

The Footsteps of Faith Series

Lesson # 1 “The Righteous Shall Live by Faith”

Scripture: Romans 1:16-17

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.””

Introduction:

When I was a little boy my mother didn't buy into Dr. Spock's philosophy that a child doesn't need to be spanked. She believed, with all of her heart that spanking a child was the right thing to do according to the biblical passage that says “spare the rod and spoil the child”. Well she wasn't going to have any spoiled child...I'll tell you that for sure.

Well how should I say this? She exercised that divine principle upon my back porch on many...many...many different occasions. I knew the right thing to do but, I just didn't seem to have the ability not to do it. And, standing in the corner turned out to be my arch enemy and mom knew it and used it quit effectively.

But then when I was about 5 or 6 years old things changed. Mom somehow decided that spankings weren't enough. Mom decided that she should discuss my alleged wrong doing with me before the spanking. All of a sudden it was important for me to start understanding why my actions were wrong and be able to tell her why they were wrong. I truly thought the end of the world was near.

Then an interesting thing happened around 8-9 years old. The spankings all but stopped. I had learned many of the lessons of youth. But at 8-9 years old mom started spending a lot of time talking with me about the motives behind my actions and how they effected other people. She started becoming more lineate and I have to admit as a child that was a bit confusing, I wondered why my mom was stepping down from a four star general to a private.

Now, as an adult, I look back and understand the difficult transition my mother was helping me make. She wanted me to turn aside from rule keeping as some kind of childhood obligation with spanking as a penalty, to a desire of the heart to do and be the right thing.

Transitional Statement:

Church, in many ways the Book of Romans is the same. God's people needed to make the transition from the Old Covenant system of rule keeping and obligation, to the message of Christ which was to motivate the heart of man from desire not obligation. The Book of Romans sets forth the principle that a right relationship with God is found in the footsteps of faith, not the footsteps of obligation.

Lesson:

I. The Apostle Paul

Romans 1:1

I Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,

A. Paul's past

1. Philippians 3:5-6 "...circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; 6 as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless."
2. Jew of Jews, Pharisee of Pharisees and legalist to the core
3. Educated by Gamaliel Acts 22:3 one of the most respected teachers of the Law Acts 5:34
4. Also a Roman Citizen Acts 22:28
5. Out to destroy the church.
Galatians 1:13 "For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it;"
6. Experience on road to Damascus Acts 9
7. So Paul was the ultimate example for this letter because he had made the change from legalistic rule keeping to walking in the footsteps of faith.

B. Paul was a Bond Servant of (Christ / Messiah) Jesus

1. Willing slave with ear pierced by and awl .Ex 21:2-6
 - Placing himself in full submission
 - He recognized his obligation and responsibility to his master

....oh that we could understand the same
2. Most Jews refused accept Jesus as the Messiah
3. Worse yet are those who tried to blend Judaism with Christianity
 - Understanding salvation by works

B. Called as an Apostle

1. "Called" is basically a divine appointment.
2. "Apostle" is a Delegate, Ambassador of the gospel, commissioner of Christ
 - Acting with the full authority of the one who sent him (Christ)

C. Set apart for the gospel

1. Set apart by limit or boundary for the gospel (Good News of Jesus)
2. The gospel is Paul's soul mission or purpose
3. And specifically, to the Gentiles 1 Tim 2:7 & Eph 3

II. The Nature of the Gospel

Romans 1:2

2 which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures,

A. The Gospel has been the focal point of all history

1. Jesus was established to be our savior before the foundation of the world Eph 1:4
2. Jeremiah 31:31ff pointed to the Good news under Christ
3. And all of the prophets from Isaiah down to Malachi were pointing to Christ

1 Peter 1:12

12 It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel..."

4. Now at the writing of this book these folks stood at the consummation of the ages Heb 9:26

B. The Gospel is more than a prediction it is a Promise

1. Guaranteed by God Himself
2. Calling our attention back to the promise given to Abraham that all nations would be blessed through his seed (Christ) Gal 3:16

