

# Sermon Notes

Romans 16:21-27

"Conclusion - Doxology"

A Sermon Series on Romans (June 23, 2019)

## Introduction

- 1) The noted theologian R.C. Sproul stated that the **purpose of theology is doxology**.<sup>1</sup>
  - a) Simply defined, "theology" is "the study of God."
    - i) Everyone does theology, and in a broad sense - everything is theological.
    - ii) What thing could you mention that doesn't involve God?
    - iii) The question is if one's theology is godly (in accord with God's word) or not.
    - iv) The first four of the Ten Commandments criminalize false theology.
  - b) The dictionary definition of "doxology" is a "*worship/liturgical expression of praise to God.*"
    - i) Literally, "doxology" could be translated as "the study of glory" or "glory sayings."
    - ii) Throughout Romans, especially at the end, there are doxologies. In a broad sense, all Romans is doxology. Rom 11:33-36; 15:33;  
16:20,24\*; 16:25-27
- 2) Good, godly theology brings us to worship and ends in perfect worship in the glories of heaven. If not, we violate the Fourth Commandment, not finding rest in the Triune God alone.
- 3) After greeting several other Christians in v.21-23 (like he did in v.3-16), Paul begins his final doxology in v.25-27 with: "*Now to Him who is able to establish you.*"
  - a) Note the "*to*" of the "*Now to Him*". The focus, and direction, is to the Triune God. Rom 16:20
    - i) In Rom 16:25-27 there is going to be a long list of things God has done to establish His church, but this is doxology - words of glory/praise, given to God.
    - ii) Our thinking must be about Him, ending in praise of Him, and what He has done.
    - iii) As that great axiom of the Protestant Reformation teaches:  
"*Soli Deo gloria*" (Glory to God alone, to God alone the glory).
  - b) We praise the Lord because God is "able."Eph 3:20; Jude 24-25
    - i) The word for "able" here in Romans is not a wimpy one.
    - ii) It's where we get our word "dynamic" (δύναμαι, *dúnamai*) from.
    - iii) The word for "power" (δύναμις, *dúnamis*), as in "*the gospel . . . is the power of God*" from Rom 1:16b, comes from this word "able."
    - iv) The KJV, in its archaic language, in Rom 16:25 puts it wonderfully:  
"*Now to Him that is of power to establish.*"
  - c) We praise the Lord because He is powerful and none can resist His will, thus we have assurance He is able to establish and strengthen us. 2Chr 20:6; Job 9:12;  
Dan 4:35; Rom 9:19
    - i) The word for "establish" (στηρίζω, *stērizō*) is "to set fast" and "to fix firmly."
    - ii) This is to "establish" (NASB) or to "strengthen" (ESV, NET, NIV).
  - d) Note who the Lord is establishing.
    - i) The "*you*" (ὁμοῖς) here is not singular, but the plural (ὁμοῖς).
    - ii) We moderns default to the individual, this is unbiblical.
    - iii) Our thinking should default to the church (local & universal) and then to the self.

## How Does God Establish/Strengthen Us?

- 1) First, we are established according to Paul's Gospel.
  - a) Since we have been reading through Romans we shouldn't be at all surprised that the Gospel is how God establishes His people.
  - b) "*. . . the Gospel of God, which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, 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 . . . For . . . the gospel . . . is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 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.'*" - Rom 1:1b-4,16-17

<sup>1</sup> [www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/doxology-goal-theology/](http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/doxology-goal-theology/)

[www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/theology-and-doxology/](http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/theology-and-doxology/)

