

1 TIMOTHY 2:1-7

ONE MEDIATOR

“First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time. For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.”¹

“You are so narrow-minded!” She was lambasting me because I was insisting there is but one way to God. I had cited several texts to support my position. Among other portions of the Word, I had cited Jesus’ testimony, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” [JOHN 14:6]. I had also noted His promise, “All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out” [JOHN 6:35, NKJV]. “What makes you think you are better than me or anyone else?” In truth, I have no illusion that I am better than any other person. The context of our conversation was not focused on comparing myself to other people; her vociferous response was to a simple statement that there is but one way to peace with God, and that is through Jesus Christ as Lord.

In the text before us in this message, we read the Apostle’s assessment of a great truth. “There is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” If we believe the truth presented by this teaching we will also recognise the urgency to inform others of this truth—urgency that is imposed on each individual who follows the Master because he or she knows that Christ Jesus is the One Mediator. If Christ Jesus is the One Mediator between God and man, then all who follow Him will realise the necessity of supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings that are being offered for all mankind, and especially for those who govern. If Christ Jesus is the One Mediator between God and man, we who believe will seek to lead peaceful and quiet lives, godly and dignified in every respect so that our lives adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, inviting opportunity to explain the hope that is in us. Join me in considering the Apostle’s affirmation, considering how the knowledge should touch each believer’s life.

ONE GOD — While there are a number of significant theological truths presented in this brief statement from the Apostle, the first that stands out must surely be that there is one God. Christians are not polytheists, nor are they pantheists; we know by revelation and by experience that there is one God. Moreover, we know this God as our Father, just as we have been taught by Christ Jesus the Master.

When Jesus was asked to teach His disciples to pray, He instructed them to address God, “Our Father in heaven” [MATTHEW 6:9]. To be certain, we know that God is Father of the Lord Jesus, but throughout the New Testament are multiple testimonies that He is our God and Father. Speaking of the unity of the Faith, Paul remembers that there is “one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all” [EPHESIANS 4:6].

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from **The Holy Bible, English Standard Version** © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Opening the Letter to Galatian Christians, Paul writes, “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen” [GALATIANS 1:3-5].

Again, drawing the Letter to the Christians in Philippi, Paul gives this ascription of praise: “To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen” [PHILIPPIANS 4:20].

Nor was Paul’s conviction of the Fatherhood of God acquired only after years serving as an Apostle. Early in his service, he spoke of God as Father of those who believe. The Letters to Thessalonian Christians were among his earliest letters. Arguably, First Thessalonians may have been his earliest letter to have been included in the canon of Scripture. Notice how he reveals his understanding of God in that letter. Opening the letter, Paul writes, “We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers, remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ” [1 THESSALONIANS 1:2, 3].

Later in this same letter, Paul pens a prayer that reveals his understanding of God’s relationship to all who believe. “Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you, and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints” [1 THESSALONIANS 3:11-13].

He demonstrates the same understanding in the second letter he wrote to the Thessalonians. “Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word” [2 THESSALONIANS 2:16, 17].

Lest you imagine that only Paul had this understanding of God’s relationship to those who believe, consider one final Scripture from James, the half-brother of our Master. Again, remember that James is quite an early book, written from a very Jewish perspective. Many scholars believe this brief letter to have been the earliest writing that is included in the canon. “Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unstained from the world” [JAMES 1:27].

Writing about the power of the tongue, James writes these words. “See how great a forest a little fire kindles! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God” [JAMES 3:5-9, NKJV].

What should be apparent from this brief review of New Testament statements concerning God is that He is the Only God. Moreover, God has made Himself known to those willing to receive His revelation of Himself. As he opens his Letter to the Christians in Rome, Paul speaks of God, “The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse” [ROMANS 1:18-20]. Focus on the fact that what God has revealed to mankind is evident to anyone who is even vaguely familiar with nature—God’s creation reveals His Person and care for mankind.

The God whom we know and whom we call “Father,” loves those whom He has redeemed. This God is not some distant, austere demigod who ignores mankind; He is not a God who began all things and then allows matters to move ahead without His oversight. When we pray, we know that we are heard because He has promised He would hear all who pray in His Son’s Name. When we come to Him through His Son, we are assured that we will be welcomed. When we honour Him through worshipping Him, we know that our worship is acceptable because it is offered in the Name of His Only Begotten Son.

