

Hopewell ARP Midweek Sermon

Wednesday, August 7, 2024

Romans 16:25–27

²⁵ Now to Him Who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began ²⁶but now made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith—²⁷to God, alone wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.

The Chief End of the Gospel

Main idea: the chief end of the gospel is God’s glory in Christ, Who is glorified in strengthened Christians from all nations.

Introduction: an appropriate conclusion (or (!) part of the reasoning for stronger believers to bear with the week).

1. The Source of Christian Strength

1. A “how” question with a “Who” answer
2. The strength is not in the means of grace but in the God of grace

2. The Means of Christian Strength

1. v25 takes us back to 1:16–17. God (Whose power it is in the first place) has elected to exert that power through the preaching of the gospel, by which He saves
2. “The preaching of Jesus Christ” isn’t just sermons that contain content about Jesus; it is preaching in which Jesus Himself addresses us (cf. 10:17).
3. Having begun in faith that comes by hearing, we must continue in faith that comes by hearing (cf. 1:17, 10:17, 12:3)

3. The “Secret” of Christian Strength

1. The “mystery kept secret since the world began” is that the Lord Himself, in Christ Himself, would be our righteousness, our propitiation, our strength, and our salvation—for sinners from ALL nations.
2. What eye, ear, and mind could not discover, God Himself has now revealed.
 1. Revealed in the coming of Christ.
 2. Made known by the prophetic Scriptures. For the Spirit-inspired apostle, gospel preaching must be expositional preaching.
3. The God Who ordained this salvation has commanded that it would be spread through preaching.

1. The obedient response to this command, for some/many, is to preach this gospel
2. The obedient response to this command, for ALL, is to believe this gospel.

4. The “Chief End” of Christian Strength

1. Believers, strengthened forever in this way, bring glory forever to Jesus Christ
2. Jesus Christ’s glory forever, displays the alone-wisdom of God forever

Conclusion: worship Christ in your hearts, and worship God through Christ. But more than that, keep seeking the completion of your salvation. Keep seeking your everlasting and perfect strengthening in Christ, that He might be glorified in you, and God in Him, forever and ever!

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Romans 16 verses 25-27. These are God's words. Now to him, who is able to establish you? According to my gospel. And the preaching of Jesus Christ. According to the revelation of the mystery. Kept Secret since the world began, but now made manifest. And by the prophetic scriptures made known.

To All Nations. According to the Commandment of the Everlasting God. For obedience to the faith. To God Alone wise be glory through. Jesus Christ, forever. Amen.

Well, this is certainly an appropriate conclusion. To the book of Romans. Paul's letter to the Romans, although it seems that it was not originally the conclusion. The received text. Uh, that was assembled in the In the wake of the Reformation. Has it here, and the critical text? In agreement with Uh, Jerome's Latin and Uh, lately discovered Western texts.

Has it here. But the majority texts the the text used in the Greek, speaking churches throughout the centuries actually has it right in the middle. Of his reasoning with the stronger and weaker. Believers at the end of chapter 14, and before chapter 15, And you can see how well it would fit there.

Now, to him, who is able to establish you. Which is to say, there are stronger, Believers, and there are weaker Believers. But there are only dependent Believers. Who need God himself to strengthen. To firm us up to establish. And so it suits that context? But, It was somehow moved there.

Or originated here. It certainly is An appropriate conclusion. To the book of Romans 4, it gives us the chief end of the Gospel. Which is the glory of course of God in Jesus Christ. Strengthened Christians. From All Nations. And since the chief end of the Gospel is the glory of God in Jesus Christ in strengthened Christians from All Nations.

We have here a Uh, conclusion. That focuses especially upon Christian strength. The source of Christian strength, God himself. The means of Christian strength, the preaching Of the Gospel, the preaching of Jesus Christ. The secret. Of Christian strength, the fact that God Purposely withheld, the knowledge of how he would save and how he would ultimately glorify himself until the coming of his son and the preaching of his gospel.

