

THE ROAD OF THE RIGHTEOUS

Expositional Study Of Romans

Romans 1:4

Written By

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Like you, I've watched my share of pharmaceutical adds on television. You know the drill. They typically boast of how they will help you with a given physical issue. Usually, nice, friendly, happy-looking people, who take the given drug, are showcased riding bikes, sailing, and so forth. All of this is designed to get you to see how much better your life would be if you just gained control of your personal issue by taking the drug in question.

But, then, the narrator launches into, well, all the potential adverse side effects you may experience if you buy and use their product. After listening to the long lists, I usually turn to my wife, Liz, and say something like, "Yeah, like I'm going to rush out and take that particular drug."

Here is one case in point. The add reaches out to people who are destroying their bodies by means of smoking. *Chantix*, the drug of choice, is supposed to help you kick the habit, but once a person hears the potential physical and/or mental drawbacks, he is probably left thinking, "Smoking can't be worse than all the pharmaceutical company says can happen to me. So, I think I'll just live with my destructive habit."

Aren't you glad the gospel of Jesus Christ is not like this? We are born with a whole lot more wrong with us than smoking. We are born, as I said, in our last study, spiritually dead; however, through the person and work of Jesus on the cross and on resurrection Sunday, we have, at the moment of faith, the promise not just the forgiveness of sin, but eternal life. Listen carefully to how Jesus opens up this promise:

Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life (John 5:24).

Simple and to the point, isn't it? You have a spiritual problem, and He offers you the spiritual solution with no negative drawbacks. Zero. Zip. Nada.

No wonder the Apostle Paul included the gospel in his opening credentials to the church in Rome, Italy. With a product like this, a person, like Paul, who had experienced its transformative power, would naturally live to talk about it all the time and invite others to receive what he had received. Further, with a supernatural product like this, Paul we logically let other believers know they, too, need to speak up and out about the wonderful good news of God. As we have seen, he does this much starting in verse 3. Here we encounter a special apostolic principle which carries us through verse 7.

We Are To Be Purveyors Of The Powerful Gospel (Romans 1:3)

As purveyors of God's gospel, what, exactly, are we purveying? Three things present themselves in verses 3 through 7. We have covered the first two, so let's review them by first re-reading the verse:

... concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, ... (Romans 1:3).

From this enlightening sentence we learned the gospel we are to relay to others is first of all about ...

- *The Person of the Gospel* (Romans 1:3a). For thousands of years, God prophesied with specificity that His only Son, the second person of the Holy Trinity, would come to earth to deal with man's sin problem. Paul addressed this inexorable truth in his earlier letter to the Corinthians: "*He [God, the Father] made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him*" (2 Corinthians 5:21). Dr. Luke, writing in 62 A. D., some four years after Romans, echoed the greatness and exclusivity of Christ's redemptive work with these line-in-the-sand words, "*And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which they must be saved*" (Acts 4:12). Jesus is THE name of the gospel of God to sinners, which means there are no other names and no other saviors in any other religions.
- *The Purpose of the Gospel* (Romans 1:3b). In addition to Jesus being THE divine Savior, Paul details how part of the purpose of the gospel relates to Him as the flesh and blood descendent of King David. Again, this not only limits divine salvation for sinners to the One who fulfilled the Davidic messianic prophecies

(Isaiah 9:6), it informs us that one of the Father's gospel purposes is to give us the King who can be the true and lasting King of Kings of the Davidic kingdom promised in the Old Testament.

Turning from the purpose of this gospel in verse 3, Paul turns quickly in verse 3 and speaks about . . .

The Power of the Gospel (Romans 1:4)

We see its power as we read the verse inspired by Paul's pen:

. . . who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord . . . (Romans 1:4).

Verse 3 speaks about human side of the gospel by relating the Messiah, Jesus, to the Davidic line. In this verse, Paul turns to addresses the divine side of the gospel we are called to share with a lost world.

We are not sharing about any man claiming to be the Savior, but the God-man, the only one suited to deal with our sin issue. This man, Jesus, proved His divinity in a definitive fashion with His resurrection from the death. How Paul develops this motif is most intriguing.