Long years before Jesus walked the Judean hills, Moses wrote this testimony of God: ““Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one” [DEUTERONOMY 6:4]. God has revealed Himself as unique; compared to the multiple Baals, Israel was informed that God stood alone. Muslims argue that we Christians worship three gods. In saying this, they show their ignorance of the Lord our God. We do not worship three gods—we worship one God who has revealed Himself as a triunity—Father, Son and Spirit. We do not worship God who manifests Himself at various times in differing manners; we know God as One in three Persons.

In the Word of God, we see the Father identified as Yahweh, the LORD, very God. Through Isaiah, the LORD declares:

“Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel
and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts:
‘I am the first and I am the last;
besides me there is no god.
Who is like me? Let him proclaim it.
Let him declare and set it before me,
since I appointed an ancient people.
Let them declare what is to come, and what will happen.’”

[ISAIAH 44:6, 7]

Again, God, through Isaiah, has declared of Himself:

“I am the LORD, and there is no other,
besides me there is no God;
I equip you, though you do not know me,”

[ISAIAH 45:5]

The LORD God presents Himself as Creator of all things. Listen as He speaks through Isaiah.

“Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer,
who formed you from the womb:
‘I am the LORD, who made all things,
who alone stretched out the heavens,
who spread out the earth by myself,’”

[ISAIAH 44:24]

Hear the Lord God as He speaks of His power to create on another occasion.

“To whom then will you compare me,
that I should be like him? says the Holy One.
Lift up your eyes on high and see:
who created these?
He who brings out their host by number,
calling them all by name,
by the greatness of his might,
and because he is strong in power
not one is missing.”

[ISAIAH 40:25, 26]

What is interesting to the believer is that the Spirit of God is also identified as Creator and as God. The Psalmist speaks of the Spirit as Creator:

“When you send forth your Spirit, [the animals] are created,
and you renew the face of the ground.”

[PSALM 104:30]

Doctor Luke records an incident in which Peter identified the Spirit as very God. “A man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, and with his wife’s knowledge he kept back for himself some of the proceeds and brought only a part of it and laid it at the apostles’ feet. But Peter said, ‘Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God.’ When Ananias heard these words, he fell down and breathed his last. And great fear came upon all who heard of it” [ACTS 5:1-5].

Jesus the Messiah is identified as very God. John speaks of Jesus as Creator when he writes, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it” [JOHN 1:1-5].

Later, John writes of Jesus, “No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him” [JOHN 1:18, NASB]. Clearly, John was convinced of Jesus’ divine nature.

Throughout Scripture, Jesus is presented as very God. Paul writes, “To [the Jews] belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen” [ROMANS 9:5].

As Peter begins the missive we know as Second Peter, he writes, “From Simeon Peter, a slave and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ, have been granted a faith just as precious as ours” [2 PETER 1:1, NET BIBLE]. The terms “God and Savior” both refer to the same person, Jesus Christ. This is one of the clearest statements in the NT concerning the deity of Christ.

The True and Living God has revealed Himself to us as Jesus. “No one has ever seen God. The only one, himself God, who is in closest fellowship with the Father, has made God known” [JOHN 1:18, NET BIBLE].

Theology in this day in the western mind is seemingly formulated through wishful thinking and a warm, fuzzy feeling. Consequently, God, if He is considered at all, is a benign figure removed from most interaction with His world. As I have noted on other occasions, contemporary theology has created a novel theology named **MORALISTIC THERAPEUTIC DEISM**. Permit me to remind you of the tenets of **MORALISTIC THERAPEUTIC DEISM**.

1. A God exists who created and orders the world and watches over human life on earth.
2. God wants people to be good, nice and fair to each other, as taught in the Bible and by most world religions.
3. The central goal of life is to be happy and to feel good about oneself.
4. God does not need to be particularly involved in one's life except when God is needed to resolve a problem.
5. Good people go to heaven when they die.²

It is an appealing theology—it demands nothing of adherents and yet offers them all that anyone could imagine God is able to give. This theology allows man to do pretty much whatever he wants without being bothered by the need to know the will of God. Adherents of this strange, new (though assuredly ancient) religion manage occasionally to throw God a brief acknowledgement, provided they have nothing better to do. They will sing choruses that make them feel good about themselves, seek affirmation that their life choices are good and continue living pretty much as they have always lived.

The True and Living God is not at all like that, however. The Psalmist Asaph contrasts the popular conception of God—even as it then existed—and the reality.

“God says this to the evildoer:
‘How can you declare my commands,
and talk about my covenant?
For you hate instruction
and reject my words.
When you see a thief, you join him;
you associate with men who are unfaithful to their wives.
You do damage with words,
and use your tongue to deceive.
You plot against your brother;
you slander your own brother.
When you did these things, I was silent,
so you thought I was exactly like you.
But now I will condemn you
and state my case against you!’”