And then, of course, at the end, the chief end of Christian strength and the chief end of the gospel and the chief end of everything. To God alone. In this case took out a loan wise, but to God Alone. Glory through Jesus Christ. Forever. And so, under those four thoughts, Uh, we seek to hear this passage preached this evening first.

The source of Christian strength. Now to him who is able to establish you to him, who is able to strengthen you strengthen you so that you become fixed in place, strengthen you so that you are able to stand and withstand anything That strengthening that, Ephesians 4 describes, as the purpose of the ministry of the pastor teachers using, what the foundational Apostles and Prophets and evangelists.

Have written from the Lord, that standing, and withstanding. And after all to stand that Ephesians 6 describes How can I be strengthened? And perhaps you have asked that question yourself where perhaps it was some theological difficulty that you have had and you go back and forth and you wonder can someone who knows so little, who's like a little child before God and can't make their minds up on something?

How will you come to maturity of thought or perhaps? It's been in battling some sin? Maybe some sin that you thought. You were past and yet there is that remaining fleshliness and The flesh taking opportunity of some circumstance. You have stumbled back into it and you have thought, when will I ever be strong?

When will I ever come to a firmness and steadiness and stand as a Christian? Or perhaps it is some difficult circumstance. That your heart. Buckled. At the thought of maybe. Not even a circumstance that you're in, maybe a potential one and the anxiety has come rushing in. And uh, it's a few moments before you realize what you're doing.

You're worrying about tomorrow as if the Lord hasn't assigned for each one of your days, the trouble that belongs to that day. And you think when When will I ever be strong? How can I be? Strengthened How can I be steadied fixed? Made firm established. And it's a, how question.

With a who answer. Now to him. Who is able to establish you. Yes, there's preaching and there's praying and there's the supper, and there's your baptism. And there are lesser means that we would not. Um, Put. The same category as those ordinances. One, that is not a lesser mean the ordinance means.

And the ordinance of the ministry Shepherds that the Lord has given you. And so forth, there are all those means. But strength is not in the means of Grace. It's not in the reading, it's not in the praying. It's not in the eating of the supper, or the washing of the water that is applied in the baptism, or even in you're remembering.

The baptism. It's not in the under Shepherds that the Lord has given you to help you strength. Is in God himself. We Rejoice that he has given us means of his grace. That he has honored us and dignified. To participate in his strengthening. But strength is not in the means of Grace, it's in the god of Grace.

As the commonly used. Saying. The best of means, or means at best It is. Who strengthens us? And this is wonderful. Because it means that the strength isn't mechanical it's personal. The Lord is the one who strengthens. And it means that the strength is infinite. We've just heard, didn't we on the Lord's Day morning?

In Psalm 119 81-88, about running out of strength and looking to, the means Our eyes being exhausted. Depleted. By searching the scriptures while we pray. When will you comfort me? But we never exhaust God. God has never depleted. And he is the one who strengthened so the source of Christian strength it's a how question with a who answer it's God himself.

The means of Christian strength. Now to him who is able to establish you According to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ. Now why does he say my gospel here? Isn't it just the gospel? Well there is a sense in which the Apostle wants to assure the Roman Believers to whom he has never had the opportunity yet to preach.

That he is preaching the same gospel that they have heard. That is gospel is the same as their Elders gospel. As the apostles gospel from whom they first heard, the gospel preach, that it is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He's also by saying my gospel he's taking us back to chapter 1 verses 16 and 17 where he has just finished saying that he is eager to preach the gospel in Rome.

And why would he preach the gospel in Rome to a congregation? Whose faith is famous in the whole world? Well, he's not ashamed. To preach what they already know. Because they may already know the facts of the Gospel. But the reality is that the gospel is the power of God for salvation.