Paul employs a graphic word here to here in the opening articular participle, *who was declared*, *tou horisthentos* (τοῦ ὀρισθέντος) to introduce us to the power of Christ's gospel work. Interestingly enough, we get our word *horizon* from this ancient word. Literally, the word means to "establish a boundary."¹ From this nuance, it was a logical jump to use the word for making

¹ William Arndt et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 723. ὀρίζω (ὄρος) fut. 3 sg. ὀριεῖ LXX; 1 aor. ὄρισσα, pf. 3 pl. ὀρίκασιν (Tat. 17, 3). Pass.: 1 aor. 3 sg. ὀρίσθη (Just., A I, 44, 12); ptc. ὀρισθείς; pf. ptc. ὀρισμένος (Aeschyl., Hdt.+)

① from the basic mng., 'to separate entities and so establish a boundary', derives the sense 'to define ideas or concepts': *set limits to, define, explain* (X. et al. [as Ath. 6, 1] in act. and mid.) περί τινος *give an explanation concerning someth.* 12:1. τὸ ὕδωρ καὶ τὸν σταυρὸν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ὄρισεν *he defined the water and the cross together* (i.e. in the section on the tree by the streams of water Ps 1:3) 11:8. Sim.

② **to make a determination about an entity, determine, appoint, fix, set**

ⓐ of things

α. expressed by the acc. προφήτης ὀρίζων τράπεζαν *a prophet who orders a meal* (s. τράπεζα 2) D 11:9 (w. double acc.: Πυθαγόρας . . . ἔσχατον ὀρίζει φύσιν Theoph. Ant. 3, 7 [p. 216, 12]).—Of time (Pla., Leg. 9 p. 864e; Demosth. 36, 26 ὁ νόμος τὸν χρόνον ὄρισεν; Epict., Ench. 51, 1; PFlor 61, 45 [85 A.D.]; Jos., C. Ap. 1, 230; Just., D. 102, 4 χρόνος; more freq. pass., s. below) ἡμέραν **Hb 4:7**. ὄρ. προστεταγμένους καιρούς *set appointed times* **Ac 17:26**.—μηδὲν ὀρίζοντες μηδὲ νομοθετοῦντες *without making rules or ordinances* GMary 463, 29.—Pass. (SIG 495, 171; PFay 11, 16 [c. 115 B.C.]; PAmh 50, 15; PTebt 327, 12 al.) ὀρισμένοι καιροί (Diod S 1, 41, 7; cp. 16, 29, 2; Jos., Ant. 6, 78) *appointed times* 1 Cl 40:2. ὀρισμένης τῆς ἡμέρας ταύτης *after this day has been fixed* Hv 2, 2, 5 (Diod S 2, 59, 5; 20, 110, 1 ὀρισμένη ἡμέρα; Herodian 1, 10, 5 ὀρισμένης ἡμέρας; Pollux 1, 67).—ὁ ὀρισμένος τόπος *the appointed place* 19:1 (cp. Iren. 5, 31, 2 [Harv. II 412, 1]). οἱ ὀρισμένοι νόμοι *the established laws* Dg 5:10. ὁ ὀρισμένος τῆς λειτουργίας κανὼν *the established limits of (one's) ministry* 1 Cl 41:1. ἡ ὀρισμένη βουλή *the definite plan* **Ac 2:23**.—Subst. (cp. SIG 905, 14 τῶν ὀρισθέντων ἄγνοια) κατὰ τὸ ὀρισμένον *in accordance with the* (divine) decree **Lk 22:22**.

various types of declarations, for when you establish a boundary are you not, in fact, making a tangible declaration with the various surveyor stakes? Indeed. The gospel, therefore, becomes the essence of the spiritual horizon for mankind, if he is paying attention with his logical, thinking mind. How does it accomplish this fact? By declaring Jesus as the God-man Savior by means of the power of the resurrection from the dead. You might need to read that one more time. This time let the import of it sink in.

