

Title: What Is The Gospel?

Text: Romans 1:16-17

Take your Bibles, please, and turn to Romans chapter 1. The book of Romans chapter 1 verse 16 and 17. Two wonderful verses explaining the GOSPEL?

In these first 17 verses, which is an introduction to this book dealing with RIGHTEOUSNESS AND FAITH, we notice (1) first of all, the character of the Gospel. This was the subject of verses 1 thru 7. (2) Secondly, we noticed Paul's concern for the gospel in verses 8 thru 15. (3) Today, I want to look at the meaning of the term "Gospel" and the CONTENT OF THE GOSPEL IN VS 16-17/

O.K...Vs 16....(READ ROMANS 1:16-17)

Prayer

(1) In Church life, today, there is much confusion concerning the meaning of the term "gospel". Just what do we mean by the term "GOSPEL?" I don't want to spend time in looking at all the various views. I just want you to know what the Bible says about the meaning of the term "GOSPEL." And I don't know any better verse than Vs 16 in answering the question: WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

Vs 16 says that the Gospel is the POWER OF GOD. That is what it is. The gospel is the power of Almighty God. It is not how we use it. It is not the methods or our talents or our abilities. It is not little 4 point plans or anything else. IT IS THE GOSPEL THAT IS THE POWER OF GOD.

Now, that should really encourage all of us. WHY? Because when ever we share the Gospel, and to whomever we share the Gospel, regardless of the one speaking, or regardless of the circumstances..THE GOSPEL IS GOD'S POWER.

In the Greek, it is not "THE" power of God. But, simply..POWER OF GOD. WHAT DOES THAT MEAN? It means "that which God has and is in himself." The power which comes from God is the Gospel of Christ.

Now, in understanding this principle, there are three ^{things} in Vs 16 that I would like to share with you concerning THAT POWER.

(1) Number one, the reason for boldness. People are often afraid to share the gospel with those who are lost. But, if you understand this principle, it will take care of ~~that~~'s attitude. *It will give you boldness in your witness.*

Paul says in Vs 16, "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel." WHY could he say that? Why wasn't ^{Paul} ~~he~~ ashamed of the Gospel? Why was he so bold in his witness? Because the Gospel is the power of God.

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~~Some people are bold~~

The reason some people are bold in their witness is not because they have been trained in methods or techniques. NO WAY..They have boldness because they know that the GOSPEL IS THE POWER OF GOD. And therefore, there is no reason to be ashamed.

(2) Secondly, the result of this power, according to Vs 16, is salvation.

Salvation is the result every believer ought to seek when he shares Jesus with someone else. In the gospel is the power of God resulting in salvation. And I praise God for that simple fact. Romans 10:17 says "Faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the Word of Christ." If you want to be saved, then believe the Gospel. *If you do NOT Believe The Gospel, you cannot be saved*

(3) And this brings us to the third principle about the power of God in Vs 16. The reception of this gospel is through believing. That is what makes it powerful. The gospel is not power because you try to do something that you think God wants you to do, and then gain acceptance by it. You don't perform for God. You BELIEVE what God has already done.

NOW, WHAT IS IT THAT GOD HAS DONE?

IN I Cor. 15, Paul *Tell us what God has done* ~~defines~~ the term Gospel. *It says* ~~The Gospel is~~ that Christ died for our sins. That he was buried, and that He arose again and was seen by many witnesses. He is alive and he is coming back to this planet again.

Now, that ~~Gospel~~ is what we believe in order to be saved. To believe it, is to accept it. Not to try to earn it or to examine it, or, whatever. But, to accept it as the truth. And the moment you believe the gospel, as it is in the WORD OF GOD, *→ I Cor 15* at that moment you experience salvation. Not before, but only then

And the sad truth is that many people do not fully believe the Gospel because they are adding to it or taking away from it, *or changing it.*

For example: There are many people who believe that Christ died on the cross. For after all, history records the death of Christ. But, not all of them believe that all the sins of the whole world..past..present..and future are already paid for *when Jesus died on the cross. OR, They do not believe that Jesus arose from the dead.*

You see, when you believe in Christ, you believe in a full sufficient sacrifice. Totally. There is nothing missing. And I don't need to add anything to it. It is not Christ and me and my works. It is only Christ and Christ alone. And that is believing the Gospel. Very, very important, dear friends. The ~~power of God is the Gospel.~~ *Gospel is the power of God*

(3) Now let's come to the third principle. I would like you to notice in vs 17, the PROVISION OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST. The provision of the Gospel. And the provision is simply "RIGHTEOUSNESS." That is the provision: "RIGHTEOUSNESS."

Dear friends, this is a basic principle that you need to get a hold off. A basic principle going all the way back to the time of Christ. And that is that the whole world, every last person in the world must have "righteousness". If you are not "righteous" you will never get into heaven. You will go to Hell. WHY? Why do we need to be righteous? Because God is Holy. He is a holy God. And a holy God demands a holy response on the part of people. And you cannot respond to God unless you are righteous.

Now, the question is: how do I become righteous? That is a very important issue. Some people believe you become righteous by the things you do or the things you don't do. Like: if I pay my bills and don't swear and go to church, then I am righteous. NO WAY. That teaching and belief is false. It is not from the Bible. It is people's wishful hopes. Now, let me show that to you. ^{there} ~~There~~ are two things that I would like you to see about this righteousness that is provided in the Gospel. *Two things,*

(1) Number one, according to Vs 17, the source of righteousness is the Gospel. Vs 17 says: "For in it". The word "it" refers back to the word "gospel" in Vs. 16. "For in it, in the Gospel, the righteousness of God is revealed."

Now, please remember that according to the book of Romans “righteousness” is not a process in your life by which you are trying to become more “Christ like.”

Righteousness is an act of God. When all the wrath of God was poured out on Jesus at the cross, that is discussed in the book of Romans as being “righteousness.” And that “righteousness” is transferred to me and to you the moment we believe and accept the fact that Jesus died for our sins. When we believe that fact, God declares us to be

righteous. Did you hear me? When I accepted Christ as my savior, at that moment God declared me to be righteous.

I accept Christ at the age of 12 - I am NO more righteous today than I was at the age of 12. Oh, I may know how - I hope I am more Christ-like in attitude and deeds, but I am NO more righteous

Dear friends, the Bible does not teach that we are made righteous. That will ~~happen at the second coming of Christ. We are not made righteous.~~ We are “declared” or “pronounced” righteous. And that is very important to remember. Because people look at you and say: “You call yourself a Christian, you go to church, and you are no better than I am.” And that is true. Because we have all sinned.

Now, this doesn’t mean that we should not try to live Godly lives. We should. We have been set apart to serve Christ.

But, the point is that non of us are righteous in our own selves. We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. But, you see, when we accept what Jesus did for us on the cross, God “declares” or “pronounces” us to be righteous. And there is a big difference. Very, very important dear friends.

So, the source of righteousness is the Gospel. And the Bible says that this is continually being revealed. And please notice, it is not being revealed by the way I live. The righteousness of God is being revealed in the Gospel. If you are not sharing the

Gospel you are not revealing the righteousness of God. People often talk about “righteousness” as how I live. That is not revealing God’s righteousness. The Gospel is doing that. So, we must go back to the cross and examine it again and continue to emphasize it. Because the righteousness of God is found at the cross.

So, when we talk about the provision of the Gospel, first of all, we must understand that the source of righteousness is the Gospel.

(2) Now, the second thing concerns the content of the Gospel. Dear friends, the real secret of understanding all of this is tried up in that little phrase “FROM FAITH TO FAITH.” Vs 17. says: that “the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith.” The word “from” means “out off” dealing with source. And the phrase “to faith” or “into faith” is dealing with “position.” Your position in Christ.

