**MOUNT WADE MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH**

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**ADULT BIBLE STUDY LESSON**

**The Credentials of Christianity**

**Part 4: The Foundation (08/23/23)**

**INTRODUCTION**

As we began our study of the Book of Romans, in verse 1 the Apostle Paul introduced himself to the Roman saints. He had never met these people and he wanted to let them know that he was on the up and up. It seems that in those days, there were some people running around claiming to be servants of the Lord when actually they were out for financial gain. Unfortunately this is still happening in our society today.

Now Paul is moving on into his message and mission.

Paul is now ready to share the foundation for the Book of Romans. It is a Book about the essential elements of Christianity. Beginning with the Gospel and moving into the deeper truths of the Christian faith, Paul shares the mind of God with the Roman Christians. As we travel through this great Book, we too are going to encounter truths that will be life changing.

1. **THE FOUNDATION OF PAUL'S MESSAGE (v. 2-5)**

Paul now shifts our attention to focus on Jesus Christ.

1. ***Jesus Is The Promised One:*** The Gospel that involves the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus was not an afterthought with God. He had been declaring that His Son would come and that He would die for the sins of humanity. The Gospel was not a new thing, but it was something that was older than man himself. Rev. 13:8 says, “*And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*”
2. John 5:39 says, “*Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.*” The entire collect of scripture in the Bible all point to Jesus Christ. It is designed to reveal the promise of God in Jesus Christ.
3. The sacrifice of the Messiah is plainly foretold in the Old Testament. Isa. 53:1-12 says, “*Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him -- the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare -- his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.*”
4. The Old Testament is filled with types and symbols that point to the coming Savior. For example Adam, the Ark, the Manna, the Tabernacle, the Sacrificial system, etc. All of these things pointed ahead to the One who was to come. Every little lamb that was killed in sacrifice gave testimony to the One who was coming later. Jesus was the promised One.
5. ***Jesus Is The Powerful One (3-4):*** These verses tell us that the Gospel is far more than just a recollection of Old Testament prophecies. The Gospel is about the God/Man named Jesus Christ. These verses say a lot about His power and His position.
6. **His Position:** (Son of God) Jesus Christ was no ordinary man. He is in fact the very Son of God. I don't understand the how, but God the Father took a virgin called Mary and caused her to conceive without the benefit of a human partner (Luke 1:35). The child she carried in her womb was none other than the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, the Lord Jesus, who is 100% God. I think that one of the greatest mysteries of all time is how God could robe Himself in human flesh and become human, but it’s exactly what God did (Phil. 2:5-8). While Jesus walked this earth, He was not a divine man, neither was He a human god. Jesus was the God-Man. He was 100% God and Man at the same time. That is a mystery that our mortal, finite minds could never hope to unravel.
7. **Perhaps a deeper look at Phil. 2:5-8 is in order here. There are several words in these verses that demand our attention and our understanding concerning Who Jesus really is.**
8. In **verse 6,** the Bible says that Jesus was in the "**form**" of God. This word refers to the very essence of His being. One could not be in the form of God and not be God, for God is a Spirit. Jesus was in every essence God!
9. **Verse 7** says that Jesus "took upon Himself the "**form**" of a servant." He used the very same word (form). Jesus became in every essence a servant. However, it is worthy to note the word "being" in verse 6. This verb is a present participle. It means that Jesus continued in the "form" of God. That means while He became a man in every way, He also remained God. He was very literally the God-Man.
10. In **verse 7** the word "**likeness**" is used. This word means "resemblance". While Jesus remained God inwardly, outwardly, He had every attribute of humanity, except for a sinful nature. If we would have seen Jesus when He walked this earth, we would not have known Him, by appearance, from any other human (Isa. 53:2).
11. **Verse 8** tells us that Jesus was found in the "fashion" of mankind. This word refers to His **physical form**. Paul is saying that Jesus Christ was a very real man. Some people believe and teacher that Jesus was merely a spirit and that He had no flesh. However, Paul tells us that He literally became a man so that He could give His life in death for the sins of the world. It would have been impossible to nail a spirit to a cross! The conclusion then is an easy one to reach, Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is the God-Man!
12. **His Person:** Paul takes three titles of the Lord to tell us more about Him.
13. **He is Jesus** - This is His human Name. The title of His humiliation. The name of His conviction and crucifixion.
14. **He is Christ** - The words means "the Anointed One” (Christos). This name is His official title. It portrays Him as…
15. **Prophet**, Deut. 18:15-19. “*The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them -- all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.”*
16. **Priest**, Psa. 110:4. “*The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.*”
17. **King**, 2 Sam. 7:12-13. *“And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up -- thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.”* In Jesus Christ is found the One who had been promised before the foundation of the world. He is the Messiah and He is Savior of the world.
18. **He is Lord** - The third title mentioned by Paul is that of **Lord**. This is the title of His exaltation (His return to sit on the throne at the right hand of God.). This word reminds us that He is the victor over death and the grave; and He is the resurrected and exalted One. He is to be honored, feared, obeyed and served. He is Lord (Acts 2:36). *“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.”*
19. **His Pedigree:** The last portion of verse 3 and all of verse 4 tell us about His pedigree. Paul gives us, in these verses, the credentials of the Lord Jesus.
20. **His Human Credentials** - Paul tells us that He came from the kingly line of David. As such, Jesus is qualified to sit upon the throne as the King of the Jews. When the Bible says that He was made, it literally means to "become." Jesus is God, yet He became a man so that He might live among us and die for us. He walked as we walk, He suffered as we suffer, He bled as we bleed. Therefore, since He is a man, and has lived as a man, He is more than qualified to aid us in our times of difficulty. Heb. 4:15 says, *“For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”*
21. **His Heavenly Credentials** - Even though Paul says that Jesus was the son of David, that is, He is 100% man, he also tells us that there is proof that Jesus is the Son of God (and is God 100%). There are 2 proofs given in verse 4 that declare His Heavenly Credentials
22. **His Righteousness.** The very fact that Jesus was born without sin, that He lived without sin and that He died without sin proves that He was heavenly in His origin, divine in His nature, and perfect in all His ways.

