***Paul's Appeal for Prayer Support - No. 5
Romans 15:30-33
RO192-02***

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Romans 15, we're looking at verses 30-33 at the end of this chapter. Our subject is Paul's Appeal for Prayer Support; this is segment Number 5. The apostle Paul has arrived safely in Rome for his trial before Nero. Along the way, he has escaped the conspiracy of unsaved Jews to assassinate him. He has survived shipwreck at sea. He has survived the bite of a poisonous viper. And as he has traveled from Caesarea to Rome, he has explained the gospel of grace salvation to a variety of gentile rulers and citizens. Thus, Paul's prayer, that he enunciated in Romans 15 that we read that he would have protection from the Jews in Jerusalem, has indeed been granted. He has delivered the gift and his life has been spared.

In Rome, Paul is placed under house arrest, chained to a soldier as his guard while he awaits his trial. Therefore, Paul has freedom to meet people in his home. He has opportunity to testify and teach to them and to teach the Word of God. He first testifies to the Jews of Rome about Jesus Christ as being their Messiah Savior. Most of them reject his message. He then turns of testifying to the Gentiles in Rome about grace salvation, and many of them believe.

Paul continues now under house arrest in Rome for 2 whole years before his trial finally comes up. And from the records that we have in Scripture, we are inclined to believe that at that trial, he was declared not guilty, and Nero freed him. He was free for a few years and perhaps even got to fulfill his dream of evangelizing in Spain. In any case, a few years later, he was again arrested. This time there was no question of his guilt because the laws had been changed, that it was a capital crime to teach Christianity and therefore Paul was executed. But on this occasion, he uses this time very effectively in his house prison. This, of course, is the period when what we call the prison epistles were written: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon.

**Paul's Second Prayer Request to the Church in Rome**

Finally, Paul also gave the believers in Rome, when he was writing them in the Book of Romans, a second prayer request relative to his mission in Jerusalem. So, we look at that. If you'll turn to Romans 15, we take up the second prayer request.

In the latter part of verse 31, Paul says, "and that my service for Jerusalem may prove acceptable to the saints." The word service is related to the word Deacon, it's "diakonia," d i a k o n i a, and this refers specifically to his divine mission of delivering the Jerusalem Relief Fund from the gentile churches. When he says, "for Jerusalem," this mission for Jerusalem, he means for the Jewish Christians who are in the city who are suffering famine. He says, 'please pray that my divine mission here now for the saints of Jerusalem may prove' and actually the word "prove" is the Greek word "ginomai," g i n o m a i, which means "to become," that his service is going to become something.

And what he wants it to become is "acceptable," a long Greek word, "euprosdektos," e u p r o s d e k t o s. This word is made up of 3 words. The first part "eu," means well. The second part, "pros," p r o s here means "toward." The last part, "dektos," means "acceptable." So, literally it means "well acceptable towards," or "very favorable acceptance." It's a word that emphasizes that Paul is really concerned of how the Jewish Christians are going to respond when he walks in with this money gathered from Gentiles, even though these are Jewish Christians. And he wants this gift not only to be accepted, but he uses a strong word; I want it to be very well accepted. I want these people to be deeply appreciative of what the gentile churches have done. He says I want this to be done by the saints. They're referring to the Christians in Jerusalem.

**Legalism Versus Grace**

Paul's problem was this. He was concerned for the way the Jewish Christians would respond to the relief fund from the gentile churches. Paul knew that there was some resentment even among Jewish Christians toward gentile Christians. The Jewish Christians had some indignation over the attitude of freedom that was expressed by the Gentile Christians toward the Mosaic Law. And Paul was concerned that when he came with this gift, there might be such a depth of resentment that the Jewish Christians would say, 'Keep your money. We don't want it from people like those Gentile Christians with their freewheeling way of life.'

