

McCoy Memorial Baptist Church

DATE: October 14, 2020

Wednesday Class: "Romans: God's **Good News** for the World"

INTRODUCTION:

1. The _____ of Romans. "It is not surprising that the church in every generation has acknowledged the importance of Romans."
2. The _____ of Romans.
 - A. The City of Rome. [Comments from Dr. Kenneth Hanna, From Gospels to Glory]
 - B. The Church at Rome
 - 1) It's founding. No one knows the exact date & circumstance of its founding. The epistle to the Romans points to a substantial and well-established church. There have been 3 prominent attempts to explain the origin of the church:
 - a) Peter founded it. Roman Catholic tradition from the 4th century claimed that Peter established the church during a twenty-five year residence in Rome. The tradition has been disproved and largely rejected, even by the Catholic Church.
 - b) Jewish converts returning fr. the feast of Pentecost founded the church (Acts 2:10).
 - c) Associates of Paul founded the church at Rome.
 - 2) It's character.
 - C. The Epistle to the Romans
 - 1) Authorship and Date:
 - a) Paul's authorship was accepted widely and without serious debate.
 - b) _____ served as Paul's scribe (amanuensis; 16:22).
 - c) _____ "a servant of the church in Cenchrea," delivered letter (16:1-2).
 - d) The epistle was written during the winter that Paul spent in Corinth and before he made his last visit to Jerusalem (Acts 20:1ff. with 2 Corinthians 13). This was Paul's third missionary journey. The letter was written early spring of A.D. 57 or 58.
 - 2) Occasion:
 - a) By Paul's own circumstances, his travel plans (1:10-13; 15:23-29). He wrote to prepare the way for his coming visit to Rome and his proposed mission to Spain. Three localities figure in Paul's travel plans: Jerusalem, Rome, and Spain.
 - Paul's _____ destination is Jerusalem (15:30-33; cp. Acts 20:1ff.)
 - Paul's _____ destination was Spain

- Bet. Jerusalem & Spain, Paul's _____ destination was Rome.

“Paul thought of Rome, being situated between Jerusalem and Spain, as a place of refreshment after he had been to Jerusalem and a place of preparation en route for Spain. In other words, his visits to Jerusalem and Spain were of special significance to him because they expressed his two continuing commitments: to the welfare of Israel (Jerusalem) & to the Gentile mission (Spain).” - John R. W. Stott

“But he could have decided to go to Spain without either visiting Rome on the way or even telling the Romans his plans. So why did he write to them? Surely because he felt the need of their fellowship. Rome was about two-thirds of the way fr. Jerusalem to Spain. He asked therefore if they would ‘assist’ him on his journey there (15:24), presumably with their encouragement, financial support and prayers. Indeed, he wanted to use Rome as a base of operations in the Western Mediterranean, much as he had used Antioch (originally) as a base in the East.” - John R. W. Stott

- b) His letter also arose from the sit. in which the Roman Christians found themselves.

“Even the most casual reading of Romans betrays the fact that the church in Rome was a mixed community consisting of both Jews & Gentiles, with Gentiles in the majority (1:5f., 13; 11:13) and that there was considerable conflict between these groups. It is further recognized that this conflict was primarily not ethnic (different races and cultures), but theological (different convictions about the status of God’s covenant and law, and so about salvation).”

“Echoes of this controversy, in both its theological and its practical implications, may be heard rumbling throughout Romans. And Paul is seen from beginning to end as an authentic peacemaker, pouring oil on troubled waters, anxious to preserve both truth & peace without sacrificing either to the other. He himself had, of course, *a foot in both camps*. On the one hand, he was a patriotic Jew (‘I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers ... the people of Israel’, 9:3). On the other hand, he had been specially commissioned as the apostle to the Gentiles (‘I am talking to you Gentiles ... as I am the apostle to the Gentiles ...’, 11:13; cf. 1:5; 15:15f.). So, he was in a unique position to be an agent of reconciliation. He was determined to make a full & fresh statement of the apostolic gospel, which would not compromise any of its revealed truths, but which would at the same time resolve the conflict between Jews & Gentiles over the covenant and the law, and so promote the unity of the church. He sought to explain the relationship between Jew & Gentile in God’s over-all plan of redemption. Jewish Christians were being rejected by the larger Gentile group in the church (14:1-15:13) because the Jewish believers still felt constrained to observe dietary laws & sacred days (14:2-6).” - **Both quotes from John R. W. Stott’s commentary on Romans.**

3. Special _____:

- The emphasis on Christian _____. Romans contains the most comprehensive statement of the doctrine of salvation by grace alone. through faith alone, in Christ alone to be found in the New Testament.
- It’s _____ and _____. It’s the most systematic of Paul’s letters. “The epistle is characterized by the systematic and logical arrangement of its contents. It is one of the finest pieces of logic ever penned. It’s full of originality of thought & is forceful in its presentation” (Edmond Hiebert, An Introduction to the New Testament).

