

The Power of the Gospel

Romans 1:16-17

Sermon-in-a-Sentence: Our attitude toward the Gospel determines the urgency with which we seek to share it with others.

Why did Paul have such a strong desire to proclaim the Gospel in Rome? In these verses he sets forth the theme of his letter to the Romans: The Gospel which is the power of God that produces eternal salvation in those who put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ.

I am not ashamed of the gospel...

Paul was confident in his message and its power to transform the lives of his readers. In these verses he sets forth four reasons why he was not ashamed of the Gospel.

I. Because Of Its Origin (1:16a)

For I am not ashamed of the gospel (of Christ)...

- Cp. verse 1 – “Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for *the gospel of God...*”
- The Gospel is the Good News from God, revealed to man, concerning His Son, Jesus Christ.
- What is your attitude toward the Bible? What do you really believe about it?
 - If it is only a collection of religious writings written by religious men of centuries gone by, then it has no more authority over our lives than any other religious writings.
 - But if it is, as it claims to be, the very Word of God, given by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, then we hold in our hands the revealed mind and heart of God, to which, as Peter wrote in 2 Peter 1:19, we will do well to pay attention!
- Paul was not ashamed of the Gospel because it was a message sent with the authority of God.

II. Because Of Its Operation (1:16b)

I am not ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of God...

- Rome was feared because of its conquering power. But in spite of all its military might, Rome was spiritually and morally bankrupt.
- “The philosopher Seneca called the city of Rome ‘a cesspool of iniquity’; and the writer Juvenal called it a ‘filthy sewer into which the dregs of the empire flood.’” (*Wiersbe, Be Right, p. 24*).
- Paul was not ashamed of the Gospel because he knew that it is the only message that has the power to transform people’s lives from the inside out.
- Has the Gospel transformed your life? Do you believe it has the power to transform the lives of others?

III. Because Of Its Outcome (1:16c)

I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for...salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

- Salvation = "deliverance."
- The Gospel has the power to deliver us from:
 - The **penalty** of sin, which is guilt and death
 - The **power** of sin, which is bondage and deception
 - The very **presence & practice** of sin, when we are safely at home in heaven, never again to struggle with sin
- The Gospel brings us Justification, Sanctification and Glorification:
 - Justification – to be declared righteous by God Himself
 - Sanctification – to grow in righteousness as we submit to the work of the Holy Spirit
 - Glorification – to be totally and completely righteous as we dwell forever in the presence of God
- "If men and women are to be saved, it must be through faith in Jesus Christ as proclaimed in the gospel." (*Wiersbe, Be Right, p. 25*)

IV. Because Of Its Outreach (1:16d-17)

I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for...salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

- Everyone needs to be saved! Everyone needs to hear the Gospel! (Romans 3:23; 6:23; 10:17).
- We earn credibility, the right to be heard, by our lives, but sooner or later, we have to share the Gospel with our lips.
- "God does not ask people to *behave* in order to be saved, but to *believe*." (*Wiersbe, Be Right, p. 25*)
- Ephesians 2:8-9 – "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."
 - God's part is grace—salvation is a free gift.
 - Our part is faith—taking God at His Word and putting our trust in Jesus Christ.

For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed

- The Gospel reveals to us that God is a holy and righteous God.
- Righteousness, a right relationship with God, is a gift from God that is received by faith.

A righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

- The message of Romans and the entire Bible is that when we put our faith in Jesus Christ to be our Savior, God gives us His gift of salvation and eternal life.
- Through faith in Christ, God makes us righteous and therefore acceptable in His sight.
- "There are more than sixty references to faith or unbelief in Romans, because the only way a sinner can become [righteous] before God is 'by faith.'" (*Wiersbe, Be Right, p. 26*)