Jesus didn't become the Son of God by means of the resurrection. He, who possessed the spirit of holiness as God (this phrase is used in the Old Testament of God, cf. Psalm 29:5; 96:12; 144:5), proved His divinity beyond doubt by means of resurrection. Who else could/can reverse the effects of necrosis but God? Who else could fulfill Daniel's prophecy in 12:2 that on day there would be a general resurrection than the God-man, Jesus? Who else could fulfill the words of the Psalmist when he prophesied, "For Thou will not abandon my soul to Sheol, neither will Thou allow They Holy One to undergo decay" (Psalm 16:8). All mankind is prone to decay at death which is irreversible, but not so with the Messiah. Only Jesus, the Creator (Colossian 1:16-17) could possibly fulfill this ancient prophecy. People might have questioned the identity of Jesus while He walked the earth, but His very public death and resurrection leaves no doubt that He was God in the flesh on a redemptive mission of all missions. This is why Paul says Jesus' identity was declared with power for there is nothing more powerful than a person breaking the bonds of death.

Jesus did not just defeat death, He prophesied on multiple occasions He would accomplish this feat.

³⁹ But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign shall be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet;
⁴⁰ for just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. (Matthew 12).

He gave them a sign all right because He rose on the third day just like He said He would. Talk about a sign. Talk about power.

β. by an inf. (Appian, Bell. Civ. 5, 3 §12 ἀντιδοῦναι=to give as recompense; ApcMos 28 φυλάττειν; B-D-F §392, 1a) ὥρισαν ... πέμψαι *they determined* (perh. *set apart*; so Field, Notes 119f and TGillieson, ET 56, '44/45, 110) ... to send **Ac 11:29**; by an indirect quest. 1 Cl 40:3.

Ⓟ of persons *appoint, designate, declare*: God judges the world ἐν ἀνδρὶ ᾧ ὥρισεν *through a man whom he has appointed* **Ac 17:31**. Pass. ὁ ὠρισμένος ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ κριτῆς *the one appointed by God as judge* **10:42**. Of eccl. superintendents or overseers οἱ κατὰ τὰ πέρατα ὠρισθέντες *those who are appointed in distant lands* IEph 3:2. W. double acc. *declare someone to be someth.* (Meleag. in Anth. Pal. 12, 158, 7 σὲ γὰρ θεὸν ὥρισε δαίμων) pass. τοῦ ὠρισθέντος υἱοῦ θεοῦ ἐν δυνάμει *who has been declared to be the powerful son of God* **Ro 1:4**.—DELG s.v. ὄρος. M-M. TW.

On another occasion when the unbelieving Jews sought a sign from Him to verify His heavenly identity, Jesus, once again, pointed to His coming resurrection:

¹⁸ The Jews therefore answered and said to Him, "What sign do You show to us, seeing that You do these things?" ¹⁹ Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." ²⁰ The Jews therefore said, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" ²¹ But He was speaking of the temple of His body. ²² When therefore He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jesus had spoken (John 2).

Again, Christ's disciples, who were eyewitnesses of His horrendous execution by means of crucifixion, did not connect all the dots in His teaching about the resurrection until after He had risen. Then they understood it fully and went on to suffer and die for their newfound understanding.

All in all, Jesus appeared twelve times after His resurrection prior to His ascension back into heaven.

- Mary (John 20:10-18)
- Mary & women (Matthew 28:1-10)
- Peter (1 Corinthians 15:5)
- Two disciples (Luke 24:13-35)
- Ten Apostles (John 20:24-31)
- Seven Apostles (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:14-18)
- 500 Brethren (1 Corinthians 15:6)
- James (1 Corinthians 15:7)
- All the Apostles (Acts 1:4-8)
- Paul (Acts 9:1-9; 1 Corinthians 15:8)

These viable people saw Him, heard Him, touched Him, and many ate with Him. Many had seen His crucifixion and they saw the scars after the crucifixion. No wonder they believed He was, in fact, God. The resurrection evidence was, and is, all so powerful. This is what Paul's credentials were all about. Since the power of this Savior and His gospel touched and transformed his life, he had no desire but to share it with all those he came in contact with. Hence, if the Romans would have him come to their church, they could expect a heavy emphasis in his teaching upon the power of the gospel, a power unleashed in this historical resurrection of Jesus, the Christ.