And so while God is the source of Christian strength, the means of Christian strength, is the preaching of the Gospel. In it. The righteousness of God, is revealed the righteousness, through faith, in Jesus Christ, first for the Jew. And then for the Gentile, the righteousness that is by faith from start to finish from faith and for Faith, They still need more righteousness.

They still need more divine power. To continue and ultimately to complete their salvation, just as you do. You who needs this strength? You must as the scripture commands, you work out your salvation with fear and trembling, how are you going to do that? Well, it's a how question with a who answer for it is God who isn't working, you both to will, and to work.

According to his good pleasure. But the who God, who is the answer to the how question? He has appointed. This means, The preaching. Of the gospel. For, it's not just the preaching of the Gospel, it's the preaching of Jesus Christ. Which by the time we get to this point in the Book of Romans whether it's here or at the end of of chapter 14, by the time we get past chapter 10 of the book of Romans, we know that when it says the preaching of Jesus Christ, and this is grammatically possible.

In verse 20, 25 both are grammatically possible, it's not just preaching that has Jesus as its content Jesus has its core Jesus as its Essence. It's preaching that has Jesus as its origin. There are the beautiful feet of those who are sent to preach the gospel, but when the sent ones preach, Those in whom the Holy spirit is working.

Don't just hear the sent one. They don't just hear the servant on Earth, they hear Jesus himself. Faith comes by hearing and hearing the word of God. Chapter 10 and verse 17. And so we we all began. If you are a Christian, you began in the faith that comes by hearing.

And as you continue, you must also continue By the faith. Or continue in the faith. That comes by hearing for God as it were chapter 12. And verse 3, you remember, that picture of him portioning out Faith to us. Well, how does he do that? Yes, he needs no instrument.

He is the Living. God. And yes, he personally is giving us. But he has a tool. He has a mechanism that he uses to increase our faith. And that is the preaching of his word. The preaching of his gospel. He is the one who has the almighty power and he whose power it is has elected to exert that power.

Through the preaching of the Gospel. This is why the Apostle said then, The gospel is the power of God for salvation and here, now to him, who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching Of Jesus Christ. So the source of Christian strength, God himself.

Personally. Powerfully. Working on you strengthening you. The means of Christian strength. He's appointed to do it through his word preached. Some of your children. I trust who have been now to many a prayer meeting Will be able to remember when you were older. Mom and dad valued the preaching of the Gospel.

Mom and dad valued, corporate prayer. These are the means that God uses to exercise his Almighty power in our lives. So, if it was going to be done, we would be there if we could. Well, not just the source of Christian strength, and the means of Christian strength, but now the secret of Christian strength.

And here, we're picking up the language of the rest. Of verse 25 and into verse 26. According to the Revelation. Of the mystery. And that New Testament word refers to something that God has to reveal to us. Something that cannot be searched or sought out by, By what we might call science you, you can't hear it with the ear in nature.

You can't Discover it in the created thing. And not only empiricism can't get their rationalism. Can't get there, either. You can't go into a closet. The fool in his heart says there is no God, and there was a fool who in his heart said I'm going to doubt everything and once I get to something that I can know is true, then I'll try and figure everything out from there and all he got to was I think I think therefore I think that I am What a?

Those things that are most needful to know cannot be had from Empiricism observance. Of the creature cannot be had from rationalism. Just the mere operating of man's mind. No, God has made them. A mystery in the New Testament, use of the word. So that we must depend upon him.

So that we must say whether it is of the world as a whole or of our ability to know, In the beginning. God. And so that he might glorify his son. He kept this mystery hidden. It's his prerogative, it belongs to him, he doesn't owe it to us. And all the more does he not owe it to us having sinned and died?

In Rebellion against God in our first father. Adam. And so he refers to that According to the revelation of the mystery kept secret, since the world began. Every ever since Adam. Over hurt. God cursing, the serpent. And telling the serpent that there would be a seed of the woman.

Who had crushed the Serpent's head? And upon the upon, which Adam believing that was Prof that which was prophesied about the seed and his wife's part in it thought. Mrs. Adam was no longer a good enough name, she needed to be called Eve because she's the mother of all the living.

