [Laughter]

Now the apostle is saying here that he is apostle by calling. That is, God has initiated the work of grace in him. And he says too that he is separated unto the gospel of God. He is, in a sense, a spiritual Pharisee, for that word "separated" is a word that is traceable to the root for Pharisee, which means a separatist. So he's separated unto the gospel of God and with the mention of the term "gospel of God," the apostle launches into an aside on that gospel.

Now in older times, it was customary when letters were written to say simply, so and so, one's name, we'll just say "A", "A" to "B" greeting. That was all that was usually given in letters. So it would be say, Lewis to John greeting, *chairo*, greeting in the customary way in which letters were addressed. Now Paul begins that way. He says, "Paul" and then in verse 7 he says, "To all who are in Rome." So Paul, to those who are in Rome, grace and peace to you," but, in between there is this expansion. So the mention of the term "gospel of God" has called out of Paul an expansion of the significance of that gospel.

One thing, one disease, with which the apostles were afflicted, is this that at the mention of the name Jesus Christ, they often launched into asides, or explanations, or expansions of what they were saying. In many of Paul's letters, you will find this. That is, an apostolic disease. John the apostle caught that disease too. If you open up the Book of Revelation, you will notice that he mentions the term Jesus Christ and then he launches into an expansion. They could hardly mention the name Jesus Christ without some expansion. And here, we have the expansion on the gospel.

First of all, he says that it's good news, but not new news. He says, "Which he had promised before by his prophets in the Holy Scriptures." Luther said, "It was not by accident that the gospel was discovered. It's not by some concurrence of the stars. But, the gospel is something that is foretold in the Old Testament and it is proclaimed in the new, promised in the Old Testament."

What are the texts of the Old Testament that promise the gospel? Well, there are many of them. We remember Genesis chapter 15 and verse 6, "Abraham believed in the LORD; and it was reckoned to him for righteousness." That text the apostle will use later in this epistle. It clearly was one that he had in mind. There are many other texts. Jeremiah speaks of, "the Lord our righteousness", our justification and this is the great epistle of justification. Many of the passages of the Old Testament set forth the gospel. Paul says it was promised before by his prophets in the Holy Scriptures.

We should never have the idea that the gospel is something new. It's not new. It's old news, but it's good news. It has been promised in the Old Testament. It has been expanded in the New Testament. It reaches its fullest expansion in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. If anyone should ever say to you that the gospel, which we proclaim, is not the gospel that was proclaimed in the Old Testament. All one has to do is to turn to writings of the apostles in the New Testament and point out that he says here, "He has promised it before by his prophets in the Holy Scriptures."

Now he says that this gospel, it concerns his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Now that expression, incidentally, "Jesus Christ our Lord," in the Greek text follows the 4th verse. Now why it was put here is a little bit of a problem and I think it's much better to reserve "Jesus Christ our Lord" for the end of verse 4 because it's a kind of summary of what is stated in verse 3 and 4. He says, the gospel concerns his Son and in saying that he speaks of the theo-anthropic person. That is, the God-man kind of person, the theo-anthropic person. Eternal yet clothed with man's nature. "To move one step from Jesus Christ as the theo-anthropic person is to withdraw from the gospel," John Calvin says. I agree with that. So the gospel concerns the Son and it is properly capitalized in the Authorized Version text, "Concerning his Son" because the reference is to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now this text that follows, which expands, "Concerning his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, made of the seed of David according to the flesh," and so on, is a very difficult Christological text. And I'm going to try to elucidate it as simply as I possibly can, but it is a very difficult text; a difficult passage. And, unfortunately, because of its difficulty, it has never been given the place in Pauline

thinking that it should have been given. Luther said, "This text has never been adequately interpreted by anyone" and then he proceeded to give the adequate interpretation. Unfortunately, very few have followed him in his interpretation. So I'm not going to be so bold as to suggest that I'm giving you the adequate interpretation. I won't tell you what I think, but nevertheless, I'm not going to say it is the adequate interpretation. But, almost all of what I will say to you will be in harmony with the word of God. I hope all of it is.