- c) However, do you find it surprising that Paul writes "*according to my Gospel*"? Rom 16:25b
- i) We shouldn't. There is only one correct Gospel, as thought by those handpicked by Christ Himself, and filled with the Holy Spirit. John 14:26; John 16:7
  - ii) To say "I follow Jesus and not Paul or Peter" is to reject Jesus Christ.
  - iii) Thus Paul begins and ends Romans asserting his godly authority. Rom 1:1; 16:17-19
  - iv) Getting the Gospel doctrine right is critical. The Bible allows freedom about sanctification, not justification. Rom 14:1ff; 1Cor 3 Compare Gal with 1Cor
- 2) The primary way the Gospel is given out is "*the preaching of Jesus Christ*." Rom 16:25b
- a) Preaching (κήρυγμα, *kérugma*) is to "cry out," "proclaim," to "discharge a herald's office."
  - b) It is to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ, about His work on the cross.
  - c) If there is no Christ and His cross, there is no good news.
  - d) The Gospel is by far the most important thing the church does, and our main purpose.
    - i) First, as the center of worship to honor God and establish the saints.
    - ii) Second, as the saving proclamation we herald to the lost world.
    - iii) And thus we fulfill the Law, by loving God and our neighbor. Matt 22:36-40
- 3) But where do we go to know which Gospel is right? Paul writes, "*according to the revelation of the mystery which was been kept secret for long ages past but now is manifested by the Scriptures of the prophets*". – Rom 16:25b-26a
- a) The mystery of the Gospel comes to us solely by revelation of God.
  - b) It was kept secret for thousands of years, until the first advent of Christ. Heb 1:1ff  
(Praise God we live in these end times!) 1Pet 1:12
  - c) However, this secret is clearly found in God's ancient word: The Old Testament (OT).
    - i) How amazing the Bible speaks about Christ hundreds of years before His birth.<sup>2</sup>
    - ii) However, when the NT speaks of "Scripture" it usually refers to the OT, since the NT was being written at the time. (There are a few exceptions.<sup>3</sup>)
    - iii) So "*the Scriptures of the prophets*" definitely refers to the OT. Matt 26:56; Rom 1:2
    - iv) The Apostles of Christ, however, are prophets too. 1Thes 2:13; 2Pet 3:2,15-16;  
And their writings are Scripture. Rev 22:18-19
- 4) The Gospel, and its working out, is "*according to the commandment of the eternal God*." Rom 16:26b  
The Gospel is the most important thing there is.

## **Conclusion – The Outcome of the Gospel**

- 1) Paul concludes his doxology of Rom 16:25-27 with the outcome of the Gospel.
- a) It will be "*made known to all the nations*." Rom 16:26b
    - i) The Old Covenant was for one nation (Israel), the New is for all people.
    - ii) How amazing that we Gentiles here today are a testimony to God's power.
  - b) The gospel leads to the "*obedience of faith*." Rom 16:26b
    - i) Yes, the heart of the Gospel is that we are justified (made right) with God, by faith alone in Christ. Rom 3:21-31
    - ii) We are called to trust in Christ daily, which produces hope and creates love of God and our neighbor, and thus makes us obedient. Rom 5:1ff
  - c) The main purpose of the Gospel, however, is not "to get people saved" (this is certainly a byproduct) but to bring glory and honor to God.
    - i) As Paul concludes in Romans, "*to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen*." – Rom 16:27
    - ii) The Gospel is about worship, about doxology.
    - iii) God has done the impossible (at least by man's standards).
    - iv) The Almighty has/is redeeming a fallen creation, and for that we should be thankful and offer to Him the praise due His holy name. Amen.

<sup>2</sup> See: Deut 18:15; 2Sam 7:12-16; Ps 2; 16; 22; 34; 69; 110; Is 2:2-4; 7:14-16; 9:1-7; 11:1-12; 42:1; **52:13-53:12**; 59:20; Jer 33:15-18; Dan 9:24-27; Hos 3:4-5; 11:1; Mic 4:2-3; 5:2-5; Zech 9:9; 12:10; 14:9; Mal 4:1-6.

<sup>3</sup> See: 1Cor 4:6; 1Tim 5:18 (Luke 10:7); 2Pet 3:2,15-16; Rev 22:18-19 and maybe Rom 16:26?; 1Cor 15:4?; 1Thes 2:13?