These legalistic Jewish Christians had reservations about the free grace salvation and the free grace freedoms in Christ which were practiced by the Gentile Christians. The Gentile Christians ignored the Mosaic Law lifestyle because it didn't apply to them. This became a problem early in the church. You can read in the Book of Acts, Chapters 5-29 about the conference that they had in which they discuss this issue: do Gentiles have to obey the Mosaic Law in order to be saved? And at the end of that conference, you read that passage, you will see it, they decided, no. The Mosaic Law is a way of life. It had nothing to do with salvation in the Old Testament. You didn't get saved by keeping the Mosaic Law in the Old Testament. You got saved by trusting in the coming Christ as Savior. And you certainly aren't going to be saved now that Christ has come by obeying the rules of the Mosaic Law. This is further reinforced in Galatians 5:1-4 where Paul says, "It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore, keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery." And the yoke of slavery that he's referring to there is the Mosaic Law.

The problem was that when Paul evangelized the Galatian area of the Roman Empire, there was a great reception on the part of the Gentiles. But when he left, up come the Judaizing Christians from Jerusalem following after him, and they convinced the Gentile believers in the Galatian area that they had to subject themselves to the Mosaic Law. So, pretty soon the Gentiles of Galatia are trying to grow spiritually by keeping rules. Paul said, I told you when I was with you, you're not saved by obeying rules of conduct and you do not grow spiritually by obeying rules of conduct. You grow as a result of your knowledge of doctrine and your positive volition attitude toward doctrine so that God the Holy Spirit, causes you to mature and your conduct flows from that. You're trying to make what comes out of your regenerated life the cause of your spirituality. He says, 'You've got it backwards.'

So, Paul wrote to them, and he was very firm. He said 'Christ has set you free, that's what salvation is all about in the Age of the Church, freedom. Don't go back to the burdensome yoke of the Mosaic Law, which even the Old Testament believers couldn't obey in any degree.'

**Grace Plus Works Is Not Salvation**

In Galatians 5:2 Paul says, "Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no profit to you." Do feel the chill of that verse? Understand what it said! If you receive circumcision (For what purpose?) to be saved, and that's what the Judaizers were saying. They went to the Galatians, and they said, if you want your male children ever to go to Heaven, you better circumcise them or they'll never get there, a works method of being saved. And Paul says, 'salvation is free grace, you add one speck of human work and you have denied God the ground to save.' Do you realize that? Ephesians 2:8:9 says that you are saved by grace, not of works lest any man should boast. God will save you? Yes! He will save you how? On his ground of grace, or you don't get saved at all.

I'll put that into our terms today. I am going to be saved, I'm trusting in Christ as Savior, and I go to my priest, and I confess regularly to go to Heaven; is a person who does that going to Heaven even though he believes that Christ has died for his sins? No, he will not. I'm trusting in Christ as Savior, and I am taking the Lord's Supper regularly for the forgiveness of my sins... how many times in my Lutheran association background have I heard about the pastor being called to rush to the hospital because somebody is seriously ill and potentially going to die in order to give them the Lord's Supper? Why? Why obviously so their sins will be forgiven. If that person who is about to die really believes that his trust in Christ, plus his taking of these elements of the Lord's Supper are going to take him into Heaven, you know what happened when he died? He opened his eyes in Hades. What a shock, to be a good church person all your life, and to be a participant and a money-giver, and a praiser of the Lord, and end up in Hell.

This is why Paul was saying, 'You've got to get this straight. You're going to be telling people that they are going to Heaven if they trust in Christ plus obeying the Mosaic Law, and what you have done is lied to them. They will never get to Heaven that way!'

Galatians 5:3 says, "And I testify again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is under obligation to keep the whole law." Paul says, 'OK, let's talk about going to Heaven by keeping the Law of Moses. The Law of Moses is a unit. You cannot break part of it and still say that it is whole, that it is perfect, that you have kept it.'

Did you ever put something in your dishwasher and put a plate too close to something else? And when it came out, it has a chip on it. Do you have a perfect plate? Sure, it's just a chip. I noticed though, when the guests come, they don't get the chipped plates. I get the chipped plates, but they get the nice plates. Why? Because it's not perfect anymore.