- It's _____ (it permeates Romans).
- The widespread use of _____ quotations.
"Paul quotes more often from the O.T. in this epistle than in all the other epistles combined. Romans has 61 direct quotations & many more indirect allusions to the O.T. Paul draws from 14 different books of the Old Testament. Isaiah and Psalms are the most frequently quoted." – Edmond Hiebert
- The deep concern Paul had for _____ (9:1-5; 10:1-4).

4. The _____ of Romans (see 1:16, 17). It's the gospel, the "good news" of justification by grace alone, thru faith alone, in Christ alone. Paul intends to carry the gospel to Spain and it is this gospel that he expounds clearly in Romans (cp. 1:1-17).

PAUL AND THE GOSPEL (vv. 1-7)

- The major theme of Paul's letter is the gospel (vs. 1; see also vss. 2-6, 9, 15-17). In fact, it can be said that Romans 1:8-16:27 is simply a detailed explanation of Rom. 1:1-7. Paul unfolds and expands what is announced in the first seven verses.
- A definition of the "gospel".
 - The gospel is a message (see 1 Cor. 15:1-4). The gospel by which we are saved is, "Christ died for our sins and rose from the dead." The gospel can be stated in _____.
 - There's a _____ / _____ definition of the gospel. The "gospel" includes the entire work of Christ. He saves us from the guilt & penalty of our sins, and from its dominion or reigning power in our lives (cp. Rom. 6:1-14).

In his opening remarks, Paul gives a six-point analysis of the gospel, to which he had been set apart:

1. The _____ of the gospel is _____ (vs. 1; cp. 15:16)
2. The _____ to the gospel in _____ (vs. 2)
3. The _____ of the gospel is _____ (vss. 3, 4)
4. The _____ of the gospel is _____ (vss. 5, 16)
5. The _____ of the gospel is the _____ of faith (vs. 5)
6. The _____ of the gospel is the _____ of Christ's name

We can state these truths simply using 6 prepositions. The good news is the gospel of God, about Christ, acc. to Scripture, for all nations, unto the obedience of faith, and for the sake of the Name.

- 1) Application to Believers: You must _____ it.
- 2) Application to Nonbelievers: You must _____ it.

PAUL AND THE ROMANS (vv. 7-13). After his introduction, the apostle tells his Roman readers frankly of his feelings toward them. He makes four points:

1. He _____ God for them all (v. 8)
2. He _____ for them (vss. 9, 10)
3. He longs to _____ them and he tells them why (vss. 11, 12)
4. He's often planned to _____ them, but has been prevented from doing so (v. 13)

PAUL AND EVANGELISM (vv. 14-17). What were the origins of Paul's evangelistic enthusiasm? Many commentators have called verses 16-17 the 'text' of which the rest of Romans is the exposition.

1. The gospel is a _____ to the world (vss. 14, 15)
2. The gospel is God's _____ for salvation (vs. 16)
3. The gospel reveals God's _____ (vs. 17). Two basic questions confront us:

What is "the righteousness of God"?

- "The righteousness of God" is **a divine attribute**. 'Righteousness' describes his character, together with his actions which are in keeping with his character.

- "The righteousness of God" is **a divine activity**, namely his saving intervention on behalf of his people. See Psalm 98:2; Isa. 46:13; 45:21.

- "The righteousness of God" is **a divine achievement**. The genitive is now no longer subjective (as in reference to God's character and activity), but objective ('a righteousness from God', as NIV renders the phrase in both 1:17 and 3:21). Indeed in Philippians 3:9 the simple genitive ('the righteousness of God') is replaced by a prepositional phrase ('the righteousness ... *from* God, *ek theou*). ***It is a righteous status which God requires if we are ever to stand before him, which he achieves through the atoning sacrifice of the cross, which he reveals in the gospel, and which he bestows freely on all who trust in Jesus Christ.*** There can be little doubt that Paul uses the expression 'the righteousness of God' in this third way.

What is the meaning of "from faith to faith"? Here are the four most plausible meanings:

- **faith's origin** - 'from the faith of God, who makes the offer, to the faith of men who receive it'. More simply, it is 'from God's faith (better, faithfulness) to our faith'. God's faithfulness always comes first, and ours is never other than a response.

- **the spread of faith by evangelism** may be in Paul's mind: 'from one believer to another'.

- **faith's growth**, 'from one degree of faith to another' (cf. 2 Cor. 3:18, rsv).

- **faith's primacy** which is being stressed. NIV: "by faith from first to last" or "by faith thru & thru."