

Romans 1:1-17

Sunday 2/17/2008

This sermon will help you, especially if you are a young Christian. It will certainly help you put the Book of Romans together. I think it will even help those of you who are in the institute class. This coming Saturday is their first test, and they have to pass the test to stay in it. Some of them are already in trouble because they were supposed to see me this month and they haven't, and they're not here this morning. If you have a test with six questions on it, you missed two, and if you don't meet with me, that already counts as one. So you can see some of them are going to be in trouble, but that's okay. We need more room there anyhow; we're kind of packed out.

I think for those of you that are here today, this is really going to help you. My goal is to help you get the Bible. Last week, we looked at one of the great parallels in the Bible. We talked about how Israel missed the first coming of the Lord Jesus Christ because of the rejection of, the Bible says in Romans chapter 1, first of all, the Holy Scriptures, and then the Spirit of Holiness. I showed you how the nation of Israel, the first thing they did was reject God's Word. Really, if you want to put it in a category, the first thing they did was reject God, then they rejected His Word, then rejected His Spirit. So when they did that, God shut down. The Holy Spirit of God shut down the nation of Israel so that they could not get anything from God. That's basically why they could not see.

We talked about last week how in the Old Testament, the prophets wrote about the suffering of Christ, that's just crucifixion, and the glory of Christ, that's the second coming. Because they lost the Holy Spirit of God, which I also showed you last week, that is the key to you and me understanding the Scripture, they couldn't figure it out. Then I showed you the great parallel that today, you and I as Christians, we're going to miss the greatest event in our lifetime that's going to befall this planet, and that's going to be the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament, the nation of Israel is God's people, and it's through that nation that God wanted to bring His Son, and they rejected Him because of their unbelief. Their unbelief was because of the fact that they quit the Bible, and they quit believing in the Holy Spirit of God.

In the New Testament, if you're saved here this morning, God wants to work through you. This church is a body of saved people. God wants to work through this church to accomplish His plan. This church is only as strong as the individual Christians that are in it. That's why we go to great length and great detail to not only teach you the Bible, but make sure that everybody in ministry is following the Scriptures and doing exactly what they need to do with it. We talked about how many of the Christians are going to miss the greatest event in all of the Bible, in reality, the second coming of Christ, for the same reason. They rejected God, they rejected the Word of God, and now the Holy Spirit of God has no effect in their life.

You and I will never figure out the Bible on our own. You can get a book on being a doctor, being a lawyer, being a mechanic. Any trade you want to think of, you can go and get a book, and you can teach yourself that trade or have other people teach it to you. When it comes to the Bible and the ministry and the things of the Word of God, it's the Holy Spirit of God. Everything that you and I have in our being, in our self, will not help us when it comes to the Bible. That's

why we have to be dependent on the Holy Spirit of God to teach us, and I gave you some great verses on that last week.

We talked about how that great concept last week was what I call anyhow the sub-levels of the Bible. We talked about how the Bible has different levels: the level that you live on where you have to deal with issues in all your life; the basement level where you store the verses and the concepts that you learn. But then there's a sub-level, and the sub-level of the Bible is the goal for all of God's people. It ought to be anyhow. It ought to be where you really understand how the whole aspect of the Word of God works. My whole job and everything that I do with you, one-on-one as a church, and I can really only accomplish it with the one-on-one because it takes that specialized ability to get into your world and hand-cut for you what you need.

I know this: I know that my job and everything I do is to try to get you to that sub-level. On Thursday night, you'll find that I take a long time detailing every aspect out. You're going to see it on Sunday morning. You saw it last week. You're going to see it again today. To point out to you the things that you have to learn, I gave some of you folks a book, *How to Study the Bible This Morning*. That is one of the greatest books you'll ever get your hand on, not because I wrote it, but because I'm the aspect of showing you how to get to the sub-level. That's what I meant. I didn't mean it was great because I wrote it. It's a great book to show you. That book is basically how I learned the Bible and how I got introduced to the sub-level of the Bible because the sub-level is where it all goes together, where it all fits. I'll help any of you, anytime, any place do that and put that all together.

I. Paul's Greeting in Romans

Today we're going to continue on in our passage. We've been really dealing with the introduction, the greeting that Paul has been given to the church, and we're going to finish that up today. We divided Chapter 1 into two sections. We're going to finish Section 1 and then we'll go on to Section 2 next week. Here's what he said. Let's follow along here in Romans 1:1.

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,

(Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,)

Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;

And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:

By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name:

Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:

To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;

Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you.

For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established;

That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.

Now Father, we ask you today to be with us, help us to put the Word of God together, help us to get it all in the right order here, and help us to leave today understanding some more great truths about your Word. Help us every time we meet together for these people, your people Lord, the ones that I have been entrusted to teach the Word of God to, help them to go home today a little closer to you, a little more in love with you, a little more wanting to follow you, and help me Lord make the Bible clear to them today. I can only do that as the Holy Spirit of God helps me do that. So Lord, we ask you today to meet with us, give us what we need to have today, and we'll thank you and praise in Jesus' name for sake we ask it, amen.

You'll remember when we started Romans 1, in fact I think it was in the introduction, I told you how that when Paul opens up this book in verse 7, it's different than all the other books that he writes to. In all of his other books he starts out writing to the churches or to the saints that are in the churches. He doesn't do that in Romans. He's showing us the first great truth we saw, and that is the fact that Paul understands that we are always going to be under the domination of the Roman Empire. He understands the great mystery of Daniel 2 and Daniel 7 and Revelation 17 and 18, the mystery called Babylon Mystery Religion, the mother of Harlots. He understands how that they were under Rome at that particular point. He understands that transition down through the history of the church, and he understands that in your day and my day that we are under Rome. Rome is the world power, has always been the world power from a religious standpoint, and we know that now from what we talked about a couple of weeks ago. With that great teaching and his opening remarks, he begins to lay out what I call the cornerstone of the difference between the church and the world, the religious world that we live in. This is very, very important because this is what he's trying to accomplish in Romans in his greeting.

II. Training Your Eye to See

Now look at Romans 1:3. Here's what it says in verse 3, and we're going to look at another great doctrine here that we're going to explain to you that you're going to be able to see how this fits in.

Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;

Now I want you to look at that verse for a moment, and I want you to tell me in a second here, I want you to tell me what's wrong with that verse. In time, as you come through the Bible, you're going to develop what I call an eye to see things that don't make sense in the Bible. There's a lot of people that when they look at the Bible, they see things that don't make sense, and immediately the Bible's got to have a problem with it. I know better than that, and I understand that God wrote the Bible so we would, if you were paying attention and looking for things, you would ask yourself the question, "Why is that?" A lot of learning the Bible is seeing things that don't match up and not immediately going to the point and saying, "Well, it's wrong," but asking yourself why it doesn't match up and finding the answer and showing you how they both are right but they don't match up together, but they both have an individual application, and that's called rightly dividing the word of truth.

