

06-19-16

Series: The Book of Romans

The Gospel and God's Righteousness (33)

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Romans 1:1-17

(Continuation from 06/12/16)

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.”

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).

2. (Romans 1:16) Gospel— God, Power of— Salvation: Paul is not ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of God to save.

Romans 1:16 (NASB)

¹⁶For 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.

Note **four significant facts.**

1. The word “power” (*dunamis*) means the might, energy, force, and strength that is within God.
2. The word “salvation” must be understood and grasped by every person upon earth.
3. God saves all who believe.
4. God saves all nationalities, both Jew and Greek.

4. God saves all nationalities, both Jew and Greek. Note the word “**first.**” This does not mean favoritism, but *first in time*. God does not have favorites, favoring the Jew over the Gentile. It simply means the gospel was to be carried to the Jew first. They had been the channel through whom God had sent His Word and His prophets and eventually His Son into the world. Therefore, they were to be reached first; then the gospel was to be carried to the Greeks, that is, to all nationalities.

The point is twofold.

- a. The gospel is God's power, and it can reach any nationality and any person, no matter who they are.

- b. Therefore, no one is to be exempt from the gospel.
1. No messenger is to *exempt anyone* from the gospel.
 2. No person is to *exempt himself* from the gospel. The gospel is for everyone, no matter his race, color, condition, circumstance, or depravity.

John 7:37 (NASB)

³⁷ Now on the last day, the great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink.”

Romans 10:12-13 (NASB)

¹² For there is no distinction [difference] between Jew and Greek; for the same *Lord* is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him;

¹³ for “Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

1 Timothy 2:4 (NASB)

⁴ Who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Revelation 22:17 (NASB)

¹⁷ The Spirit and the bride say, “Come.” And let the one who hears say, “Come.” And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life [freely] without cost.

3. (Romans 1:17) Righteousness: Paul is not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the revelation of God’s righteousness.

Romans 1:17 (NASB)

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.**”

Righteousness

*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.” (1:17)*

The fourth key word Paul uses here regarding the gospel is **righteousness**, a term he uses over **thirty-five times** in the book of Romans alone. Faith activates the divine power that brings salvation, and in that sovereign act **the righteousness of God is revealed**. A better rendering is *from*. [“**the righteousness from God is revealed.**”]

Paul confessed to the Philippians,

Philippians 3:8-9 (NASB)

⁸ “More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, ⁹ and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from *the* Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith.”

Romans 3:21-24 (NASB)

²¹ “But now apart from the Law *the* righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,
²² even *the* righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction;
²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
²⁴ being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.”

The German pietist Count Zinzendorf wrote, in a profound hymn,
Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
'Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head.
Bold shall I stand in Thy great day,
For who aught to my charge shall lay?
Fully absolved through these I am,
From sin and fear, from guilt and shame.

From faith to faith seems to parallel “everyone who believes” in the previous verse. If so, the idea is “**from faith to faith to faith to faith,**” as if Paul were singling out the faith of each individual believer.

Salvation by His grace working through man’s faith was always God’s plan, as Paul here implies in quoting from [Habakkuk 2:4](#), as it is written, “**But the righteous man shall live by faith.**” Abraham, the father of the faithful, believed, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness ([Romans 4:3](#)), just as every person’s genuine faith, before and after Abraham, has been reckoned to him as righteousness (see [Hebrews 11:4-40](#)).

Romans 4:3 (NASB)

³ “For what does the Scripture say? “**ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.**”

There is emphasis here on the continuity of faith. It is not a one-time act, but a way of life. The true believer made righteous will live in faith all his life. Theologians have called this “the perseverance of the saints” (cf. [Colossians 1:22-23](#); [Hebrews 3:12-14](#)).

Colossians 1:22-23 (NASB)

²² “Yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach—

²³ if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.”

Hebrews 3:12-14 (NASB)

¹² “Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God.

¹³ But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is *still* called “Today,” so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.
¹⁴ For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end.”

Romans 1:17 (NASB)

¹⁷ “For in it *the righteousness of [from] God* is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “**BUT THE RIGHTEOUS *man* SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.**”

Note two points.

1. Man has a serious problem—that of thinking he is righteous.

The problem is easily seen by picturing the following:

- 1) ⇒ Man thinks that he is good enough and that he does enough good to be acceptable to God.
- 2) ⇒ Man thinks he is righteous and that he walks righteously enough to be acceptable to God.

However, there is one problem with man’s thinking: man is not perfect. But God is perfect, and He is perfectly righteous. Therefore, He cannot allow an unrighteous and imperfect being to live in His presence, not even man. Man just cannot live with God, not in his imperfect and unrighteous condition, for he would pollute the perfect world of God, the very ground and atmosphere and nature of heaven, of the spiritual world and dimension.

The only way man can live with God is to be made righteous, perfectly righteous. How can man be made perfectly righteous? The gospel gives the answer. The gospel is the revelation of God’s righteousness and reveals how man can be made righteous and reconciled to God.

Matthew 5:20 (NASB)

²⁰ “For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses *that of the scribes and Pharisees*, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.”

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NASB)

²¹ “He made Him who knew no sin *to be sin on our behalf*, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

2. The answer to man’s problem is faith. When a person believes the gospel—really believes that Christ saves him—God takes that person’s faith and *counts it* for righteousness. The person is not righteous; he is still imperfect, still corruptible, and still short of God’s glory as a sinful human being. But he does believe that Jesus Christ saves him. Such belief honors God’s Son, and because of that, God accepts and counts that person’s faith as righteousness. Therefore, he becomes acceptable to God. This is *justification*; this is what is meant by being justified before God.

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But note a most critical point: a person must *continue* to believe. A person must continue to live by faith from the very first moment of belief to the last moment of life on this earth, for it is his faith that God takes and counts as righteousness.

Romans 1:17 (NASB)

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.**”

What is meant by the two statements...

- 1) “from faith to faith,”
- 2) and, “the just shall live by faith”?

Very simply, the whole life of the believer is to be a life of faith, from beginning faith to ending faith, from faith to faith. Therefore, the righteousness of God is revealed *continuously* through all of life, from the beginning of a person’s faith to the ending of a person’s faith. As Scripture says:

Genesis 15:6 (NASB)

⁶“Then he believed in the LORD; and He **reckoned** it to him as righteousness.”

Acts 13:39 (NASB)

³⁹“And **through Him** everyone who believes is freed from all things, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses.”

Romans 1:17 (NASB)

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 3:28 (NASB)

²⁸“For we maintain that a man is **justified** by faith apart from works of the Law.”

Romans 4:3 (NASB)

³“For what does the Scripture say? “**ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.**”

Romans 4:23-24 (NASB)

²³“Now not for his sake only was it written that it was credited to him, ²⁴but for our sake also, to whom it will be credited, as those who **believe** in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.”

Romans 5:1 (NASB)

¹“Therefore, having been **justified** by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

1 Corinthians 6:11 (NASB)

¹¹“Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were **justified** in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.”

Galatians 3:24 (NASB)

²⁴“Therefore the Law has become our tutor *to lead us* to Christ, so that we may be **justified** by faith.”

Matthew 24:13 (NASB)

¹³“But the one who **endures** to the end, he will be saved.”