* 2 Cor. 5:21 - For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.
* Heb. 4:15 - For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.
* Heb. 7:26 - For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.
* 1 Pet. 1:19 - But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:
* 1 Pet. 2:22 - Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.

**Note:** Jesus lived His life as a man by doing what we are expected to do; He yielded totally to the "Spirit" of holiness. Everything Jesus did, He did as a Spirit filled man. He lived a righteous life by the power of the Holy Ghost, and we can too, if we will yield to God. Will you ever be sinless in this flesh? Probably not! But, if you yield to the Spirit as you should, then you will certainly sin much less. 1 Cor. 10:13 says, *“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”*

1. **His Resurrection.** Just as His righteous life proved His heavenly origin, so too does His resurrection from the dead. Death could never hold Jesus. He was perfectly holy and only submitted to death for our sakes (John 10:18, *No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.*). All others who have ever lived and died are gone from this earth forever, but not Jesus. He died and conquered death so that those who follow Him might enjoy eternal life.

**A Brief Look At The Dual Nature Of Jesus Christ**

While He was here on earth, there were certain instances when His dual nature is on display. Allow me to share 3 with you this evening.

1. **Matt. 17:24-27** In this passage, Peter comes to Jesus because some are asking whether Jesus was going to pay His taxes or not. Nothing is more human than paying taxes. In todays society, we are taxed to death. Jesus responds to Peter by telling Him that Kings are exempt from taxes, but to avoid offending anyone, He will pay His taxes. However, His method of getting the money proved His deity. He sends Peter to go to the lake and cast in his hook. He tells Peter that he will find the money for the tribute in the fishes mouth. Don’t miss the dual nature of Christ in the text. Jesus is saying, "Go to the lake that I created. I know that one of my creatures has dropped a coin into my lake. My law of gravity caused it to sink into my water and I commanded one of my fish to take that coin into its mouth and not swallow it. When you cast in your hook, I will command my fish to bite it. When you catch the fish, the money will be in its mouth and you can pay our taxes to other people that I created who work for a government that I allow to rule.” Human participation partnered with divine creation.
2. **Mark 4:35-41.** After one of the toughest days of His ministry, Jesus enters a ship with His men to pass over to the other side of the lake. When He gets in the boat, Jesus humanity is visible. He is literally exhausted and He falls asleep on the ship. While He sleeps, a storm descends and rocks the ship. The disciples, who are seasoned mariners, are afraid of the storm and fear that they will die. They awaken Jesus who gets up and speaks to the storm and says, "Peace, be still." When He does, the storm stops in obedience to its Creator. 100% human & 100% God was on the boat in the personality of Jesus Christ.
3. **Luke 23:39-43.** In this passage, Jesus has been nailed to the cross and He is doing a very human thing; He is bleeding and dying. Then He does something Godly. One of the thieves that were crucified with Him turns to Jesus and asks for salvation n(remember me). Jesus does what is human and divine on the cross. He delivers and dies. He saves the man and promises Him a home in paradise. The He dies on the cross for the man’s sin (as well as all of the sins of humanity).