Now notice what he says. First of all, he says that it concerns his Son who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh. Now if you have a New American Standard Bible, for example, you will find that the term "made" of the Authorized Version is rendered by "born of the seed of David according to the flesh." That's all right. That's probably a little more accurate than the expression of the Authorized Version. But, surely, anyone reading the Authorized Version and reading the words "Who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh" understands that this is of our Lord's birth. So he came to be. That's the force of the Greek expression, "He came to be of the seed of David according to the flesh." In other words, Jesus Christ entered human existence, the human stage of existence by birth. In the fullness of time, God sent forth his Son who came to be of a woman, who came to be under law. Paul says in another place, that he might redeem those who were under the law that they might receive the adoption of sons. So he was made of the seed of David according to the flesh. He entered the human stage of existence by birth and then he was appointed to a further status as the text will point out.

Now this is the first of three obvious antitheses that are found in this expression of verses 3 and 4. The first, "made," "declared," or "appointed," verse 4. Notice the way in which this statement is constructed. There are three of these antitheses, "He was 'made' of the seed of David according to the flesh, 'appointed' Son of God with power." Then, "Seed of David, Son of God, according to the flesh, according to the spirit of holiness." So here is a statement constructed by Paul with a great deal of care expressive of doctrinally important points.

The first has to do with his human existence and his appointment to a higher status. Now that will be developed when we talk about Son of God and then according to the spirit of holiness. But let's look at the second of the antitheses. It's "seed of David" and "Son of God." He said, "He was born of the seed of David according to the flesh and appointed Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead." So, on the one hand, we have his Davidic Sonship. Now that's important.

Now we have seen this recently because we've been expounding the Epistle to the Romans. And we remember that in the 49th chapter of the Book of Genesis, Jacob had said with reference to Judah that Judah would be the tribe from which the Messiah should come. He said that Judah, and he used the expression "Shiloh," remember? That Judah would stand at the top of the tribes so far as position is concerned. That the ruler would not, well, let's turn to it because I'm not starting it quite properly, Genesis chapter 49 and verse 10. And the point I want you to notice is simply the connection with the tribe of Judah. He says, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."

Later on, this prophecy is further defined as a reference to the family of David; Jesse, and his son. And so, we have here beginning in the Book of Genesis, reference to the Davidic line of our Lord Jesus Christ, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, until the one whose name is Shiloh." And that name means "him to whom it all belongs." So he is seed of David. That is part of the apostle's preaching.

He preached the Davidic Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ. Any preaching of the gospel to be fully Pauline must be a preaching of the gospel that recognizes the Davidic Sonship of the Lord Jesus because this is the thing that connects him with all of those promises of the Old Testament that God has given. But over against seed of David, he says, we have Son of God, "Appointed Son of God with power according to a spirit of holiness" so Davidic Sonship on one side, divine Sonship in power on the other side.

Now when he says that he was appointed Son of God, we are not to think that Jesus Christ was not Son of God in the ultimate sense of his essential Sonship until he was appointed by the Father. At some point in time, here, the resurrection from the dead. This is not a relationship to his essential Sonship. This is a relationship to his official work as the Son of God. It's a text that refers to his Lordship and it is by virtue of the resurrection that our Lord was appointed Son of God with power. That is the time at which having come forth from the grave, he was marked out as God's Messianic Son endowed with specific power as the Son of God. So the reference here then is to his official Lordship not his essential Sonship. And this is, by the resurrection, he says. He was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead. So then the reference is to him as the divine Son marked out as Lord of all by the resurrection.

You remember that the Apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost after the resurrection proclaims him as Lord and calls upon men to believe in him as Lord in that great sermon. He concludes in the latter part of the 2nd chapter by saying, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." That's what Paul is talking about right here. He means that he has been appointed to this status by virtue of the resurrection from the dead. He is the official Lord of all.