[PSALM 50:16-21, NET BIBLE]

Focus on the latter part of the **TWENTY-FIRST VERSE**: “You thought I was exactly like you.” The condemnation is that those who thought they worshipped imagined that worship consisted of doing their religious duties rather than living a godly and holy life!

² Christian Smith with Melinda Lundquist Denton, **Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers** (Oxford University Press, New York 2005) 162-3

When the LORD God passed before Moses, showing His back, He pronounced His Name: “The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation” [EXODUS 34:6, 7]. This is the God we know, the God we serve, the God before Whom we bow—this is the One True God we worship. He has showed us mercy and redeemed our lives through His Son.

ONE MEDIATOR — The Apostle has presented God as though setting the stage for the broad concept. Then, he narrows the focus, turning our attention to Jesus, the Son of God. This is appropriate, as the Son of God is presented as the centre of message of life. I want to return to a portion of the Word we considered earlier. Think again of what John wrote in his prologue.

“The Word became flesh and took up residence among us. We saw his glory—the glory of the one and only, full of grace and truth, who came from the Father. John testified about him and shouted out, ‘This one was the one about whom I said, “He who comes after me is greater than I am, because he existed before me.”’ For we have all received from his fullness one gracious gift after another. For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came about through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. The only one, himself God, who is in closest fellowship with the Father, has made God known” [JOHN 1:14-18, NRSV].

God chose to reveal Himself through the Son. When the People of Israel were to be delivered from Egyptian bondage, God appointed Moses to lead them through the wilderness and to the Jordan. God presented Himself through terrifying phenomena when communicating with Moses or manifesting His power to the Israelites. When Moses was called to go up on the mountain to meet God, the scene was awe inspiring. We read of that time when he first received the Ten Words from the hand of God. “On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled. Then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they took their stand at the foot of the mountain. Now Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke because the LORD had descended on it in fire. The smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain trembled greatly. And as the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him in thunder. The LORD came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain” [EXODUS 19:16-20].

Soon after this, Moses took leaders with him and went again into the mountain. “Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, and they saw the God of Israel. There was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness. And he did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; they beheld God, and ate and drank” [EXODUS 24:9-11]. This is the same Nadab and Abihu who would later be struck down because of their presumption [see LEVITICUS 10:1-3; NUMBERS 26:61].

What is tragic about the revelation of God’s majestic glory is that though the people experienced His powerful presence, they quickly grew casual about being in His presence. Nadab and Abihu dishonoured their position and attempted to worship God according to their own desire rather than doing what God commanded. Though Moses was on the mountain receiving the Ten Words, the people quickly grew restless. “When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered themselves together to Aaron and said to him, ‘Up, make us gods who shall go before us. As for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him’” [EXODUS 32:1].

There is an awful truth discovered in this review of the interaction of the LORD God and His chosen people—**MAN GROWS CASUAL IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD WHEN ALL HE HAS ARE AWESOME DEMONSTRATIONS OF POWER.** We long to see God work in power; but the very thing that first drives us to our knees soon becomes routine, and our fallen nature impels us to become casual with the Lord God. If we will honour God, we must know Him as God and honour Him as He instructs us. It pleased God that when He would give the final revelation of Himself to mankind to present the Son of God.

Jesus came, not in powerful manifestations of might and glory; rather, He presented Himself as a little babe born in the most humble of circumstances. Later, in this same letter, Paul will quote a hymn that appears to have been current among the faithful: “Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness:

‘God was manifested in the flesh,
Justified in the Spirit,
Seen by angels,
Preached among the Gentiles,
Believed on in the world,
Received up in glory’”

[1 TIMOTHY 3:16, NKJV].

At His baptism, identifying with mankind, the Father gave His approval of the Son. “Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, ‘I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?’ But Jesus answered him, ‘Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.’ Then he consented. And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, ‘This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased’” [MATTHEW 3:13-17].

In similar fashion, the Father approved Jesus as the Chosen One who would reveal God to mankind. “A cloud came and overshadowed [Jesus and the three disciples], and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, ‘This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him’” [LUKE 9:34, 35]!

As the Father would point mankind to the Son, so the Spirit of God points mankind to the Son. Preparing His disciples for His exodus, Jesus taught, “I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you... These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you” [JOHN 14:16, 17, 25, 26].

