

Romans 1, lesson 7
3/8/19 Vv. 14-16, 3/8 lesson7

V. 14, *I am a debtor...Greeks, barbarians, wise, unwise*

As we will see, Paul preaches against debt, Romans 13:8 *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.*

V. 15, Paul's debt was to preach the gospel.

1 Corinthians 9:16 *For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!*

He considered himself in debt because he had been given a gift, and was set aside by God to reach both the Greeks and the Barbarians with the gospel of Christ. He considered himself in debt in getting the gospel to them.

Note that those who have been gifted by God to teach his word are in debt to those whom God has placed "under" them.

Greeks – those who prided themselves in knowledge. The Greeks are exalted even today for their humanistic knowledge. Plato and Aristotle are the best-known Greeks of the past.

Barbarians – those who were not Greeks were considered Barbarians. Barbarians probably meant all those who did not speak Greek. The world even today considers all who do not hold to ancient Greek thought Barbarians.

Wise – This class of people would be included in the Greeks, who prided themselves in their worldly wisdom.

1 Corinthians 1:17 *For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with **wisdom** of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. 18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish **foolishness**; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. 19 For it is written, I will destroy the **wisdom** of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. 20 Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made **foolish** the wisdom of this world? 21 For after that in the **wisdom** of God the world by **wisdom** knew not God, it pleased God by the **foolishness** of preaching to save them that believe. 22 For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after **wisdom**: 23 But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and*

unto the Greeks foolishness; 24 But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. 25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. 26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: 27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; 28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: 29 That no flesh should glory in his presence. 30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: 31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

Wisdom vs. Foolishness

The Wisdom of God is considered foolishness by the world. And we as Christians understand that what the world considers wisdom is utter foolishness.

Foolish—that is, things the world considers foolish. Example:

Psalms 119:97 MEM. *O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. 98 Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me. 99 I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation. 100 I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts.*

The wise of this world considers the law-word of God foolishness, but the Lord promises wisdom and understanding above and beyond the wisdom of this world to those who meditate on and love his law-word.

Foolishness of preaching. That is, those who are wise in their own eyes consider the preaching of the Gospel utter foolishness. They consider the Commandment of God foolishness, so the commandments must be removed and replaced by man's laws.

How many people have we met who, when we might invite them to hear the Gospel, think it is utter foolishness, and a waste of time?

We cannot expect the unregenerate man to find any attraction in the preaching of the gospel, unless the Spirit has placed a desire to hear.

Unwise – This would be those whom the world regards as ignorant and unpolished. The learned and unlearned. Today, those who have not finished school and gone to college, or have not advanced in the education held so important by the pagan world are considered **unwise**.

There is an interesting passage in Isaiah 29:9-16:

Stay yourselves, and wonder; cry ye out, and cry: they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink. 10 For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered. 11 And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed: 12 And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned. 13 Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men: 14 Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid. 15 Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the LORD, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us? 16 Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay: for shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding?

10 For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered.

Note here that being wise or unwise—that is, learned or unlearned—is not what determines understanding the Word of God.

No matter how wise the unsaved might, unless the Lord “wakes” them up, the word of God is foolishness to them.

Because of the Lord’s mercy to us, we, like Paul, owe a debt to everyone God opens a door to.

V. 15 tells us that his desire was to have fruit at Rome, and to strengthen the brethren.

So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome

also.

Luke 17:10 *So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.*

At every opportunity and according to his ability, he is ready to preach the gospel.

He is ready to show the power of the gospel even in the wicked capital of the world, Rome. He is looking forward to every opportunity that the Lord might offer to make known the gospel, which includes the serious and hard to understand doctrines that he will offer in this book.

We had a lady visit our church in Linden with one of our members from a small community a few miles away. She loved the church, and attended a bible study at her friend's house. She came to church a few times, yet her husband refused to attend.

We asked her why, and this was her answer. She normally attended a Pentecostal church, and her husband had attended a few times with her. The last time he attended, the church was trying to get an evangelist to come preach. The evangelist required a certain amount of money before he would consider coming. They passed the offering plate 3 or 4 times until they got enough money for him to come. That was the last time he attended church.

As a pastor, I would never allow an evangelist to come who required a certain amount of money. However, we did have very popular evangelists who came every time he was in the area. He took whatever came in for an offering.

