



World Christian Fellowship

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Romans 12 Concerning His Son

Romans 1:3-4, *concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born 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.*

Paul telling us about this gospel of God is concerning His Son.

What is this gospel of God concerning His Son?

The gospel is concerning God's Son.

That is the heart and the very center of the gospel.

There is no such thing as the Christian gospel, and there is no such thing as Christianity, apart from Him. Christianity, by definition, is Christ Himself.

Now this is something we see clearly in the New Testament, about which there can be no discussion or argument

whatsoever. There is no such thing as Christianity apart from the Person of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Does this that the Lord Jesus Christ is a 'bearer' of good news from God?

No!

It means that He Himself is the good news.

It is the Person and what the Person has done.

Is Jesus one of a great series of prophets and of teachers who have been raised up by God?

No!

There is an absolute uniqueness about Himself. He Himself is vital and must always be central and in the most prominent position.

This is what constitutes the whole uniqueness of the Christian gospel.

Take any religion and you will generally find a man's name associated with it. But in none of these can it be said that the man is absolutely essential.

You have Buddhism, but you can have Buddhism without Buddha.

You have Confucianism, but you can have Confucianism without Confucius.

It is an accident that a particular man happens to put forward the teaching, but the man himself is not essential to the teaching.

What is vital in all these religions is the teaching.

In Christianity, when you come to the realm of the Christian faith, the whole position is absolutely different.

If you take away the Person and there is no message at all.

There is no teaching.

There is nothing.

The connection between our Lord Himself, as a Person, and Christianity is obviously something which is of central significance.

Let me give you another contrast. Take the law that was given to the children of Israel through the medium of Moses in the Old Testament. Now Moses was not essential to that law; God could have given the law equally well through Joseph or through anybody else. He chose to do it through Moses. But Moses as a person is not a vital part of it. We can have the law without him.

But here we are in an entirely different situation, the whole message is about this Person.

It is almost incredible that there are still people who are capable of regarding themselves as Christians, and of teaching what they regard as Christianity, without even mentioning the name Jesus Christ.

They still think that Christianity is a particular relationship to God, and that it consists only in the living of a particular kind of life. They are able to talk about it and apparently to practice it without mentioning this name at all. But surely that is a very denial of the whole Christian position!

The gospel of God, says Paul, is '*concerning his Son*', and there is no gospel, there is no good news apart from Him.

The good news is in this Person Jesus Christ, and what He came to do, and what He did and achieved.

So that is the first thing, and the Apostle, delights in teaching it. Paul always does it at the beginning of any letter he wrote to the church.

Acts 13, where we are told that Paul, travelling in Antioch and Pisidia, preached about the Jesus there, as he did everywhere.

Acts 13:23-24, *From this man's seed, according to the promise, God raised up for Israel a Saviour—Jesus—²⁴ after John had first preached, before His coming, the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.*

Peter did it in Jerusalem.

Acts 2:22, *Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know—*

They preached about Jesus and the resurrection. The Person! They were called 'Christians' obviously for that reason. Their emphasis upon this Christ, this Person.

The good news! The '*gospel of God concerning his Son*', The word 'concerning' because it does concern this Person Jesus Christ, and Him only.

Apostle Paul goes on to tell us who the Person is.

First thing he tells us about Him is that He is God's Son.

This is again one of those elementary, primary, and all-important statements.

Paul makes this great assertion, which is the very essence of the Christian faith. That the historical Person, Jesus of Nazareth, is the eternal Son of God.

Do you remember that the same emphasis is made in the Epistle to the Hebrews?

Hebrews 1:1-3, God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, ²has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; ³who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

There is something that is characteristic of the whole New Testament, because if this is not true, we have no gospel. It is the very essence of our message.

It is concerning this same Person that the voice came from heaven at His baptism.

It is concerning the same Person on the Mount of Transfiguration, saying, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased'.

It is absolutely essential that, as Christian people in this modern age,

- we should be clear about this truth, and
- should be ready to contend for it and to fight for it,

Because if we forsake it then we have no Christianity at all.

This was the claim that our Lord made for Himself. Because He made this claim that He was crucified.

John 10:30, *'I and the Father are one.'*

The Jews wanted to kill Him.

John 10:33, *The Jews answered Him, saying, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God."*

For them that was nothing but sheer blasphemy.

For that reason, that they conspired together and said that He must be put to death, and put out of the way.

They thought, this carpenter, this one who had not belonged to the schools of the Pharisees, was actually claiming that He was one with God, the Son of God and equal with God. It was for that reason that He was really put to death.

We must, therefore, assert this truth. It is the first great pronouncement that we make as Christians. The Person, Jesus Christ, is the eternal and everlasting Son of God.

Jesus is and ever was the eternal Son of God. He can be called His Son in a way that nobody else can.

The '*only begotten of the Father*' - that is another term which is used of Him in the New Testament.

Men have been created by God.

Jesus is not created.

He is 'begotten' and 'the only begotten', and therefore in a class and a category entirely His own.

Mark 1:1, *The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.*

Apostle Paul in the particular form that he employs in this Epistle condensing doctrine instead of setting it out and elaborating it.