That's the Law, break one piece and Paul says you have broken the whole thing. So, let's talk about going to Heaven by the Law. Which of you dudes keep the whole Law, especially since Jesus explained that the first place of sin is up here in the head, and you don't have to do an outward act of adultery or fornication to be guilty of it. All you have to do is mentally receptively indulge in it. You don't have to snuff a life out to be guilty of murder; all you have to do is have an attitude of hatred. So, pretty soon it was very clear, nobody ever kept the 613 regulations of the Mosaic Law. No way.

**Grace Saves - Not Works!**

Galatians 5:4, Paul says, "You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace." Paul says, 'God's method is grace. If you fall away from this method of grace salvation, there is no other way. Those of you who are trying to be justified on the basis of what you do, you have fallen from God's grace method of salvation, therefore you are doomed.'

So, the apostle Paul had a problem. He knew that there were Jewish Christians who could not give up their heritage of the Mosaic Law and they could not conceive of that heritage not being imposed on Gentiles and for those Gentiles still to be going to Heaven. You see, they were making the principles of how you live decides whether you go to Heaven or not. Paul therefore was viewed with resentment and suspicion by many Christian Jews as the one who taught the Gentiles their grace lifestyle with no subjection to the Mosaic Law.

So, Paul knew it was possible that when he got to Jerusalem, these Jewish Christians would want nothing to do with him or his Gentile relief fund. Therefore, he asked for prayer that the fund would be graciously received as it had been given in Christian love. His point was this act of love must not be spurned by the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem. Please pray that it will not be so and that it will be fully and graciously accepted by them. This was to be a gift to cement the bond of fellowship in Christ between Jewish and Gentile Christians.

**Paul's Hope for Rest**

Then, in Romans 15:32-33, the end of the chapter, Paul expresses a need for some R and R, some rest and recreation. In Romans 15:32 he expresses the hope: he says, "so that I may come to you in joy." He says, 'I am asking these two requests that I'll be protected from the Jews and that the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem will accept the gift graciously so that I will be able to come to you in a very happy frame of mind.' He wants to be able to travel joyously to Rome after visiting Jerusalem.

Now, this depends on God foiling the plots of the unsaved Jews against Paul in Jerusalem. It depends upon the Jewish Christians receiving the Jerusalem relief fund in the spirit of love in which it was given. He says, 'I want to come to you in a happy friend of mind by the will of God.' Whether Paul's hope for joy in Rome will be realized, he is smart enough to know, is dependent upon the will of God. There are so many Christians who do not understand that. Everything that concerns us is governed by the will of God, and Paul himself is wisely subject to the sovereign will and the perfect wisdom of God in all of his life plans. Wish to God that all of us could learn that, but that we have no alternative but to be subject to the sovereign will of God, as that will is expressed in Scripture. His perfect wisdom is the best bet for us in every aspect of life.

God's will for Paul is going to be revealed as circumstances develop. And when we leave the decisions to God in our lives, we always get the best results. That's the Doctrine of Faith Rest. There is a point beyond which we cannot carry things, beyond which we cannot make things happen the way we want them to, where we have to wait upon God to open the doors.

Well, of course, Paul reached Rome under less than happy circumstances, he got there as a prisoner of the government. But nevertheless, he found that though that wasn't the way he planned, that's the way it worked out in the sovereign will of God. And that the choice, as he said, 'by God's will, I want to come to you in this joyous frame of mind.' He left it with the Lord, and as he found that as it worked out, it really was for the best.

When he wrote to the Philippian church from his house in Rome in Philippians 1:12-14, Paul indicates it really all turned out for the best. Paul says, "Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel, so that my imprisonment in the cause of Christ has become well known throughout the whole Praetorian Guard and to everyone else." Paul says, 'Do you realize what an opportunity I have every day? They chain me to a different soldier, and they are not just chaining me to some guy of the regular troops down the line, they're chaining me to the elite. This guy is a Marine. This is the Praetorian Guard. This is the top. When I talk to him, what I say to him reverberates through the highest echelons of the military in Rome. And it's having an enormous effect up there on the troops that are the first line troops and that have powerful influence through the empire that they move.'

