

Title: Called and Separated  
Text: Romans 1: 1-7  
Date: June 24, 2012  
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

The saints of God in this world are described as “called” and “separated”—set apart, sanctified, “called saints.” The apostle Paul describes himself and those saints at Rome as such.

**Romans 1: 1: Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called *to be* an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, 2: (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) 3 Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; 4 And declared *to be* the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead: 5 By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name: 6 Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ: 7 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.**

Paul was called and separated to be an apostle. He was called directly by the Lord Jesus Christ to be an apostle—the requirement to be an apostle. In that, his call is different from how the child of God is called and separated. But Paul applies this same call to the saints at Rome. **Romans 1: 6: Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ; 7: To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called *to be* saints:---**Paul says, ‘It is the calling of God, who separated me, by whom I have received grace and apostleship--and it is the same calling that you were called separated and now “called saints.”’

**Title:** Called and Separated

**Proposition:** When we see how Paul was called separated we see how all God’s saints are called and separated.

**Divisions:** I. **WHO** CALLS AND SEPARATES; II. **FROM** WHAT ARE WE CALLED AND SEPARATED; III. **UNTO** WHAT ARE WE CALLED AND SEPARATED

## **I. WHO CALLED AND SEPARATED US**

In the eternal purpose of God—God, in his sovereign grace, by divine election separated Paul. In time, before Paul could be separated for the work which God foreordained for him, Paul had to be called and separated by grace. All who shall be saved by God, were chosen of God in Christ and shall be called through the gospel of Christ.

Galatians 1: 15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called *me* by his grace, 16 To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:

Jeremiah 1: 5: Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, *and* I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.

Paul was called and separated, at one and the same time, to the faith and the apostleship of Christ by Christ, personally .

Acts 26: 13: At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. 14: And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why

persecutest thou me? *it is* hard for thee to kick against the pricks. 15: And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. 16: But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; 17 Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, 18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

Just as the Father and Son called and separated Paul, so too, the Holy Ghost called and separated Paul to the work for which he had called him.

Acts 13: 1: Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2: As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. 3: And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid *their* hands on them, they sent *them* away. 4: So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

**Application:** Saints are called and separated by God the Father, by Jesus Christ the Son, and by the Holy Spirit. It is by divine election, by blood atonement and by the internal work which always gets the job done—it is an effectual, irresistible, saving call and separation.

**II. FROM WHAT ARE WE CALLED AND SEPARATED--**Paul had been a Pharisee—“separate one”—that may be why Paul uses this word “separated”.

Paul had separated himself by his confidence in the flesh—in natural, external, outward religious things.

Philippians 3: 4: Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: 5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, *of* the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; 6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

He had separated himself through much study.

Acts 22: 3: I am verily a man *which am* a Jew, born in Tarsus, *a city* in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, *and* taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day.

Paul set himself apart from all others in his religious zeal in works religion.

Galatians 1: 13 For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews’ religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: 14 And profited in the Jews’ religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.

**Application:** Brethren, be sure to understand, that while Paul was in works religion—looking to the things he had done to separate himself—Paul had not truly separated himself at all. He separated himself from the liberal Sadducees, yet he was still one with them—he proved it because he would sooner embrace them than Christians who truly were called and separated unto Christ and his gospel. He separated himself from sinners—**come not near me I am holier than thou**—yet he was in the same camp with sinners because he was lost. At the time, as religious has he appeared, in himself he was separate from God

Isaiah 59: 2: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear.

Jude 19: These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.

The Lord told the Pharisees that sinners and publicans shall go in the kingdom of heaven before you—Paul was just such a one before he was called--all his religion had only taken him further and further into ungodly rebellion. Paul was like all of God's elect before God saves us, we were lost in the darkness of our own depraved hearts and spiritual ignorance. It may have been in a form of religion we called the worship of Christ even as Paul thought he was worshipping God, but we were all:

- Ignorant of God and Ignorant of his Providence
- Ignorant of Ourselves and our Sin
- Ignorant of the Scriptures and Ignorant of the Gospel.
- Ignorant of Christ, Ignorant of Righteousness and Ignorant of Salvation

This is what Paul had to be called and separated from and it is what all God's elect are called and separated from. It gives us great hope to see that God called Paul. Is anything too hard for the Lord? No. Christ said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (Joh 6:37)

### **III. UNTO WHAT ARE WE CALLED AND SEPARATED**

Paul was called and separated **unto the gospel of God**. (Paul was separated to preach the gospel, but like Paul, God separates all his elect unto the message of the gospel—unto Christ himself.

**Romans 1: 2: (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) 3: Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; 4: And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:**

Before, Paul was separated to the law. Now, God separated him "to the Gospel of God". It is called the gospel of God because God is the author of it. His free and sovereign grace is the cause of it. Christ is subject of the gospel--the Author and Finisher of our Faith. The glorification of God's name and the calling out of God's sheep is the purpose of it.

Romans 1: 16: For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. 17: For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

**Application:** Believer, we are called and separated unto Christ, to bear witness through the gospel of God, that **salvation is of the Lord:**

- God did the choosing
- God made atonement for the sins of his elect through his blood--all in perfect justice and God is our Justifier
- God sanctifies and calls and sets us apart
- God keeps us
- God shall resurrect us into glory with him
- To the praise of the glory of his grace wherein he made us accepted in the Beloved.

