

The Gospel and God's Righteousness (23)

Pastor Eddie Idefonso

[Romans 1:1-17](#)

(Continuation from 01/17/16)

C. Paul's Boldness for Christ: Unashamedness of the Gospel, [Romans 1:16-17](#)

Romans 1:16-17 (NASB)

¹⁶“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the **power** of God for **salvation** to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”

¹⁷“For in it *the* **righteousness** of God is revealed from **faith** to faith; as it is written, “But the righteous *man* shall live by faith.”

(Romans 1:16-17) Introduction: these two verses contain one of the greatest summaries of the gospel ever written. It is a clear declaration of God's power to save all who believe, no matter their nationality or condition. It is a clear explanation of why Paul was never ashamed of the gospel.

1. **It is the good news from God Himself (v.16).**
2. **It is the power of God to save (v.16).**
3. **It is the revelation of God's righteousness (v.17).**

(Romans 1:16-18) Another Outline: The Power or Urgency of the Gospel.

1. **It saves (v.16).**
2. **It reveals the righteousness of God (v.17).**
3. **It makes possible a life of faith (v.17).**
4. **It delivers from the wrath of God (v.18).**

(Romans 1:16-18) Another Outline: Paul's Four "For's."

1. **For I am not ashamed (v.16).**
2. **For the Gospel is the power of God (v.16).**
3. **For the righteousness of God is revealed (v.17).**
4. **For the wrath of God is revealed (v.18).**

After having gained the attention of his readers by explaining the purpose of his writing and then introducing himself ([Romans 1:1-15](#)), Paul now states the thesis of the epistle. These two verses express the theme of the book of Romans, and they contain the most life-transforming truth God has put into men's hands. To understand and positively respond to this truth is to have one's time and eternity completely altered. These words summarize the gospel of Jesus Christ, which Paul then proceeds to unfold and explain throughout the remainder of the epistle. For that reason, our comments here will be somewhat brief and a more detailed discussion of these themes will come later in the study.

01-24-16

Series: The Book of Romans

As noted at the close of the last chapter, the introductory phrase “**for I am not ashamed of the gospel**” adds a final mark of spiritual service to those presented in [verses 8-15](#), the mark of unashamed boldness.

Romans 1:16-17 (NASB)

¹⁶ “**For I am not ashamed of the gospel**, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.
¹⁷ For in it *the* righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “**BUT THE RIGHTEOUS *man* SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.**”

Paul was imprisoned in **Philippi**, chased out of **Thessalonica**, smuggled out of **Damascus** and **Berea**, laughed at in **Athens**, considered a fool in **Corinth**, and declared a blasphemer and lawbreaker in **Jerusalem**. He was stoned and left for dead at **Lystra**. Some pagans of Paul’s day branded Christianity as atheism because it believed in only one God and as being cannibalistic because of a misunderstanding of the Lord’s Supper.

But the Jewish religious leaders of **Jerusalem** did not intimidate Paul, nor did the learned and influential pagans at **Ephesus**, **Athens**, and **Corinth**. The apostle was eager now to preach and teach the gospel in Rome, the capital of the pagan empire that ruled virtually all the known world. He was never deterred by opposition, never disheartened by criticism, and never **ashamed**, for any reason, **of the gospel** of Jesus Christ. Although that **gospel** was then, and still is today, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, it is the only way God has provided for the salvation of men, and Paul was both overjoyed and emboldened by the privilege of proclaiming its truth and power wherever he went.

Although every true believer knows it is a serious sin to be ashamed of his Savior and Lord, **he also knows the difficulty of avoiding that sin**. When we have opportunity to speak for Christ, we often do not. We know the gospel is unattractive, intimidating, and repulsive to the natural, unsaved person and to the ungodly spiritual system that now dominates the world. The gospel exposes man’s sin, wickedness, depravity, and lostness, and it declares pride to be despicable and works’ righteousness to be worthless in God’s sight. To the sinful heart of unbelievers, the gospel does not appear to be good news but bad, and when they first hear it they often react with disdain against the one presenting it or throw out arguments and theories against it. For that reason, fear of men and of not being able to handle their arguments is doubtlessly the single greatest snare in witnessing.

It is said that if a circle of **white chalk** is traced on the floor around a goose that it will not leave the circle for fear of crossing the white mark. In a similar way, the chalk marks of criticism, ridicule, tradition, and rejection prevent many believers from leaving the security of Christian fellowship to witness to the unsaved.

The so-called **health and wealth gospel** that has swept through much of the church today is not offensive to the world because it offers what the world wants. But that spurious gospel does not offer **the gospel** of Jesus Christ. Like the false teaching of the Judaizers, that is “**a different gospel**,” that is, not the gospel at all but an ungodly distortion ([Galatians 1:6-7](#)).

01-24-16

Series: The Book of Romans

Galatians 1:6-7 (NASB)

⁶“I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel;

⁷ which is *really* not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.”

Jesus strongly condemned the motives of worldly success and comfort, and those who appeal to such motives play right into the hands of Satan.

A scribe once approached Jesus and said, “**Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go.**” **Matthew 8:19 (NASB)** Knowing the man was unwilling to give up his comforts in order to be a disciple, the Lord answered:

Matthew 8:19-20 (NASB)

¹⁹“Then a scribe came and said to Him, “Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go.”

²⁰ Jesus said to him, “The foxes have holes and the birds of the air *have* nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.”

Shortly after that, “**another of the disciples said to Him, ‘Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father’**”. **Matthew 8:21 (NASB)** The phrase “**bury my father**” did not refer to a funeral service but was a colloquialism for awaiting the father’s death in order to receive the inheritance. Jesus therefore told the man:

Matthew 8:22 (NASB)

²² But Jesus said to him, “Follow Me, and allow the dead to bury their own dead.”

Geoffrey Wilson wrote, “The unpopularity of a crucified Christ has prompted many to present a message which is more palatable to the unbeliever, but the removal of the offense of the cross always renders the message ineffective. An inoffensive gospel is also an inoperative gospel. Thus Christianity is wounded most in the house of its friends”. (***Romans: A Digest of Reformed Comment*** [Carlisle, Pa.: Banner of Truth, 1976], p. 24).

Some years ago I spoke at a conference, after which the wife of the pastor approached me. Expressing an unbiblical mentality that is common in the church today, she said, “**Your message offended me, because you preached as if all of these people were sinners.**” I replied, “**I’m glad it came across that way because that is exactly the message I wanted to communicate.**”

Paul’s supreme passion was to see men saved. He cared nothing for personal comfort, popularity, or reputation. He offered no compromise of the gospel, because he knew it is the only power available that can change lives for eternity.