In Philippians 1:14 Paul says, "In that most of the brethren trusting the Lord because of my imprisonment have far more courage to speak the Word of God without fear." He says when I came and people saw what had happened to me and how God had carried me through, you could just imagine Paul holding them in thrall as he described the journey by sea for 2 weeks in that storm, and the viper, and everything else that happened to him, all the conspiracies and God carrying him through, they suddenly got the point: 'You realize that I am immortal? I, as a Christian, am immortal. I cannot be touched by any of the forces of Satan until my mission under the will of God is complete. I am under His protective care.' So, the general run of Christians in Rome became much bolder in their own witnessing.

God granted Paul his request for safety from the unsaved Jews and he also granted him a cordial reception of the Jerusalem Relief Fund by the Christian Jews. The result was Paul says, 'I want to come to you under these happy conditions.' Then he says I want to "find refreshing rest." And did he ever need R and R by this time? I need some "refreshing rest in your company."

He wanted to find rest, and this is another interesting Greek word, another long one, "sunanapauo," s u n a n a p a u o. This word again is made up of 3 words: "sun," which is a preposition and means with, "ana," a n a, which means "up," it's a preposition. Then this verb "pao," which means "to cease or to rest." So, it literally he says, "I want to rest up with," to rest up with. What he was saying is that he wanted to have a period of total rest with them. It wasn't just that he wanted to have a period of a vacation, but he wanted it with them, and he was referring to himself physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

This is in the Greek aorist tense, which means that at the point that he finally arrives with them, middle voice, which clearly says that he needed this, this was for himself. And it's the subjunctive mood, it's a potential; he really hopes that when he gets to Rome, he can have this. He looked forward for some refreshment and rest in Rome in the fellowship of the Christian's there.

He seeks this R and R for his whole being, for his spirit, his soul and his body. What he'd hoped to do was now to leave his fears and concerns behind him when he arrived in Rome, to get out from under the daily pressures of the ministry. You must remember that this is the great burden that the apostle Paul carried. He had a constant burden of the churches that he had to be concerned with and that he had to take care of.

There were plenty of Christians who were flakes in those days, just like there are today. There were plenty of Christians who never could get their eyes off of temporal things and off of their personal well-being and get them on eternal things and on the Lord's work. Those are the people that were constantly drifting off. You could read in 2 Corinthians 11:23-29 Paul's descriptions of all the personal dangers and sufferings he faced. And then he points out that apart from this, verse 28 says, "Apart from such external things, there's a daily pressure upon me of concern for all the churches. Who is weak without my being weak? Who is led into sin without my intense concern?" Paul says, 'The burdens of what takes place among the believers are my burdens too. When somebody gets in trouble, I can't just ignore it. It's a problem on me. It's a burden on me as well. Therefore, I am constantly carrying this load.' So, he thought it'll be so nice sailing across the Mediterranean, that beautiful clear water, and a pleasant trip, a voyage by sea to Rome. It didn't turn out like that, but at least he hoped when he got to Rome, he'd get some rest and some recreation.

Another verse on this is Acts 20:34 where Paul says, "You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my own needs and to the men who were with me." This was another thing that had been a burden on Paul, 'how do you pay for the church work?' That's the question we still ask. How do you pay for everything that's needed to do God's work? How do you pay for the facilities and maintain them? How do you pay for the operational needs? Paul says, 'Not only did I have the spiritual burdens upon me, the physical threats upon me, but I had the problem of getting the money to execute my missionary work,' and he had to go to work himself out of his own funds to be paying for this. When something was needed and no one else came up with it, the apostle Paul felt obliged before God if he had the reserves to do it himself. And that's exactly what he did. But that did add another burden to him.

So as things turned out, Paul ended up with 2 full years of R and R in Rome after 2 years in Caesarea. The trip from Caesarea to Rome was filled with many hazards, but God safely carried him through to the capital of the Empire. In his Roman house prison, Paul taught Grace Age doctrines from Salvation to Rewards to a variety of people. And in Rome, he wrote the great prison epistles.

