

The Righteousness of God

Sermon 2 in the Romans Series

Romans 1:8-17

I. Themes in verse 1-17

1. The Trinity v. 3-4
2. The Resurrection v. 4
3. The Gospel v. 15
4. The Salvation v. 16
5. The Righteousness of God v. 17
6. Faith – Justification by faith alone v. 17

II. Exposition: Paul's Motivation 1:7b-15

A. Paul's Commendation of this Church -- v. 8

B. Paul's Desire to Visit this Church v. 9-12

1. "For God is my witness." v. 9a
Rom. 9:1; 2 Cor. 1:23; Gal. 1:20; Phil. 1:8
2. He prayed for them v. 9b
3. He wanted to impart a spiritual gift v. 10-11
4. Not just one way Communication v. 12

C. The Commission given to Paul v. 13-15

Paul was sent by God to minister to the Gentiles – but it was always his practice to go to the Jews first.

1. The Jews were his own people – being a Jew himself.
2. The Jews would be aware of the OT – so Paul could take them from what they knew to what they did not know.
3. While most Jews rejected Jesus as Messiah – many did follow – including many priests.

4. This group that knew the OT Scriptures would form a solid beginning for a church.

He couldn't be in Rome – yet – so he preaches the gospel by writing this epistle.

III. Paul's Thesis Statement for this Epistle 1:16-17

Here is the HEART of the REFORMATION.

Justification by faith changed the church from cold dead ritualistic teachings of works for salvation.

v. 16

1. I am not ashamed
2. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation
3. Salvation comes through believing (faith)

v. 17

1. The righteousness of God

Psalm 98:2-3-- The LORD has made known his salvation;

he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations.

³ He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel.

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

Isaiah 46:13 – I bring near my righteousness; it is not far off,

and my salvation will not delay;

I will put salvation in Zion,

for Israel my glory."

Isaiah 51:5 -- My righteousness draws near, my salvation has gone out,

and my arms will judge the peoples; the coastlands hope for me, and for my arm they wait.

2. From faith to faith
(an idiom) As noted by Calvin – true faith progresses

3. The just shall live by faith (Habakuk 2:4)

Gal. 3:11 – no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for "**the just shall live by faith.**"

Heb. 10:37-39 -- "For yet a little while, *And* He who is coming will come and will not tarry.

³⁸ Now **the just shall live by faith**; But if *anyone* draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him."

³⁹ But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.

v. 16

1. I am not ashamed

Romans 6:21 – same Greek word.

I am sure we have all been ashamed to speak up at times.

Peter was overwhelmed in the moment of temptation – as the slave girl says, “I know you are one of them”. He denied it 3 times and was ashamed.

In **2 Timothy 1:8** -- Paul urged Timothy not to be ashamed – **11, 12**

Have you ever been ashamed of the gospel?

Have you ever held your tongue, not because it was the appropriate thing to do at the time – but out of shame and embarrassment.

In a culture built on honor/shame – crucifying Christ was to put an end to him once and for all by ultimately humiliating him and making him into a mockery, a lowly criminal, one to be despised and rejected instead of a hero.

1 Cor. 1:18-25

This verse fits in well with the rest of the chapter.

Professing to be wise – they come up with the most idiotic things.

And so much of what they come up with – are the same things that sinful man and sinful cultures have come up with for centuries.

The culture of Roman society in v. 18-32 sound very much like what we are experiencing in modern day Western society – Europe and America.

We’ll deal with that next week – but just let me say, Satan and the forces of evil are not so much “clever” coming up with new things – but they are “experienced”. They know what works to corrupt the minds of men and women.

They believe the most harmful and ridiculous things.

Sometimes they are even ashamed of what they believe – like when a lady testifying before congress refused to answer when asked, “Can a man have a baby?”

You know she believes that – by her definition of a woman being a man.
But she refused to answer – saying the question was “dangerous.”

Well, that one WAS new – and not very clever – I might add.

And then call what you and I believe “foolishness”.
More on that next week.

2. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation

There is NO OTHER WAY of salvation.

John 14:6 -- Jesus said, “I am the way the truth and the life. No man comes to the Father except by me.”

Acts 4:12 – The Apostles say -- Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

3. Salvation comes through believing (faith)

Not of works – lest any man should boast.

If we are going to boast – let us boast about our great God!

We are not going into great detail – because the detail comes in the rest of the book.

These are what we could call PAULS THESIS STATEMENTS.

I. 17

1. The righteousness of God

The Greek word righteousness occurs 34 times in 29 verses of Romans.

We are going to see “righteousness” in a few contexts.

The context here is God’s righteousness in bestowing salvation upon those who put their faith and trust in Him.

The emphasis is on GOD in verses 16, 17, 18 – that’s the context.

The power of God – v. 16

The righteousness of God – v. 17

The wrath of God – v.18

The righteousness of God.

Psalms 98:2-3-- The LORD has made known his salvation;
he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations.
³ He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness
to the house of Israel.
All the ends of the earth have seen
the salvation of our God.

Isaiah 46:13 – I bring near my righteousness; it is not far off,
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my salvation has gone out,
and my arms will judge the peoples;
the coastlands hope for me,
and for my arm they wait.

It is righteous of God to provide salvation for us through Jesus Christ!

2. From faith to faith

This introduces us to the next phrase – the just shall live by faith..

This is the Christian life in so many aspects.
As Calvin says – it's a faith that advances and grows.

It's an idiom – and that should not be so strange to us.
Isaiah talks of going from strength to strength.
Paul in 2 Cor talks of being transformed from glory to glory

True faith – given by God – GROWS – because it is ALIVE!

The Seed (the Word) falls upon rocky ground.
It dies or is eaten by birds – no fruit.

The Seed is sown on shallow ground.
A great beginning.
From all human appearances – a great growth.
But no solid root – no real faith – it withers and dies.

The Seed is sown on thorny ground.

It springs up – but the weeds of world are stronger – and the plant that springs up is choked out by something that matters more – the cares of this present world and the deceitfulness of riches.

What matters most to you?

This present life and all that you can obtain – or Christ?

That's the good soil. The heart changed by God. The person now is a believer!
And it brings forth fruit.

Some more visible fruit than others – but faith is alive and there is fruit.

3. The just shall live by faith (Habakuk 2:4)

This little verse – taken from the writings of the prophet Habakuk have changed the world.

Quoted 3 times in the New Testament.

Gal. 3:11 -- But that no one is **justified** by **the** law in **the** sight of God is evident, for "**the just shall live** by faith."

Heb. 10:37-39 -- "For yet a little while,
And He^[a] who is coming will come and will not ^[b]tarry.

³⁸ Now the^[c] just shall live by faith;

But if *anyone* draws back,

My soul has no pleasure in him."

³⁹ But we are not of those who draw back to ^[d]perdition, **but of those who believe** to the saving of the soul.

Salvation by faith alone.

Salvation by grace alone.

Salvation by Christ alone.

Do YOU believe in the only savior of sinners – the Lord Jesus Christ.

Are YOU TRUSTING IN HIM ALONE for salvation?

PRAY

Hymn 441 – Thy works not mine O Christ