Before we leave this point, I must ask you a personal question: Has the power of this resurrected truth transformed your life by faith yet? If not, what excuses are holding you back? Further, if you are a believer in the Lord Jesus, is the evidence of His resurrection so powerful that you just cannot wait to share it with someone who does not know Him?

Paul moves from what I call the power of the gospel to . . .

The Provision of the Gospel (Romans 1:5-7)

What does the gospel provide? The closing verses of Paul's credentials give us the answer:

⁵ through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles, for His name's sake,

Paul is probably speaking about this own personal benefit from believing in Jesus as the risen Lord and Savior because of two reasons: one, because apostleship applies to the men Jesus specifically called, and two, because his unique ministry was ultimately to the Gentiles.

Backing up, then, Paul says he received "grace" from the resurrected Jesus. This is an understatement. He was not just any normal unbeliever, but a Pharisee of the first order who hunted and killed Jews who believed Jesus was risen. As he remarked to the riotous Jerusalem mob,

⁴ And I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and putting both men and women into prisons, ⁵ as also the high priest and all the Council of the elders can testify. From them I also received letters to the brethren, and started off for Damascus in order to bring even those who were there to Jerusalem as prisoners to be punished (Acts 22).

On that trip to Damascus is when the resurrected Lord encountered Paul and arrested his spiritual attention. Again, Paul tells the story better than anyone:

And it came about that as I was on my way, approaching Damascus about noontime, a very bright light suddenly flashed from heaven all around me, and I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?' And I answered, 'Who art Thou, Lord?' And He said to me, 'I am Jesus the Nazarene, whom you are persecuting' (Acts 22).

Talk about grace. God should have sent a lightning bolt down to vaporize the ruthless religious zealot, but He didn't. He, who is rich in mercy and love for the lost, showed this misguided, misinformed religious leader he was dead wrong about Him. From that point forward, Paul was never the same again. Grace poured over his soul and cleansed his heart and his mind. He arrived in Damascus a new spiritual man all because the living Lord saw fit to show grace to him. Trust me on this one, the same Lord who showed grace to Paul will show grace to you if you are living life on the wrong spiritual road. And if you know Him, then, you know the humbling nature of God's grace.

In addition to grace, Paul said he received apostleship, or a calling to go on a specific mission for God. As he details here, that mission involved making sure Gentiles became obedient insofar as they, too, come to know and worship the resurrected Lord and Savior, Jesus, the Christ. He introduces this concept with this clause:

to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles, for His name's sake . . .
 . (Romans 1:5).

While obedience can denote daily, moment-by-moment obedience to the teachings of Christ and the Word (1 John 3:23-24), I think, based on the simple emphasis of the gospel here, Paul is merely saying his heart's desire, his calling is to make sure Gentiles come to believe in the resurrected Savior, too (Romans 11:11; 15:9-16; Galatians 1:16; 2:2, 8, 9, 12, 13, 15). He fulfilled that burning desire all the way until Nero beheaded him around 65 A.D. Think of how many Gentiles are in heaven all because Paul shared the power of the gospel with them. Think of how many Gentiles lost in false polytheistic systems of belief came to know, through Paul's influence, true spiritual light and to possess lasting internal joy because they, too, understood the grace of the risen Savior, Jesus.

Even though we are not Apostles, we, like Paul, can relate to the rich grace of Jesus. It's what you encountered when you were wandering aimlessly through life looking for meaning and purpose but not finding it. It's what grabbed your heart and head and wouldn't let you go. It's what you sensed when you sang old hymns as a child.

Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling
 Calling for you and for me
 See all the portholes
 He's waiting and watching
 Watching for you and for me
 Come home, come home
 You who are weary come home
 Earnestly, tenderly Jesus is calling
 Calling all sinners, come home.
 All for the wonderful love he has promised
 Promised for you and for me
 Through all our suffering
 He has mercy and pardon
 Pardon for you and for me
 Come home, come home
 You who are weary come home
 Earnestly, tenderly Jesus is calling
 Calling all sinners, come home.²

Grace is what saved you, and you know it. Knowing that grace, as in Paul's situation, has hopefully sent you on a mission of sorts, a mission to reach your own version of the Gentiles. Mark this well, in all of your attempt to reach them for Christ, are you making sure they understand the grace of God toward them as sinners? Are you letting them know that the same living Lord who pursued Paul, pursues them like a Good Shepherd (John 10)?