Now it is remarkable that the Bible does present these things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ because what we have is a unique person. He's more than a man. He is the seed of David, but he is also the Son of God and Lord of all. There are some who like to think of this text as teaching the human nature of our Lord and the divine nature of our Lord and, of course, that's true. But, that is not probably what the apostle is trying to say. He's trying to say just what I've set forth for you. But, it is true that he is a person who has a human nature and also a divine nature and yet he is one person.

Now let's think for just a moment about that because that's important. A man may have two forms of consciousness yet with only one form of self-consciousness. That is true to us. We can understand something about our Lord, not everything, but something about him, we'll just remember

that. You can feel cold with your body. Wouldn't you love to feel a little cold with your body today? Do you know that if we have two more days over a hundred, we will break the all-time record? So I'm looking forward to that [Laughter]. Tell my grandchildren, "This is the all time record." Really, we are living in momentous days [Laughter]. Things that really ought to make us feel good, record breaking days. Think of that. And did you know that back in about nineteen hundred and three, I think it was; it was fifty-five today in Texas? How would you like that? [Laughter]. Well, anyway, a man can feel cold with his body even though it may seem difficult today. He can feel cold with his body while he prays to God with his mind. So he has a sense of consciousness, of cold, and he has a sense of consciousness of God in his mind.

These two forms of conscious experience, feeling cold with your body and praying to God with your mind, are two wholly distinct forms of consciousness and yet they are all parts of one self-consciousness. It is I who feel cold with my body and it is I who pray to God with my mind. So this doubleness, this distinctness in the consciousness, does not destroy the unity of my self-consciousness. So the Lord Jesus as the theo-anthropic person, the God-man kind of person, was constituted of a divine nature and of a human nature.

The divine nature had its own form of existence and experience like mine, like mine in the ordinary person. And the human nature had its form of experiences like the body in the human being. But, there was just one person, one subject ego, one ego in our Lord Jesus Christ. So at the very time that our Lord was conscious of weariness in his body, as he was by the well at Samaria when he was thirsty, he was also conscious of being the eternal and only begotten Son of God, the second person of the Trinity. That's proved by his words to the Samaritan woman when he said to her, after he said, "Give me to drink." Expressive of his humanity, he said, "Whoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. I that speak unto thee am the Messiah." So he is an individual who feels thirst, but at the same time, he gives a water that will cause a person never to thirst thereafter, for it is the water of everlasting life.

The Lord Jesus may be in the boat and the storm may come. He may be so tired from the day's activity that as the lightning flashes, and as the thunder roars, and as the waves beat against that little boat, and as the water comes over the boat, and the apostles, who were familiar with the Sea of Galilee, are fearful and come to him, they discover that he's sleeping in the stern of the boat. And so, they awaken him and say, "Master, Master, carest Thou not that we perish?" And the Lord Jesus stands up in the midst of the storm, the tired Son of God, and speaks a word. He rebukes the wind and the waves and suddenly there is a great clam. You see both humanity and deity reside in the one person in that one little boat with the apostles. And they turn around and say, "What manner of man is this that even winds and waves obey him?" Paul would say, "He's the Son who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, an appointed Son of God with power by virtue of the resurrection of the dead."

Peter one day, asked by the people of the time, "Does your master pay taxes?" He said, "Sure." He came home and the Lord Jesus said, "Peter, why'd you say that? You know I don't pay taxes. But in order that they might not be offended, I tell you what I want you to do. I want you to go down to the lake, Peter. It's my lake. (And said,) I want you to just launch out just a little bit and I want you to drop over your line in my lake. And you'll do it whenever you want to, but do it right now. Just go down to the lake and I've got a little fish down there and he's just waiting for your hook. (Isn't that nice you fisherman?) Just waiting for your hook and he'll be there. And when you drop your hook over, (he said,) my fish will be there and he will take that hook and you just bring that fish up. And you just open the fish's mouth and they'll be a little coin in there and it'll be sufficient to pay our taxes and you go do that and you pay our taxes." And, of course, that's exactly what happened. Peter went down there. He threw his line over and there was the fish just waiting "Catch me!" [Laughter] And he brought it up and there was the coin and he took it and paid it. Now what a human thing it is to pay taxes, but what a divine way of paying taxes we have.

