

SERMON NOTES

By Pastor John Paul Miller

In The Grip of God's Grace

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans

Romans 1:14-17 - "The Good News"

Romans 1:14-17, *"I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."*

The text I have just read is no doubt the most important in Paul's letter to the Romans and perhaps in all literature.

Why?

In it we find the theme of this epistle, and the essence of Christianity. It tells us how a man or woman may become right with God. For we in our natural state, are not right with God ...

But the message of Romans is how we can be right with God.

Paul calls it "*the gospel*" (vs. 15, 16)

As we approach this text we find Paul making three strong personal statements about his desire to preach this gospel.

I. Paul's Burden (vs. 14)

Romans 1:14, "*I am debtor ...*"

In what way was Paul a debtor?

Paul was in debt because he had been saved, and he knew the good news.

Illustration: most people go through life living as if the world owes them. But as Christians, we have a debt to the whole world.

Notice in verse 14, the “Greeks (the wise) and the Barbarians (the unwise).

To the Greeks there were only two kinds of people: Greeks, and everybody else (Barbarians).

And to the Jews there were only two kinds of people: Jews and everybody else (Gentiles).

In God’s mind there are only two kinds of people: the saved, and the lost!

1 John 5:12, “*He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.*”

Illustrations:

A house on fire!

We need to be ready to warn others when we see danger coming!

We owe the same debt to unbelievers!

The four leprous men in 2 Kings 7

Vance Havner – “The Gospel is not a secret to be hoarded but a story to be heralded. Too many Christians are stuffing themselves with Gospel blessings, while millions have never had a taste.”

I’m one beggar telling another where I found bread.

II. Paul’s Boldness (vs. 15)

Romans 1:15, “... *I am ready*” – Literally, eager!

Paul was eager to pay this debt.

How?

By Preaching the Gospel!

What exactly is the gospel?

Literally, it’s “Good News!”

It’s not ‘good views’

It’s not ‘a creed’ (a mental assent)

It’s not ‘a code of conduct’

It's not a ceremony – baptism, communion, circumcision

What is the 'Good News'?

1 Corinthians 15:1-4, "*Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:*"

1. *Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;*
2. *he was buried,*
3. *he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:*

Paul was eager to preach not a plan, not a philosophy, but a person.

III. Paul's Belief (vs. 16-17)

Romans 1:16-17, "*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.*"

It's said that so many are ashamed of the gospel of Christ.

Why?

1 Corinthians 1:18, "*For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.*"

1 Corinthians 1:23, "*But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;*"

Are you ashamed of the gospel, then you are ashamed of Jesus!

There are some things we should be ashamed of but not Jesus, not the 'good news'

Why was Paul unashamed of the gospel?

1. It's Source – 'God' (vs. 16)

It's God's idea

Man can't save himself – man's way seems right in his own eyes

But God's way is through Jesus – He's the way, the truth, and the life.

2. It's Nature – 'Power' (vs. 16)

Rome was into power but sinful and weak – Seneca = “a cesspool of iniquity”

The gospel is the one message that has the power to change men's hearts.

Power – Greek = 'dunamis' – dynamite, dynamo, dynamic

2 Corinthians 5:17, “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

God's power changed my life!

3. It's Purpose – 'Salvation'

What is it?

It's deliverance from:

- sin – what is sin? – Missing the mark! We have all sinned
- sin's past penalty
- sin's present power
- sin's future presence
- Also Satan, Self, The Second Death, Hell

You can be saved and know it today!

4. Its' Scope – 'Everyone'

The wise – Greek's

1 Corinthians 1:18-25, “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.”

The unwise – Barbarian's

- an un-educated
- ordinary people

Religious people – the Jew (vs. 16)

To everybody everywhere (also the Greeks)

Illustrations: Nicodemus (John 3)

The Demoniac of Gadara (Mark 5)

Zacchaeus (Luke 19)

The Woman of Samaria (John 4)

5. It's Reception – '*Believeth*' (vs. 16)

It's not behave, it's believe

John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

What does it mean to believe? Its faith

Ephesians 2:8-9, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."

Faith is the hand of the heart.

We all exercise faith – (give examples)

6. It's Revelation – '*God's righteousness*' (vs. 17)

Literally it's, a righteousness from God

Illustration – Paul in Philippians 3

It's the only way for you to be right with God.

1. Sin - Realize
2. Cross - Believe
3. Receive