

# Romans 16:25-27

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*Paul ends his letter with a blessing. His entire letter was about the gospel of grace and living by faith, living righteously through the resurrection power of Jesus, and here he closes with a summary.*

Paul finishes this letter to the believers in Rome with a blessing, assuring them of their hope in Christ. This is Paul's longest letter, and he spent much of it explaining the hope of the gospel. Because of Jesus Christ, we have two great blessings: 1) a forever place in God's family and 2) the power to live by faith daily through the resurrection power of Jesus. Because we can walk in faith, we can experience a fulfilled and hopeful life in Christ.

Paul starts the blessing, writing: *Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ* (v 25), which is what this whole letter has been about. Paul used the same Greek word translated *established* in the beginning of the letter, creating a set of bookends:

“For I long to see you so that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, that you may be established.”  
(Romans 1:11)

So we see that believers can be *established* through receiving spiritual gifts from other believers. Through this letter Paul is establishing their faith through his giftedness as a teacher, giving them the *gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ*. It is the power of the gospel that provides salvation, from initial faith to be born again, to the faith to walk apart from the destruction of sin and the world (Romans 1:16-17).

Paul has been reminding the believers that everything they need to be justified in God's sight and to live a righteous life daily has been provided to them in Christ. The law has been fulfilled through Christ, and walking by faith in Christ is the only way to be righteous before God.

The gospel of Christ was a mystery throughout the Old Testament given through the prophecies, *according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God* (vv 25–26).

Now, the gospel has been fully revealed in Christ and is no longer a *mystery*. Through the prophets, God wrote the prophecies that would be fulfilled in Christ. This gospel *has been made known to all of the nations* (v 26), and those who believe it are practicing *obedience of faith* (v 26).

One of the mysteries was how there could be a messiah (“anointed one”) who was a suffering servant, such as the messiah predicted in the “My Servant” songs of Isaiah (Isaiah 43:1-4, 49:1-26, 50:4-11, 52:13-53:15), as well as a messiah who ruled the earth from the Throne of David. The answer is One who is both God and human who is willing to die for the sins of the

world, who gains “all authority” due to His faithfulness, and who will return again to take up His throne on earth, the throne of David. This reality is now being *made known to all the nations*.

This emphasis on living a life of righteousness by faith refutes the slander that led Paul to write this letter. The slanderers claimed that teaching a gospel of grace leads to a life of sin (Romans 3:8). They said that if all that is required to be justified as righteous before God is to simply believe, then people will say, “Great, now that I’m justified, I can sin and not worry about it.”

But Paul has argued that although such behavior cannot undo God’s grace, it is foolish to sin, because sin leads to death, loss, and slavery (Romans 6:15-16, 23). Paul has exhorted those who have believed his gospel to live in the obedience of faith. Paul has asked, “Why would we want to go back under death, slavery, and judgment of sin in our daily experience when we can live the resurrection power of Jesus, and share both His life and rewards?” His answer has been “That is crazy thinking.” In this way he has refuted those who have both slandered grace and insisted something must be added to the cross in order to justify us in God’s sight.

Although the gospel was a mystery before Christ, this does not mean that those who came before Christ cannot be justified before God. Paul used Abraham as an example of someone who believed God and was justified before God simply because he believed (Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:3). Abraham lived long before Christ came to earth, but Paul explains clearly that he was justified in God’s sight through faith.

Even though Abraham did not know when or how Christ would come, he believed the promise God made to him and it was credited to him as righteousness (Romans 4:3). Jesus’s death on the cross paid for the sins of the entire world—past, present, and future.

Christ has come and fulfilled all the prophecies, making the mystery known, and now the gospel is being made known to all of the nations. Paul spent his ministry making the gospel known to the nations. And as we know, the faith of the believers in Rome is being spoken of throughout the world (Romans 1:8).

The gospel is being spread, bringing many to obedience in faith. The theme verse of Romans (Romans 1:16-17) includes this assertion by Paul regarding the gospel: “For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘But the righteous man shall live by faith.’”

The righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel. The gospel (good news) of Christ begins with faith. We are justified in God’s sight simply by having enough faith to look upon Jesus on the cross, hoping to be delivered from the deadly venom of sin (John 3:14-15).

Then we acquire righteous living, walking in harmony with God’s design for us, through a walk of faith. The gospel of Christ is therefore all about faith from start to finish. Law-following and rule-following does not achieve righteousness. Indeed, when we walk by faith we fulfill the Law (Romans 8:4).

Paul concludes his blessing by giving God the glory through Jesus Christ. Throughout Romans, Paul has made it clear that it is God who should receive credit for all good things, such as in Romans 5:9–11.

It is only because of God that we are able to live freely. The law does not empower us to live a righteous and harmonious life. Apart from Christ, we do not have the ability to live that redeemed life. Through Christ we are made free to live, by faith, according to the way God intended. God designed us to reign in the earth as stewards and as a team, serving and loving one another. Through the power of the gospel and the Spirit, we can restore our fallenness when we walk in faith, obeying Jesus's commands.

We as believers have been saved from the penalty of sin through faith in Christ's finished work on the cross. Subsequently, we are being sanctified through our continued faith in Christ, not through the Law. Religious rules have no power to redeem.

Paul is reminding the Roman audience of this essential point. God alone deserves all the glory: *To the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen* (v 27).

God is *wise*. He created all things. He knows what is best for us. The original sin was rooted in the temptation that "I know better than God." Satan consistently tempts us to think this is the case, and even tempted Jesus in that manner. But God knows best. Jesus provides an example of the mindset of laying aside comfort to follow in obedience. We are exhorted to adopt that same mindset (Philippians 2:5-7). It is through following in faith, believing that God's ways are for our best, that we can gain the greatest riches and life fulfillment (Revelation 3:21).

*Jesus Christ* deserves all *glory* and honor (Revelation 5:13). It is through Him that all was created, and it is He who has redeemed creation from the Fall of Man. Jesus Christ is God become human. He has restored the "glory and honor" intended upon humans to reign in the earth (Hebrews 2:9-10). He will have the *glory forever*. When we trust the wisdom of God, and walk in His ways, we have the unimaginable opportunity to share in His glory (Hebrews 2:9-10; Revelation 3:21).

Paul ends with *Amen*. This word is transliterated from "amen" in Hebrew, which is also transliterated into Greek as "amen." As a benediction, it means "so be it." Paul ends with a declaration that "so shall it be"—*Jesus* shall have all honor and all *glory*. *God* is all-wise. Therefore the thing that makes most sense for all believers is to have the faith that His way is best, the rewards He promises are infinitely greater than anything offered by the world or the flesh, thus we should follow the Spirit, walking by His direction.

### **Biblical Text**

**<sup>25</sup> Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, <sup>26</sup> but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, *leading to obedience of faith*; <sup>27</sup> to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen.**