W. E. Sangster was a British preacher and a very outstanding one and near the end of his life, Mr. Sangster was so weak and so sick that he was unable to walk or even speak. And he wrote to

his daughter a note. He said, "It's terrible to wake up on Easter morning and have no voice with which to shout, 'He is risen!' But, (he said) it would be still more terrible to have a voice and not want to shout." You see, we have a God-man who is our Savior and he is the Son of David according to the flesh. I want to tell you, my dear friends, that Shiloh has come! The one to whom it all belongs and he is not only Son of David according to the flesh, but he has been appointed Son of God with power by virtue of the resurrection from the dead.

Now the third of the antitheses is the antithesis according to the flesh on the one hand and according to the spirit of holiness on the other. And, of course, the difficult expression is what does Paul mean by the spirit of holiness? Does he mean the Holy Spirit? It's possible to express it this way. That's a Hebraic kind of way of saying things. The spirit of holiness could be the Holy Spirit, but that would be the only time that the apostle uses this particular expression of the Holy Spirit. And so, it's probably wiser to look for some other force.

Is it a reference to the divine nature we have according to the flesh and now according to the spirit of holiness? That is, according to the divine nature that would be a matching pair of expressions according to the flesh, humanity according to the spirit of holiness; deity, and, of course, this is true of our Lord. But again, that would be a strange way to say it. Without arguing the case much, because it would demand a lengthier article. I have written a lengthy article on this. It's probably better to take this as the principle of holy consecration, the spirit of holiness, the Holy Spirit, but little "s" not capital "S," which characterized our Lord's life. It was his holy obedient disposition.

It is what is referred to by the apostle in another place, when in Philippians chapter 2, he says, "He was obedient unto death and even such a thing as the death of the cross." In fact, Philippians 2:5-11 is the clearest exposition of Romans 1, 3 through 3 and 4. So what he is saying is that the stage of humiliation, "Born of the seed of David according to the flesh" has given way by reason of the resurrection to the stage of exaltation.

The Son moved in history from Messiahship to Lordship and the resurrection is the dividing point. That's what he means. He's talking about history. He said, "He came as the seed of David according to the flesh and as he moved through his life and ministry and especially his death and resurrection, he has been appointed Son of God with power." And so, you can see the historical progression of the Davidic Son who came and answered to the promises of the Old Testament and now by virtue of death, burial, and resurrection, and ascension to the right hand of the Father, he is Son of God with power by virtue of the resurrection from the dead. He is the mighty Lord of all, is the force of the expression.

Now the apostle says in verse 5 and verse 6, as he expresses the aim of the gospel, "By whom we have" (I should have said this, he concludes by saying, Jesus Christ our Lord. That's the concluding expression in the Greek text and notice the effectiveness of the summary. He is Jesus, the human seed of David according to the flesh, Christ, Messiah. He is the Messianic fulfillment of the Old Testament promises, but he is also our Lord, Son of God with power by virtue of the resurrection. So the apostle, "Jesus Christ our Lord" has summed it all up. I cannot say more than that. He is the Savior who saves to the uttermost and he's Lord of all.

And he speaks of faith obedience. He says, "By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name." That's the term by which we receive him. We come to know him through faith. We don't come to know him by joining the church, by praying through, doing good works, being a good citizen, being well educated, cultured. We become Christians when we receive, as a free gift, the salvation of God and in that we acknowledge our unworthiness to gain eternal life by the things that we do.