**Paul's Word of Peace**

So, in Romans 15:33, our last verse of this chapter, this brings us to the close of the main body of instruction in Romans after many, many long months and years that we have been in this book. Romans 16 is finishing up with personal greetings to friends and so on. But here's where the exposition, this great dissertation on justification by faith in Christ through Free Grace Salvation comes to an end. And what he ends on is the word of peace.

He says in conclusion, "Now the God of peace." The word "peace" looks like this in the Greek Bible, e i r e n a, "eirena." This refers to a condition of tranquility in the soul where there is no aggravation, no fear. There is a settled condition of tranquility.

"Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen." He closes the book with a benediction. He closes the formal part with a benediction on his brethren at Rome. Paul commits them all to the God of peace.

**God Is the Source of Peace**

The expression "God of peace" means "God who is the source of peace." This is illustrated in 2 Thessalonians 3:16 where Paul says, "Now may the Lord of peace Himself continually grant you peace in every circumstance. The Lord be with you all!" He refers here very clearly to God as the source of peace. There's two kinds of peace in the Bible. I need to clarify and remind you of those. First of all, we have learned of one of those previously in Romans 5:1, "Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Notice the word "with," "we have peace with God." This is the Greek word "pros," p r o s. This is a preposition, and it connotes face-to-face. So, what this word is telling us is that we now, through the Lord Jesus Christ, we believers have a position of tranquility when we face a holy God. That's a very serious matter in the mind of any human being. Unless you're an utterly abject fool, you are naturally concerned, taking the presupposition that someone had to make this world and that there is a God out there, and that He has revealed Himself, and that that revelation is in the Bible, and that He has spelled out an accountability on our part for our sins, and that there is no presence in Heaven with Him unless we ourselves are as absolutely perfect as God is, that requires some serious thinking of our own condition when we check out of this life.

Unfortunately, most people tend not to take this very seriously until the doctor tells me something that knocks them off their chair and they say, 'You must be kidding. I do not get diseases like that. That surely is not what has happened to me.' Then after the initial sobering of the fact that you might check out of this life has passed, then people start thinking about facing this Holy God. Usually, it's too late by then unfortunately.

Paul says, 'It is important for every human being to be able to have a comfortable sense of peace within himself with God.' This peace is secured permanently by entering the outer circle of eternal fellowship when we trust Christ as Savior. This is a very valuable diagram. People talk to me about it all the time. People call me on the phone. We use our tapes to be sure they've got the diagram clear because they don't know what I'm writing up here. This was born on my kitchen table several years ago as a clear moment of inspiration and incisive thought, that no doubt in my mind, came from God Himself, of how to show that a person can be in the family of God and yet not perfect in his life, and you're still going to Heaven. Visually, so people can grasp it. But this has brought untold comfort to people when they've seen this simple little diagram.

It's like when John Speke came out of the jungle and stood on the shores of Lake Victoria in the heart of Africa. He had been engaged, as many explorers had been, to find out: where does the Nile River begin? The search for the source of the Nile was in the 19th century, a preoccupation that scientists and explorers had comparable to our generation in the search of how to get to the moon. It was big stuff, and this man had a burst of intuitive insight. He looked at this lake and he said, this is the source of the Nile River, and we shall go around the shore until we find its exit and we'll follow it right down to the end. He hurried back to the man who is in charge of the exploration, a fellow named Richard Burton, not the one you know. Burton, who was a real expert in geography, says, "That's nonsense Speke, you don't know what you're talking about." Speke says, "This is it. I know it. This is what we've been looking for." Burton dismissed it and lost the honor of being the man to find the source of the Nile.

This little diagram was one of those bursts of intuition. Here it is. This cross represents our faith in Jesus Christ. And when we trust in Him as Savior, our free salvation takes us right in here to the realm of eternal fellowship. It is eternal because it's non-reversible. Once you're born into the family of God, you cannot be unborn any more than you can when you are physically born. John 6:47 has this to say, John 6:47, "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life." He who believes has eternal life: believes what? He believes the claim of Jesus Christ to be the bread of life through whom one may find food for eternal life by trusting in His atonement on the cross.

