

Sermon Follow-up | May 10, 2020

21 Letters — Paul's Priorities: The Gospel

Focus Passage: Romans 1:1–17

Corollary Scripture: Genesis 15:6, Galatians 3:8, Romans 12:1-2

Sermon Recap: There is power, like the explosive power of dynamite, in the gospel. There is such power in the Gospel that it saves everyone who believes, it reveals the righteousness of God, and it transforms our lives through faith, apart from any accomplishment of our own. Paul quotes the prophet Habakuk to show the Gospel was always God's Plan A. At the time in history, the gospel signified good news that your king's side has been victorious in battle and the enemy has been defeated. There is peace. The gospel is not good advice telling people what they need to do. You can take or leave advice. The gospel is good news about what Jesus has done; it is something that either happened or it didn't. Having heard the good news, people need to respond by trusting it or rejecting it. The gospel always calls for a response of turning away from self-ruled living to living by trusting faith in Jesus as the victorious King. The power for life now and forever is ready and available to us through faith in the gospel.

Introductory Comments

- There are a number of opportunities for individuals and groups to help others during this time listed <http://wcchapel.org/provide-help/>.

Study Helps

- I encourage you to check out the Bible Project Romans Part 1 link in the Further Resources section below.
- Paul wrote Romans in A.D. 57 to Christians in Rome whom he had never met.
- **Thematic Overview:** “Paul wrote his letter to the church at Rome while he was in Corinth (or perhaps the nearby seaport of Cenchrea) toward the end of his third missionary journey. We know from the opening paragraphs of his letter that he was very desirous of going to Rome and spending some time with the Christians there. He wrote that he longed to see them so that they might be “mutually encouraged by each other’s faith” (1:12). He also was “eager to preach” the gospel to those who lived in the capital city (1:15). But Paul had another agenda in mind as well. Toward the close of the letter he wrote about his plan to visit them on his way to Spain (15:28). In addition to enjoying their company, he hoped they would assist him on his journey. As he looked forward to evangelizing Spain, he trusted that Rome would be for him in the west what Antioch had been in the east. From previous experience Paul knew that his enemies were skilled in twisting his message. Galatians is proof of that. So important were his plans for taking the gospel to the far reaches of the western empire that he could not afford to have his message jeopardized in the very place that he intended to use as a base of operations. So, he wrote a rather full and complete presentation of the message he had been preaching. The result is the Book of Romans—a magnificent presentation of the gospel, the good news that God has provided a righteousness based not on what we can do for ourselves but on what God has already done for us in sending his Son as a sacrifice for sin. Paul’s purpose was to set forth in a systematic fashion the doctrine of justification by faith and its implications for Christian living. The gospel had to be kept free from legalism; equally important was that it did not fall into the opposite error of antinomianism.”¹ (*Antinomianism* literally means “Against Law,” a sort of anything-goes mentality that since we are saved by grace we can do whatever we want.)

¹ Robert H. Mounce, [Romans](#), vol. 27, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 30–31.

Group ~~Gathering~~ Interaction

Connect: Making Honest Connections with One Another (Pick one)

1. Please share briefly one of the following:
 - a. What did you do fun this week?
 - b. When did you first hear and understand the good news of the gospel? ... How did you respond?
 - c. What has God been saying to you through His word, the sermon, or other people?

Grow: Listening to and Learning from God's Word

Read Romans 1:1–17

1. From Paul's introduction, it is apparent that he was writing to people in Rome who were already followers of Jesus. They had previously responded to the gospel and received salvation. How then are we to understand Romans 1:15: "So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome?" Why did Paul want to preach the gospel to people who had already received it?
 2. What are some examples of how Christians might be ashamed of the gospel?
 3. How is it that "the righteousness of God is revealed" in the gospel?

Serve: Serving King Jesus and Others, By Living Out and Letting Others Know God's Word

1. The sermon made a distinction saying, "the gospel is not good advice but good news." Does that distinction impact how we share the gospel with others?
2. The sermon said, "The True King has won the decisive battle against sin and all of its consequences: injustice, greed, violence, racism, exploitation, shame, guilt, cruelty and of the fiercest enemy of all, death itself." How do you see the power of the gospel for salvation addressing those topics?
3. Make a sign on a piece of paper that says "The gospel has power to _____!" Fill in the blank with one word that speaks to you of the gospel's power and take a selfie photo displaying your sign in front of you. Then, send your photo to photos@wcchapel.org.

Further Resources

- Bible Project –
 - Romans – <https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Content/VideoElement/182901>
- Illustrations and quotes from the sermon can be found on the "Sermon Slides" link at the bottom of www.wcchapel.org