

W452A_Romans_8_9.mp3

[00:00:02] That this is a tape recording made at the Chapel of the Open book at our Wednesday dinner, our meeting. And we are still dealing with Romans the eighth chapter. When you look at the epistle to the Romans as a whole, you realize what magnificent teaching there is embodied in it and very especially in this eighth chapter. There used to be a saying when I was young, when we lived in the days of steam instead of electricity, that you don't install a steam hammer to crack a nut. Well, we could retranslate all that in modern terms. And you cannot think that all that wonderful thing has been done by God through Christ for us without some commensurate purpose and goal that will justify it. Think what God has done. He sent his son and he condemned sin in the flesh that we might be saved and that he might be just. In so doing, we are told by John in his first epistle that among other things, that Christ came to undo the works of the devil. Not only did he come to to accomplish our forgiveness, but behind it there was that attack. And that attack was upon the image of God. You remember right in the beginning, man was placed in this earth and he was made in the image of God and he was the subject of attack. And we find that in the outworking of God's purpose. There is a day coming when that image shall be wonderfully restored and the beginnings of it are taking place.

[00:01:42] Now, according to one passage we'll look at in a moment in Colossians. So the passage we've just got in front of us for these brief minutes is Romans of the eighth chapter, verse 29, for whom he did Foreknow. He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. If any of those who are listening to this program are bothered about the word predestination, they will find that we have devoted a quarter of an hour that is devoting a quarter of an hour to that subject. But just to relieve the mind, there is no word destiny or fate in its make up. And if you would examine the things that are in front of God with regard to predestination, there is no abuse of free will. Whatever. Unless you say that the course a rich uncle of yours died in Australia or America and left you £10,000, that it was an intrusion on your free will for him to put it down beforehand in his will and not tell you anything about it. But I've got to meet that man yet to believe it. The word predestinate is made of two Greek words pro horizo to mark off beforehand, and it's never used of salvation, but predestinated to become the first born pre predestinated to an inheritance

and predestinated to be like the Son of God who's going to quarrel with a destiny like that. So we'll leave that to work its own way with you.

[00:03:14] Now then, let's think further. In the first part of this, Romans, you remember the son of God. Is there set? We've looked at Romans as a whole, and we find that every section of it is dominated by the word son. In here we have he sent his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh. Now, that was the first move. And the last move is that we are going to be in the likeness and that son of God in his glory. There's the two balancing terms. And if you will turn straightaway to another passage which will help to confirm this emphasis. Philippians chapter two and three. In Philippians chapter two, he brings in that marvelous revelation concerning the descent of the Son of God. It says, verse six, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, took upon him the form of a servant who was made in the likeness of men. There we've got very parallel with Romans, the first 28th chapter, first few verses. He was made in the likeness of men and being found in fashion as a man. He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. There. We had him stooping down to the death of the cross. Now, the third chapter, verse 24. Our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our body of humiliation, not merely a vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his, but body of glory, and as according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

[00:05:07] So we've got that in more places than one that God intends that that destroyed or defaced image shall be renewed. But the blessed fact is that once we were told, once we bore the image of the earthy, but one day we're going to bear the image of the heavenly and you'll find in Colossians, if you'll turn to that to get another thought, Chapter three, that this is very, very plainly stated. He says in verse ten, You have put on the new man. This is in contrast to the old man, of course, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him. And then to confirm that this is still referring to something in the way that Christ enters into the story. Chapter one, verse 15, Christ, who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature. So there as the image of the invisible God, He was the first born of every creature. And in Romans, he's the firstborn among many brethren. And that may be a more wonderful thing still. Every creature will one day have to acknowledge willy nilly. But here we have a family that are redeemed and they are going to be conformed to his image for whom

he did foreknow. He also did mark off beforehand to be conformed to the image of his son that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