Now there's something wrong with this verse, and what I want to do for you in time as we go through it, and some of you are getting it, and what I want to do for you is I want to help you develop your eye to be able to see things in the Bible. If you've ever been over to Steve Bracken's house, he's got to me an incredible arrowhead collection, and he's got them all on the walls, and they're all in cases and everything. He's quite the avid arrowhead collector. I was talking with him about it, and he was telling me how he finds them. He's got the ability because he's done it for so long that he can walk along a creek bed or walk along something and he can look at something over there and something will stand out to him that isn't right with the scenery. He'll see a stone that is beveled differently. He'll see a shape that doesn't look like the rest of the stone, and he'll walk over and he'll say, "Wow, that's an arrowhead." Now I would walk over it a hundred thousand times and never see that, but he's trained his eye.

People who look for things, my dad was the same way. My dad, and I know we have them in here, my dad was a mushroom hunter, and morel mushrooms, they're hard to find. I mean, you got to look for them. My dad would never like to take me mushroom hunting because I'd smash all the mushrooms walking over them. He could see a mushroom, I was going to say miles away but that would be an exaggeration, but he could see mushrooms along before I could, and he would be able to go into a woods. Why? Because he had trained himself to look for mushrooms, and it's like anything else in life. Once you, this is why people like the movie CSI, crime scene investigators. A good detective goes into a room of a crime scene, and you know what he does? He looks for things that are out of order other than the dead body laying on the floor. He looks for things that are out of order. He'll look for something that isn't right. He'll, and when they take the body in, they'll look for stuff inside the body that isn't right. Then they'll look at marks on the body that aren't right. I mean, the average woman doesn't have bad bruises all over her neck. I mean, it's the fact that somebody strangled her. It's a thing that we all have to do that.

Years ago, when we lived in Ohio, I had a job that didn't pay very much, and our first daughter was being born, Kelly, and I had to, back then I think it cost like a thousand dollars to have a baby. It's a lot more than that now, but we didn't. I'm trying to tell you how I used to be a turtle rancher. I used to catch snapping turtles. My wife knows this is true. That's how I paid for our first daughter being born. There was a restaurant in town that would pay me, and this was back in '73. I think the minimum wage was like a dollar seventy-five back then, because I know she had

three jobs to try to get that all taken up here. This restaurant would pay me six dollars a pound for turtle meat and frog legs, because turtle meat, they had a delicacy about turtle soup. Nobody, they couldn't get it. So you know what I mean? I've always been an outdoor type, and I had this big swamp down about 20 miles south of my house. I was catching snapping turtles that big around. My biggest I ever got was, have you ever gotten a 65-pound snapping turtle in a net? You're going to find out who's a bigger man, him or you. I mean, they got heads on them like that. Don't think this because their head's right outside the shell. They got a neck that long on them.

Me and my buddy one time, we were down there, and he had a flat bottom boat. We're up here in this swamp, and we got so many turtles that day that, and we used to get nets. You put them out with sticks and you put rotten bait in it. They love that rotten smell. So they'll fight their way into the net. As long as the bait's in a steel container, like a wire mesh, they'll never try to get out. They just keep trying to get that. We had so many turtles that day, it was incredible. We had so many, all of our burlap bags were full. We had to set two nets across the boat. They had like six turtles in them. They get fighting among themselves. So we had to stand up. We couldn't even sit down. So we're standing up. He's in the front and I'm in the back. This one turtle reached through and bit him on the rear end. The guy weighed about 280 pounds. He was a big boy. We have our guns on, shoes and suits, the snakes and all this stuff. All I knew, all I remember was I heard a yell and the boat went woof, woof, it went over and dumped us all into that. We lost everything. The water was about chest deep. So we had to dive down and pick up and then carry everything back up.

But I did that, and I got out there. I was out there all the time. I got so good at being able to read the signs out in, I couldn't do it now, but it was so good. I could see a turtle head at 200 yards and know it wasn't a stick sticking out of the water. I could learn, I could learn and see everything before I stepped on it. I remember I was out with a kid one time when he'd go down with me. He said, "Do you ever see any snakes down here?" And I said, "Well, just the one you're standing on." He jumped back, and he had stepped on a big old bull snake. It was all curled up, but they're camouflaged so good that you can't see it. Well, I had trained my eye. I could tell the difference between whatever it was. I could see those things, and whatever you do in life, it's along those lines. The Bible's the same way. You ought to be able to train your eye.

In fact, when it comes to the Bible, you need to train three things.

1. You need to train your heart.
2. You need to train your mind.
3. You need to train your eye because you have to be able to see things in the Bible that the average person would miss.

Just like Steve with the arrowheads, me with the snakes, my dad with the mushrooms, my wife with the checkbook. I mean, you got to be able to, that's a joke. You got to be able to see those things there that other people don't see. I love, I don't ever say anything to anybody, but some of you have come over in the past, and we went through the Bible together, and you're studying a book in the Bible or something. Here's what I tell them to do. It's a plan because I want to learn, I

want to teach you to develop your eye. So if somebody comes over and studies the Bible with me, what I tell them is this: "Hey, look, you decide what you want to do. Book of the Bible, subject in the Bible, I don't care. You read that book or read up on that material and then you write down the things that you don't, that you see that you don't understand. And then bring it into me and I'll help you put the whole thing together because you have to do your part too."

I laugh sometimes because somebody will come in, and they'll do a book, whatever the book may be, and they'll say, "Well, I got two chapters done." And I'll say, "Well, that's really good." And they'll come down, and they'll have about, at the end of our time, and I don't ever say anything, but they got maybe four, five, six things out of there. I look at it, and I kind of laugh to myself when I'm saying, "You know what, you missed 98 things in that chapter." They'll just stand right out. But you see, it takes time to develop your eye. But you've got to focus that you've got to develop your heart, you've got to develop your mind, you've got to develop your eye.

Now look here, look what it says here. It says, "Concerning His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh." In this passage to me, something jumps out at me, and it's in verse 3. Now what do you see? You see, I'm in the process of showing you how to do this. We're in a situation here where we're studying the books of the Bible. We're all the way up. We just finished Judges. We're going to get into Ruth. I'm showing you how to put your Bible together. I tell you that in time in your life, in your Bible, every page of your Bible, you ought to have marked some way that when you're going through your Bible, it's telling you what is in that passage or that chapter. If you're going to teach the Bible at some point in your life, you're not going to be able to remember it all. I don't remember it all. You asked me a question on Thursday night. You think that, and obviously some of the questions you've answered a thousand times, you remember them. But many, many times somebody will ask me something that I haven't messed with for a long time. I don't see it. So what I do is, is what I have to rely on what I put in my Bible. So right there, I'll come through that, that passage or that chapter will tell me what I got to deal with. Your Bible ought to be set up in such a way that when you walk through it, it yells at you what's in this chapter.

You know how you do that? You get you one of those little yellow China markers over there. The things or the words, and I've given you lots of key words. They're in those books I gave you. That day, the day of the Lord, the day of Jesus Christ, they all mean something. Last week we talked about the Holy Spirit of God, and I showed you how that there's a number of titles for the Holy Spirit of God. They all mean something different. You asked that question on Thursday night, and I showed you how that thing kind of works together.