He addresses it to the saints. He says, "To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called saints." For all saints are called. They're all the subject of the initiating work of grace. I don't see how anyone who reads the Epistle to the Romans can help but see that salvation is the work of God from beginning to end, and how wonderful to have a salvation that is the work of God from beginning to end. If there was some human link in it, some conditionalism dependent upon human

obedience, we would be of all men most miserable if we really knew our hearts. But, fortunately, the apostle makes it plain; we are called saints, saints by calling, "Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."

Why is all of this so important? Well, if Jesus Christ is Lord, if he's the Messiah that Paul preached, then he's the Lord of all realms. He's the Lord of what we think concerning the Bible. "The Scriptures cannot be broken," Jesus said. He is the Lord with respect to sin. He said, "If ye then being evil." He spoke of men as depraved. He's Lord with reference to the atonement. When he said, "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many," he expresses to us the doctrine of a substitutionary atonement by which he has rendered satisfaction to the holiness of God.

He is Lord in the realm of salvation. He said, "I am the way. I am the truth. I am the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me." He is the exclusive Savior. There is no salvation through any other person or through any other philosophy on the face of this earth. He is the sole Savior of men. He is the one who speaks authoritatively concerning life after death, "I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me though he were dead yet shall he live and he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" he said to Martha. I say to you this morning, 'Believest thou this?'

And he, of course, is Lord with reference to the church. He has built the church, the true church of believers, upon the confession that Peter uttered by revelation, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." How petty and unsatisfying then are the views of modern man about Jesus Christ: divine propagandist, man for others, the uniquely man for others. A Christian confesses that Jesus Christ is Lord of all. And let me tell you this, my dear Christian friend, the forces of darkness will not be defeated by flags of truce. And if we are going to be effective ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ, and we're all servants of him, we must speak the truth in the boldness with which the Holy Spirit endows us.

There's an old story I like about a cowardly soldier who appeared before Alexander the Great. He used to, occasionally, call his men together and they would deal with matters of discipline in his great army. This day was an especially bad day. A number of men were guilty of various offenses and finally a young man was brought before the great king. And he asked, "What was charge against him?" It was a young man of 18 or 19 years of age and Alexander, obviously, was impressed by his good looks and by his appearance. And one of the men standing by, one of the soldiers said, "In the face of the enemy, he turned and ran." And Alexander became livid with rage and got down off of his chair. He walked over to the young man, he grasped him and he said, "What is your name?" He said, "Alexander, sir." And that seemed to make him even madder. And he said, "Either change your name or change your actions."

So you're a Christian. You're a Christian, but do you really respond to the name that you've attached to yourself? Is it true that you really are bold in your witness for him? And you acknowledge before all that he is the one in whom you are trusting and you proclaim him as Davidic Messiah, Son of God with power, boldly to your friends and to your family?

Well, we have no doubts about what Paul and the Romans believed, but what about the Dallasites? We may not be able to hoist the flag of salvation over the roof of City Hall, but can we hoist the flag of salvation over our roof? Can we say, as the apostle says in the 6th verse here about the Romans, "Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ." Can we really say, "Among whom we also are the called of Jesus Christ?" I ask you that question this morning. Have you come to faith in Jesus Christ? Are you able to say, "I am one of those called individuals"?

You may have wandered in here this morning, wondering, "What in the world is Believers Chapel all about?" Well, now you have a pretty good idea. The gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is that we are sinners, that Christ has offered the atoning sacrifice for sinners. And you may have the salvation of God as by the Holy Spirit you are brought to conviction and you come and receive, as a free gift, the forgiveness of sins. Come to Christ. Put your trust in him. By the grace of God, may God give you enlightenment, may you come, and then you'll rejoice in a Savior, seed of David

according to the flesh, Son of God in power, Lord of all, able to meet all of your needs through the blood that was shed. Let's stand for the benediction.

[Prayer] Father, we are so grateful to Thee for this masterful expression of the faith of a Christian by the Apostle Paul and we bow before Thee. We acknowledge that he is Lord of all. And we desire, Lord, that he be Lord of all in our lives and Lord of this church and we plead with Thee, Lord, O...

[RECORDING ENDS ABRUPTLY]