In John 20:30-31, we read, "but many other signs therefore Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written." John says, 'What I have recorded out of all the things that Jesus did have been carefully selected,' "that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, Savior, the son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name." I want you to notice what the requirement is for getting into this circle of eternal fellowship. It is trusting, that's what the word belief means, trusting in Christ as one's personal Savior.

And certainly that is explicitly stated in the famous verses of John 3 beginning at first 14, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whoever believes may in Him have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

Isn't it interesting that just before Jesus says to Nicodemus the famous John 3:16, through whom millions of human beings have entered eternal life in Heaven, He should illustrate it by the incident of the serpents in the wilderness upon the occasion of the disobedience of the Jews, when God sent in the snakes, the poisonous snakes which bit people, and they were dying instantly all over the place, and Moses pled before God, 'What should I do?' And God said, 'Make a serpent out of brass, put him up on a pole, put him up on high and tell people that anybody who looks at that serpent will immediately be immune to the serpent's bite.' What do you think happened out there? Moses did that. I suspect that when he made the announcement, turned on the P.A., 'Now hear this! Now hear this! All those of you who would like to be immune from these poisonous snakes, God has told you to simply look upon this brass serpent on this pole and you will be safe.' Clicked it off. Somebody said, 'Oh, what? I can't think anything more stupid than that. How's that going to help me? Oh, there he goes. He's got me now.' Soon he can't breathe. The neurological system is affected, and he drops dead. Somebody next to him says, 'I'll look.' And the serpents are biting this guy, he's brushing the serpents off and stomping on their heads; and just like Paul on Malta, he's not affected at all.

Now, I must ask you a question. This free grace salvation, which is being illustrated by the serpent on the pole and the look of faith, (You see, they had to believe God, in faith, that this would work, and look!) Did they have to keep looking? Did they have to keep walking around with their eyes on that, and as soon as they took it off a serpent would get them? It's very clear that all they had to do was look! That expression of faith made them immune to the whole sea of serpents that were crawling around that place. I mean, this is where Indiana Jones got some of his sequences, from this Scripture and these snakes all over the countryside in this camp. This is scary. Here he is, safe and secure by a simple look.

I want you to remember that because we're going to get into some things that you're going to have to start thinking. I want you to think about 'what is really saving faith?'

Here you are, coming down the highway, as years ago we were in our old Flexible bus that we used to own; that bus from the bus company, not the Greyhound, it's the other one, Trailways bus that we bought. It's early morning and we're going to our camp up in Tennessee and we come over a hill. I happen to be driving at that time. It was about 6:00 in the morning. We come across an accident. A man is lying on the road, [he'd gone] through the windshield, into the railing on the side. A woman is lying in the car, trapped. It's all mangled. When I got into the car, the stench of alcohol was enormous. So, I knew what had been going on. He had run into one of those reinforced concrete abutments on the side of the bridge as he crossed. And he really mashed it up. This woman is fading in and out of consciousness. I thought at first she was dead. Now what are you going to say to her if you want to ensure that if she dies, she goes to Heaven? What is the absolute essential of saving faith that she must know to get her in?

This is the question that John tried to answer, he said, by writing the gospel of John. And the right answer will give you peace "pros God", "with God." You will know that you are there in the eternal fellowship of Almighty God.

**Carnal versus Spiritual Christians**

Now, the other part of the genius of this little diagram is that there's an inner circle that you do enter at the point of salvation, which we call fellowship in your daily life. We call it temporal fellowship. It means that at the point of salvation, you are filled with the spirit; God the Holy Spirit controls you. But you take the Sin Nature into the Christian life, and you do sin. When sin comes in, you step out of the inner circle. Here [the inner circle of temporal fellowship] is the only place that the Holy Spirit controls. This area [out of temporal fellowship] is where the Sin Nature controls. Now you are what the Bible calls carnal as over against being spiritual.