The first thing I see here when I come into this is, and this is not the main thing because I'm going to ask you what you see on this, is the name Jesus Christ. I don't know if you know this or not, but this is how you train your eye. The complete title for Jesus Christ is, The Lord Jesus Christ. Each one of those means something.

- The Lord means His deity, God the Father.
- Jesus was the name of the earthly man.
- Christ is the word for Christos or anointed. He's the anointed of the Lord. He's the Christ.

So if you want the complete title that gives you all three aspects of Him, it is the Lord, He's God, Jesus, He was the earthly man, Christ, He's Christos, He's God's anointed one. Now when you find the term used, you'll find it used differently. It doesn't say the Lord Jesus Christ all the time. Sometimes it says Christ Jesus. Sometimes it says Lord Jesus. Sometimes it says Jesus Christ. Sometimes it says just Jesus. Every time you find that word used, either in a combination of the two or separately by itself, it'll set the context for you. It means something different every time you see it because the three parts of His name means something. That's what I'm talking about when I'm talking about training your eye. When I read a passage and it starts to say to me down through here, His son Jesus Christ, I know I've got two aspects of a three-part name. Jesus the earthly man and Christ Christos the anointed one. That sets a context for me. If He'd have said Christ Jesus, it would have reversed the process, it would have set another context. That's the first thing that you look for, and that's what I'm talking about, about training your eye to read the Bible. You cannot read the Bible like any other book you've ever read in life because God put that book together and the Holy Spirit of God put it through a systematic way that you have to read it, understand it, and it defines itself like I tell you in the book on how to start the Bible. These are all in there, by the way.

Now look at this. It says concerning His son Jesus Christ our Lord which was made of the seed of David. What is the thing that jumps out at you other than the name of Christ? The first thing it jumps out to me is it doesn't say he was born of the seed of David. It said he was made of the seed of David. You see the difference? Because if it was going to talk about you or me, it would say born of your family. If it was talking about me, it would say born of Frank H. Alexander. It doesn't say born of what it says there, it says made of the seed of David. Now that begins to one of the greatest studies, and this is what Paul is doing here. This is what I'm talking about when it talks about having an eye for the detail of the Word of God. It doesn't say that he was born of the seed of David, but rather he was made of the seed of David. Paul now begins to lay out the key to everything, which is the virgin birth of Christ. As we go on through this, you're going to see his death and his resurrection after his death.

III. The Virgin Birth of Christ

Now let's go down sub-level. This is good today because we've got a small crowd here so I don't have to rush through this, and I can take the time, and you're going to get blessed for being here today as far as leaving here today understanding a little bit more about it, especially the institute people. Now turn your Bible to Isaiah 7:14. If you don't have a Bible, you didn't bring one, you can look on with somebody that's got one with you there. Isaiah, the Old Testament, it's the major prophets, it's probably right after, right before the minor prophets. You got Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, so it's those little three major prophets together there.

All right, look at Isaiah 7:14. Now here's what it said, and this is what Paul was building on, but you've got to have the keen eye. The Bible never wastes an inch of space or wording; it teaches you something about everything, and you need to just learn to develop that eye, you just do, and some of you are. Kyle, I was listening to Kyle the other night up there, the boys got a deal where they go up and they teach each other the Word of God every other Wednesday night or whenever

it is, and I was listening to you on eternal security, and I could see that you had picked up some things, you were seeing some things, and I've listened to two or three of the guys now, and some of you are beginning to get it, some of you are beginning to get it. This is something you always got to stay with.

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Now Immanuel means God is with us. This is the main prophecy in the Bible, one of the main prophecies in the Bible, that shows you that Jesus Christ had to be virgin born. He could not have been born of the seed of David, and we're going to find out why here in a minute. Most people believe that Jesus Christ was virgin born; they just don't know why he had to be. To me, that's as important as why he was. So we're going to show you these things, and this is what Paul is alluding to. Paul in his very opening and his very greeting is so careful that he doesn't break the Christian or the Christian doctrine of the virgin birth. It's absolutely right on the money with everything that he does.

Now it says, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." In your Bible, and if you don't have these, it's something, and you younger Christians probably won't at this point, but you guys have been around for a while. In your Bible, you know, and you heard me talk about it before, there are 48 prophecies in the Old Testament that are given concerning the first coming of Christ of a virgin coming to the nation of Israel, the Lord Jesus Christ, 48 prophecies. Now those 48 prophecies, and you ought to have them in the back of your Bible or someplace, if you haven't got them, you need to get them because when you start to deal with people about the Bible itself, these are absolutely crucial.

By the way, this is how I really came to Christ by this. I told you my testimony, you know that I was saved supposedly at a very early age, but I got away from the Lord, and by the time I was just getting out of the army, I was into evolution, I was into astronomy, which I still am, but I was into the side of it where I really didn't put God into it. It was this very thing that some guys, I was attending Kent State University then, it was this very thing that God used in my life, and I've used it a thousand times, and it goes like this: There are 48 prophecies in the Old Testament given about the first coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. These prophecies were given 600 to a thousand years before he was ever even born. They're given by about 20 or 30 different men. They span the expanse of the whole Bible in the Old Testament. The chances against 48 prophecies about one man given 600 to a thousand years before he was born, given on the expanse of the landmass and the different men that did it, the chances against those 48 prophecies coming to pass are 10 to the 157th power.

I don't know if you know how big 10 to the 157th power is, but there are not 10 to the 157th power electrons in our universe. You can get a hundred thousand electrons on the head of a pin. There's a scientific book out that I had a number of years ago by a Frenchman, he's a mathematician, called Douay, and he says that the number of electrons in our universe, he puts a number at 10 to the 52nd power. You know what Douay says? Douay says this: he says that no

event in life that the chances against are more than 10 to the electrons in the universe could never happen because the event, the value of the event, can never be more than the value of the electrons that make reality in life. It's an incredible thing when you stop and think about it. He says that if the odds against something are more than the electrons in a universe, and I'm talking about our universe, I'm talking about taking a universe and its center point and going out 300 million light years in all directions with its galaxies and the stars and the planets, there are not ten, that's ten with a hundred and fifty-seven zeros after it, electrons in our universe.

If there's anything that proves that the Bible is supernatural, it's that. The chances against those 48 prophecies coming to pass were 10 to the 157th power, more a hundred or so than the electrons thought to be in our universe. Yet at the first coming of Christ, every one of those was fulfilled on the exact day, on the exact month, and some of them deal with the specifics. It's not generalities. It's not generalities like, "Oh yeah, he's gonna come someday." No, those 48 prophecies deal with the day, they deal with the year, they deal with the time of the month, they deal with every aspect, they deal with a specific city. It would be like me standing here and saying to you, "In the year 6545, in St. Louis, Missouri, on Brown Street, at the intersection of Thompson, there's going to be a man born. That man's name is going to be whatever it is, and he's going to live for 42 years, and on July 9th, 42 years to the day of his birth, he's going to die. He's going to get killed in a car wreck at the corner of McGill and Market, and he's going to be buried in Westlawn Cemetery in South St. Louis, and he's plot number six, verse four, down a line." What are the chances of all that coming to pass? Well, that's the issue that you had with the first coming of Christ. 48 prophecies given, the number against it was 10 to the 157th power, and on the day he showed up, he fulfilled every one of those prophecies that were more than electrons in the universe.

