



World Christian Fellowship

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Romans 17 Identity of Rome Christians

Romans 1:6-7, *among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ; ⁷To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Paul identified to them as,
Bond slave of Jesus Christ,
Called apostle,
Separated for the Gospel of God.

Now Paul identifies the recipient of the letter.

1. Called of Jesus Christ
2. Beloved of God
3. Saints

The church is Rome predominantly of Gentiles with mix of Jewish people.

When he writes to them, he gives them three distinguishing marks about them.

1. Called of Jesus Christ

It can be read as called by Jesus Christ.

Throughout the scripture we find that calling was attributed to God. It is God who called them by grace.

Ephesians 2:1-6, *And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins,² in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,³ among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. ⁴But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.*

It is God who loved us and called us.

John 17:6, *"I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word.*

John 6:44, *No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.*

We come to Christ, but we are drawn or called by the God the Father.

A Christian is the one who belongs to Jesus Christ who has been called to Him and has been placed in Him.

The letter to Ephesians speaks volume about this theological term of 'in Christ'.

What makes a Christian and other religions is that we are in Christ and Christ in us!

Galatians 2:20, *I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*

- ✓ We are in Christ.
- ✓ We are in His Kingdom.
- ✓ We are united to Him.

- ✓ We are part of His body.
- ✓ We belong to Him.
- ✓ Mystical union of a believer in Christ!

How does anyone to come to Christ like this?

V7, ⁷*To all who are in Rome,*

Does this mean every citizen of Rome?

No!

Those who have got the effectual call of God.

The invite is for everyone but only those who believe will come into this relationship.

Even today we witness that there two people listen to the same message one person heart a passion for Christ and fire has been put on whereas the other person does not show any interest.

Even this bible study invite is for all the people in Church but not everyone comes to hear this. But even after you come hear to study do you still feel the fire in you ignited?

What is a Christian?

A Christian is the one of the called ones.

Jesus said that He came to call the sinners not the righteous.

Luke 5:32, *I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.*”

Matthew 22:14, *“For many are called, but few are chosen.”*

Peter in his first sermon on the day of Pentecost preached about the same.

Acts 2:37-39, *Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?”* ³⁸ *Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.* ³⁹ *For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.”*

Paul uses the same theme when he writes to the church in Corinth.

1 Corinthians 1:23-24, *but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness,* ²⁴ *but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.*

1 Corinthians 1:26-29, *For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not*

many noble, are called. ²⁷ But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; ²⁸ and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, ²⁹ that no flesh should glory in His presence.

Calling becomes an effectual calling.

Acts 17:30, *Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent,*

Only the spirit of God can make that call into an effectual one.

1 Corinthians 2:1-5, *And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. ² For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. ³ I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. ⁴ And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, ⁵ that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.*

People can listen the message of Christ and the cross but only the spirit of God can make that as an effectual call.

When the person the person hears the call and surrender his life to the Lordship of Jesus Christ then they make that call as an effectual.

2. Beloved of God

These precious people are beloved of God!

For a moment let bring the history of the time the letter was written.

Those who put their faith in Christ have been tortured, persecuted, and killed. The church in Rome was meeting in houses of people like Priscilla and Aquilla.

The society is corrupt and morally bankrupt.

Religious people were persecuting them too.

So, they were pressed from the rulers, society and the religious elite and Paul tells them they are beloved of God.

Why were they called beloved of God?

Because they have done something great?

No! Not at all!

Because they are in Christ!

As we just read from Ephesians 2, but God in His grace and mercy.

Ephesians 2:4-6, *⁴ But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶ and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.*

God made us sit together in heavenly places.

We do not become beloved of God because of anything that we do but God.

1 John 4:19, *We love Him because He first loved us.*

We were sinners and not worthy to come near God at all, but this all happened only because of God's abundant love upon the sinners.

Paul uses the same statement what God used it for Jesus Christ.

Matthew 3:17, *And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."*

Matthew 17:5, *While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!"*

Lord Jesus Christ is the beloved of God.

Christian is in Christ by which we are the beloved of God.

John 17:22-23, *And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: ²³ I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.*

Glorious truth about Christians are the beloved of God.

It is impossible for some of you to believe in! But this is the greatest truth one should embark their hope on!

Christians in Rome, the world hated them, persecuted them but they were loved by God.

3. Saints

Paul uses this word as Saints to the believers frequently in the scriptures.

Whereas the Roman Catholic church had taken this into another level and brought so many confusions in the church today.

What is a saint?

A Holy one.

Saint and Holy the word come from the same word from Greek and Hebrews.

Separated to God and to His praise.

In the Old Testament it was told Moses went up to the Holy mountain.

The vessels in the tabernacle were called holy vessels.

The book was called Holy books.

Separated for God and to His service.

So, in effect they were separated from everything and set apart for God.

Separated from everything negative.

Separated from the world.

Just separated from the worldliness is not enough but it should be useful for the service to God.

Separated from the world may make one moral but that does not make you holy.

By living a separated life, one may lead a good life outside, but he is not a holy man.

What makes you saint is that you are separated to God.

Not just separated from the world but to God.

Separated one have the concern for the glory of God in every aspect of their life.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11, *Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites,¹⁰ nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.¹¹ And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.*

Sanctified comes before justified. Why?

You have been separated from the world to God!

Every Christian is a saint because they have been set apart for God by God!

He may be ignorant,

He may be like a baby,

He may lead an unworthy life,
Nevertheless, he is a saint!

Christian is separated from the world to God.
You can not be Christians yet belongs to the world.
You cannot be Christian yet belongs to Satan.

To be a Christian you have put on a new nature.

Colossians 1:13-14, *He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,¹⁴ in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.*

This is just the beginning.

This is what God has done for you and you must work further.

Philippians 2:12-13, *Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;¹³ for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.*

God continue to work in us through His Holy Spirit.

Peter also writes in his letter how a Christian ought to work out.

First Peter writes o them about their privileges.

1 Peter 2:9-10, *But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light; ¹⁰ who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.*

Since you have these privileges you ought to live a life on this earth to glorify God!

1 Peter 2:11-12, *Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, ¹² having your conduct honourable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

Apostle John also writes the same thing in his letter.

1 John 3:3, *And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.*

This is part of saintliness.

- You don not make yourself as a saint.
- You have been made as a saint by God.
- You have been separated to God.
- You must realize and live accordingly.

Conclusion:

When Paul introduced himself, he said he said that he was separated for the Gospel of God.

Now he says that every Christian is a separated one for Christ.

He was showing that he is not in any way superior to them.

1 Timothy 1;15, *This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.*

Paul says the same thing about him.

God loved him,
God called him,
God separated him,
God made him a saint.

It is true for every one of us here.

The Christians in Rome were experiencing the hardship what we are enduring today yet God called them so we as well.

Could we live to the glory of God!