C. The focus of Gospel is the Son of God

Romans 1:3-4

3 concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, 4 who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord,

1. God sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins 1 John 4:10

-Offering Himself as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

-To reconcile man to God Col 1:20

2. According to the flesh, Jesus was born a descendant of King David

- 2 Sam 7:16 God promised David's kingdom to last forever
- Jesus is the rightful heir of King David's throne.
- He will fill it forever Luke 1:32-33
- He is the fulfillment of Old Testament Prophecy

3. And, in the Spirit, was declared to be the Son of the Most High King (God) by His resurrection from the dead.

D. The Gospel's driving force

Romans 1:5

5 through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake,

1. Paul's mission was spreading the saving message of Jesus right?

- Yes, but in a more defined sense for the book of Romans.

2. To bring an obedience of faith

- An obedience, not through fear or obligation.
- But an obedience that comes through desire to please God
- The Gospel not to be a system of works of merit, but one of the grace of God working through our faith. Eph 2:8-9

- Look at Romans 16.26

***Obedient Faith seems to be the bookends**

E. And concerning the Gospel, it calls all saints to service.

Romans 1:6

6 among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ;

- Walk in a manner worthy of our calling Eph 4:1

III. The Saints in Rome

Romans 1:7

7 to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

A. Saints

Saints ...set apart, sanctified made holy for service to God

- B. Those at Pentecost Acts 2
- C. Dispersion after Stephens Stoning Acts 8:1
- D. The text indicates a blend of Gentile and Jews
- E. Written primarily to the Gentiles

- By textual comments
- Understanding of 26 persons greeted 2/3rds are Greek
- This fits the Lord's directive for Paul's work with the Gentiles
- Fits the context of the whole message, by which Paul explains that righteousness does not come through legalistic rule keeping, to which he uses the Jews as an example, but righteousness is found in the footsteps of faithful obedience.

IV. Paul Prayer for the Roman Saints

Romans 1:8-10

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world. 9 For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the preaching of the gospel of His Son, is my witness as to how unceasingly I make mention of you, 10 always in my prayers making request, if perhaps now at last by the will of God I may succeed in coming to you.

A. Paul thanks God

1. Through Jesus

-John 14:6 The only way to God is through Jesus

2. For their faith

- It was an example to the world.
- Not their works
- Not their accomplishments
- *But their trust in God.

B. Paul was praying for this church that he had never even been to. ...his care for the universal church

- 1. I can only guess that he prayed ahead for us also.....:)

V. Paul Can't wait to See Them

Romans 1:11-12

11 For I long to see you so that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, that you may be established; 12 that is, that I may be encouraged together with you while among you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine.

A. To impart spiritual gifts

-For establishment / confirmation Mark 16:20

B. And for the mutual encouragement of faith

-Not getting together to compare baptism numbers but to uphold trust in God.

C. Paul had wanted to come see them many times

Romans 1:13-15

13 I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that often I have planned to come to you (and have been prevented so far) so that I may obtain some fruit among you also, even as among the rest of the Gentiles. 14 I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. 15 So, for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

VI. The purpose of the Book of Romans

Romans 1:16-17

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."

A. Not ashamed of gospel, but uphold it

B. It (gospel) is the power of God for salvation

-You can't be saved outside of it !

C. It came through the Jew's but was made available to the Greek

D. Through the gospel a "Righteousness by Faith." Is revealed

Righteousness bases on trustnot rule keeping!

E. From our faith to faith.

-From The promise given to Abraham and his faith to their present day faith.

Conclusion:

Church, could it be that the spiritual stagnation felt in many Christians today is the result of an approach to God based on rule keeping and obligation, instead of desire. It comes with no surprise that we can with all the force of scholarly thought reason dwindle faith down to only that which we understand. But God wants us to move beyond sight and walk by faith 2 Cor. 5:7