In First Peter chapter 1 tells us that even the spirit of Christ who is prophesying in all those prophets from Adam down to especially Moses who recorded all of the written. Prophecy. From the beginning of the world, until his time and all those other. That they were eager to know they longed to know.

About whom and when Are these things that we're writing. And then, at last, This mystery that God had kept secret since the world began. He made manifest, he revealed in the coming of Christ. Oh, there was great blessing to be a Jew. You remember that of what advantage, what advantage has the Jew?

Chapter 3. First of all, chief of all he has the Oracles of God. And again, in chapter 9 they were the ones to whom the scriptures were entrusted and among other things. And the greatest part of which was from whom according to his flesh, the Lord Jesus Christ came.

Chapter 9. But this mystery was hidden, it was hidden even very much from the Jews. There was only one nation that had these scriptures that had the Revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ. But, Left a veil over their hearts. For the most part. And even those who believed. Only could understand so much.

The Lord keeping it until the coming of Christ into the world. When He when this mystery would be made manifest and then Having been revealed having revealed the mystery that God himself. The Lord himself in Christ himself, would be righteousness for Sinners, and their right standing before God and propitiation for.

Sinners, a full atonement, that takes away, all the wrath of God that God himself would be our righteousness and our propitiation and our strength and our salvation that God would be all these things for us and Jesus. When he had revealed that mystery, In the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He then appointed that by the prophetic scriptures, The mystery would be made known to all the nations. So, even the apostles who had seen When they preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, you know what they preached. They preached the scriptures. Peter on the day of Pentecost. Did not fill what he was saying with his own experience of Jesus Christ, although it was great.

He preached on Psalm 110, and Psalm 16.

What eye and ear and mind could not discover God himself revealed in the coming of Christ and he made it known. By the prophetic scriptures. Here, the spirit inspired Apostle as he's writing and he's writing, prophetic scripture himself. The New Testament is prophetic scripture as much as the Old Testament is.

But at the time that he's writing to them, the Old Testament is the bulk and still is, isn't it? It's almost twice as big. And how impoverished are they, who never study? And never meditate and never hear preached. The Lord Jesus Christ. From the Old Testament. For, it's not just his statement to the Jews.

You search the scriptures for in you think that in them you have eternal life but it is they that speak of me and is not just to the men on those discouraged disciples on the road to Emmaus. When he starts to starts at Moses and explains from all the scriptures, the things concerning him.

But here he says, By the prophetic scriptures, the Gospel of Jesus Christ that has now been made manifest will be made known to All Nations. So for the spirit inspired, Apostle gospel

preaching must be expositional, preaching. Even for eyewitnesses. Of the Lord Jesus Christ. And if for them how much more For us.

You see the God who ordained. His power to be exerted in saving us. In this way, had commanded that. This salvation would be spread through preaching. And so verse 26 continues. Now, made manifest and by the prophetic scriptures made known to All Nations according To the Commandment of the Everlasting God.

From all eternity. God had planned what ear couldn't hear and what I couldn't see and what the heart of man could never come up with that. The Lord of Glory would be crucified for Sinners and if they would have known it, they wouldn't have crucified him. First Corinthians 2 says, He is the Everlasting.

God, he had ordained that from all eternity. And you know what else he had ordained from all eternity. He had commanded. That this salvation would be revealed. Would be made known to all the nations. By preaching. By preaching. And so if God has commanded that his salvation would go out by preaching, there are at least these two obedient responses.

One obedience to the command is for a few and the other obedience to the command is for all. One, obedience is for those who are sent. For those who are called and ordained. They must as the Apostle said, to his Protege, his child, and the faith. And in the ministry, they must do the work of an evangelist.