[00:06:40] And the whole of our Christian life can be summed up in just seeking to be like him as far as it humanly possible. And the grace of God is used by us. We are dealing with Philippians on our Sunday morning service and the passage I read just now where it says our conversation is in heaven is the word politeuma that means citizenship. And I remember that, Paul said, speaking even of things down here. He said, I'm a citizen of no mean city. And I said, I felt the hold of Christian life could be summed up in these words If you're a citizen of no mean city. Well, don't be a mean citizen. And that covers sanctification, justification, forgiveness and walking in the steps of faith and truth. Just living in harmony with your high calling. This emphasis upon the image. You remember persists. I'll give you another passage which may have come into your mind. One Corinthians 15. I've partly quoted it, but it's something to which we press. One day there's going to be a wonderful change. It says, first of all, verse 51, we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. So whether you're living at the Second Coming of Christ or whether you're not, one thing is going to be true of us all. We shall all be changed. And without being rude to anybody, I should say, isn't that a good thing? Because you're all looking at me.

[00:08:15] I know, but I'm looking at you and all the things that go to make up this life, however wonderful they be, however much we cling to them all, what are they and how are we going to be changed? Well, we don't know how, but is there a pattern? Oh, yes, there is. So we have here a little bit earlier, verse 49. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. So it's most obvious that this image which we meet in Genesis, which we find recurring through the Scriptures, is a definite part of the divine programme of redemption. Not only is it that we should be forgiven, not only that, we should be justified. Not only that, we should have a place in glory, but that God's original purpose, that in this universe there should be those who, like His beloved son, is the manifest image of the invisible God we find even today. Even we, according to the epistle to the Ephesians, that we are a representation of some of the ways of God. Two invisible powers. I think perhaps we might get the passage on rather mangling it. Ephesians Chapter two. Chapter three, Verse ten. To the intent that now. Now. Not right. Not in the future. Merely to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church, through the

church, through these redeemed people, the manifold wisdom of God. It's rather extraordinary to think that principalities and powers are being taught lessons by looking at us.

[00:10:01] And then in the in the day that's coming verse, chapter two, verse seven, not merely now there's a stress on the word now, but now it says that in the ages to come. So in the glorious future he might show Show to whom will there somebody going to see and learn apparently show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus. And then we come back to Romans, the eighth chapter.

Moreover, whom he did predestinate them. He also called. There's one thing about it that when God has a purpose, he has all the facilities to bring that purpose to a glorious fruition. We may be staggered at this thought, but we've already been reminded it's according to that power whereby you subdue all things unto himself or, as Ephesians put it, the power that was rorted Christ when he was raised from the dead. Who we did mark off beforehand. He called you and I have all come to God by different pathways. Some of us have sat in churches and some have heard the word. We don't know how. Some have read the printed page and we couldn't always explain what started the move. But God was behind it all. He called and who he called them. He also justified. A great sweep there, a great step and a good many steps have been sort of omitted. But God will have no one unjustified in his presence.

[00:11:32] And not only He ourselves, but he so planned redemption that he should be just at the same time to declare his righteousness as well as to give us a righteousness by faith and whom he justified. He's going to take to this glorious conclusion. Then he also glorified and if you say to me, Can you give me some description of that glory? Well, I say I'm reminded that it hasn't been to the heart of man. The things that God have prepared for him, that love him. But I've got this one thing. I think it will be sufficient if I got deep down in my consciousness that whatever glory may involve, whatever it may be like, whatever gets through parliaments and heights to scale in that day, there's one thing going to be a fact already stamped upon it that glory will be something like the Son of God, for it says We shall be conformed to his image. And there is a hymn I've heard sung in the early days about many things that will be glory for Thee. Well, I think we could revise that, even put these words in that if you and I, poor creatures as we are, shall one day be conformed to the image of God's Son and find that we are reckoned as his brethren and he the firstborn. Well, if there's no other glory

writing us than that, I think it's one of those things that can hold the heart and keep us, as it were, with our thoughts set upon things of heaven.