Paul is announcing to us that he is a preacher of the good news concerning what God has done in the matter of His own eternal Son, the One who is co-equal and co-eternal with the Father.

John, of course, puts it in his own way.

John 1:1-2, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God.*

It is the very essence of the Christian faith. God's Son, the only begotten One, is apart from all others.

Paul goes on to prove his claim, and he does so by putting to us two separate statements concerning the Son.

The gospel is concerning the Son of God.

'He was made of the seed of David, according to the flesh'.

He was 'declared' ['declared' by contrast with 'made'] 'to be the Son of God', not Son of David, 'to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness.'

What is the gospel about?

The gospel does not start with us.

It does not start with our problems and experiences.

It is a great proclamation and announcement of something that God has done about this Son of His, who was there with Him, 'in the bosom of the Father', from eternity, without any beginning at all.

Co-eternal with the Father.

What has happened then?

1. He was born according to the flesh.
2. Seed of David

The phrase is about Him.

He was 'made of the seed of David'.

How the Apostle Paul is going to prove his contention.

The Son was there always in the bosom of the Father from eternity, and he does that partly using this expression 'was made'.

He 'became' of the seed of David, 'according to the flesh'.

He was - He became.

The word that is here translated '**made**' can also be translated '**to begin to be**'.

He began to be of 'the seed of David according to the flesh'.

He was not that.

He began to be that.

He was 'made of the seed of David according to the flesh'. Or, indeed, the word can be translated 'to come into existence'.

He 'came into existence' according to the flesh.

The Son of God was there in eternity, but something has happened. He began to be something that He was not before.

He has begun to be, or that He has now come into existence.

Immediately, we are right in the heart of this great Christian doctrine concerning the incarnation.

John, in his prologue, having said those marvelous and wonderful things about the eternal Word that was in the bosom of the Father.

John 1:3-5, *All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. ⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.*

The Apostle Paul does not put it here in as elaborate a form as he does in other places, but it is the same doctrine.

Galatians 4:4, *But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,*

God sent forth His own Son from eternity, from where He was before from that existence which He has had from eternity with His Father.

The most elaborate statement is in the letter to the Philippi.

Philippians 2:5-7, *Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, ⁷ but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.*

In eternity it was 'the form of God', but now He takes upon Him 'the form of a servant'.

The same Person still!

But He has taken on another form!

Apostle Paul is telling us here just in these few words as it were. 'Was made of the seed of David, according to the flesh'.

He entered the world in this way.

- The Son.
- The only Son.
- The Son of God.
- God's Son began to be in the flesh.

There is the birth of the babe of Bethlehem. The fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy.

John 1:11, *'He came unto his own'*,

He was not born like everybody else. He came out of eternity to His own. He was in the form of God. He now 'begins to be' in

another form. That is not His beginning. It is only His beginning in this form.

It is only the beginning according to the flesh. This is, of course, so central, and so important that one can never possibly exaggerate it.

'according to the flesh'

What does 'flesh' mean at this point?

We will find in the Scriptures that this term is obviously used in different ways and carries different meanings.

But we will be able to determine the precise meaning by looking on the context.

There were some heretics in the early church denied that He had come truly in the body. They said that He took upon Him a phantom body, the appearance of a body, which was not a body at all.

Now that is something which is clearly contradicted by this statement of the Apostle.

He truly was 'made flesh', but this term does not mean the body only, nor does it mean the body as opposed to the soul. The teaching of the New Testament is that our Lord was truly man,

and that He not only had a human body, but He also had a human soul.

He entered into a full manhood, into a complete human nature. Flesh, therefore, means here everything which constitutes the nature which a child derives from its ancestors. He had a true body and a reasonable soul.

In other words, it is a mistake to think of our Lord as the Son of God with just a human body. He had a human soul also. He had a human mind. He had human reason.

It is essential that we should bear that in mind. He is not our Saviour if that is not true. He cannot save men unless He truly became man in a real sense.

Luke 2:52, *And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and men.*

He could and He did increase in wisdom as well as in stature.

So that the statement is that He took unto Him a true human nature, and He took that human nature unto Himself from the Virgin Mary.

The result of that we find in the four Gospels.

- ✓ He not only grew, but
- ✓ He experienced hunger,
- ✓ He experienced thirst,
- ✓ He suffered pain, and
- ✓ He experienced grief.

He said He did not know certain things.

He did not know when the end of the world was to come.

There have been heretics who said that the eternal Son of God, the eternal Christ, entered into the man Jesus at His baptism and went out of Him again at the cross, so that the eternal Son of God did not die. It was only the man Jesus who died. That is false to the New Testament teaching.

The eternal Son of God took on Him a

- true human nature,
- body,
- soul,
- reason,
- mind,
- understanding, and

He died as truly as any human being has ever died.

He experienced the shame, the suffering, and everything that is described in such remarkable detail in the last chapters of the four Gospels.

Therefore, He is the Son of Man, God's Son. God's Son became Son of Man, and constantly in His days in the flesh, He would refer to Himself as the Son of Man.

