

“Through him we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all Gentiles, including you who are also called by Jesus Christ. To all who are in Rome, loved by God, called as saints. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” Romans 1: 5-7 (CSB)

Today we will look at more of the words that stand out from this passage in Paul’s letter to the Romans. The word to delve into today and SAINTS, OBEDIENCE and LOVED.

First of all, saints. Its sometimes difficult to imagine being greeted as a saint. We imagine the saints like Francis who was heavily blessed by God through living in poverty and seeking to put God first in everything. His only desire, to live the Gospel (and suffer for it!). Or Paul, who wrote much of the New Testament. These are people from long ago, dead many centuries, who we can learn from to enhance our daily walk of faith, but they aren’t living with the exact same challenges as the 21st century provide. Yet a Saint is simply a follower of Jesus. We are saints as much as Francis and Paul were in that way. So, basically, being a saint doesn’t mean you have to be dead.

Obedience. Now this is a word that seems, in some ways, to be a negative. As christians, aren’t we set free? Isn’t freedom doing as we please? Well, yes, and no. As christians we are obedient because we want to be. We know that doing what God asks is best for us, even if it doesn’t seem that way at the time. We can’t just use God’s grace as a cover all to give us a free reign on sinning because we know we are forgiven. We all get it wrong, but would you deliberately do something evil against someone who has shown you unconditional love? If the answer is ‘no’, and I hope it is, then think how much worse it is to just do as we please after all God has done for us?

The final word to look at briefly is Loved. I wanted to end on a positive. However tough life is, however easy, God loves us. We can never go so far from Him that we can’t come back. God doesn’t promise us an easy life. There will always be challenges to overcome. It’s how we learn to really fully rely on the goodness of God. Or we learn how weak our faith is. But ultimately God loves us, His creation, and its a love so great we cannot reciprocate it, all we can do is accept it in thankfulness.

Pray

Loving Father, we thank you that your love is so vast that we can never begin to measure it. We know that nothing we can do will come close to being enough to thank you for all you’ve done for us, and what you will do for us in the future. As a small token we offer you our obedience to your will for us as your saints and ask that you forgive us for the times we have got it wrong and the times we will get it wrong. Please be with all the people we love and help them to feel your love surrounding them today. Thank you again, just for being you. Amen.