

# Scriptural Truths

## E-Mail Meditations

The Lord Will Come . . . Perhaps Today . . . Behold, I Come Quickly . . . Rev. 22:7

No. 64

June 2017

### Facts In The Book Of Romans

#### Introduction

It doesn't really matter if I do not like it, I can argue that it is not right, I can deny it, I can tell my wife and children not to mention it, but it stands like Mont Blanc for all to see! What is it? I am getting older! No matter what I do, the stark fact remains, not only did my parents tell me, but I have the official piece of paper from the Royal Maternity Hospital in Belfast issued by the Northern Ireland Government that I, Rowan Jennings, was born on February 1st 1944! Whither I like it or not is totally irrelevant.

There are other facts a lot more serious than when I was born or how old I am. They concern my spirit, for the fact remains, it will never die.

The age old question is, "Why do we age?" "Why do we die?" All sorts of creams, denials, etc. can act as cover-ups, but the fact is, we are all getting older and since time does not stop, I am closer to death now than I was one minute ago.

More importantly than the facts my mum and dad told me are the facts God tells each of us. Since God is true, "but every man a liar" (Rom. 3:4), it is intelligent to take heed to that which He states.

#### God's Facts

The book of Romans was written to four groups of people:

- a) Those who were saved from the penalty of their sins, called "saints" (Rom. 1:7).
- b) Those who were "outwardly not as bad as others but just as bad in secret" (Rom. 1:32-2:5).
- c) Those who were under varying levels of the judgment of God while still alive but with opportunity for salvation (Rom. 1:21-32).
- d) Those who were ultra religious following the law (Rom. 2:17-29).
  - i) It is to the latter three groups Paul is concerned with and as he writes, he instructs those of the first group on the facts of salvation.

#### His Thesis

- a) The universal need of salvation whither they are Greeks, Barbarians, wise and unwise, Jew or Gentile (Rom. 1:14, 16).
- b) The righteousness of God in salvation (Rom. 1:17).
- c) Salvation is granted on the grounds of faith (Rom. 1:17).

1) First Fact - The increasing depravity of man.

- a) The universal need of salvation (Rom. 1:21-31). Why do people sin? This Paul will begin to answer by writing in this section and then begin again from a different perspective in chapters 2:12-7:6. He wrote, "When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God" (Rom. 1:21). It began with the rebellious attitude of insubordination. Then attitude became action on two levels, "They glorified Him not as God" (Rom. 1:21), and "neither were thankful" (Rom. 1:21). These they had control over but they could not control the effect such had on their lives (Rom. 1:21-31) as God increasingly "gave them up" (Rom. 1:24, 26) and "gave them over" (Rom. 1:28).
  - i) Those who were under varying levels of the judgment of God while still alive but with opportunity for salvation (Rom. 1:21-32). This group of people deemed themselves to be more intelligent than God. In their evaluation developing wickedness was progression and liberation, imagined theories were and are to them indicators of increasing intelligence, and with their imagined importance, they dishonor God. They did this by:
    1. Lowering Him to be like corruptible man, that is, someone with whom they could debate and stand in opposition to
    2. Others made Him like a bird, something which could be beautiful to look at, admire, and be enthralled with
    3. Others made Him like a four footed beast, a little dog or cow, something that is useful due to what I can get out of it
    4. Finally, others made God like a creeping thing, that which man could stomp on without fear of consequences (Rom. 1:23).
  - ii) The second group are hypocrites for while they would not openly worship idols, yet it is done more subtly. They consider there is nothing wrong with "gay pride parades" and watching them, or going to admire paganism in the form of what is called "native culture", being void of natural affection which we see in abortions when mothers let the little babies get ripped apart, but they would not do such. To them God gives the warning, "Thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?" (Rom. 2:3)
  - iii) The third group are the religious church going people. They are those who walk on the clean side of the street and are clean living people (Rom. 2:17-29). These people know what is right for they have the law and a God consciousness (Rom. 2:17), possibly holding a position in a church, and think that by observing the commands and religious ritual of the law and the church salvation is almost assured.
    1. God's summary:
      - (a) All humanity are under sin, controlled by a power they cannot break, and the result is universal depravity without exception (Rom. 3:10-18). All humanity, as individuals, will stand before God with every mouth stopped (Rom. 3:19), no excuses and no extenuating circumstances. Man constantly sins and nothing he can do on his own can help him gain salvation. Even after Paul was saved he admits, "I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good . . . . For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do" (Rom. 7:14-19).

2) Second fact - Salvation is by faith without the works of the law.

- a) Paul, by inspiration, makes several vital points. First, Abraham was before the law and David after the law, and the unspoken question being answered is, "How were they justified?" Abraham could not be justified by works of the law for it had not been given, and David could not have been justified because he broke the law. They were both justified on the grounds of faith without works! (Rom. 4:3-7)
- b) On this point of faith many stumble. Let me state clearly, "faith is not a work", man does not get justified by having the right sort of faith or the right amount of faith. Faith is not a commodity, a work (Rom. 4:4). Before salvation the individual trusted, had faith in their church affiliation, rituals, personal works etc., as the means of justification. They are genuine, sincere people who earnestly desire to be in Heaven when they leave this earthly sphere. But, when the time came or comes, when seeing that such works could never justify and cleanse them from their sins, they transferred their faith to the finished work of Christ on the cross. They saw the truth that "all the doing had been done" when the Lord cried, "It is finished" (Jn. 19:30), and believing God, they consciously put their faith, their eternal salvation, wholly dependent on the person and work of Christ.

- 3) Third fact - I can know I am justified before God before I die and before the judgment.
- a) There are many thousands who, like my grandma, believed that no one could know they were saved or justified by God until the judgment, when the good deeds would be on one side of the scale and the bad on other. Which ever one was the heavier determined where the individual went for eternity. This is fiction. The true fact is we can know, while in the body, that we have eternal life (1 Jn. 5:13) and are justified (Rom. 4:24-25) by believing on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead.
  - b) Paul puts it very beautifully when he wrote, “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ . . . and rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Rom. 5:1-2). What a “peace” this is! The individual who is justified never again has to be concerned about “have they done sufficient good works?”; “Has the rituals they performed satisfied the claims of God?”; “How long will I be in purgatory?”. The release from the eternal consequences of my sins is banished and for the balance of my life, know that when I sleep never to awaken in this life, I will be with the Lord. Blessed assurance. It also means that the relationship I have with God can never be broken and the individual can live in the assurance of sharing the glory of God.
  - c) Some might say Paul used the word “hope” and that is not an absolute. There is the need to understand how we use the word “hope”. In Greek it means two different things. In our world, to “hope”, for example, to paint the house, it means that it might happen and might not. The word “hope” in Greek, “elpis”, means a confident expectation. Thus, the wording teaches that those who are justified have the confident expectation and joyous anticipation of sharing the glory of God.

### Conclusion

At times we sing, “*We have an anchor which keeps the soul, steadfast and sure*”, these are not just theoretical pie in the sky dreams, but are actual facts given by God. God never deals in theories but in absolutes, and irrespective of where an individual is in the world geographically, historically, or culturally, these facts remain unchangeable. Thank God for the undisputed way of salvation and it’s eternal blessings.

. . . *Rowan Jennings*

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