Shortly, Jesus would speak again of the Spirit of God as He taught His disciples. “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you” [JOHN 16:13, 14]. The Spirit of God was to point to the Son of God. Never, would the Spirit draw attention to Himself through awesome demonstrations. Efforts to induce spiritual experiences dishonour the Son of God and expose us to grave spiritual danger.

Anyone—any experience—that fails to point to the Son of God cannot be of God. Christ Jesus is the One Mediator given to bridge the gulf between man and God. It pleased the Triune God to present this Jesus, pointing mankind to Him, rather than seeking ostentatious demonstrations of majesty and glory. To be certain, when Jesus comes again, it shall be on clouds of glory and in great power. Now, however, it has pleased the Father that Jesus should be seen as one of us, so that no one need be frightened or terrified.

This truth comforts us. As the writer of the Letter to Hebrew Christians has written, “Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need” [HEBREWS 4:14-16].

ONE GREAT NEED — I find the context of Paul’s statement fascinating. He is speaking of offering up “supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings” for all people, and especially for those who govern. We pray for national leaders precisely because we long to see people redeemed. We pray for those in authority precisely because we know that Jesus gave Himself for all mankind. The heart of Paul’s admonition is awareness of our great need.

All people are estranged from God. We were created to know God, to walk in concord with Him and to enjoy Him. Our first parents chose to rebel against His will, plunging the race into disastrous ruin. Now, man, through his own efforts, can only grope blindly in deep darkness as he futilely attempts to find God. Understand a significant truth: God is not lost, man is lost. No one can claim, “I found God.” God was never lost. One who is redeemed can claim, “God found me and rescued me,” because it is man who is lost.

In his ruined, fallen condition, man could seek mercy from God, endeavouring to please God through presenting a sacrifice because of his fallen condition. However, there was always need for another sacrifice precisely because any person is fallen and will sin again. The author of the Letter to Hebrew Christians makes this quite clear when he writes, “Since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins? But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins” [HEBREWS 10:1-4].

What is required is a sacrifice that is infinite, able to assuage the wrath of Holy God and sufficient to atone for sin. What is needed is a sacrifice that does not need to be presented again and again. That requirement is met through the presentation of Jesus, the Son of God as the infinite sacrifice. I am thrilled when I read of Jesus’ work that secures my acceptance before the True and Living God. “When Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God” [HEBREWS 9:11-14].

Christ's sacrifice of Himself for mankind was sufficient because He is very God in flesh. "When Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified" [HEBREWS 10:12-14].

Jesus came to earth for one great, singular reason—He came to present Himself as a sacrifice for sinful man. Earlier in this First Letter to Timothy, the Apostle Paul has written, "The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" [1 TIMOTHY 1:15]. In saying this, Paul is but iterating Jesus' own words. Jesus was focused on this great task. To religious leaders who were offended that He would reach out to wicked people, Jesus said, "The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost" [LUKE 19:10]. On another occasion, when other religious leaders grumbled because He deigned eat with "sinners," Jesus said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners" [MATTHEW 9:12, 13].

Our great need is One who can deliver us from the judgement we deserve because of our rebellious, sinful nature. That One is Jesus, the Son of God. The Apostle contrasted our condition before we knew the Saviour and what we now enjoy when he wrote the Roman saints. "Just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.

"For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" [ROMANS 6:19-23].

I was recently criticised because I don't dig deeply enough to satisfy the prurient curiosity of the one complaining. He conceded that I used a lot of Scripture, but I didn't provide insight that gratified him. May I say quite candidly that I can never explain the great mysteries God has presented; all I can do is present what God has said, trusting that His Spirit can draw those whom He calls to receive this Word. I have a simple message that the most simple among us can understand, and one that satisfies the one who longs to know more of our God. I plead guilty to the statement a former student made of me many years past. "Doctor Stark only has two messages, 'Get saved' and 'Live like you're saved.'" Can there actually be another message? If we will honour God, this is the message given by the Master, prompted by the Spirit and honouring to the Father.

Let me ask this question of you who listen: Are you saved? Have you accepted the gift of life secured by this One who is the One Mediator? I am not particularly concerned to know if you are religious, but I am quite serious in stating that you must be born from above. Christ Jesus gave His life as a sacrifice in your place. He was buried and He conquered death, rising from the dead. Now, the Word of God is very clear in the promise, "If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is my Master,' believing in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be set free. It is with the heart that one believes and is declared right with the Father, and with the mouth that one confesses and is set at liberty." You know very well that Paul concludes by quoting the Prophet Joel, "Everyone who calls on the Name of the Lord will be saved," [ROMANS 10:9, 10, 13]. I pray this includes you. Amen.