Are we ready at every opportunity? Do we look for opportunities?

Colossians 4:5 *Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. 6 Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, **that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.***

1 Peter 3:15 *But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with **meekness and fear:***

V. 15 closes the introduction or preface to the epistle. He has shown his deep interest in their welfare. Now he proceeds to present the great doctrines that he

wants them to understand.

Vv. 16-18

The next section is Romans 1:16-18, where he shows that the gospel is for the **justification** of all mankind through faith.

V. 16, I am not ashamed of the gospel...

The gospel is so simple that even a child can understand it. Because of its simplicity, the wise men of this world mock it. It is very easy to be intimidated by the paganism around us. We are made to feel ashamed of the Gospel.

We place too much attention on what people think, rather than placing our attention on the power of God in the Gospel.

Paul, as well as the rest of the Apostles, had been persecuted by the Greeks, the Barbarians, the wise who considered themselves the only men of Scriptural knowledge of the time, and also by the unwise—those considered beneath the wise.

Of Christ. The problem was over the claim that Christ was the long-expected Messiah. Though rejected by many, particularly the Jews, Paul was not ashamed of the gospel which stirred up such turmoil everywhere it was preached.

Power... Without the power of God, the Gospel as well as all of scripture is no more than a dead letter. Paul was bold in his presentation of the gospel, for he knew it alone had the power of God to change men, and thus change the world.

Since the fall, men have tried to change the world into the image of their own fallen image; that is, Humanism.

Power:

1) It is God's power, not man's.

2) It is the only power unto salvation. Many different methods of redeeming one's soul have been tried since Adam, but only the gospel had or has any power of redemption in them.

3) It is the only power that can enable one to understand the Word of God. The word of God is a dead letter without the power of God. Its truths are just boring

facts to the unconverted, but to the converted, it becomes a personal letter to them.

Unconverted men try to understand the word of God, they may preach great sounding sermons, and write many books, but they do not understand what they are speaking nor writing about. Their messages completely miss the gospel message.

To the unconverted, the word of God is not much more than a history book which contains a lot of interesting facts.

4) Only those who have experienced the power of the gospel can understand its power.

5) Skip

6) The power of God is the only thing that can united men and nations. It alone can turn former enemies into best of friends.

There are many prophecies that tell us that the day is coming when all nations will worship at the feet of King Jesus, the true New World Order:

Isaiah 11:9 *They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.*

Habakkuk 2:14 *For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.*

1 Corinthians 15:22 *For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. 23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. 24 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. 25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. 27 For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. 28 And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.*

Psalms 110:1 *The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.*

Matthew 22:44 *The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?*

Mark 12:36 *For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The LORD said to my*

Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.

Luke 20:43 *Till I make thine enemies thy footstool.*

Acts 2:35 *Until I make thy foes thy footstool.*

Hebrews 1:13 *But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?*

Hebrews 10:13 *From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. united one-time fows*

It is the only power given to us to confront the works of the kingdom of darkness.

7) The power of God is the only weapon we have against the enemy.

2 Corinthians 10:4 *(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) 5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;*

There is a great political struggle going on for power, but both sides only offer humanistic answers, so both sides must fail. Obviously, we must move in the conservative side, but neither side has the power to change man for the better. The power of the gospel is the only means to bring about change.

Unto salvation...

The word salvation (soteria) means deliverance, preservation, victory, and health, and it refers to material and temporal deliverance, as well as personal, national, temporal and material triumph. The biblical doctrine of salvation is so clearly one of victory, that it must be emphatically stated that salvation is not escape. Many pagan concepts of deliverance are really doctrines of escape. (R.J. Rushdoony, Salvation and Godly Rule, p. 1. Ross House Books.)

With the above definition of salvation, we must say that a great amount of "salvation" preaching even in professed bible believing churches is simply a pagan version of escapism.

To everyone that believeth... God's power unto life is not revealed to everyone, but only to those whom he chooses, as Paul will make clear.

How is God's power revealed?

1. In nature, in earthquakes, volcanoes, and weather of all kinds.

2. In freedom from the power of sin, which frees us from the power of the allures of the world, flesh and the devil.

3. In freedom from the penalty of sin.

4. In freedom of conscience

Hebrews 9:8 *The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: 9 Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; 10 Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. 11 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; 12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. 13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: 14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*

Hebrews 10:22 *Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.*

To here lesson 7