

# The Footsteps of Faith Series

## Lesson # 8 “Righteousness comes through faith in Christ”

Romans 5:1-21

**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:**



In that place between wakefulness and dreams, I found myself in the room. There were no distinguishing features save for the one wall covered with small index-card files. They were like the ones in libraries that list titles by author or subject in alphabetical order. But these files, which stretched from floor to ceiling and seemingly endlessly in either direction, had very different headings. As I drew near the wall of files, the first to catch my attention was one that read "Girls I Have Liked." I opened it and began flipping through the cards. I quickly shut it, shocked to

realize that I recognized the names written on each one.

And then without being told, I knew exactly where I was. This lifeless room with its small files was a crude catalog system for my life. Here were written the actions of my every moment, big and small, in a detail my memory couldn't match.

A sense of wonder and curiosity, coupled with horror, stirred within me as I began randomly opening files and exploring their content. Some brought joy and sweet memories; others a sense of shame and regret so intense that I would look over my shoulder to see if anyone was watching. A file named "Friends" was next to one marked "Friends I Have Betrayed."

The titles ranged from the mundane to the outright weird. "Books I Have Read," "Lies I Have Told," "Comfort I Have Given," "Jokes I Have Laughed At." Some were almost hilarious in their exactness: "Things I've Yelled at My Brothers." Others I couldn't laugh at: "Things I Have Done in My Anger," "Things I Have Muttered Under My Breath at My Parents." I never ceased to be surprised by the contents. Often there were many more cards than I expected. Sometimes fewer than I hoped.

I was overwhelmed by the sheer volume of the life I had lived. Could it be possible that I had the time in my 20 years to write each of these thousands or even millions of cards? But each card confirmed this truth. Each was written in my own handwriting. Each signed with my signature.

When I pulled out the file marked "Songs I Have Listened To," I realized the files grew to contain their contents. The cards were packed tightly, and yet after two or three yards, I hadn't found the end of the file. I shut it, shamed, not so much by the quality of music, but more by the vast amount of time I knew that file represented.

When I came to a file marked "Lustful Thoughts," I felt a chill run through my body. I pulled the file out only an inch, not willing to test its size, and drew out a card. I shuddered at its detailed content. I felt sick to think that such a moment had been recorded.

An almost animal rage broke on me. One thought dominated my mind: "No one must ever see these cards! No one must ever see this room! I have to destroy them!" In an insane frenzy I yanked the file out. Its size

didn't matter now. I had to empty it and burn the cards. But as I took it at one end and began pounding it on the floor, I could not dislodge a single card. I became desperate and pulled out a card, only to find it as strong as steel when I tried to tear it

Defeated and utterly helpless, I returned the file to its slot. Leaning my forehead against the wall, I let out a long, self-pitying sigh. And then I saw it. The title bore "People I Have Shared the Gospel With." The handle was brighter than those around it, newer, almost unused. I pulled on its handle and a small box not more than three inches long fell into my hands. I could count the cards it contained on one hand.

And then the tears came. I began to weep. Sobs so deep that they hurt started in my stomach and shook through me. I fell on my knees and cried. I cried out of shame, from the overwhelming shame of it all. The rows of file shelves swirled in my tear-filled eyes. No one must ever, ever know of this room. I must lock it up and hide the key.

But then as I pushed away the tears, I saw Him. No, please not Him. Not here. Oh, anyone but Jesus.

I watched helplessly as He began to open the files and read the cards. I couldn't bear to watch His response. And in the moments I could bring myself to look at His face, I saw a sorrow deeper than my own. He seemed to intuitively go to the worst boxes. Why did He have to read every one?

Finally He turned and looked at me from across the room. He looked at me with pity in His eyes. But this was a pity that didn't anger me. I dropped my head, covered my face with my hands and began to cry again. He walked over and put His arm around me. He could have said so many things. But He didn't say a word. He just cried with me.

Then He got up and walked back to the wall of files. Starting at one end of the room, He took out a file and, one by one, began to sign His name over mine on each card.

"No!" I shouted rushing to Him. All I could find to say was "No, no," as I pulled the card from Him. His name shouldn't be on these cards. But there it was, written in red so rich, so dark, so alive. The name of Jesus covered mine. It was written with His blood.

He gently took the card back. He smiled a sad smile and began to sign the cards. I don't think I'll ever understand how He did it so quickly, but the next instant it seemed I heard Him close the last file and walk back to my side. He placed His hand on my shoulder and said, "It is finished."

I stood up, and He led me out of the room. There was no lock on its door. There were still cards to be written.

