

# The Gospel and God's Righteousness (24)

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[Romans 1:1-17](#)

(Continuation from 01/24/16)

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

**Romans 1:16-17 (NASB)**

<sup>16</sup> "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."

<sup>17</sup> "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."

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](#)).

**Galatians 1:6-7 (NASB)**

<sup>6</sup> "I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel;  
<sup>7</sup> 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)**

<sup>19</sup> "Then a scribe came and said to Him, "Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go."

<sup>20</sup> 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)**

<sup>22</sup> But Jesus said to him, "Follow Me, and allow the dead to bury their own dead."

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**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.

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 \(v.17\).](#)

**1. ([Romans 1:16](#)) [Gospel— Ashamed: Paul was not ashamed of the gospel, because it was the good news from God Himself; that is, the gospel is the news that God has given to the world and wants proclaimed to the world.](#)**

**[Romans 1:16 \(NASB\)](#)**

**<sup>16</sup> 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.**

The fact that the gospel had been given by God Himself made Paul unashamed of the gospel. No man should ever be ashamed of anything concerning the Sovereign Majesty of the universe. However, Paul had every reason to be ashamed.

1. Paul’s day was a day of moral degeneracy, the hideous days of Nero. Rome was a moral sewer, a cesspool of detestable and inconceivable wickedness. Such a day stood diametrically opposed to the moral righteousness of the gospel.

2. Paul was by nationality a Jew, a race that was thought by many of that day to be a despicable sub-human race, worthy only to be cursed, ill-used, and enslaved. Naturally, Paul would be apprehensive among non-Jews. In the flesh he would be tempted to shy away from them.

3. The gospel Paul preached was almost unbelievable. A male member of the despicable Jewish race was said to be the Savior of the world, and not only was He said to be a Jew, He was said to be a mere man like all other men. But not only that, His death was said to be different from the death of other men. He was said to have died “**for all other men,**” that is, in their place, as a substitute for them. And then to top it all, He was said to have risen from the dead. His resurrection was said to be the proof that He was the very Son of God. Such

unbelievable claims made the gospel a contemptible thing in the minds of many. A natural man would shrink from making such phenomenal claims.

4. Paul was often rejected, not by just a few persons, but by whole communities. The authorities imprisoned him in **Philippi** ([Acts 16:19-23](#)).

[Acts 16:19-23 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>19</sup> **“But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the market place before the authorities,**

<sup>20</sup> **and when they had brought them to the chief magistrates, they said, “These men are throwing our city into confusion, being Jews,**

<sup>21</sup> **and are proclaiming customs which it is not lawful for us to accept or to observe, being Romans.”**

<sup>22</sup> **The crowd rose up together against them, and the chief magistrates tore their robes off them and proceeded to order *them* to be beaten with rods.**

<sup>23</sup> **When they had struck them with many blows, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to guard them securely.”**

The religionists ran him out of Thessalonica and threatened his life in **Berea** ([Acts 17:5-15](#)).

[Acts 17:5-15 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>5</sup> **“But the Jews, becoming jealous and taking along some wicked men from the market place, formed a mob and set the city in an uproar; and attacking the house of Jason, they were seeking to bring them out to the people.**

<sup>6</sup> **When they did not find them, they *began* dragging Jason and some brethren before the city authorities, shouting, “These men who have upset the world have come here also;**

<sup>7</sup> **and Jason has welcomed them, and they all act contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus.”**

<sup>8</sup> **They stirred up the crowd and the city authorities who heard these things.**

<sup>9</sup> **And when they had received a pledge from Jason and the others, they released them.**

<sup>10</sup> **The brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews.**

<sup>11</sup> **Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily *to see* whether these things were so.**

<sup>12</sup> **Therefore many of them believed, along with a number of prominent Greek women and men.**

<sup>13</sup> **But when the Jews of Thessalonica found out that the word of God had been proclaimed by Paul in Berea also, they came there as well, agitating and stirring up the crowds.**

<sup>14</sup> **Then immediately the brethren sent Paul out to go as far as the sea;**

and Silas and Timothy remained there.

<sup>15</sup> Now those who escorted Paul brought him as far as Athens; and receiving a command for Silas and Timothy to come to him as soon as possible, they left.”

The intellectuals laughed him out of Athens ([Acts 17:32](#); cp. [Acts 17:16-32](#)).

[Acts 17:32 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>32</sup> “Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some *began* to sneer, but others said, “We shall hear you again concerning this.”

[Acts 17:16-32 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>16</sup> “Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was being provoked within him as he was observing the city full of idols.

<sup>17</sup> So he was reasoning in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing *Gentiles*, and in the market place every day with those who happened to be present.

<sup>18</sup> And also some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers were conversing with him. Some were saying, “What would this idle babbler wish to say?” Others, “He seems to be a proclaimer of strange deities,”—because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection.

<sup>19</sup> And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, “May we know what this new teaching is which you are proclaiming?”

<sup>20</sup> For you are bringing some strange things to our ears; so we want to know what these things mean.”

<sup>21</sup> (Now all the Athenians and the strangers visiting there used to spend their time in nothing other than telling or hearing something new.)

<sup>22</sup> So Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, “Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects.

<sup>23</sup> For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, ‘TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.’ Therefore what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you.

<sup>24</sup> The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands;

<sup>25</sup> nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all *people* life and breath and all things;

<sup>26</sup> and He made from one *man* every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined *their* appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation,

<sup>27</sup> that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;

<sup>28</sup> for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we also are His children.’

<sup>29</sup> Being then the children of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and thought of man.

<sup>30</sup> Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all *people* everywhere should repent,

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**<sup>31</sup> because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead."**

**<sup>32</sup> Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some *began* to sneer, but others said, "We shall hear you again concerning this."**

His message was *considered foolishness to the intellectuals (the Greeks)* and a *stumbling block to his own people (the Jews)*. There were several times in Paul's life when he could have given up in shame and fled to some part of the earth to begin life all over again.