You see, being a spiritual Christian doesn't mean that you know a lot about the Bible, that you're a really sweet, nice person. It simply means that all known sins are confessed, and thus you have yielded your life entirely to God, and you are in the inner circle of control by God the Holy Spirit. Now you can pray and get heard. Now you can make requests and get them granted. Now you can find security in all areas of life that you need it. Here is the functioning area. Of course, when you step out, you have to come back in. That's where the confession of known sin comes in, and that brings you back under the control of God the Holy Spirit.

Now, it is very important that you understand this diagram, because we're going to have to understand why is it that some people are really born-again and they look like the devil? Why is it that some kid grows up under great instruction in the Word of God, he's very receptive and he's very positive to it, yet when he grows up, he's a spiritual bum? What has happened to him? Is he going to Heaven or is he going to Hell? What took place? Was something wrong at this point when the gospel was presented to him; was some wrong action taken that gave him an illusion that he was saved when in fact he was not?

The apostle Paul says we have peace with God as a result of having our sins forgiven and therefore being justified by God, by having his absolute righteousness imputed to our account. Two things happened in salvation that gives you a sense of tranquility about facing the Holy God. One, all your sins have been wiped off the slate, forgiven. That's not enough. That's negative. The other thing the Bible says is that God imputes to you His absolute righteousness so that when He sees you, you're as good as His Son, Jesus Christ. We call that justification. Having your sins removed is forgiveness. Having absolute righteousness imputed to your account is justification.

You must have forgiveness and justification to go to Heaven. God says, 'I give that to you when you trust in My Son.' We have been forgiven. We've been justified. Therefore, we are now reconciled to God's standard for life in Heaven, which is absolute righteousness. We are permanently born again spiritually. We can never again be separated from the family of God. Jesus made that so explicitly clear.

I want to stress that because we do have to ask what is the situation of these people who claim to be born again and really are born again, but whose lives are so immersed in the world, whose lives are doing the very thing that this same author, John, tried to make very clear to Christians in 1 John 2:15-17 when he said, "Do not love the world." What in the world is "the world?" It is the system of life that Satan has created that surrounds us every day of our lives, that is bombarded at us with every communication medium. Do not love the world. That world is "agape." Don't have a mental attitude of goodwill toward the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone has a mental attitude of goodwill toward the world, the mental attitude of goodwill toward the Father is not in him. You understand that? You cannot be on good terms, friendly, with the people of the world in the world system and say, I'm friendly with God.

That's what he's dealing with in this book, John says, “We've got a lot of Christians who are telling us (and they are really Christians, they are really born again, but they're telling us) that they're walking in compatibility with the living God; they're on friendly terms with Him.” But in fact, you're lying to yourself. You're not on friendly terms. You're not walking in compatibility with Him. And when you don't do that, are you ever going to pay for it in eternity? Well, you better have a good time now with whatever preoccupies you, because when you get up, there is going to be tears rolling down your cheeks. Don't love the world, not the things in it. [continuing in 1 John 2:15] "If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him, For all that is in the world, [Number one,] the lust of the flesh, [the lust patterns of the sin nature. Number two,] the lust of the eyes [I've got to have this; I've got to have that. This is what I need. I need that. I need that. I've got to get this. Number 3,] and the boastful pride of life, [the arrogance, I don't need the Bible. I don't need to be fed all the time on doctrine. I don't need to be in these services. I know all this stuff. Hey, man, I'm in. I'm walking. It is that attitude of confidence that one indeed may have of peace with God through free grace salvation that has caused a great error to be currently interjected into the Christian community that is tearing up the lives of a lot of people, which is where we're headed to discuss that point. But I understand where that has come from because of how Christians live against the very things that John says 'Don't do that.' All of this, he says,] is not from [God, our] Father, but is from the world. [It's from Satan.] And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever."

So, John says, 'After it's all gone and the day comes when we all march by your side and we carry you out feet first, what are you going to have left if this is your lifestyle? The forgiven and justified believer is thus reconciled to God's standard permanently. All things in his life now are working together for good as he is sanctified, set apart by God the Holy Spirit, that famous Romans 8:28. A peace from God based upon Free Grace Salvation apart from human merit or any performance, gives us the assurance of eternal life in Heaven. How do I know I'm going to Heaven? Because I have understood God's plan of trusting in His Son to take me there on the basis of His covering my sin by His own death upon the cross.