Through the gospel of Christ, Christ calls and separates his elect **FROM darkness INTO Light**

1 Peter 2:9: But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

Remember, Paul said, “I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me.” The Lord spoke saying “rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee...to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee.

Just as Christ our Light appeared in this earth and abolished death and brought immortality to light, in like manner as he appeared and spoke to Paul, so Christ through the Holy Spirit appears in our hearts—he is formed in us—and he abolishes the death we were clinging to and brings light and immortality to light within us through the gospel.

2 Timothy 1:9: Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, 10: But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: 11: Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

2 Corinthians 4: 6: For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

This unction of the Spirit, this mind of Christ, causes us to know and understand all things.

Proverbs 28:5: Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the LORD understand all *things*.

1 Corinthians 2:15: But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. 16: For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

1 John 2:20: But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.

**Application:** Brethren, when this Light shines Christ is made unto us Wisdom and then Christ became our Righteousness and our Sanctification. True sanctification of heart in righteousness and holiness of truth is to be purged and separated from vain works to Christ our Righteousness and Holiness by the washing of regeneration—it is to have Christ formed in you. Now, in Christ our Light—believers walk in the Light of Christ and by his Light we distinguish between things that differ:

- Between grace and works
- Between free grace and free will
- Between the Voice of Christ and the voice of strangers.

John 10: 4: And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. 5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.

By this effectual call, God separates his elect **out of bondage into liberty—when Christ becomes our Wisdom he also becomes our Redemption.**

2 Corinthians 3: 17: Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord *is*, there *is* liberty.

Galatians 5:13: For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

We were by nature children of wrath, even as others; but now, in Christ, we are freed from the curse and condemnation of God's holy law. We were slaves dominated under sin--but now, in Christ we have become the servants of righteousness. We were under the bondage of the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: but we are now Christ's free men. Grace has set us free! Those who were once driven by the law of works, now are led by the Spirit, walking in the law of faith and love—old things are passed away, behold ALL THINGS—have become new.

Galatians 5: 1: Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

By this effectual call, God's elect are separated **out of this world unto THE fellowship.**

1 Corinthians 1:9: God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Gospel of love and grace called and separated Abraham from his former land of idolatry, from his unbelieving family and former friends to follow Christ—to no longer love the world or the things of the world because those things are not of God.

**Application:** Brethren, at no time has God ever called his people and told them to be joined with this world and the religion of this world. GOD SEPEARTES HIS CHILDREN FROM FALSEHOOD, EFFECTUALLY COMMANDING US TO NO LONGER JOIN WITH IT.

Deuteronomy 7: 2: And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, *and* utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them: 3: Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. 4: For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly. 5: But thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire. 6: For thou *art* a holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that *are* upon the face of the earth....26 Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thine house, lest thou be a cursed thing like it: but thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is a cursed thing.

Revelation 18:4: And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

Paul was in works religion but he was not saved by it or left in it. God saved him by Christ himself calling him out of it and separating him from it. He does the same in our day through the gospel of God.

AND WHAT SWEET FELLOWSHIP HE GIVES! Those called and separated unto the fellowship of Christ have been called unto the fellowship of Jesus Christ to Mt Zion, heavenly Jerusalem. We now have access and communion with our triune God at his throne of grace! We have fellowship with His saints on earth and in heaven (Hebrews 12:22-23)

Ephesians 2: 19: Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

Hear the Spirit of God and be not beguiled.

2 Corinthians 6:14: Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? 15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? 16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. **7:1** Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

**Application:** I realize this gospel does two things. It convinces those who are effectually called and separated by God that we are saved by grace and are complete in Christ—it unites us together with Christ more and more. But this same gospel makes others feel lost.

**Illustration:** “Are you saying I’m going to hell!”

If the gospel makes you feel lost, if it makes you uncomfortable, if you think it is stripping you of something you have confidence in other than Christ—then heed the word of the Lord! Don’t ignore it. Don’t attempt to suppress it! It may be that God is calling and separating you unto Christ.

But believer, remember that until God has done the calling and separating, sinners may very well depart from the gospel or separate you from them because of it. The Master says to us:

Luke 6: 22: Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you *from their company*, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man’s sake.

It may cause great sorrow because it may be our dearest companion—even an unbelieving husband or wife. But brethren, God has called us and separated us unto holiness, not uncleanness. When the unbelieving depart, do not let it bring you back into bondage or turmoil or unrest. Remember, God has called us unto peace.

1 Corinthians 7: 15: But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such *cases*: but God hath called us to peace.

- Peace which passes all understanding
- Peace he gives in the midst of the tribulations which the world cannot give or take away.
- Peace in believing that we are one with God by the blood and righteousness of Christ

Colossians 3: 15: Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body.

**We have seen:** 1) Who does the calling and separating: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit—it is effectual, internal, saving. 2) From what God calls and separate us—from the old things that have passed away; from self and self-salvation; from darkness of sin and ignorance; from all that separated us from him. 3) To what has God called us: from darkness to light; from bondage to liberty; from the world into the fellowship of Christ Jesus; from uncleanness to holiness; from turmoil to peace, into his grace, into his kingdom.

One last question: shall those he has called and separated ever be separated from him again? No way.

Romans 8: 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen!