

Week 18

**Romans
1-3**

The Gospel: the Power of God to a Needy world

“I am not ashamed of the **Gospel of Christ**, for it is the **power of God** to salvation for **everyone who believes**, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

For in it **the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith**; as it is written, ‘The just shall live by faith.’”

THE GOSPEL = Good News promised beforehand through the prophets in the Holy Scriptures regarding **God’s Son**, who as to His **human nature** was a descendant of David, and who through the **Spirit of holiness** was declared with power to be the **Son of God by His resurrection** from the dead:

Jesus Christ our Lord

† Why do we need the Gospel?

Because people in their wickedness and godlessness suppress the truth and as a result are recipients of God’s wrath.

THE TRUTH: the holy invisible God created all things; His eternal power and divine nature are clearly visible and understood from what has been made so that men are without excuse for their suppression.

SUPPRESSION OF THE TRUTH: Although men knew God (as a reflection of Him, a part of His being), they neither glorified Him (gave Him prominence and top priority in all of their desires, decisions, determinations, dialogues, and deeds) as God nor gave thanks to Him (by living unselfishly, benevolently, godly).

As a result, their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened (instead of giving themselves to worshipping the holy, invisible God, they gave themselves, their hearts, to created things, ie. glorifying images they created instead of their Creator).

THE WRATH OF GOD = God giving people over to their shameful lusts (getting what their darkened hearts crave) which break covenant with God and other people; people end up degrading their bodies with one another...being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving,

unmerciful; who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

THIS IS THE RESULT OF EXCHANGING THE TRUTH OF GOD FOR A LIE. Thus the punishment of God is in what we become because of what we worship. It is inescapable; for how can we escape what we become?

Principles of God's Righteous Judgement (chapter 2 to 3:20)

1. Render to each according to his deeds
 - a. Eternal life to those who by patient continuance [persistence] in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality
 - b. Indignation, wrath, tribulation, and anguish to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness
2. No partiality
 - a. All who sin without knowledge of the law will perish without the judgment by the law
 - b. All who sin in the law will be judged by the law.
 - i. Not the hearers but the doers will be justified
3. Jesus Christ will be the standard by which to judge men's secrets.
4. Circumcision (sign of faith) of the heart will receive praise from God. Because only the one who keeps the righteous requirements of the law is truly circumcised (faithful).
5. All people are guilty because no one is righteous.
 - a. Do not seek after the true God.
 - b. All have turned aside from the true God.
 - c. Together as a race become unprofitable to God. [He gets no return but rather has to pay a debt.]
 - d. No one does good.
 - e. Throats are open tombs.
 - f. Tongues practice deceit.
 - g. Mouths full of cursing and bitterness] are used to injure and kill.
 - h. Feet are swift to vengeance.
 - i. Destruction and misery line their way.
 - j. The way of peace they do not know.
 - k. There is no fear of God before their eyes.

THIS LAW HOLDS EVERYONE GUILTY BEFORE GOD. PLAIN OBSERVANCE OF RITUALISTIC LAWS WITHOUT THE SPIRIT OF THE LAW DOES NOT RESULT IN JUSTIFICATION. BUT THE LAW DOES REVEAL OUR SIN – A DEPRIVATION OF WORSHIP OF THE TRUE GOD.

REFLECTION: In your own words drawing from your experience, describe the greatest need in your life. Does it match the testimony of Scripture? God says the Gospel is His power to save those with the consuming need He has delineated in His word [which has been very clearly identified by the Apostle Paul]. Have you experienced the transforming power of the Gospel to save you from your need? If yes, how so? If no, why not?

| | | |
|------------|-------------------|--|
| Week 19 | Romans 4-8 | <h1 style="margin: 0;">The Gospel:</h1> <h2 style="margin: 0;">The Power of God to transform those who believe!</h2> |
|------------|-------------------|--|

“But now the **righteousness of God** apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe.” 3:21-22

Defining this [**righteousness**] which is witnessed by the **Law and the Prophets** and comes through faith in Jesus Christ:

- “And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.” **Genesis 15:6**
- “I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless. And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly.”
Genesis 17:1-2
- “This is My covenant which you shall keep...Every male child among you shall be circumcised;” **Genesis 17:10**
- “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. [Ten Commandments followed]” Exodus 20:2-17
- “For I am the Lord your God. You shall therefore consecrate yourselves, and you shall be holy; for I am holy.” **Leviticus 11:44a**
- “And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments of the Lord and His statutes which I command you today for your good?...Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer....He administers justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing...You shall fear the Lord your God; you shall serve Him, and to Him you shall hold fast, and take oaths in His name. he is your praise, and He is your God...”
Deuteronomy 10:12-21
- “Unto the upright there arises light in the darkness; he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous. A good man deals graciously and lends; he will guide his affairs with discretion. Surely he will never be shaken; the righteous will be in everlasting remembrance. He will not be afraid of evil tidings; his heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord. His heart is established; he will not be afraid, until he sees his desire upon his enemies.” **Psalms 112:4-8**
- “Treasures of wickedness profit nothing, but righteousness delivers from death.”
Proverbs 10:2
- “Listen to Me, My people; and give ear to Me, O My nation: For the law will proceed from Me, and I will make My justice rest as a light of the peoples. My righteousness is near, My salvation has gone forth, and My arms will judge the peoples...Lift up your eyes to the heavens...the earth beneath...My salvation will be forever, and My righteousness will not be abolished. Listen to Me, you who know righteousness...do not fear the reproach of men...for the moth will eat them up like a garment...but My righteousness will be forever, and My salvation from generation to generation.” **Isaiah 51:4-8**

Defining the **[FAITH]** that results in **righteousness**:

- It is available to all because all have sinned and fall short of God's glory.
- It is confidence in God's grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, who was the substitutionary sacrifice that appeased the wrath of God (revealed in chapter 1). The blood of the sinless, holy Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, was and is the price of justice that God accepts from those who place their wholehearted confidence and trust in its precious value to cover their sin debt.
- Saving faith believes that God justifies and blesses the ungodly through faith in Jesus Christ. Abraham received this righteous standing with God before his circumcision. Therefore, he is the father of all who believe, circumcised and uncircumcised.
- This faith is not confidence in any human being's works but in the infinite goodness of God.
- **PRIMARY, CENTRAL MARK OF DEMARCATION OF BIBLICAL, SAVING FAITH:**
Believing in the God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did; Biblical faith is hoping against all hope in the light of real circumstances, giving glory to God, being fully convinced that God is able to perform what He promises. This belief, i.e. believing that God has raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, results in our justification and freedom from bondage to sin and death – true righteousness!!!

| |
|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">The Righteousness by Faith results in entering into the Peace and Grace of God.</p> |
|---|

Defining the **Peace and Grace of God**:

- A **personal process** in which we are **being transformed** into the **glory of God**.
 - This process begins with tribulations that produce perseverance which create and establish character that grows and generates hope.
 - This Hope will never disappoint because it is actually the Holy Spirit of God who continually pours God's love into our hearts.
 - This love caused God's Son to die for us when we were His enemies. This love is incomprehensible for those who have been reconciled and are no longer living in hostility towards God.
 - Just as we bore the likeness of Adam, ie. sin and death, so through faith, we bear the likeness of Christ, ie. grace, righteousness, and immortality. We are the beginning of the New Humanity, [redeemed, forgiven, freed] created to be in true likeness of the Creator.
 - Through baptism into Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, we become "slaves to righteousness", able to obey God

wholeheartedly. The fruit of this new bondage is holiness and everlasting life.

- This process is being married to Another “we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter.”
- This process is a spiritual battle against the sin that lives in my members. Only God through Jesus Christ can deliver me from this body of death.
- This process is setting our minds on the things of the Spirit which are life and peace. The Holy Spirit living in us gives life to our mortal bodies so that we can live according to the Spirit by putting to death the misdeeds of the body. Those of us who are led in this way are true children of God, for we cry out, “Abba, Father.”
- This process involves sufferings that do not compare with the glory that will be revealed in us in the future. As we live daily according to the Gospel, ie. dying to sin and living to God, experiencing inner transformation of our hearts and minds (our identity), we are getting a little foretaste of the earnest expectation of all creation – **the glorious liberty of the children of God!!!**
 - **God is working everything to the good of those who love Him and are the called according to His purpose (the glorious redemption of His people to become like His Son, Jesus Christ).**
 - **God who did not spare His own Son for us will freely give us all things.**
 - **God is proving through tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, and sword that nothing can stop Him from creating a people who are more than conquerors through Him who loves us.**
 - **NOT EVEN...**
 - **Death nor life**
 - **Angels, principalities, or powers**
 - **Things present nor things to come**
 - **Height nor depth**
 - **Any other created thing...**

**...shall separate us from the
love of God which is in
Christ Jesus our Lord.**

| | | |
|---------|-------------|--|
| Week 20 | Romans 9-11 | <h1 style="margin: 0;">The Gospel:</h1> <h2 style="margin: 0;">the Power of God and the Freewill of Men</h2> |
|---------|-------------|--|

***The Power of God (ch.9): Election,
what has been established in eternity past***

“It is not as though God’s word had failed. For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel... ‘It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned. In other words, it is not the natural children who are God’s children, **BUT IT IS THE CHILDREN OF THE PROMISE** who are regarded as Abraham’s offspring.”

“Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad – in order that God’s purpose in election might stand: **NOT BY WORKS BUT BY HIM WHO CALLS** – she was told, ‘The older will serve the younger.’ Just as it is written: ‘Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.’”

- Jacob – name (identity) was changed to Israel because he struggled with God and men, and prevailed. Gen.32:22-32
- Esau – sold his birthright (identity as the heir) for a bowl of stew. Hebrew 12:16, 17

IS GOD UNJUST?

- “I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.”
- “It does not, therefore, depend on man’s desire or effort, but on God’s mercy... who are you to reply against God? Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for noble purposes and some for common use?”
- “What if God, choosing to show His wrath and make His power known, bore with GREAT PATIENCE the objects of His wrath – prepared for destruction?”
- “What if He did this to make the riches of His glory known to the objects of His mercy, whom He prepared in advance for glory – even us, whom He also called... ‘I will call them ‘My people’ who are not My people; and I will call her ‘My loved one’ who is not My loved one.’”
- “Unless the Lord Almighty had left us descendants, we would have become like Sodom, we would have been like Gomorrah.”

“WHAT THEN SHALL WE SAY?”

That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a **righteousness that is by faith**; but Israel, who pursued a **law of righteousness**, has not attained it.

“WHY NOT?”

“Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the ‘Stumbling Stone.’ As it is written:

“See, I lay in Zion a Stone that causes men to stumble and a Rock that makes them fall, and the one who trusts in Him will never be put to shame.”

The Rock speaks of the eternal reality that God only has compassion and mercy on the Son of David (Christ) and His descendants forever (Psalm 89). God’s eternal blessing is on the Christ and all who place their faith in Him, believing that God has raised Him from the dead.

Present Response (chapter 10): Faith

The eternal blessing is the righteousness that comes through faith in Christ. This righteousness cannot be sought after on one’s own efforts or desires, but must be the righteousness of faith which speaks, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?...or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’

Basically, these phrases express the demand for something that God has already done in Christ, implying that God’s actions and provisions are not enough.

[IN STARK CONTRAST]

...But it says, ‘The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart’...

That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

- For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, ie. with the essence or core of our being, in all sincerity and earnestness, believing in the Truth of God in Christ, that He is Lord over all and the One that God has accepted, empowered, and blessed forever!
- And with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Confessing the truth of who God is in Christ and our binding union with Him.
- “...whoever calls on the name (identity) of the Lord shall be saved.”

† God’s righteousness comes through faith which comes by hearing, which comes by the word of God.

† The last few passages of chapter 10 (vs.18-21) emphasize the hopelessness of those who attempt to obtain righteousness by their own works, establishing it on their own terms.

The Nation of Israel: God's historical time piece and future indicator of God's first resurrection of the Saints

- † Chapter 11 describes future events in the restoration of Israel, “a disobedient and contrary people.”
- “Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no longer of works;”
 - “Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded.
 - “...have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! ...through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles.”
 - “Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness!”
 - “For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but **LIFE FROM THE DEAD?** (11:15)
 - “Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in...Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear. For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either.”
 - “Therefore consider the goodness [grace] and severity of God...toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness...if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.”
 - “...do not...be ignorant of this mystery...that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.”
 - “For the gifts and the calling of god are irrevocable.”
 - “For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience, even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy.”
 - “For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all.”

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!

“For who has known the mind of the Lord?
Or who has become His counselor?
Or who has first given to Him and it shall be repaid to him?”

For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

Reflection: Take a close look at these 3 chapters. Paul has delineated past, present, and future aspects of God's salvation within the context of His dealings with the nation of Israel. What can we learn about the God of the Scriptures and Jesus Christ through these passages? How does this discourse on God's sovereignty versus freewill illuminate the previous 8 chapters?

| | | |
|------------|--------------|--|
| Week 21 | Romans 12-16 | <h1 style="text-align: center;">The Gospel:</h1> <h2 style="text-align: center;">the Power of God to live godly lives of love</h2> |
|------------|--------------|--|

Therefore (after all that has been said in the previous 11 chapters),

...in view of God's mercy (seeing the truth of the wrath of God against depraved humanity and the grace of God that has made salvation and redemption from that wrath possible / the Biblical worldview / the faith of and in Jesus Christ)

...offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship.

“Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and His worshippers must worship in spirit and in truth.” John 4:23, 24

DO NOT BE CONFORMED ANY LONGER TO THE PATTERN OF THIS WORLD, BUT BE TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWING OF YOUR MIND.

Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – His good, pleasing and perfect will.

“Jesus answered, “My teaching is not My own. It comes from Him who sent Me. If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether My teaching comes from God or whether I speak on My own...He who works for the honor of the One who sent Him is a Man of truth; there is nothing false about Him.” John 7:16-18

When we are conscious and convicted of God's will [by the Holy Spirit] (as revealed in chs.3-11), we'll be able to choose to do His will and discover the divine, glorious, life-giving truth of the Scriptures, the hidden manna mentioned in Revelation 2:17. In addition to the hidden manna, Jesus will give a white stone with a new name, a new identity! This new person does not think according to the pattern of this world, but rather begins a life long process of transformation where the mind and heart are first renewed, then new deeds, words, and relationships emerge, and eventually the body at the first resurrection. This renewal of the mind is according to the revelation of Jesus Christ in all 66 books of Scripture. The Apostle Paul briefly describes some initial changes with regards to the most elementary principles of Christian living. They are delineated in the following section.

Outward manifestation of the inner transformation:

I. Think as one body

- a. Not to think _____ but to think _____
- b. Working _____ as one body utilizing our own _____ while appreciating and depending on the _____ of others

II. Love without hypocrisy

- a. Abhor _____ . Cling to _____ .
- b. Be kindly _____ to one another with brotherly _____ in honor giving preference to one another.
- c. Do not lag in _____ .
- d. Be fervent in _____ serving the Lord.
- e. Rejoice in _____ . Be _____ in tribulation. Continue steadfast in _____ .
- f. Distribute to the _____ of the _____ , pursuing _____ .
- g. _____ those who persecute you; _____ and do not curse.
- h. _____ with those who _____ , and _____ with those who _____ .
- i. Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on _____ but associate with the humble.
- j. Do not be wise in your own _____ .
- k. Repay no one _____ for _____ . Have regard for _____ in the sight of all men.
- l. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, _____ with all men.
- m. Beloved, do not _____ yourselves... "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.
- n. "If your enemy is hungry, _____ ; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will _____ ."
- o. Do not be _____ , but _____ .

III. Civil obedience and godly conduct

- a. Let every soul be _____ . For there is no _____ .
- b. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring _____ on themselves.
- c. Do what is _____ and you will have praise from the authority.
- d. You must be subject not only because of _____ but also for _____ .
- e. _____ therefore to all their due: taxes, customs, fear, honor appropriately to whom they are due.
- f. Owe no one anything except to _____ , for he who _____ another has fulfilled the law.
- g. All the commandments are summed up in " _____ ."
- h. Do this, knowing the time, that **NOW IT IS HIGH TIME** to awake out of sleep;
 - i. Cast off the works of darkness, put on the _____ .
 - ii. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in _____ , not in _____ , not in _____ .

iii. BUT PUT ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

IV. True righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit

- a. Receive one who is weak in the faith but _____.
- b. There is nothing unclean of itself; but to him who considers anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean.
 - i. Yet if your brother is grieved because of your food, **YOU ARE NO LONGER WALKING IN** _____. Do not destroy with your food the one for whom Christ died.
 - ii. The _____ is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.
 - iii. *For he who serves Christ in these things is acceptable to God and approved by men.*
 - iv. *Therefore let us _____ the things which make for _____ and the things by which one may edify another.*
 - v. *Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves.*
 - vi. *But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from _____ (out of a clear conscience and desire to serve Christ); for whatever is not from _____ is _____ (deprivation of consideration for what pleases God).*

V. Bearing others' burdens

- a. The _____ ought to bear with the _____ of the _____.
- b. Let please our neighbor for his _____ leading to his _____.
- c. Whatever things were written in the Scriptures were written for our learning so that through _____ and _____ of the Scriptures, we might have _____.
- d. **Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be _____ toward one another, according to **Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.****

Reflection: How does your mind compare to the one so beautifully described in these chapters? Pray to put off the old self so that God can raise up the new self created to be like Christ in holiness and love.