- He belonged to Jewish race.
- He was born of the Israelites according to the flesh, as Paul will argue in the ninth chapter of this letter.
- He comes from them as far as the flesh is concerned.

Romans 8:3, *For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh,*

2. Seed of David

'the seed of David'.

This is the description which is so constantly given of Him in the New Testament.

Matthew 1:1, *The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham:*

That is the gospel. This Person is the 'son of David, son of Abraham', and, of course, the people recognized that.

Do you remember how the blind man outside Jericho called out?

Mark 10:47, *And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"*

Apostle Paul writes to his spiritual son Timothy.

2 Timothy 2:8, *Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel,*

Why this emphasis on the seed of David'?

What is the significance?

In the sermon that was preached by the Apostle Paul in Antioch of Pisidia, that the significance of this lies in the fact that God had made this specific promise to King David, that out of his loins and of his seed should come the great Messiah, the great eternal King, who should set up His eternal kingdom.

If we go through the Old Testament and look at the prophecies, we will find that God narrows down His promise in this way. There, away back in the garden of Eden, He makes the general promise that the 'seed of the woman' should bruise the serpent's head. 'The seed of the woman' - that is the whole of mankind, Jews, and Gentiles. He will come out of human nature. He will come out of mankind.

God goes on and He narrows that down.

It is going to be of the seed of Abraham.

He is going to be a Hebrew.

Here is a distinction now into Jews and Gentiles.

God makes another clear distinction that He will come through the tribe of Judah.

Genesis 49:10, *The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people.*

This great ruler is going to come out of Judah. But the tribe of Judah contains large numbers of families, so God narrows it down still more, and He narrows it down to one family, to the line and house of King David.

God has prepared the way for what was going to happen.

The Messiah, when He comes,

- A man,
- A Jew,
- Tribe of Judah,
- House of David.

He also undoubtedly emphasizes this to show that Christ is the great king eternal, the One who is to bring in the kingdom of God, which is to be without end, and who is to reign as king in this kingdom for ever and ever.

The Jews looked forward to the coming of this Messiah who was to be of the seed of David. They held on to what they called 'the sure mercies of David'. That is what God had promised, and the Apostle's whole point therefore is to say that this Jesus is the One. He is of the seed of David. He is the One in whom the sure mercies of David are going to come to all people.

The genealogy of Jesus is mentioned in Matthew 1 and Luke 3.

Matthew 1:16, *And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ.*

A long line of genealogical table.

Matthew 1:18, *Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.*

Matthew also tells us of the difficulties of Joseph, and how God appeared to him, and reassured him.

In Luke we have the genealogy.

Luke 3:23, *Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, the son of Heli,*

There are obvious differences between the genealogical tables in Matthew 1 and Luke 3, the explanation is simple.

In Matthew you have the genealogical tree of Joseph,
In Luke you have the genealogical tree of Mary.

Both instances the Scriptures are careful to tell us that He was not the son of Joseph.
He was the son of Mary.

Therefore, Luke shows us how Mary was a direct lineal descendant from the great King David. So, the Lord Jesus Christ is of the seed of David through His mother Mary.

Isaiah 9:7, *Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.*

Isaiah 11:1, *There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.*

See the prophecies and the fulfilment.

By the time we come to the time of the birth of Christ in the history of the world, the house of David had fallen into a very low state indeed. It was no longer a marvelous tree with great spreading branches and leaves.

It had all gone practically, except just the stump. It had become nothing but a root. But the prophet said, out of the root, out of the stump, out of the mere stem of Jesse will come the rod, the branch, and so it happened.

When David's house was, as it were, at its very lowest, suddenly the greatest of the seed of David appeared. The Son of God took unto Him the seed of David and was born thus as a child.

We looked at this in detail in our Matthew but let me brief you for a few minutes.

The Jews are still waiting for their Messiah to come. They do not believe that He has come. Their own Scriptures tell them that the Messiah will be of the seed of David. He must be.

But here is their difficulty!

All the records have now been lost as the result of what happened in **70 A.D.** The genealogical tables have all gone.

In the time of our Lord's birth, there was that periodical census, and all men had to go up each to his own city, according to their houses. You will find the account in Luke 2. They had such records in those days, but they have them no longer.

So that if someone comes and claims to be the Messiah now, he will never be able to prove that he is truly of the seed of David.

But we can prove that the Messiah who had come was of the seed of David.

We see so clearly the blindness that has overcome the children of Israel. They are in a position in which they can never establish that the Messiah whom they are expecting is really the Messiah, and they reject the One in whose case it can be established and was established, that He is of the seed of David, and conforms to the records, and thereby fulfils the prophecy.

Now that is therefore a very valuable argument for us to use if ever, we are trying to evangelize a Jewish friend. It is a most important and a most vital argument.

What is the good news?

The good news is that when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son!

This Son of His who had always been in His eternal bosom - only-begotten, co-equal and co-eternal even with the Father.

He sent Him forth, and He sent Him in this way.

In this humble form, to be born as a babe in Bethlehem in the flesh, as a man, in the likeness of men and in the likeness even of sinful flesh. He came so low for us men and our redemption.

Have you accepted this good news?

If you have then are you excited that the God, you worship is how faithful?