You know how I know that that Bible is a supernatural book? Because there's no other book in the world like that. I'm asked many times, and it's true, I'm asked many times on Bible study about, "You know, there were a lot of other virgin born people down through history." You can go through history, you can find claims of all kinds of virgin born people. Iris and her son Osiris, Nimrod was supposedly a virgin born from his mother Tamaz. You find them all down through history. Somebody asked me one time, "What is the difference between those and the one that you believe in?" Well, first of all, the difference is this: name me one person on planet earth whose life was changed from Iris and Osiris. That would be my first question. My second question is this: do they have a book like that? No, they don't.

You know why I don't believe in evolution? Remember what Douay said: if a thing was more, if the value of something or the event was more than the value of 10 to the 52nd power, the thing would never happen because mathematically it cannot, and it cannot go beyond the value of it. You know what the chances against evolution are? It's 10 to the 40,000th power, 10 with 40,000 zeros after it. That's what you're up against. So when you've got a Bible, next time somebody tells you that, somebody tells you that your Bible is just like, you got a Bible that by scientific proven facts is more than the electrons in the universe, blows evolution right out of those things before it ever gets started, and every one of those things came to pass.

Now one of those 48 prophecies, as I say, is Isaiah 7:14, and it says there that, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." I told you that means God with us. Now let me show you how the devil worked this out. Around 1880, they came out with a new translation. Up to that point, for 400 and some years, the only Protestant Bible you could buy was a King James Bible, and the King James Bible says in Isaiah 7:14 that, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive." What the devil wanted to do is he wanted to get rid of the virgin birth because we'll see why here in a little bit. So they changed that verse in Isaiah 7:14 in your new RSV that came out in the 1880s, and it said, "Behold, a young woman shall conceive and bear a child." What's the big deal about that? That happens in this church about six times a week. There was nothing supernatural about any a woman conceiving. What was supernatural and what was the sign to Israel that a virgin conceived? Now that's something.

When the new NIV came out, of course you know that the new NIV is based on the Roman Catholic Sinaiticus and Vaticanus manuscripts out of the Vatican. When it came out, they obviously believe in the virgin birth. They were against what the RSV said in 1881 about a young woman. They wanted it, they wanted it because they believed that Mary was a virgin. But oh yes, the Roman Catholic text in Isaiah out of the new NIV, which is a Protestant Bible based on Roman Catholic text, it says "the virgin shall conceive," not "a virgin." No, no, no, no, no. They made it the fact that there's only one virgin because the Roman Catholic Church teaches that Mary was a perpetual virgin, and she is the virgin. So they want to protect their little doctrine there. No, the key was that first of all Mary was not a perpetual virgin, but that means that the Roman Catholic Church says she has no more kids, that she was only used of God one time supernaturally, and therefore she was a perpetual virgin after that, even though that you can go in the New Testament and find out all the other kids by their name and their birthdays and their, you know, where they want you to buy their gift is found in the Bible, but that seemed to be irrelevant to it.

IV. Why Christ Had to Be Virgin Born

So let's weigh all this out. Why did a virgin, why did Christ, why did he have to be virgin born? We all believe that he was, but we got to go sub-level now, and here's where this is going to help you to come next Saturday night. It's going to help you right now, but here's the bottom line: why did he have to be virgin born? Why is that? Why is it so important that it says that he was made of the seed of David, but it's very careful not to tell you that he was born of the seed of David, because he was not?

I don't know what you know about the Bible, but let me give you a brief overview of a large segment of the Bible. When God created Adam and Eve, he put them down in the garden. The Bible tells you in Genesis that Adam was made in God's image and God's likeness. Very quickly, the image is the spiritual side of him, the likeness was his physical side. So Adam and Eve are down in the garden. They're made spiritually in God's image. They're made physically after the likeness of God: a head, two arms, a body, and legs. But when the devil shows up, the devil takes

from them the salvation that God gave them, and Adam and Eve lose that spiritual image. I'm not trying to make this complicated; I'm going to walk you through it very, very slowly here.

Once Adam and Eve lost the image of God, they are now in their own trespasses of sin, and from Adam and Eve right up to the New Testament, man is in a fallen state. Man never gets that image restored. God gives him a physical kingdom; we're studying it. He gives them the kingdom of heaven, a physical kingdom, but the spiritual kingdom, the kingdom of God, is nowhere to be found, and man cannot have a spiritual relationship with God like you and I have. Do you ever notice that? Do you ever notice there's only certain men in the Old Testament that God comes down to and he talks to them and tells them to tell everybody else? I guarantee you that everybody in the nation of Israel did not have a relationship with God like Moses did. I guarantee you that everybody in the nation of Israel did not have a relationship with God like David did. I guarantee you that not everybody in the nation of Israel had a relationship with God like Joshua did. God in the Old Testament picked certain men, and it was those men that God chose to tell everybody else what God had told them. Why? Because man has lost his fallen, he has that fallen image. Man can't fellowship with God. So God cannot have fellowship on the basis that he has now until that image gets restored.

Now, the history of the Bible, of the Old Testament, you know what it is? In its easiest way to understand it, you know what it is? It is a test. For 5,000 years before Christ ever showed up, 5,000 years from Adam up to the birth of Christ, God gave man a 5,000-year track record showing man that he could not get to God and solve his sin problems on his own. Every man, from Adam to Noah, to Abraham, to Lot, to Moses, to Levi, to Joshua, every man from Saul to Samuel to David, right up through the Kings of Israel, right up to his last one, Zedekiah, every one of them proved one thing: and that was they could not stand up against God's righteousness on their own. In every case, they may have been the wisest, holiest men that ever lived. You find nobody wiser than Daniel, and he couldn't do it. You find nobody who loves the Word of God more in the Old Testament than David, and he couldn't do it. You find nobody who's a greater type of God the Father than Abraham, and he couldn't do it.

What the Old Testament shows you after 5,000 years, you and I got a problem with our blood. We have a sin issue. We can't get God's righteousness to have fellowship with him when this old bloodline is running through our veins. You know what the Bible says? The biggest problem you and I have is it's our flesh. Our flesh is what makes us, wants us to go out and do all the things that we know that are wrong. It's your flesh that when you know it's wrong and you know what's right, it almost like it burns inside you to go do what's wrong when you know what's right to do. That's the flesh. You know what the Bible says in the book of Leviticus? The life of that flesh is in your blood. You see, you and I got a blood problem. The life of this flesh is in his blood. That was the problem in the Old Testament, the bloodline. God gave man 5,000 years, and they came and they went. They stood up and they fell. At the end of that time, God says, "I'm gonna get me a man who doesn't have a problem with his blood." But to do that, "I gotta get somebody that's not born of man's bloodline." So you know what? He had to get a son that was gonna be the savior that was gonna restore the fallen image that Adam lost that you and I needed to get back. The only way he could do that was through a son that was virgin born who did not come through

the bloodline that was tainted down through the history of the nation of Israel. He had to get somebody that was gonna be a king. He had to get somebody that was gonna reign on the throne of Jerusalem. But he couldn't get somebody that was born through the seed of David because of the bloodline. He had to get somebody who was made of the seed of David supernaturally. See how that works?

