

The Book of Romans, Lesson 5, Romans 1:5, "Called by Grace, Sent to Witness"

✚ So grateful for the teachings of Donald Grey Barnhouse, the famous Pastor of the Tenth Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia, PA., who started teaching on the book of Romans in 1949 on the air and continued in that book until his death in 1960, I am dependent on many of his insights for our study of this same book. "Through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles in behalf of His name." Romans 1:5. Who is "we" in this passage? The Bible and in particular its favorable promises are not for everybody. Those promises are for a select, or, shall we say, an elect few! There is no positive promise in the Bible for a Mormon, Jehovah's witness, Buddhist, Hindu, Atheist, or a religious person. The only thing for them here is the offer of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ or the certain punishment of Hell. Otherwise, there is no comfort for them here, no strength for them, no promises to cling to. They are without Christ and without hope. "In those days you were living apart from Christ. You were excluded from citizenship among the people of Israel, and you did not know the covenant promises God had made to them. You lived in this world without God and without hope." Ephesians 2:12. This is a book of Salvation to the lost and only that for them, the rest of the book is for those who are saved. A Lost person can learn some neat anecdotes and rules of thumb about many things from the Scriptures, but really they are of no use to them until they repent and accept God's forgiveness and salvation. This "we" is an exclusive group. There are several things for us to take note of in this verse.

1. **Grace, God's unmerited favor; getting what we don't deserve; we deserve hell, but God offers to us Heaven, that's grace.**

- ✓ "I deserved hell, Jesus took my hell on the cross, there is nothing left for me but Heaven" that's grace. We broke the law, Jesus paid the penalty, that's grace. We sing "Jesus paid for it all" not 99%. That's grace. If we aren't convinced that we deserve hell, we can never be saved, without that conviction we will never understand our need for Christ. "We have received grace" we can say the same about a gift, we didn't earn it or it would be a salary or wage; a gift is something that says everything about the giver and nothing about the receiver. God's salvation speaks of Him and His excellencies and says nothing about our qualifications, which is good since we have none! By Grace, Paul was pulled over on the road to Damascus and saved from his life of sin. By grace, we were pulled over in our pursuit of a fruitless existence to be rescued from what our sins deserved.

2. **Apostleship, remember that apostle just simply means "one who is sent."**

- ✓ Paul is saying, "I was pulled over to be saved by grace and now have been sent with the same message to my world." Even though the title of "Apostle" was unique to a select few in the New Testament times, the work of a sent one is incumbent on all of us. Never doubt it, we are just as sent as Paul was, how do I know?, check Matthew 28:19-20. We are bondservants by the grace of God who have been sent. This is a great way to start each day, "I am God's servant, how will He send me today?" When someone asks us what we do, our response should be, "I am a witness to the saving work of Jesus Christ, I have a job to pay the bills." We are saved by the grace of the works of the Son of God on our behalf, not by our own works; but we are called to do good works. When we ordain a leader, we are just simply are confirming what we see God doing with their life, i.e. Ephesians 2:8-10. We actually do not send anyone but only agree with the ones whom God has sent.

3. **"To bring about the obedience of faith." "I have been saved by grace, sent to the world to bring them to the point of obeying this faith that I represent."**

- We may do other things to make a living, like Paul who was a tent maker, but we have been sent to be His witnesses. We are not here to be, workers, ranchers, business owners, teachers, farmers, secretaries, or even moms or dads, we may do those things as a process of living, but we have been sent to be His witnesses. Are we doing what we have been sent to do?

Our purpose is to get the word out, we have been sent to do that, saved to be God's, but sent to bring others with us. What are you doing to get the word out? It is a valid question of accountability, tracts, bible studies, sharing our faith? We have to be faithful to our sending.