And I cannot add anything to that, and I cannot offer anything to that and get that as a free grace gift. If I reject any payment, it's no longer grace, and God can't give it.

Titus 3:4-8, we read, "But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, [No human good to save us.] but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, [coming alive spiritually as the work of the Holy Spirit is viewed as washing us of our sins.] whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that being justified by His grace [not by our works; not by His grace plus our work's, being justified by His grace alone] we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a trustworthy statement; and concerning these things I want you to speak confidently so that those who have believed God may be careful to engage in [What?] good deeds. These things are good and profitable for men." You couldn't put it in any clearer light.

The apostle Paul writing to Titus here says, 'You trust in Christ as Savior; now you're a Christian. You should have, as a result of that Free Grace Salvation, a certain lifestyle which is devoted each day to Father. 'Sir, what do you want me to invest my capacities in this day? I am your child. I live for You. All things are now brought together for Your purpose, for Your will, for Your good, for Your glory.' If you don't do that, you're going to have all eternity to regret it.

So, I say again, if you are an unbeliever here, and you do not trust in Christ as Savior, my advice to you is don't die. If you are a Christian, and you are indulged in everything else, but the concept that God is giving you another breath, one more chance, one more chance to keep you on this earth before he jerks you off in order that you may fulfill the good works that Ephesians 2:10 says, "He has preordained for you," if you do not understand that and start turning to preoccupation with what you should be doing in life relative to the Word of God and His guidance, my advice to you is have a ball because you will have all of eternity to regret your foolish choice.

We have peace with God entirely on a gift of God's grace. Learn this term: Free Grace Salvation. We are going to oppose that in the near future with another kind of salvation.

There's a second peace. We find it in Philippians 4:7. We'll mention it here to tie this up. Philippians 4:7, "And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." This is in the genitive case in the Greek language. We have here now not just peace with God, but this is the piece "of God." Peace with God is what we get when we enter salvation. The peace of God connotes a divine tranquility in one's daily life as a Christian, the peace with God in my daily life. Ephesians 5:18, "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit." As the result of being filled with the Spirit, right here in the inner circle, all known sins confessed, you have the peace of God. Peace is conditioned upon remaining in the inner circle of temporal fellowship through the confession as per 1 John 1:9. The confession of one's evil expresses repentance as a born-again believer and is a means of yielding your life to the will of God.

Paul expresses the desire that the Roman Christians would be filled with the Spirit and as spiritual believers enjoy the peace of God in their souls. You see, the peace of God in the Christian life is not yelling and shouting and pushing and shoving and grabbing and running and exhausting and in turmoil and screaming and yelling and all those other things that characterize human beings. When you become a Christian, tranquility is the rule. If you demonstrate a lack of tranquility, then all of us know that you just stepped out of that inner circle and you're not under control of the Spirit of God, but you are under control of your Sin Nature.

Free Grace Salvation, but there is an attack upon it. There is a serious attack that says, 'No, salvation is not simply an appropriation of a gift from God; salvation is a contract, the deal you make with God, or you don't get into Heaven.' And this is coming from the highest echelons of our own evangelical community. And it is devastating. And you need to know about it. You need to be informed about that. We shall pick that up next time.

**Benediction**

Shall we pray? Our Heavenly Father, we do thank Thee indeed for the fact that the Word of God is alive. It's powerful and it applies. We pray that Thou will help us to stop thinking that we are going to be here forever. The younger we are, the more problem we have with turning our thoughts to being the people that Thou has planned for us to be, to playing the roles in life that are ours to fulfill, and to be asking Thee for the great honor and the privilege of executing that which is to our finest, eternal best well-being, not some trivial passing thing that is a big game that gives us a kick now and then it's gone for all eternity. May we learn to live, oh God, for our eternal tomorrow in Heaven with Thee. We pray in Christ's name. Amen.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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