

THE SON OF GOD

Romans 1:1-7
(10-6-90 Revision)

Suppose you owed the First National Bank of Chicago one million dollars. And, suppose you discovered that you couldn't pay it back. Now, I'm your friend so I come to you and I tell you that I'll go down to the First National Bank and pay the million dollars for you.

Will that help you? Are you a little skeptical? Do you suspect that maybe I don't have the million dollars to pay them, any more than you do?

Beloved, you are absolutely right! I don't have a million dollars. My offer is worthless! As loving as my gesture might seem, it is meaningless because I don't have the power to carry it out.

But... Now... Suppose that some multi-millionaire like one of the Rockerfellers came to you with the same offer. That's a completely different story, isn't it? The Rockerfellers have that kind of money. They have the power to carry out such promises while I don't. Such an offer from a multi-millionaire would be important! But, such an offer from me is meaningless!

This is not just a silly story though. There is a debt and it does have to be paid! Romans 6:23 says, "The wages of sin is death;" and Romans 3:23 says, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" (~~Romans 3:23~~). We all, each and every one of us, deserve eternal death and separation from God, because we are all sinners: we have all failed to measure up to God's glory!

You owe this debt and you can't do anything about it. Suppose I offer to pay it for you. Suppose, for example, that I offer to allow myself to be crucified to pay for your sins! Just like it was with the million dollars, my offer is worthless. My offer is meaningless because I don't have the power to carry it out. I could be crucified, and I could die, but that wouldn't pay for your sins. It wouldn't even pay for my own sins! I don't have the power to do that.

But Jesus has the power! Romans 1:4 says of Jesus that He was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Jesus' power to pay the penalty for our sins was confirmed for all to see when He rose from the dead on the third day!

Jesus paid that penalty for you! And, He paid that penalty for me! I am here today because I am a willing slave of Jesus Christ. Jesus owns me! He purchased me with His own blood when He died to pay the penalty for my sins. Paul the apostle

felt that way about Jesus too. Listen to how he begins his letter to the church at Rome:

1. "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God."

He called himself a servant. In the original Greek, the word is doulos which literally means "slave."

In English, the words "America" and "freedom" go together. To be an American is to be free. But, as great as America is, it is not perfect. One of its major imperfections is that it leads men and women to believe that they are free when they are really slaves.

We are slaves to sin, self, and Satan from the day we are born. The only way we can escape that slavery is by becoming slaves of Jesus Christ instead.

Push → The "Say No to Drugs" ads you see on television these days began a few years ago with a program called, "Get High on Yourself." These ads have not been successful. The drug problem is worse today than it was when they began showing those ads. *"Just say NO"*

The main reason that these television ads have failed is that they are based on the modern religion called "Secular Humanism." Secular Humanism does not believe in the authority of the Bible: its only authority is human reason. Secular Humanism says that man is basically good and has vast potential. Secular Humanism says that the way of salvation is through science, culture, and technology.

But, any religion, or creed, or code that tries to exalt mankind will not really do mankind any good at all. Instead, such creeds and codes just confirm man in his slide towards death and Hell!

The "Say No to Drugs" ads say that you should get off drugs and get onto your own worthiness. When you become convinced of your own worthiness, you'll get turned-on to life instead of turned-on to drugs. You're good enough that you don't need drugs. "You're good enough..." That's the trap! That is the trap which Satan sets before us in the most attractive way that he can! It is the trap called "Man's Righteousness!"

SATAN TRIES TO MAKE US BELIEVE THAT WE ARE GOOD
The source of man's righteousness is in the sinful nature and being of man. But the righteousness of God has its source in the being of God! God is righteousness! Christ crucified

is the righteousness of God! God will declare us righteous when we submit to His righteousness in Jesus Christ and unconditionally surrender to Him. If we try to be righteous on our own; if we try to ignore God's plan through Jesus Christ: all we will wind up with is failure, frustration, filthy rags, and eternal death and separation from God!

Satan lays this trap in front of everyone. But the apostle Paul escaped out of that trap on the Damascus Road. He met Jesus face-to-face and immediately forsook his slavery to sin, self, and Satan. He became a slave of Jesus Christ instead.

Romans 1:1 tells us that Paul was then called to be an apostle and was separated unto the gospel of God. Think of what that means to you and me. Paul didn't just set out on his own to preach the gospel. God called him. God chose him and equipped him for the job. This is a tremendous evidence of God's ability to care for you and me! If God could stoop to pick out the man who had been His greatest enemy, and call and equip that man to be His greatest messenger, then there is no way that we can think that God is unable to reach us!

Paul was "separated unto the gospel of God.":

2. "(Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,)"

3. "Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;"

4. "And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:"

The letter to the church at Rome was written by Paul to be a textbook of theology. And, he begins his textbook with the doctrine of the trinity. In the first verse, we read of the gospel of God. In the third verse, we read that the gospel concerns His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. In the fourth verse, we read of the Spirit of Holiness. In these three verses, Paul mentions all three members of the Godhead in one context: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

The idea of the trinity is hard to understand. How can three be one? We define the trinity as, "One God in three Persons," but that doesn't help much.

Did you know that You are a trinity. You are one individual but you have three major parts. First, you are a

soul. A soul is what and who you are: it is your mind, your thoughts, your self. Second, you have a body. The body is what you (the soul) use to communicate with other people around you. Third, you have a spirit. The spirit is what you (the soul) use to communicate with God.

The soul and the spirit are not the same thing. Hebrews 4:12 says, "For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit..." If the soul and the spirit can be separated from each other, then they are not the same thing.

So, you are a trinity. You are a soul and you have a body and you have a spirit. It is your spirit which sets you apart from the rest of God's creation. It is your spirit that God described as his image when He said in Genesis 1:26, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."

People say that the universe is divided into three realms: animal, vegetable, and mineral. But that is not correct; it is not complete: one realm has been left out. The universe is actually divided into four realms: mineral, vegetable, animal, and man. Man is more than just an animal.

Minerals are not alive. They are material, but they don't have a body, soul, or spirit.

Vegetables are alive. They live and grow and die. They have a body but they don't have any soul or spirit.

Animals have souls and bodies, but no spirits. In the original Hebrew, the word nephesh literally means "a breathing creature" and this is the word that is translated as "soul" throughout the Old Testament. But nephesh is also translated as "beast" and "creature" at various points in the Old Testament. An animal has a soul and a body, but it does not have a spirit.

Man, however, is a soul and has a body and a spirit. You are a trinity of body, soul, and spirit. And, yet, you are one; you!

Another example of a trinity is the trinity of light and heat and air. You can't have light or air without having them at some temperature. You can't have heat or light without relating them in some way to the air. And, you can't have heat or air without having some degree of light too.

5. "By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for

obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name:"

The "obedience" that Paul is talking about is the obedience which results from faith. When we have faith in Jesus Christ we are overwhelmed by joy in the knowledge of our salvation through His crucifixion. We want to please Him. We want to obey Him. And, He strengthens us and gives us the power to obey Him.

Christians are the only people who are capable of truly obeying God. Anyone who is not a christian is still a slave to sin, self, and Satan, and is not capable of obedience.

6. "Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:"

7. "To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."

Five divine things are yours because of your position in Christ Jesus. First, you are called of Jesus Christ. Second, you are the beloved of God. Third, you are called saints. Fourth, you are the objects of grace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. And, fifth, you are the recipients of peace; also from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

If you have never accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, then you have none of these things. You remain a slave of sin, self, and Satan. Jesus wants to save you from all that. Turn to Him now! Ask Him to save you and become the Lord of your life!

Hallelujah! Amen!

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