Now, let’s put it all together. The righteousness of God is revealed out of faith. Meaning: the faith that received it. That is the source of righteousness. “And into faith”. A faith that is secure in its position depending upon faith and faith alone. You see, I am pronounced righteous by faith and not by works. And that as a result puts me into faith.

That is a faith that constantly depends upon the righteousness of God not myself, *righteous*
man, I hope you understand.

Now, the second word “faith” in Vs 17 is an application to the believer. We say we believe in Christ. And we say we are trusting the cross for our salvation. O.K. But there is a problem. Because we often, by the way we live in our present habit of life, give the impression that we are by the things we are going, trying to please God. And we refer to this as being “righteous.” What we do or what we don’t do.

For example, people often say, “Boy, if anyone deserves to go to heaven it is certainly good old Joe. He was a good guy.

Dear friends, that is a false application. Because it is “into faith”, a security that believes what Christ did at the cross. I will continually be changed in my life as a believer only as I continue to believe what Christ did at the cross. You cannot overcome your sins. You cannot overcome your problems by trying to do it all by yourself. You must come back and believe what Christ did you at the cross. And that, dear friends, is very important in understanding the content of the Gospel.

(3) Now, in order to drive the point home, Paul uses a tremendous illustration. This illustration comes from the O.T. Vs. 17 says: “as it is written, the righteous man shall live by faith.” That is a quote from Habback 2:4. And it is quoted three times in the N.T. And in each case it is applied differently. And I would like you to see all three cases.

(1) Number one is our text – Romans 1:17. And the emphases in this verse is on the method by which you receive righteousness. And the method is “by faith.” The righteous shall live by faith. That is the method you receive God’s righteousness. By faith and faith alone.

(2) Now, secondly, take your Bibles and turn to Galatians chapter 3, verse 11. Galatians chapter 3 verse 11. And here we find the second usage of this little verse out-off the O.T. “The righteous shall live by faith.”

Galatians 3:11 says: “Now no one is justified, or pronounced righteous, by the law (that is by the things you do or you don’t do) before God is evident; for the righteous man shall live by faith. However, the things you do or don’t do is not of faith; on the contrary, he who practices them shall live by them.”

Now, the law said, “do this and live.” The Gospel says “live and then do.” You see, faith is not the things you do or don’t do. If it is, it is not faith. So, you are not pronounced righteous by the things you do or the things you don’t’ do. You are pronounced righteous by faith.

So, Galatians 3:11 is emphasizing the meaning of faith. It is apart from the things you do or the things you don’t do. It is simply believing, trusting, relying upon what God has already done for you. Not upon what you can do for God.

(3) The third usage is found in Hebrews chapter 10 Would you turn there, please. Hebrews chapter 10 verse 35. (Read Hebrews 10:35-39)

Now, what is the issue here? The issue is the manner in which your faith is expressed in daily life. And it is patient. The kind of patience and confidence and hope that believes that Christ is coming again. You see, if you believe the righteousness of God at the cross, you must believe that He is coming again. And that belief will effect the way you live. And so, the way that your faith is expressed, the manner in which it is demonstrated in your life is through your constant patience, and your confidence, and your hope.

So, these are the three ways in which that O.T. quote is used. Showing, first of all, the method by which we receive righteousness (Romans 1:17). The method is by faith.

Secondly, the meaning of faith in Galatians 3:11. That it is not the things you do or the things you don’t do by which a person is justified. It is by faith that we are pronounced righteous.

And third, showing the manner in which our lives demonstrate that faith daily. And that is with patience and confidence and hope that Christ will come again.

So, what is the Gospel? It is the power of God unto Salvation to all who believe. And what is the provision of the Gospel? It is the righteousness of God. And the moment we believe in Christ and what He did on the cross, at that moment God pronounces us righteous.

The method of receiving God's righteousness is by faith. The meaning of faith is trusting and relying upon what God has already done at the cross. And the manner in which our lives express that faith is through patience and confidence and hope. Why? Because we know that Christ will come at any moment.

Dear friends, do not be ashamed of the Gospel. For it is the power of God for salvation to every one who believes.

Shall we close in prayer