Now turn over in your Bible to Jeremiah. Let me show you this a little bit closer. We talked about this in the institute class, and everybody will help figure this out. 5,000 years. Finally God in the book of 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, and 2 Chronicles, finally God gives them a monarchy, a kingship. We find the first king that God gives them is David. We find the last king that God, that they get, God really didn't give it to him, was a man by the name of Zedekiah. But right before Zedekiah, you got the last official king. Now let me just say this, that during this time, the nation of Israel really goes into a mess. We've already talked about it last week, how that they missed the first coming of Christ because they rejected God, his word and the Holy Spirit. We'll just put them into a mess. But by the time you get into the book of 2 Chronicles, they are almost at a point where God is gonna say, "You know what, I've had it with you guys." God temporarily takes everything from them, turns them over to the Gentile world, and that's where they're living now, but he's going to bring them back after the second coming of Christ is what you and I don't want to miss.

But we come down through here, and we come through the kings. The last official king that they have, and I know this is boring, you don't have to worry about this, just kind of listen it through unless you're in the institute. But the last official king they got is a guy by the name of Jeconiah. Really his name is Jehoiachin with an N, his dad's name is Jehoiakim with an M. It's Jehoiachin with an N, he's also called Jeconiah. Two different names for him, or maybe one name meaning two different things, I don't know. But anyway, and yet, when you find down here, he's a wicked king, and he doesn't do what's right in his life, and he completely leaves the nation of Israel. God and his name, Jeconiah, or Jehoiachin, means Jehovah will establish. He was God's hope that he would bring the nation of Israel back to God, but he didn't. With Jeconiah is where the line ends. Zedekiah is just a figurehead. Where it ends is with Jeconiah.

When you come down and end the discussion, and you want to get in Jeremiah 22 now, here's what God says. God changes his name from Jehoiachin to Coniah. I told you Jehoiachin meant established by Jehovah. Coniah means despised, broken, idle. What God does here, he pronounces a judgment, not only on Coniah, but on the line of the kings coming from the nation of Israel. Now look what he said. This is very crucial in your Bible.

As I live, saith the LORD, though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah were the signet upon my right hand, yet would I pluck thee thence;

And I will give thee into the hand of them that seek thy life, and into the hand of them whose face thou fearest, even into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of the Chaldeans.

And I will cast thee out, and thy mother that bare thee, into another country, where ye were not born; and there shall ye die.

But to the land whereunto they desire to return, thither shall they not return.

This man Coniah is a despised broken idol; is he a vessel wherein is no pleasure? wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into a land which they know not?

O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD.

Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah.

Now what he's saying is this. Let me break a long thing here, break it down. He's saying, "I've had it with the nation of Israel. I've had king after king after king after king. All they've done is denied me, turned their back on me, and went after all the other gods." He says, "This Coniah, despised, broken, idle," God says, "if he was a ring on my finger, if he was a ring on a finger, God's finger, I'd take that ring off and throw it away." God has had it with the nation of Israel. By this prophecy right here, he absolutely fixed for time and eternity that when Christ showed up, he had to be virgin born. He could not be born of the seed of David; he would have to be made of the seed of David supernaturally.

Watch what he says. Verse 25, "And I will give thee into the hand of them that seek thy life, and into the hand of those whose face thou fearest, even the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and under the hands of the Chaldeans. And I will cast thee out, and thy mother that bare thee, unto another country, Babylon, where ye were not born, and there ye shall die. But to the land whereunto they desire to return, thither shall they not return." Here he comes. This man, Coniah, that is Jehoiachin, God changes his name to Coniah, despised broken idol. "Oh yeah, hello, a despised broken idol. He is a vessel wherein he is no pleasure, wherefore they are cast out, he and his seed." Watch the word seed. "And are cast into a land which they know not."

Now here it comes, here's the prophecy. This is one of these places where the Bible's speaking to the whole world. He wants everybody to know. He's not talking to the church, he's not talking to the nation of Israel. He's making a proclamation to the people of planet earth. "O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man Coniah, childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days, for no man of his seed shall prosper sitting upon the throne of David and ruling any more in Judah." You know what he did right there? Because the line from Genesis 49 of the Kings run through Judah. What happens here because Coniah was so wicked and because the nation of Israel has rejected God over and over and over again and has shown now that after 5,000 years, man on his own cannot solve the problem of sin in men's lives. God says the next king that's gonna sit on that throne won't be out of the line of Judah through the bloodline of the Kings. It'll come through a virgin born child who is not born of the seed of David like Coniah was, but is made of the seed of David supernaturally. See how the thing works? That is one of the greatest concepts that you're ever going to find in the Bible based on the virgin birth.

Now I don't know if you know this or not, but there's two lines of Christ in your Bible, and I'm gonna keep this real simple.

- In Matthew 1, you have what we know in the Bible circles as the kingly line. That line runs him from Abraham up through David to Joseph. Joseph, who was the husband of Mary, Christ's supposed father, he's in the line of Coniah. In fact, if you want to lay it out at some point, you'll go down through there, you'll find coming down in Matthew 1:12, Jeconiah, that's him, that's Coniah. He's in Joseph's line. So that's why that Christ had to be made. He's a king of Israel, he had to be made of the seed of David, that's the kingly line, but he could not be born of it.

That's the first line. The first line of Christ is his kingly line that brings him to Israel as a king. That line runs through Joseph, back through Coniah, back to Abraham. God did not allow him to be born of that line; he allowed him to be made of that line supernaturally because of the prophecy in Jeremiah 22.

- Now, you have a second line in the Bible, and that's found in Luke 3. That will be his paternal bloodline.

Here again, I don't know where you get an eye for detail. Remember last week I gave you one of the prophecies back in Genesis 3:15, and it was one of the prophecies that showed you the first coming and the second coming, they were reversed.

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

What do you see in there that doesn't add up? A woman doesn't have a seed. Isn't that a strange thing to put in there? Your little baby's not going to get your bloodline from you. It's going to get it from him. We thank God for that every day. A woman doesn't have her own seed. A baby gets his blood from his father. When you go get a paternal test to find out who the father is, we don't give them here, we give eternal tests here. You'll get that test done. It's done through the blood. Because the baby is the seed from the father. Genesis 3:15 says, "the seed of the woman," she doesn't have a seed. Ah, boy, the great things of that book.

