

The Footsteps of Faith Series

Lesson # 2 “The Gentiles need for Righteousness”

Romans 1:18-32

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:

Down through the years I have notice that periodically different generations coin terms to express different ideas.

- Nifty Before 1960
- Groovy 1960's
- In the 1970's it was “Cool, Man”
- In the 1980's it was “Awesome”
- Totally
- Sweet
- Ah Man
- What's happening?
- Trippen
- Rad
- Buff

I was watching a movie the other day and heard Napoleon Dynamite say in the same way that we might say something is cool that is it was righteous. It is unfortunate that we twist the meaning of so many different words. But this vain use of a holy word just gets my sideways.

Transitional Statement:

Church, righteousness is a serious matter because it defines a correct relationship with God. Last week God pointed out to us in Romans 1:1-17 that true righteousness comes through living faithfully in obedience.

Today we will began to look at God's second point which simply stated is that righteousness sought from any other angle than faithful obedience, comes up short. This second point will be the discussion focus all the way through Romans 3:30.

According to Romans 3:9, which is toward the end of this text, there are two groups of people that have failed miserably regarding righteousness and they are the Gentiles and the Jews.

So today we are only going to talk about the first group that have failed as far as righteousness...The Gentiles. Our section of scripture will be Romans 1:18-32.

Lesson:

I. Generally the Wrath of God stands against all unrighteousness.

Romans 1:18

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

- A. "Wrath" is the idea of violent passion.
- B. "Revealed" has to do with taking a cover off of something.
- C. So, when it says "the wrath of God is revealed, it means that the lid is removed from God's violent passion."
 - 1. Against ungodliness & unrighteousness
 - The things which stand opposed to God.
 - 2. Men, who the truth in unrighteousness hold
 - How do you wrongly hold the truth?
 - Flagrant disregard for it, not respecting it at all. (Gentiles)
 - Manipulate it by adding to it and taking away from it, i.e. teaching as doctrines the precepts of men (Jews)
 - Massage it to fit their desires.
 - 3. Can you imagine being on the receiving end of God's violent passion?
- D. God's wrath here is an introductory statement that will apply to both the Gentiles and the Jews in this section of study.

II. God revealed Himself to the Gentiles

Romans 1:19-20

19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made,

- A. First of all, God reveal Himself to Israel?
 - To Moses in a burning bush Ex. Chapter 3. And as a pillar of cloud by day and fire by night to the Israelites Ex. 13:21. At mount Sinai He descended on the mountain with fire and smoke Ex. 19:18ff and He spoke to and directed the people through Moses.

B. But here, God makes it clear that He has revealed Himself to the Gentiles also,

-He says that which is know about God is evident (among) them

-Because God Himself made it evident to them

-Through the creationwhat has been made

Therefore: "...They are without excuse."

III. As for the Gentiles, they rejected God

Romans 1:21-23

21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

A. So how did the Gentiles respond to God's revelation of Himself to them?

B. They refused to honor God

1. They did not give God the respect due Him
2. They did not glorify Him or exalt Him in their lives.
3. But, put other things on the throne of their hearts.

B. They refused to thank God

1. They held back appreciation to the giver of all things...God !
2. Often times a thankless person thinks the world or God owes them something. They play the role of a victim and end up sabotaging themselves, and such was the case with the gentiles.

C. They became futile in their speculations

1. That is their thinking or understanding about God became pointless
2. Empty or useless
3. Paul talks about this in Ephesians 4:17

"So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind,"

D. Their foolish hearts were darkened.

1. Darkness became the driving force in their thoughts and feelings.
2. Have you ever meet someone so far away from God that darkness surrounded them?This was the condition of the gentiles.

E. They, Professing to be wise they became fools

1. Full of arrogance and pride
2. Have you ever known someone that thought they were really smart, to the point that they are always trying to prove it and in futility they are always trying to manage other peoples perceptions of themselves?

-This type of thinking always renders a person a fool !

F. They exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image

1. Idolatry
2. This is the hallmark of stupidity

-A man will carve out a rock and call the work of his hand god....

-I don't think so

G. So the Gentiles had Wrong thinking, Wrong worship and Wrong Living

IV. God's response to Gentile rejection of Him.

Romans 1:24-24a

24 Therefore God gave them over...

- A. "*Gave them over*" means to surrender or yield
- B. God had enough and gave up on them.

-Tough concept

- C. Church, don't buy into this modern day thinking that God is somehow a passive God that is tolerant beyond measure. God has limits and here the Gentiles crossed those boundaries and God turned His back on them.

Romans 1:24b

in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them.

A. God gave them over to their own desires

Romans 1:25

25 For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

A. They had traded the Truth of God like a baseball card for a lie.

-Willingly ignorant to borrow a phrase from 2 Peter 3:5

B. They worshipped and served the creature (created) more than the creator (God).

-Idolatry is nothing more than spiritual adultery.

C. And, God gave them over to the lie they had insisted upon.

Romans 1:26-27

26 For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, 27 and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.

A. To degrading passions

-Disgraceful passions

B. Homosexual relationships

-Lev 18:22 Abomination

-Lev 20:13 Death

C. Again exchanging what is right for what is wrong

-God uses the distinction of natural to unnatural (Instinctive)

-There is a basic sense of what is right and wrong within all mankind

-The Gentiles loved to pervert things

D. So, they received in themselves the due penalty in their bodies

E. Our world is very much turning to the Gentiles ways.

-We are becoming a modern day Sodom and Gomorrah, just this week California became the second state in our union to accept homosexual marriages.

-The justification is, we are born this way.

-Bologna, God tells us we are created in His image. Gen. 1:26

-Put simply it is a perverted choice against God

-Not something new

F. Here again God gave them over to the lust of their hearts

Romans 1:28

28 And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper,

A. The Greek says “They did not retain their knowledge of God.”

B. So God once again gave them over

-To a Depraved mind...that which is unapproved, rejected, worthless

-To do the things that are not proper

Romans 1:29-31

29 being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, 30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, 31 without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful;

A. Here God gets out his heavenly canvas and paints a picture of the Gentiles lack of righteousness.

Filled with all unrighteousness

Wickedness

Greed

Evil

Envy

Murder

Strife....Quarreling

Deceit

Malice

Gossips....Whisperers

Slanders...Backbiters

Hater of God

Insolent....Despiteful

Arrogant...Pride

Boastful

Inventers of Evil

Disobedient to parents

Without understanding

Not trustworthy

Not loving

Unmerciful

B. To all of these things God says “I gave them over”

C. Can God give us over?

-Yes, Hebrews 10:26 says

“For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,”

And to top it off !

Romans 1:32

32 and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.

A. Not only have the Gentiles choose to continue in sin but they give hearty approval to those who join in.

-Hey, I don't want to go to hell by myself mentality.

Conclusion:

**The Big picture here is that all have sinned and fallen short of God's glory.
The Gentiles had not earned any righteousness by their own merit.**

And, Just like the gentiles there isn't any of us righteous by our own efforts.

This study has left me asking a few questions

**Do we forget that God can have violent passion / anger against
unrighteousness.**

-Is there anything in our lives today that God would be angry with?

And then understanding that God has revealed Himself to us through His word

What is our response to that revelation?

Have we:

Honor God

Thank God

Focus on His word

Humble ourselves

Put Him on the throne of our hearts

What would it take for God to give you over?