Why? Because the Everlasting God from all eternity ordained that this is how his salvation would be spread. And thus, he has commanded his servants whom. He calls to the ministry that they would spread the gospel in this way. Preaching. Jesus Christ. From his prophetic scriptures. But then the fact that this is a commandment of the Everlasting God, it demands an obedient response from everyone.

There are those servants who have been called to preach the gospel, but every one of us is commanded. To believe. The gospel.

If you have hurt, And I know that you have hurt. If you have heard that God himself, The Lord Of Glory. Became a man. To be righteousness. For Sinners. To take upon himself, all the Wrath, all of the punishment, all of the holy hatred of God, that those sinners sins, and those Sinners themselves deserved.

That the Lord of Glory has come and taken that on himself that he gives salvation to all, who hear of him and turn from their sin and believe in him. Then God has commanded. You hasn't you by the preaching of his gospel to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And that takes away all the complaints or should take away all the complaints you say, oh well you're a calvinist. You don't think I can believe unless God gives me life and you start making, how could you, how could you start to make reasons against such a command? Such an invitation?

He doesn't say, figure out if you can believe, he just says believe. His word has in itself. The power for you to believe, he offers himself to you, he offers Faith to you, he offers repentance to you, but he offers Christ to you. You aren't able to honor your father and mother either.

But you try to do that when you find out that God has commanded it. You aren't able to love your neighbor as yourself. But you try to do that when you find out that God has commanded it. Well, here is a command. Of the Everlasting God. That you would be saved.

By believing in Jesus Christ. When you hear his gospel. Preached. So the source of Christian strength, the means of Christian strength, The Secret of Christian strength. And finally Verse 27. The chief. Of Christian strength. Now to him verse 25 had begun. And all that, we heard. So far in the sermon and thus far in the text has been a

It's been a digression. Uh, it's been a necessary useful helpful but has interrupted the original thought. Now to him said, verse 25 and verse 27, concludes To God. Alone wise. Be glory through Jesus Christ, forever. Amen. And the strengthened believer. The strengthened believer as he realizes how God has saved and who God is saving that he's saving from all the nations we should have shouldn't we you should have shouldn't you each one of you that response that the Apostle has at the end of chapter 11 Oh, the depths

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God, how unsearchable, or his judgments and his ways past finding out for who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has become his counselor, or who has first given to him, and it shall be repaid to him for of him, and through him.

And to him, are all things to whom be glory forever. Amen. This God himself in Jesus Christ. Becoming our righteousness, becoming our atonement becoming our salvation, becoming our strength, becoming our Salvation, God himself. Becoming that in Christ. Makes us cry out. Oh, the depths of the wisdom. The depths of the riches of the wisdom and the knowledge.

Of God, or Verse 27. Shortens it with the same thought to God alone wise be glory Believer and Believers who have been, strengthened forever. To God Alone wise be glory through. Jesus Christ forever, you will bring glory forever to God in Jesus Christ. As you Marvel at him who has saved you him, who is God himself.

The second person of the Triune God. And yet has become a man. In order to be this for you, And so, the first application, As the chief end of Christian strength, is the glory of God and Christ to his glorified in his strength and redeemed. You would worship him that you would adore him.

But a Application. Is that you would yourself seek to be strengthened in Christ. Because you know that Christ is being glorified by establishing you. And God is glorifying himself. In his son. So worship Christ in your heart. Worship Christ as your God. And worship the Triune God who is glorified in and through Jesus Christ.

But also keep seeking the completion of your salvation work out your salvation, with fear, and trembling independence upon God, especially using the means Of sitting under that preaching, by which he continues to give you. So that as you are more and more conformed to Christ, he is more and more glorified in you and that which for which you have been predestined will be completed.

That you would be conformed to the image of his son. And when Those whom he had Justified he has finally glorified. Jesus Christ will be the firstborn Among many Brethren. And then this The Triune the true. The Everlasting God. Has chosen to glorify himself. So keep working out that salvation.

That Christ might be glorified in you. And God in Christ. Forever. And ever. Amen.