So what you got in Matthew 1 now is you got the line of David. From which Christ has to come to be king because he is called the son of David. But he's not a son of David because he comes through the bloodline of the son of David. He's the son of David because he's made of that line supernaturally through a virgin birth that no man had anything to do with. Now that's why he had to be virgin born. We all believe that he was virgin born. I just gave you one of the greatest concepts you're ever going to find in the Bible, why he had to be.

In Luke 3, you have the line. Now here's something you probably did not know. This will help end the confusion. Mary and Joseph are cousins. They're far removed cousins, but here's how it works. Joseph's kingly line comes from Bathsheba through Solomon, through David. Solomon is the son after the first baby dies. They have another child, and that child's name is Solomon. The line of David runs through that line. Now Mary's line runs back, but it comes through Bathsheba and David's second son whose name is Nathan. It doesn't come through the king's line, but it comes through the line. It goes back to David, but through his second son. Now, somebody want to tell me why that works that way? That the human line had to come through the second one

instead of the first one? What is that reading? It always comes through the second one. You know why? Because you must be born again. See how that thing works?

So you got two lines in your Bible that I'm not making, this is everybody should, even if you have no knowledge about the Bible, you gotta follow a lot of this along. The proof of this, he had to be virgin born because of the blood problem and because of the sin. No man on that throne is ever going to sit and prosper as long as it comes from that line that had bad blood and had fallen into sin. So when God gives Israel their next king, which by the way is their last king, which will be the Lord Jesus Christ at the second coming of Christ, whom they rejected and crucified at the first coming of Christ, that's why he came as a virgin. That's why Paul here, when he's laying this out, eye for detail says he was not born of the seed of David, but he was made of the seed of David through a virgin birth.

When you understand that, when Christ shows up to restore the lost spiritual image that Adam lost, he could not be born of a human father, he had to be born supernaturally. This is why the Bible says the birth of Christ through a virgin was a sign. It was a sign, it was a neon sign. It was a sign so big that nobody could miss it. The devil tried to counterfeit the sign through many, many other phony virgin births, but as I said before, name me one life that was changed by all those other ones. Show me their book that the chances against their birth was more than the electrons in the universe and yet they fulfill. Do you know how big that number is? Let me tell you something. You know what a molecule of water is? A molecule of water is very, very small. You know how many atoms are in it? Now, electrons are smaller than atoms. You know how many atoms are in one molecule of water? You want an idea how big and you start talking and you say, kind of goes in, but you gotta have a point of reference. One molecule of water, one molecule of water. You know how many atoms is in one molecule of water? Well, let me tell you. If you could get a dollar for every atom that was in one molecule of water, you would have enough money to give everybody on planet Earth six million people, \$1 trillion. In one molecule of water, that's how many atoms you got and an electron is smaller than an atom. Incredible. That was the chances against that and yet you got people out there lost today think that they're gonna win place or show with odds like that against them.

I know some of you are crooked, not all, just some of you. You know how I know that people you deal with in life are crooked? Because if you took those odds out to the boats and you took those odds out to Las Vegas and you talk about a long shot and you showed somebody that the odds against were more than electrons in the universe and yet that thing came through, you gotta be an absolute fool to see those kinds of odds and see that long shot come in and then to stand there and say, "I don't think the Bible's relevant to me." You're a fool. That book has got you down more than the electrons in the universe and it shows you that it's not an issue of your intellect, it's an issue of your bad heart through your bad blood. You don't want to give up the lifestyle you've got. You actually think you're gonna whip this thing when the chances against them were more than electrons in the universe, you think you're gonna win place or show, that's where we're at with people. It was a sign.

Based on the prophecy of Jeremiah 22, based on the bloodline of the kings that had gotten tainted when Adam lost that spiritual image. When Christ shows up born of a virgin, he dies on the

cross, and we're gonna get into the next one here. What he does is he restores that fallen image. That's why you and I can have the relationship with Christ that they couldn't have in the Old Testament. You know why? Because he was sinless birth, because he was made of the seed of David but not born in the seed of David, because he fulfilled Jeremiah 22, because he was a sign, it was virgin, it was born and the bloodline was pure. The Bible says in Acts 20:28, that he had God's blood in his veins. Didn't you read that thing over there in 1 John, when they're over there around 1 John 5 or wherever it is in there? It says when he's hanging on a cross that guy sticks that sword to the side or that spear in his side and the Bible says what comes out? Water and blood, water and blood. You think that was just a kind of like a medical report? Don't you know that water and that blood mean something? Don't you know in that same passage, John who wrote that says that he, when he saw it back in the Gospel of John, it testified of something? You'd ask the next five Christians you meet what it testified of, they wouldn't know, they wouldn't know. There's something wrong with your blood in my blood. And Christ's blood was sinless. It had no tainting to it. That's why God would accept it for your sin and for my sin. When he did that, well, I'm getting ahead of myself.

V. The Power of the Resurrection

Let's look at the next one. Now the next thing, this is another great fundamental document found in Romans 1:4.

And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:

Now here's the thing, once you see the virgin birth and we know now why, then we get into the next sub-level thing, and this is another great concept. The next thing it shows you is that the proof and the power that Christ was the son of God was in the fact that he rose from the dead. I don't know, like I said earlier, I don't know what you all know about the Bible, but if you want a definitive passage in the Bible on the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the resurrection, it'd be 1 Corinthians 15. 1 Corinthians 15, basically through verses 1 through 4. That is the definitive passage in the Bible on the Gospel. In fact, the whole chapter is a definitive chapter on not just the Gospel, but the resurrection.

Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;

By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

Now, when you go on in this great chapter, you'll find by the time you get down in 1 Corinthians 15:11-20, he says this, he says that if the resurrection wasn't true, and Christ didn't rise from the dead, he says, then everything we're doing is in vain. We are wasting our time. He says, our faith

is in vain. He's saying your salvation is in vain. If Christ didn't come out of that tomb, and didn't rise from the dead, then everything that we're doing today is absolutely worthless. You wasted your time to come here this morning. You should have stayed home, watched Joel Osteen on television, got lifted up, and then went back to bed for a nap. You wasted your time, risked your life to get here, and if the resurrection isn't true, it's all a sham, and there ain't nothing that's gonna work in the thing. That's what he's saying, because the backbone of your salvation and my salvation, and everything that goes on in Christ is the resurrection. And now here it comes. The key to that resurrection is the virgin birth. See how it ties together? Again, most people don't have a clue of what the absolute truth was of how the virgin birth and the resurrection declared Christ to be the son of God with power. We all believe that he rose from the dead. We all believe that, but we don't know why it was important, just like we don't understand the virgin birth. When you understand how it all works, then it all begins to make sense to you.

All right, now, I want to show you how this thing declared Christ to be the son of God. What was the importance beside the fact that, if it isn't, we're in trouble? Put that aside. What was the absolute reason for him to rise from the dead on that third day? What was the point? Putting aside what I've already said about you and me and our salvation, what was the fundamental doctrine that he accomplished when he came out of that tomb?