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### **Transitional Statement:**

Church Jesus paid the price for our sins and the only way to God is through Him.

### **Lesson:**

#### **I. Justification by faith in Christ**

Romans 5:1-5

*Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God. 3 And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; 4 and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; 5 and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.*

- A. Now Paul reminds the Roman Christians that, through faith in Christ, they have been justified.
  - 1. “*Justified*” means rendered innocent
  - 2. The Law of Moses was never meant to or did it produce innocence...it produced condemnation.
  
- B. Through faith in Christ, we have peace with God
  - 1. There was no real peace with God under the Law of Moses. The Law produced tension, anxiety, and uncertainty
    - a. Remember when Jacob, the father of the 12 tribes of Israel who would live under the Law of Moses, wrestled with the angle at the ford of the river and there he was renamed Israel meaning (Striving with God) and so would mark the relationship of man with God under the Law of Moses.
  - 2. But through Christ
    - a. Peace that surpasses understanding Phil 4:7
    - b. No more striving
    - c. But calm in the blood of the lamb
  
- C. Through faith in Christ we have obtained introduction to God’s grace
  - 1. What we are talking about is access into God’s favor.
  - 2. Access to God’s grace
    - a. Was not through man’s efforts
    - b. And it was not written on some page of the Law
  - 3. Access to God’s grace comes through His Son Jesus John 14:6
  
- D. Through Faith in Christ we find hope.
  - 1. And we rejoice in that hope (anticipation and expectation) of the glory of God
  - 2. 1 Corinthians 15:19 *“If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.”*
  
- E. Through Faith in Christ we have new outlooks on life.
  - 1. Rejoice in our tribulations

- a. Brings perseverance
- b. Proven character
- c. Hope

2. James 1:2-4 *“Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. 4 And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”*

F. And a well placed hope in Christ will not disappoint us

- 1. Because through Christ the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the giving of the Holy Spirit in the watery grave of baptism Acts 2:38

G. There was not justification under the Old Testament only condemnation

## **II. At the right time Christ died for the ungodly**

Romans 5:6-11

*6 For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. 10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. 11 And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.*

A. At the right time / “time for everything” Solomon’s Ecc.

1. While we were still helpless

- a. When man had fully realized that they couldn’t save themselves
- b. When man had figured out the extent of his dilemma
- c. Verse 10 says while we were enemies

2. Then the time was right !

B. Then, Christ died for (in the place of) the ungodly

- 1. And that includes all of us because we have all sinned and fallen short of God’s glory Romans 3:23

C. This sacrifice of Christ upon the cross of Calvary stood as a demonstration of God’s love toward us

1. Up until this moment in time love was never fully explained or understood.
2. God demonstrated unconditional love through His son on the cross

E. And through Christ' blood

1. Ephesians 1:7 "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace"
2. The Old Covenant couldn't hold a candle to the New one
  - a. Christ was "*Much more then*"
  - b. Because the blood of bulls and goats under the OT system couldn't take away sin Hebrews 10:4
  - c. But the blood of Christ could 1 John 1:7
3. And it was this blood of Christ that saved us from God's wrath

F. And finally Christ reconciled us to God. Eph 2:16

### III. The difference between life and death is Christ

Romans 5:12-19

*12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned — 13 for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. 14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.*

- A. Adam was given the law by God not to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and he chose to eat any way...sin !
  - B. So sin entered the world
  - C. And death (separation from God) through sin
  - D. And death spread to all men because all sinned
- \* Separation / death reigned from Adam till Moses

-Isa 59:1-2

*15 But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many. 16 The gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification. 17 For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. 18 So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men.*

A. Life came about under Christ

1. Reconciliation entered

*19 For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.*

A. Disobedience brought death, but faithful obedience brought righteousness

**IV. The reason for the Law of Moses**

Romans 5:20-21

*20 The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, 21 so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

A. Here God is saying that the Law of Moses came in to increase error or the transgression. Now this is not saying that God is interested in the promotion of sin. You see man needed to fully understand what God wanted from them and through the Law they became aware only to realize that they would fail all the more. Hence sin increased because man's understanding of God increased. This provided the right time and circumstance for the Jesus to step in when man couldn't help himself and offered salvation.

B. So that grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Christ

## **Conclusion:**

Church, God's wrath is waiting for the ungodly make not mistake about it.

2 Thessalonians 1:6-9

*6 For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, 7 and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, 8 dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 9 These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,"*

But as Christians we are recipients of God's grace and that grace came at an unthinkable price....for His love to be poured out into our hearts His Son had to die on the cross of Calvary so we could reign in life

Do you live your life in such a way to exalt what God has given for you?