

## Not Ashamed of the Gospel

*Romans, Part VI*

Romans 1:16-17

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### I. The Right Side of History

In Paul's day, there were many who mocked the message of a crucified Jewish Messiah who was now risen and reigning as King over all the earth; mocked the idea that peace with God and hope for human history were linked with trust in this Messiah (cf. 1 Cor 1:18-31). Consequently, they persecuted Paul. But the message was true, and Paul knew it. He knew that he was on the \_\_\_\_\_ side of history.

### II. Not Ashamed of the Gospel

Verses 16-17 constitute the central theme of Paul's letter to the Romans. They explain why Paul is *eager to preach the Gospel in Rome* (15).

A. For I am not Ashamed of the Gospel (16a cf. 1:1, 3)

Why is he so eager? *For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ*. What Paul calls here "*the Gospel of Christ*" he earlier called "*the Gospel of \_\_\_\_\_*" (1). But the Gospel of God "*concerns His Son Jesus Christ our Lord*" (3) and so it is fittingly called "*the Gospel of Christ*" as well.

B. For it is the power of God to salvation (16b)

So why isn't Paul ashamed of the Gospel? "*for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*" The Gospel effectively deals with human sin. Jesus died on the cross to forgive our sins and rose from the dead to conquer sin and death. By believing in Him, we can be reconciled to God and begin to experience newness of life.

C. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed (17a)

So how is it that the Gospel saves? It is in the Gospel that *God's righteousness is revealed from faith to faith*. *God's righteousness* is His holy \_\_\_\_\_ to vindicate His Name in the face of sin and death. The Gospel reveals God's determination:

- To rescue sinners from their guilt (1:18-4:25);
- To restore true life to His people and all creation (5:1-8:39);
- To rescue all nations, Jew and Gentile alike, from sin and ignorance (9:1-11:36);
- To create a people driven by love of God and neighbor (12:1-15:13).

D. As it is written, 'The just shall live by faith.' (cf. Hab 2:4)

It is this covenant faithfulness, this *righteousness*, that God has revealed again and again throughout redemptive history. So what is our call as human beings? Our call is to trust Him and to believe His Word: *as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

- **"The one who is just by faith" shall live** (1-11: *Credenda!*)
- *The one who is just [God's follower] "shall live by faith"* (12-15: *Agenda!*)

#### An Outline of Romans

- I. Introduction
  - A. Opening Greeting (1:1-7)
  - B. Travel Plans (1:8-15)
  - C. Theme (1:16-17)
- II. Credenda: "The Righteous by Faith" Shall Live
  - A. God's Wrath vs. Unrighteousness (1:18-3:20)
  - B. The Revelation of God's Righteousness (3:21-5)
  - C. The Triumph of God's Righteousness (6-8)
  - D. The Universality of God's Righteousness (9-11)
- III. Agenda: The Righteous "Shall Live by Faith"
  - A. Transformed not Conformed (12-13)
  - B. Patient not Proud (14-15:13)
- IV. Conclusion
  - A. Paul, Minister to the Gentiles (15:14-21)
  - B. Travel Plans (15:22-33)
  - C. Closing Greetings and Benediction (16)

### III. Analyzing Shame

#### A. Shame Diagnosed

Webster writes: “A painful sensation excited by a consciousness of guilt, or of having done something which injures reputation; or by of that which nature or modesty prompts us to conceal... it is often or always manifested by a downcast look or by blushes...”

- Shame can arise from our own sin or foolishness: “The wise shall inherit glory, But shame shall be the legacy of fools” (Pr 3:35 cf. Ex 32:25; Nu 12:14; Dt 22:17; Pr 10:5; Eph 5:12).
- Sometimes we experience shame through no fault of our own but because we have suffered mistreatment or injury (2 Sam 10:4; 13:13; Acts 5:41).
- Sometimes shame comes simply as a consequence of living in a fallen world.

#### B. Shame in a Fallen Society

In a fallen society, this sense of shame is often twisted and abused. We can be pressured to feel *ashamed* of that which is not *shameful*, and we can proclaim that we are not *ashamed* of that which truly is (cf. Phil 3:19). Paul urges Timothy to resist this type of inversion:

<sup>8</sup>Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God, <sup>9</sup>who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, <sup>10</sup>but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, <sup>11</sup>to which I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. <sup>12</sup>For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day.

#### C. Shame and the Right Side of History (Psalm 71)

To be “on the right side of history” assumes some standard of *righteousness*. Human societies cannot exist without some standard of *righteousness*. It is not \_\_\_\_\_ but \_\_\_\_\_: Not *whether* we have a standard of *righteousness* as a people but *which* standard of *righteousness* we have. *Whatever our standard of righteousness, shame is what we heap on those who don’t meet it.*

<sup>1</sup>In You, O LORD, I put my trust; Let me never be put to shame. <sup>2</sup>Deliver me in Your righteousness, and cause me to escape; Incline Your ear to me, and save me. <sup>3</sup>Be my strong refuge, To which I may resort continually; You have given the commandment to save me, For You are my rock and my fortress. <sup>4</sup>Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked, Out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man. <sup>5</sup>For You are my hope, O Lord God; You are my trust from my youth. <sup>6</sup>By You I have been upheld from birth; You are He who took me out of my mother’s womb. My praise shall be continually of You. <sup>7</sup>I have become as a wonder to many, But You are my strong refuge. <sup>8</sup>Let my mouth be filled with Your praise And with Your glory all the day. <sup>9</sup>Do not cast me off in the time of old age; Do not forsake me when my strength fails. <sup>10</sup>For my enemies speak against me; And those who lie in wait for my life take counsel together, <sup>11</sup>Saying, “God has forsaken him; Pursue and take him, for there is none to deliver him.” <sup>12</sup>O God, do not be far from me; O my God, make haste to help me! <sup>13</sup>Let them be confounded and consumed Who are adversaries of my life; Let them be covered with reproach and dishonor Who seek my hurt. <sup>14</sup>But I will hope continually, And will praise You yet more and more. <sup>15</sup>My mouth shall tell of Your righteousness And Your salvation all the day, For I do not know their limits. <sup>16</sup>I will go in the strength of the Lord God; I will make mention of Your righteousness, of Yours only. <sup>17</sup>O God, You have taught me from my youth; And to this day I declare Your wondrous works. <sup>18</sup>Now also when I am old and grayheaded, O God, do not forsake me, Until I declare Your strength to this generation, Your power to everyone who is to come. <sup>19</sup>Also Your righteousness, O God, is very high, You who have done great things; O God, who is like You? <sup>20</sup>You, who have shown me great and severe troubles, Shall revive me again, And bring me up again from the depths of the earth. <sup>21</sup>You shall increase my greatness, And comfort me on every side. <sup>22</sup>Also with the lute I will praise You— And Your faithfulness, O my God! To You I will sing with the harp, O Holy One of Israel. <sup>23</sup>My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing to You, And my soul, which You have redeemed. <sup>24</sup>My tongue also shall talk of Your righteousness all the day long; For they are confounded, For they are brought to shame Who seek my hurt.

Who is on the right side of history? The one who sides with God, who relies on His *salvation* and proclaims His *righteousness*.

### IV. Conclusion