All right, turn over to Hebrews 2. I'll show you what the issue is. Now, we've already seen and understood that when Paul opens up in his greeting, some greeting, he's talking about the fact that he was made of the seed of David, but he wasn't born of the seed of David. We've already went back and we've looked at the absolute necessity for a virgin born savior, how that the kings all the way back to Adam had problem with their blood. The prophecy in Jeremiah 22 on Jeconiah, all three are the same. When the prophecy comes to home on that thing, we find that he had to get a sinless king on that throne. But there's a problem here we gotta look at. That's the next step.

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.

Now here's the real issue. Here's why the resurrection hinges on everything. Verse 14, "For as much then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also likewise took part of the same, that through his death," here it comes, "through his death, he might destroy him," here it comes, "that had the power of death. That is, the devil." "And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." That's everybody in the Old Testament, and that's also me and you. "For verily who took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him," here it comes again. See that thing? "The seed of Abraham." Notice it didn't say he became it, it says he took on him.

Now here's what you got. In the Old Testament, the devil had the power over death and hell. God gave that power to him. When Adam sinned back there and lost the spiritual image of God, the spiritual kingdom passed into the devil's hands. He now in the Old Testament has the keys and the power over death. That's what it says there in verse 14. "That through death, he might destroy him to have the power of death. That is, the devil." That's why nobody in the Old Testament could go to heaven when they died. They had to go to Abraham's bosom. That's why in the Old Testament when they died, their death is completely different than when you and I die. The Bible says when you and I die, "I have the body be present with the Lord." When they died in the Old Testament, they couldn't go to heaven. They went to a place called Abraham's bosom. We've talked about that many times on Thursday night. But in the Old Testament, the devil had the power of death and he had the keys.

Now, remember over there in Matthew 16:18, I think it is. Peter's, the Lord's talking to Peter. He says to Peter, he says, "Peter," he says, "I'm gonna give you, you're the rock and upon this, or I'm the rock upon this, that you confessed, I'm gonna do this and this." He says, "the gates of hell." We talked about a couple of Thursday nights ago, a lady asked the question, "Is hell real? Is hell literal?" We came back with the assumption that yes, it is. We know it is. Here's another piece of the puzzle for you. Not only is it real, in a real place, it's got gates on it. That gate's got a lock on it. In the Old Testament, the devil had the key to that gate. That's why when you died, you couldn't get out. You were either in one side or the other. But the gates of hell should not prevail against it.

When Christ came down, and again, most people don't have a clue of what was really taking place. When Christ came down of the seed of Abraham, verse 16, virgin born, made of the seed of David, when he died on that cross, when he died on that cross, and was buried those three days, like the Bible says in 1 Corinthians 15, and he rose again the third day, he defeated death. When he defeated death, the devil was defeated. At that point, the devil no longer had the keys to death and hell, now Christ has got them. So what he did at the resurrection, or there about that time, the Bible says that he goes down into Abraham's bosom. That's where the Old Testament changed. You know what they're called in the Old Testament? They're called captives. Some of those Old Testament passages, they're called prisoners. You know why? Because they're prisoners of death. They're captives of death. But when Christ rose from the dead, and as the Bible says in Hebrews 2, he defeated the devil, he's got the keys of death and hell, he walks down there, and he puts the key to that gate, and he opens that gate, and he throws the gate back, and he walked in and says, "Hey guys, you ought to go up with me, I'm going up, I've got the keys of death and hell." I bet that was a hallelujah shouting time, man. The Bible says that he leads captivity captive, and he has ascended up on high. Why? Because he had the keys of death and hell.

Why is that so important? Because the devil had it, and that's why the devil wanted to keep him in that tomb. That's why the devil, when he died, the devil fought for sure. We were talking about some things that the devil doesn't know in the Bible with somebody this week, and I'm sure there's some things that the devil didn't know. I'll tell you one of the things he never figured out. He really thought he could keep him in that grave. Now you know why he did without that?

Because he kept everybody else in that grave. The devil made one mistake. He didn't have an eye for detail either. He missed the point where it said, this guy wasn't born of the seed of David, he was made of the seed of David.

I'm sure that when Christ gave up the ghost on the cross, and they wrapped him in that linen, and they put him down there in that tomb, down in the nether parts where Abraham's bosom and hell's at, I'm sure that all the devil's horde just broke into a six-pack party. I bet you they're screaming and yelling, the devil's being boasted around that he's won, Christ is dead, everybody's died, nobody could stand before you, and now the one that God sent, we killed him. He's dead, he's in the tomb, and he's sold down here in Abraham's bosom. He don't got no key. We searched him when he came in. And boy, the first day man, they're down there, and the party's going strong. First day man, I mean, there's a lot of beer drinking going on, there's a lot of partying going on, and I mean, they're just having a great time. They're celebrating, the devil's won. This one that was supposed to be the chosen one. He died like everybody else. Second day, well, boy, we're having a great time. Man, party's continuing. I mean, they'll listen to some of your great music, and they'll listen to all that stuff, and they're just having a great time. And the devil's sitting up there drunk as a skunk with a crown on his head, and he's laughing, and he's gonna be the king, and as soon as this party's over, he's gonna go back up, he's gonna go into Jerusalem, and he's gonna claim his crown. Third day, what happened to the party? Well, I hear it, I hear a lot of shouting, but I don't hear any music. I hear a lot of amen glory to God, but I don't hear any of the other crowd stuff. What happened? I'll tell you what happened. Up from the grave, he arose with a power over his foes, and the keys of death and hell. At that point, at that point in time, the devil was defeated. You say, he doesn't act like he's defeated, that's beside the point. I read the last chapter of the book, we win, he loses.

Years ago, I was at a preaching thing, and a guy was up there, and he believed that we were in the millennium right now. He was preaching up there, this is heretical as you've ever heard in your life. A lady sitting down in the front row was just taking all kinds of notes. At the end of the thing, she raised her hand, she says, "You know what?" She says, "I don't understand." She said, "You told me that we're in the millennium right now, but my Bible says that in the millennium, the Satan bound. How do you explain all this?" He said, "Well, ma'am," nobody ever asked him that before. He said, "Well, ma'am, I didn't give her up." He said, "Oh, I just guess he's got a long chain." Yeah, I guess he does. I'm telling you, when Christ came out of that tomb, the victory had been won, it's over with.

That's why you'll find in your Bible, in the narrative of your Bible, why you'll find in your Bible as the narrative that the Holy Spirit has something else you gotta look at in your Bible. There's times when Peter is saying something because he was there, and I know he's saying it through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, I know that. There's time that Peter says something, or John says something, or Matthew says something, or when Paul says something, and he's saying it on the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God, and he's relating the experience that he was there. And then there's time that he's saying something and he wasn't there. You gotta be able to kind of step out of that one mode and realize that in this passage, Peter wasn't there, Paul wasn't there, nobody was there, and the Holy Spirit of God has picked up the narrative and is telling you the

story now. That's why in Matthew 28, the narrative of your Bible, never called Jesus Christ Lord till after the resurrection. You know why? Because he hadn't defeated the devil. Oh, I know you find people come up and say, "Lord, Lord," sure. I know the Bible talked about the narrative of the Holy Spirit of God, the narrative of the Word of God. It is in Matthew 28:6, that after the resurrection, he's first called Lord by the Holy Spirit of God, the narrative of your Bible. Why? Because at that point, he had defeated death and he had defeated the devil.

