

Eternity Daily Bible Study

Romans 9-16 The Implications of Salvation

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE MINISTRY OF THE AIBI

This is the last in our series on Romans 9-16. Please email me with any topics you would like me to cover in the next series of Eternity-DBS . My email address is johned@aibi.ph

Number: 629

Verses: Romans 16: 17-20, 24-27

Topic: Final Notes

Date: 9th March 2007

Romans 16:17-20, 24-27 HCSB Now I implore you, brothers, watch out for those who cause dissensions and pitfalls contrary to the doctrine you have learned. Avoid them; (18) for such people do not serve our Lord Christ but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattering words they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting. (19) The report of your obedience has reached everyone. Therefore I rejoice over you. But I want you to be wise about what is good, yet innocent about what is evil. (20) The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you. ... (24) [The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.] (25) Now to Him who has power to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the sacred secret kept silent for long ages, (26) but now revealed and made known through the prophetic Scriptures, according to the command of the eternal God, to advance the obedience of faith among all nations-- (27) to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ--to Him be the glory forever! Amen.

In these final verses Paul seems to be equipping the Roman church to deal with evil by:

- a) Warning them against divisive people (v.17)
- b) Helping them to discern the nature and tactics of divisive people (v.18)
- c) Encouraging the development of spiritual and moral discernment. (v.19)
- d) Reminding them that God is on their side and will help them (v.20,25)
- e) Calling them to a deeper knowledge of the gospel (v.25,26)
- f) Commending all obedience. (v.19,26)

Evil is the very last thing that Paul deals with in his great theological epistle. In fact it is almost an afterthought, an addendum! There is no paranoia here. Paul is so confident in Christ and in His salvation that only a few verses are needed on this issue.

Firstly Paul deals with divisive people and tells the Romans to simply avoid them. The Greek means "to turn away from, to shun". 2 John puts it quite plainly:

2 John 1:9-11 MKJV *Everyone transgressing and not abiding in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ, he has both the Father and the Son. (10) If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house, nor speak a greeting to him. (11) For he who speaks a greeting to him is partaker of his evil deeds.*

In other words do not greet the Jehovah's Witnesses when they come to your door or imply in anyway that they are believers with whom you can have real fellowship! There is a fairly clear line of demarcation between true Christians and impostors and we must have nothing to do with those who peddle another gospel.

Paul tells us that the impostors: *do not serve our Lord Christ but their own appetites, and by*

smooth talk and flattering words they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.

Some ministries clearly engage in flattery as a means of fund-raising and for the ensnarement of followers. They are living for themselves and not for Jesus Christ! When you see supposed "Christian leaders" living a lifestyle that indulges all the human appetites you need to be very careful. You are probably dealing with a fake. All true Christian ministries will have the "ring of truth and sincerity" about them and speak rather plainly.

Paul says that the Romans should develop spiritual discernment and knowledge so that they can "be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil". In other words it is OK to know all about the Bible and nothing about pornography! There is a certain proper naivety among the saints. I do not watch programs like "Sex And The City" or horror movies or shows that have gross violence and cruelty and so on and so forth. The fact that I do not know how to lie in wait and strangle someone with by bare hands does not bother me! I have often been saved from sexual temptation by my naivety as I have not "got" what the person was referring to until days afterward - if ever at all!

I think it is right to fill our minds with righteousness and to leave them empty of lewdness and other forms of garbage.

Being wise in what is good is also a long process as God has made so much that is good and there is a great deal to learn! There is plenty to do in God's work without having to learn what is evil as well. We can learn the Truth and also good methods of ministry and wise ways of dealing with people and situations.

Paul then reminds them that God wins his victories through the Church. *The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.* Satan is crushed "under your feet" - that is under the feet of those who received and believed what Paul had written. Satan is of course crushed by Christ, but His Church has a part in it. Here is an analogy from the book of Joshua:

Joshua 10:24-26 HCSB *When they had brought the kings to him, Joshua summoned all the men of Israel and said to the military commanders who had accompanied him, "Come here and put your feet on the necks of these kings." So the commanders came forward and put their feet on their necks. (25) Joshua said to them, "Do not be afraid or discouraged. Be strong and courageous, for the LORD will do this to all the enemies you fight." (26) After this, Joshua struck them down and executed them. He hung their bodies on five trees and they were there until evening.*

Christ is analogous to Joshua and the church leaders to the commanders under Joshua. Joshua places the enemy kings (powers and principalities) under the dominion of church leaders who will defeat them and who are not to be afraid or discouraged.

Paul then launches into a final doxology that reminds the Romans that God has the power to greatly strengthen them for the purpose of obeying the gospel: (25) Now to Him who has power to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the sacred secret kept silent for long ages, (26) but now revealed and made known through the prophetic Scriptures, according to the command of the eternal God, to advance the obedience of faith among all nations-- (27) to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ--to Him be the glory forever! Amen.

"To Him be the glory forever!" - this is Paul's goal. To have an obedient and Spirit-filled Gentile church that understands the "sacred secret" of the gospel. While the sacred secret was hidden it was "always there" in the prophetic Scriptures that spoke of Christ and of the salvation of the Gentiles. Because of these prophecies the Gentile Christians could always be assured that their salvation was always in the plan of God.

Blessings,

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