If nothing else tells us that Jesus Christ was both God and man at the same time, then these passages ought to clear that up forever. He proved His identity and His deity countless times throughout His life. Our duty is to learn to take the Bible at face value and believe what it says about our Lord.

1. ***Jesus Is The Performing One (v, 5):*** Paul wants to share one more thought about the Lord Jesus before He moves on. He tells us that we have received several things from the Lord Jesus. Note the word "we" in verse 5.
2. **We Have Received Grace:** Grace is the unmerited love and favor of the Lord Jesus Christ for sinners. Through grace we are saved (Eph. 2:8-9), kept, and cared for. It is by grace that we understand the promise of an eternity with Jesus in Heaven.
3. **We Have Received Gifts** : Paul says that we have received apostleship. That is, we have been gifted to work in the Lord's service. We have been drafted for His mission. We have all been sent out to be witnesses for the glory of the Lord. (Acts 1:8)

Witnessing is not limited to the Pastor, preachers, evangelist, deacons, ministry leaders and staff workers. The Bible is abundantly clear in its teaching that every child of God is to be a witness working in the Lord's fields seeking souls ready to be harvested (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15).

**DEEPER STUDY**

Verse 5, “By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name;”

**Obedience**

The Bible clearly says that God saves us for two specific purposes.

1. To obey Him
2. To lead others to obey Him (persons from all nations)

God’s plan is for humanity (man) to become members of His family. His desire is for men to freely choose to live together with Him and with all other believers in a perfect world free of sin. God wants mankind (humanity) living together in perfect love, joy, peace, worship, praise, and service as the family of God. He wants men living soberly, righteously, and godly before Him. He wants men obeying Him as His children.

When God saves us, He saves us primarily to obey Him and to carry the message of obedience to a rebellious and corrupt world. God calls us to obey faithfully and to proclaim obedience to all the nations.

**Let’s discuss several important facts about obedience.**

1. There is a massive difference between ***forced obedience*** and ***free obedience***.
2. Forced obedience has no choice and reveals …

* fear of rebellion
* lack of control
* weakness of purpose
* selfishness and self-centeredness
* low self-esteem
* no sense of godliness

1. Free obedience has a choice and can choose to obey or not to obey. Therefore, free obedience reveals …

* love and trust
* interest and care
* a sense of godliness
* a sense of brotherhood
* strength of purpose and will
* knowledge of self and confidence in self

1. **The Bible says the following about obedience.**
2. ***Obedience demonstrates several things.***
3. Obedience demonstrates that a person is wise. “Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock” (Mt. 7:24).
4. Obedience demonstrates love. “He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him” (Jn. 14:21).
5. Obedience demonstrates that God is worthy. “Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men” (Ac. 5:29).
6. Obedience demonstrates that Christ is of God. “If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself” (Jn. 7:17).
7. ***Obedience assures several things.***
8. Obedience assures a prosperous life and success. “This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success” (Jos. 1:8).
9. Obedience assures entrance into the kingdom of heaven. “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven” (Mt. 7:21; see Lu. 8:21).
10. Obedience assures the mercy of God. “And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments” (Ex. 20:6).
11. Obedience assures that a person is a member of God’s family. “For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother” (Mt. 12:50; see Mk. 3:35).
12. Obedience assures being blessed. “But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it” (Lu. 11:28; see De. 11:27).
13. Obedience assures that we know the truth. “If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself” (Jn. 7:17).
14. Obedience assures the abiding presence of the Father and of Christ. “Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him” (Jn. 14:23).
15. Obedience assures deliverance from enemies. “But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries” (Ex. 23:22).
16. Obedience assures that God will be our God and that all things will work out for our good. “But these things commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you” (Je. 7:23).
17. Obedience assures being loved by God and by Christ “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love” (Jn. 15:10).
18. Obedience assures a good and a longer life. “Thou shalt keep therefore his statutes, and his commandments, which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days upon the earth, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, for ever” (De. 4:40).
19. Obedience assures being a friend of Christ. “Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends” (Jn. 15:14–15).
20. Obedience assures eating the good of the land. “If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land” (Is. 1:19).
21. **Obedience is better than sacrifice, even the sacrifice of all one has.**

“Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams” (1 S. 15:22).

“Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God” (He. 10:5–7)