Two great concepts. You begin to understand now that not only why he had to be virgin born, because of the bloodline coming through, you understand how Paul has this in his mind. This is why when you get into Romans, or really just about any of the book of the Bible, you gotta watch everything you read. You gotta have an eye. As sure as I say that, I guarantee you, that means some people go out there trying to find something for everything, and that's not it either. You never take it where it doesn't go. You can't just make this up because I think this is something. You've gotta be, it's gotta be founded on a doctrine. When he says made of the seed of David, that is on a doctrine of Jeremiah 22. That is on a doctrine of 5,000 year track record of men in a human sense. Really, that's what the book of Romans is all about. After we get into the introduction, we get in here in Romans 1, you know what we find out? We find out exactly what Paul is saying. It is opening. He's saying in Chapter 1 and Chapter 2, in Chapter 1, the Gentiles who had a relationship with God through their conscience can't solve the problem with their sinful blood. He says in Chapter 2, he says the nation of Israel who have the oracles of God, the nation of Israel, who are God's chosen people, they can't solve the mess they're in. You know what he does in Romans 3, 4, and 5? He says there's only one way for the Gentiles and the Jews to solve the mess that they're in, and that is getting God's righteousness. You know what he does in Romans 4, 5, and 6? He shows you how to get that righteousness. You know where it goes back to? It goes back to the cross. It goes back to the bloodline. It goes back to the virgin birth, and it goes all through the resurrection.

So now, as Paul ends his greeting in the book of Romans 1, now he's laid out for us some great sub-level things. I told you, we're gonna take our time with this, so let's go over what we've learned now and get these down. Let's go over what we've learned from the greeting. Next time, next week, we're gonna start the meat of the book, if this wasn't already meat.

Here's what we've looked at:

- We saw in Romans 1:1 that he began to lay out for you and for me the basic concept of what we're to be as a minister. He, in his own verse 1, as he talked about himself, he said, "Paul, a servant." We talked about your attitude. "Called to be an apostle," your calling, "separated unto the gospel of God."
- Then he shows us the reason Israel could not separate the sufferings of Christ from the glory of Christ. We saw from that, that they rejected the holy scriptures and they rejected the spirit of holiness. They missed the first coming of Christ, just like many of God's people will miss the second coming of Christ for the same reason.
- Today, we've seen the issue behind Christ's birth. There's the fact that he was not born of the seed of David, but rather made of the seed of David through a virgin birth. Now we understand, not only we already knew that he was, but now we understand why he had to be.

We have the details now. This will help you when you come up to trying to lay out for me about Jeconiah and Coniah. This will help you put it all together in a way that you can explain it, make it better, understand it for yourself.

- Then he shows us the issue of the resurrection, how that the resurrection declared him to be the son of God with power.

Now I want to give you something here before we close that shows you how this thing all does. Let me ask you a question. Who raised Christ from the dead? One of them said the Holy Spirit, the other one said Jesus. They're both right. Let me show you this thing. Let me show you how even in the resurrection, the Bible protects the image of the concept of the Trinity. Mikey said it was the Holy Spirit, and Mikey would be right. Because in Romans 8:11, it says that the Holy Spirit of God raised him up. Rebecca said it was Jesus. Rebecca's also right. Because in John 2:19-21, Jesus made the claim that he would raise him up. Truth of the matter is all three persons of God had raised him up. Because 1 Thessalonians 1:10 and Acts 3:26, it says that God raised him up. You see, by the resurrection of Christ, we have all three, Jesus did it, the Holy Spirit of God did it, and God the Father did it. You know why? Because those three are one in a triune God known as the Trinity. Even in the resurrection, it carries it all the way through. So we see now that the resurrection was the fact that what declared him to be the Son of God.

VI. Three Things to Work On

I want to leave you with this. Three things you gotta work on in your life. I'll help you, but there are three things you gotta work on. I told you that the three things you gotta do:

4. You gotta train your heart. What does that mean? It means you prepare your heart. Remember in our study of an institute, we come down through the splitting of the kingdom with Rehoboam and Jeroboam and how that all laid out. You ever go through and study Rehoboam over there in 2 Chronicles? You know what it says about Rehoboam? The Bible says that he strengthened himself. But you know where his failure was? He strengthened himself. But the Bible says he did not prepare his heart to seek God. You gotta prepare your heart to seek God. You don't do it because you get up. We get so used to ordering everything around and everybody around. We think we can order God around. You gotta prepare your heart to seek God. Jeroboam didn't do it. He was a mighty man. He was a strong man. He took over the part of the kingdom of Israel. He did wicked with it, but he was the ironclad rule. He ran it. From the world's standard, he was a great politician. He was a great military man. He was a great person. But from God's standpoint, he was a failure. He did evilness, I'll order you to why? Because with all of his good qualities, he neglected to prepare his heart to seek the Lord.
5. Then you gotta train your mind. What does that mean? The Bible tells us about that in Romans 12:1-2, where we come down through there and he talks about that you and I ought to be a living sacrifice. He says, "be not conformed to this world, but be transformed." How? "By the renewing of your mind." Then you prepare your heart and you transform your mind. You cast down every imagination and every high thing that exalts itself against the

knowledge of God. You let this mind be in you, because also in Christ Jesus. In time, you transform your mind to think like God.

6. The third thing that happens, and this one happens automatically, you do the first two, the third one will take care of itself. You know what it'll be? God will train your eye. You can't start, you can't, you see, you can't prepare your heart without God transforming your mind. God can't get your heart and transform your mind without training your eye. Because the more you think like God, the more you're gonna look at things like God, and you're gonna lift those little things up, holy, it's gonna be like reading your, when I read that thing in there a number of years ago, about "made of the seed of David," I read that thing, it was almost like that thing just lifted itself out and said, "Hey, look at me." That's what you want in the Bible. Training your eye is based on transforming your mind. Transforming your mind all starts with preparing your heart. That's what it takes. When you get into the Bible, that's where you're at with it.

So next week now, we've learned these things. You need to, I would just say, if you're taking notes on this, just get the main points that we got out of these things over the last couple of weeks. Next week, we'll open up and we'll start the book itself. We're past the greeting now, and we'll get into the things that Paul's talking about, about the Gentile mindset. We'll come at it from a totally different angle. But we learned a lot of good things today and I hope it helps you. As always, if you're here and you want to learn the Bible, if you're here and you want to be discipled, if you're here and you want somebody to help you put the Bible together, no matter how old you are, come and see me afterwards and I will get you with somebody that will help you get the basics done. If you got questions about the Bible and you want to come over and sit down with me and let me help you, I'd be glad to do that. I'll do whatever I can do to help you. We're here to help you learn your Bible and how important it is to get it all together. Let's pray.