

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS FOR MAN FROM START TO FINISH

Part VII: God's Righteousness Exemplified In Paul's Personal Messages, Romans 15:14-16:27

F. Settling Our Minds With The Epistle Of Romans

(Romans 16:21-27)

I. Introduction

- A. We often hear of believers today being confused and unsettled over the trials and issues they face in life.
- B. Paul's closing benediction to his Roman epistle *sharply contrasts* with such a state, for he wrote there of being settled in mind by his gospel, so we view that Romans 16:21-27 benediction in its context for our edification:

II. Settling Our Minds With The Epistle Of Romans, Romans 16:21-27.

- A. After giving instructions on handling Satanically-influenced people in Romans 16:17-20, Paul added more closing greetings in Romans 16:21-24 before giving a customary closing benediction in Romans 16:25-27.
- B. That benediction begins with Paul's claim that God was able to "stablish" (KJV) his readers according to his gospel, a goal he had expressed back in Romans 1:11. (John Murray, The Epistle to the Romans, 1975, p. 240)
- C. The Greek verb rendered "established" in Romans 1:11 KJV and "stablish" in Paul's closing benediction in Romans 16:25 KJV is the **same**, the verb *sterizo*, meaning in the figurative sense "confirm, establish, strengthen," Arndt & Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, 1967, p. 775.
- D. Paul's readers had already believed the Gospel of Christ so that they were called "saints" by Paul in Romans 1:6-7, so what he meant by strengthening them by "my gospel" in Romans 16:25 included much more than the issue of justification which they already enjoyed, but the totality of the salvation package that was provided **through** the Gospel of Jesus Christ *as applied to the entire Christian experience*, and we explain:
 - 1. Christ's salvation doctrinally consists of three facets: (a) salvation in the **past** from the **penalty** of sin by faith in Christ (Luke 7:50), (b) salvation in the **present** from the **power** of sin in the believer's daily walk as he relies on the power of the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:10; 8:3-4) and (c) salvation in the **future** from the **presence** of sin in heaven (1 Corinthians 3:15; 5:5), Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to Romans 1:16.
 - 2. Indeed, in stating the theme of his epistle in Romans 1:16-17, Paul expressed his boldness in proclaiming the Gospel of Christ since in it is the righteousness of God revealed from "faith to faith," an expression meaning "faith from start to finish," suggesting God's whole package of salvation, *Ibid.*, ftn. to Rom. 1:17.
 - 3. Significantly, Paul's entire Epistle of Romans presents these three facets of salvation (as follows):
 - a. First, in Romans 1:18-3:20, Paul described how one starts out as a lost sinner, and Romans 3:21-5:21 adds that one is then justified by faith in Christ when he believes the Gospel. This section of Romans thus teaches the believer's **past** salvation from the **penalty** of sin.
 - b. Second, Romans 6:1-8:17 extensively teaches about the believer's **present** victory over the **power** of sin in the Christian's daily walk as the second tense of salvation.
 - c. Third, Romans 8:18-30 briefly describes the hope of the believer's **future** salvation from the **presence** of sin, that occurs at the rapture of the Church as the third tense of salvation.
 - d. Romans 8:31-15:13 then applies all this information to current practical issues of concern for Paul's readers, describing how the believer ought to live in this present life relative to such issues.
 - 4. The rest of Paul's epistle handles closing personal messages and his benediction, Romans 15:14-16:27.
- E. Accordingly, when Paul wrote in Romans 16:25-27 of God's power to "stablish," that is, to "confirm, establish, strengthen" his readers, what he had wanted to do when visiting them according to Romans 1:11, he intended to do so through teaching the information he gave **throughout** his Epistle to the Romans, what settling of the heart and mind would occur as his readers **APPLIED** those teachings. **Thus, growing out of the Gospel of Christ is God's structure for spiritual blessing and victory in the ENTIRE Christian experience from start to finish as taught in Romans, beginning with justification by faith and continuing on throughout the Christian's earthly sojourn and culminating in his glorification at the rapture!**

***Lesson:** Paul wanted his readers to apply the truths he taught throughout his Roman Epistle that they might enjoy not only salvation from the past penalty of sin for trusting in Christ, but salvation from sin's power in their current walk as they anticipated their future deliverance from sin's presence, that they might be settled in mind and heart!*

***Application:** May we believers in Christ apply the doctrinal truths in the Book of Romans to appreciate not only Christ's past salvation from sin's penalty, but its present salvation from the power of sin in living as we anticipate our deliverance from the presence of sin at the rapture, that we might be currently settled in our minds and hearts!*