²Paul Mickelson and Will L. Thompson, "Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling," Timeless Truths, accessed November 9, 2017, http://library.timelesstruths.org/music/Softly_and_Tenderly/.

With verses 6 and 7 we encounter two more things the powerful gospel gives us:

⁶ among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ;

The gospel gives us an understanding of the mysterious fact that God has specifically called us. Who among us can even begin to plumb the depths of this concept? He who knows all and is sovereign over all, and who has given us free will, calls us to salvation. The calling of God is theologically broken down into three facets:

call (general, special, effectual). The act by which God extends to humans an invitation to enter into a saving relationship. The idea of a “general” call arises from scriptural texts that suggest that God’s invitation goes out to all peoples through the testimony of general revelation, that is, as present in God’s handiwork and providential care for creation. The “special” call refers to the Spirit of God working specifically in the heart of an individual as the preaching of the gospel provides the person with an opportunity to exercise faith in Christ. Finally, the “effectual” call refers to the Spirit’s application of grace such that an individual receives forgiveness of sin and eternal life (salvation).³

Here's another scholastic way to look at the calling of God:

Calling

The command or invitation of God addressed to sinners in the gospel, directing them to repent of their sins and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for the saving of their souls. There is a general call, and there is a special, or effectual, call. This effectual call is equivalent to regeneration (*see Effectual Calling*).

The General Call

The general call is the address of the gospel to all sinners who hear it. The Scriptures clearly distinguish between the general and the effectual calling. Matt. 22:14 says, “Many are called, but few are chosen.” In many cases this general call is not followed by the obedience of faith and therefore does not lead to the experience of salvation. Contrast this with Rom. 8:30, “Whom he called, them he also justified.” This is an internal, effectual call that is invariably followed by justification.

Thus, the general call of the gospel is addressed to sinners without distinction. It sets forth the truths and terms of the gospel and carries the promise that all who receive Christ by faith on the terms of the gospel will receive the gift of eternal life. But it does not affect the internal change in sinners that is necessary for them to

³ Stanley Grenz, David Guretzki, and Cherith Fee Nordling, *Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 22–23.

exercise repentance and faith. That all sinners should repent and believe is beyond dispute. God condemns them for not doing so (John 16:8, 9). But sinners are so depraved that without the miracle of regeneration, they remain willfully incapable of any good spiritual response to the gospel (Rom. 8:7; *see Depravity, Inability*).

The Effectual Call

The effectual call does all that the general call does and more. Addressed exclusively to God's elect, it effects what it commands by regenerating the spiritually dead sinner, enlightening his mind, renewing his will, and giving him the gifts of repentance and faith (Acts 11:18; Eph. 2:8, 9; Phil. 1:29).⁴

To these concepts the author adds this:

The effectual call of the Spirit, which is spiritual, irresistible, and directed only to the elect. It is distinct from the external call, which is general and which indiscriminately reaches all who hear the gospel (*see Calling; Effectual Calling; Irresistible Grace*).

The internal call has the following characteristics:

