

Speaking to the soul



Loved and called

I am writing to all of you in Rome who are loved by God and are called to be his own holy people. Romans 1:7

Paul's letter to the church in Rome is sometimes described as the Gospel according to Paul. It's not a bad description because in this letter he gives the fullest explanation of his understanding of the good news of Jesus Christ. Paul never met Jesus during his earthly ministry but his miraculous meeting with God on the road to Damascus turned his life upside down. From that moment on he lived for Jesus and sought to encourage others to do the same.

Paul began his letter by explaining that he had been called by God and was a slave to Jesus. Paul had an incredibly tough ministry, but it was founded upon the complete security of his relationship with God. That's what sustained him when he was imprisoned, stoned, shipwrecked, mocked, accused and betrayed.

Having had the privilege of fostering, my wife and I often reflect on the importance of 'attachment' – the relationship that a child has with their parent or carer. Everything flows from the presence or absence of that secure bond. It is exactly the same in the Christian life. As we form a strong and secure relationship with God, we are able, like Paul, to face any challenge or disappointment.

In today's verse Paul addresses the members of the church in Rome. It was probably only a small group of people, and they were living in the heart of the great Roman empire where their beliefs would have been completely alien to the majority of people. Every day was a struggle, so Paul reminds them of their secure attachment to God. They were not only loved but also called by God. Whatever opposition they faced, they were safe in God's hands forever. However you feel today, look to God and remind yourself that you are both loved and called by him.

QUESTION

How does it affect your life today to know that you are both loved and called by God?

PRAYER

Loving Father, thank you that you love me and have called me to belong to your holy people. Amen