1. It has God as its author (1 Cor. 1:9; 2 Tim. 1:8, 9; Gal. 1:15; 1 Thess. 5:23, 24; 2 Thess. 2:13, 14; 1 Pet. 5:10). Specifically, it is God the Father who initiates salvation by the call of his sovereign grace (Rom. 8:30; 1 Cor. 1:9; Gal. 1:15; Eph. 1:17, 18).
2. It is an act, not a process (1 Pet. 2:9; 1 Thess. 2:12), as is illustrated in the calling of Lazarus from the dead (John 11:43; Eph. 2:1).
3. It is an effective summons, which cannot be frustrated but is inevitably and invariably followed by justification (Rom. 8:29–30).
4. It is immutable both in its inherent character (Rom. 11:29) and in its effects (Rom. 8:29–30).
5. It is a high, holy, and heavenly call (Phil. 3:14; 2 Tim. 1:9; Heb. 3:1) both as to its origin and intrinsic character, and as to the destiny to which it conducts.
6. It leads to great spiritual blessings: fellowship with Christ (1 Cor. 1:9) and with the saints (Col. 3:15); the peace of God (1 Cor. 7:15); holiness (1 Thess. 4:7; 5:23–24); light (1 Pet. 2:9); liberty (Gal. 5:13); hope (Eph. 1:18; 4:4); patient endurance (1 Pet. 2:20, 21); and, finally, entrance into God's kingdom and glory (1 Thess. 2:12) or eternal life and glory (2 Thess. 2:14; 1 Tim. 6:12; 1 Pet. 5:10; Heb. 9:15; Rev. 19:9).
7. It imposes practical obligations on God's people (Eph. 4:1, 2; 5:1, 2) because Christians ought to walk in accordance with it (2 Pet. 1:10).⁵

⁴Alan Cairns, *Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Belfast; Greenville, SC: Ambassador Emerald International, 2002), 73.

⁵Ibid., 239–240.

Believers are those who have heard the call of God in these three areas. The general call through general revelation shows them there is viable evidence for a living God. The internal call of the Spirit of God draws them toward God (John 6), and the effectual call saves them as they embrace the gospel message to be true for them. Once a person senses the utter power of the gospel, once they know beyond a shadow of a doubt that God is real and has, in fact, come to earth, died for their sin, and then rose again from the grave, they step forward in faith because they know they are called by Him to follow Him. I sense that call upon my life. I know many of you do, too. It is what gives you comfort, hope, and real life purpose.

Finally, those who know the power of the gospel know exactly who they are.

⁷ to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

They are loved of God. They can't help but see that love did, as Chris Tomlin sings, ran red at the foot of the cross. Folks who understand this can humbly bow their head and say, "Yes, I know He loved me enough to die for me. Yes, I know love for me kept Him on the cruel cross." Folks who understand this also know that He, the living Lord, loves them even now. Sometimes, in the privacy of their homes, they break into song and sing about it:

A wonderful Savior is Jesus my Lord,
A wonderful Savior to me;
He hideth my soul in the cleft of the rock,
Where rivers of pleasure I see.

Refrain:

He hideth my soul in the cleft of the rock,
That shadows a dry, thirsty land;
He hideth my life in the depths of His love,
And covers me there with His hand,
And covers me there with His hand.⁶

Do you sing to the Lord who loves you?

The power of the gospel also informs the followers of the resurrected Savior that they are currently saints. They won't be voted on this status later after they are dead and gone. It won't be given to them if they do certain things religious leaders deem important for the kingdom of God or the Church at large. No. When you come to the realization that Jesus is quite alive and is the true Savior and you are a sinner in need of Him, you are, at that moment of faith, called a saint, a person set apart unto holiness. C. E. B. Cranfield, the Greek New Testament scholar expands on the meaning of this unique Greek word, *saint* or *hagios* (ἅγιος):

⁶Frances J. Crosby, "He Hideth My Soul," timelesstruths.org, accessed November 9, 2017, http://library.timelesstruths.org/music/He_Hideth_My_Soul/.

The term 'saint' also has a significant history. The root meaning of *chadosh* [Hebrew for holy] seems to be 'marked off,' 'separate,' 'withdrawn from ordinary use . . . The term 'holy,' applied to Israel, expressed the fact that they were God's special people. Their holiness derived from God's gracious choice, and it involved the obligation on their part to seek to be and to do what was in accordance with the revealed character of their God by obedience to His law (see especially the 'Holiness Code' of Lev 17-26). Paul's use of 'holy' rests squarely upon this OT foundation. Those who have been called by the holy God are holy in virtue of His calling and are hereby claimed for holiness in life.⁷

When the power of the gospel has not been unleashed on your life, you are a sinner. However, at the moment of faith in Jesus, He radically changes your status forever to that of a saint. Now, we who know the power of His gospel, need to get on with living in light of our status, don't we? We also need to make sure our lives are laser focused on being purveyors of God's wonderful, living-giving gospel.

⁷C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1975), 70.