

***“Romans, Dispensationally Considered —
The Capstone of Our Faith, Christ Jesus Raised for Our Justification, Part 2”***

Our Outline Today: “The Simplicity of the Message Makes All The Difference!”

- ***For Abraham, the Wording of the Good News Made All the Difference***
 - ***For Us, Under Grace, the Word of Grace Is the Power of God for Salvation***
 - ***Today, for Jew or Gentile, Salvation is by Faith Alone, Through the Gospel***
 - ***How Glorious Is Our Salvation? Christ’s Sacrifice Is All Sufficient!***
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- ***WE WILL LIMIT OURSELVES TO JUST THE MOUNTAIN PEAKS
TODAY AS WE SUMMARIZE AND FOCUS OUR THOUGHTS BEFORE
GOING ON TO CHAPTER 5!***
 - ***How far have we come here in the Romans, chapters 1-4 ...***
 - ***At the beginning we find these words:***

Romans 1:16 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.

- ***Then, the full explanation, since this seems impossible considering all the scripture and history that had gone before over several millennia. Indeed, the Lord of glory had called out of the Gentiles a people for his name so long ago promising them so very many blessings. There was a wealth of revelation concerning that calling through Moses and the law and the prophets. So, one might rightfully ask, how is it possible that as verse 16 says so simply and powerfully that the Jews are included as proclaimed here under the terms of this gospel of grace that Paul preached? Well in these first four chapters the apostle explains that in detail as we have seen and are reviewing here today.***

Romans 1:16-20

16 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.

17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

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

- ***The phrasing here is carefully chosen by the Holy Spirit of God: The Gospel ... the power of God ... and then the “content” of that gospel or good news ... the righteousness of God by faith alone without works stands poised triumphantly against the universal backdrop of the unrighteousness of men as it is fully revealed ... FROM HEAVEN!!!***
- ***This is Paul speaking, of course. These first chapters of the Romans, Dispensationally Considered, “Rightly Divided”, if you will, explain how this principle applies always, in every dispensational plan, from the expulsion of Adam and Eve and their two sons Cain and Abel from the garden, until the final dispensation, the Millennial Kingdom. Though works are sometimes added, faith is always supreme. And no one can be saved by works alone without the required assent of faith to the word of truth given.***

When was this transforming word of truth given, we may ask. The apostle is only too ready to explain, for he writes here one thing and then another and then another as he covers a vast expanse of human time up to his present time (and ours as well, since we live in the same dispensation as he did).

Here, he writes that this revelation was even written in the heavens and so it was there from the beginning of mankind upon the earth. So all were WITHOUT EXCUSE ... This was through “general revelation” available to all everywhere.

But that was not all for he continues to write here in this magnificent letter that again and again the creator and savior of this world revealed himself and his will from heaven ... And this was special revelation given to individuals from time to time for the benefit of themselves of course and also for others. For example, he reveals himself to his chosen servants (and the apostle tells us so much about that here in these opening and foundational chapters of this letter) and for each of them and those that heard them these were “turning points” indeed for them. Who were those persons God chose and what were those turning points?

To answer that question about how the Lord God had intersected with the lives of each of these called out ones he goes back to the beginning, of which times he writes that the creator and redeemer God holds all accountable, as it is written there:

[READ] Romans 1:18-21

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

19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed *it* unto them.

20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

- *There were two times this could have been the reality, that all knew God. Firstly, with Adam, Eve, Cain, and Abel, now driven out of the garden. Secondly, in the days during and immediately after the flood.*
- *[Add a diversion on the gospel in the stars here?]*

***Abel:* He was the first prophet to be called by God after the Fall and the expulsion from the garden. He had proclaimed by word and deed the Lord's plan of redemption including the shedding of blood of an innocent victim and, for that reason, he was murdered by his brother as our Lord himself revealed:**

Matthew 23:34-38

34 Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and *some* of them ye shall kill and crucify; and *some* of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute *them* from city to city:

35 That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

36 Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou* that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under *her* wings, and ye would not!

38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

- *And in due time, the Lord called others, Seth first and the pre-flood patriarchs, like Enoch, Job, and Noah and then finally, Abraham.*

More than five hundred years later through divine encounters along the way additional revelation was given to God's servants like Moses. He was called forth with the Law and eventually David and the major and minor prophets were given additional revelation. And, by his grace, in due time Paul himself was called into the ministry, finally, of grace apart from all the works Moses had required of the Jews.

All of this is summarized here in Romans 1-4! Let's begin today by reconsidering Abraham and the revelation of God's message for that day and hour. And it was a significant and transforming one indeed:

I. For Abraham, the Wording of the Good News Made All the Difference:

[READ] Genesis 15:1-6

- 1** After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I *am* thy shield, *and* thy exceeding great reward.
- 2** And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house *is* this Eliezer of Damascus?
- 3** And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.
- 4** And, behold, the word of the LORD *came* unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.
- 5** And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.
- 6** And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

[READ] Romans 4:1-5

- 1** What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?
- 2** For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath *whereof* to glory; but not before God.
- 3** For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. *[This is the quotation from Genesis 15]*
- 4** Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.
- 5** But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

- *It is clear therefore as Paul writes here (and he is our teacher!) that for Abraham, it was his faith and not any works that made the*

difference. And here the apostle states that most critical and fundamental principle that we stand on also today: “Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.”

- *And so the fundamental principle is stated here based on the scripture presented. The one verse is enough to illustrate that principle so clearly, as he writes there so shamelessly and powerful in its simplicity. For Abraham’s righteousness was imputed by God or granted to him, by simple faith and not works, God’s blessing was granted. Now, what about us?*

II. For Us, Under Grace, the Word of Grace Is the Power of God for Salvation:

- *Now, we will skip ahead to the ending on chapter 4 which so simply and powerfully states that this principle of faith is ours as well! Yes, the Law came in and ruled with an iron hand all to whom it was given, but nevertheless the fundamental principle of grace was upheld, that by faith through the simple message given God’s will was accomplished. Though the dispensational plan changed (a number of times down through the ages) faith through the word of truth revealed stood at the foundation of a sinner’s redemption.*

[READ] Romans 4:16-25

16 Therefore *it is* of faith, that *it might be* by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,

17 (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, *even* God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.

18 Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.

19 And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb:

20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;

21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

23 Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;

24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;

25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

- *Here the apostle states the foundation upon which all we Gentiles stand. For we are not under the law but under grace and so we do not have any works to offer.*
- *And how simple and profoundly powerful are his words summarizing that foundation on which we all stand as believers today: the very righteousness of Christ Jesus that has been imputed to our accounts. For we have believed on him, the Father, who raised up our Lord Jesus from the dead.*

III. Today, for Jew or Gentile, Salvation is by Faith Alone, Through the Gospel:

- *The simplicity of salvation by grace through faith alone is reasserted here also for Jews! For even for Jews living under the Law of Moses those works though required were never intended for their salvation. That is the clear teaching here so often stated.*

[READ] Romans 4:4-8

4 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,

7 Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.

8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

- *But what about the Jews then today and where are they to be found in this dispensational plan? For they had been given the Law of Moses given to them directly from heaven by Almighty God by angels and a mediator, Moses. What about them today? Did not the Law of God supersede or cancel the word of promise given before? No indeed, for it was added and could not cancel it (Gal. 3). Is the simplicity of the gospel of grace for us Gentiles the same for the Jews today or do they have a different gospel as so many claim?*

Galatians 3:16-22

16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

17 And this I say, *that* the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.

18 For if the inheritance *be* of the law, *it is* no more of promise: but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise.

19 Wherefore then *serveth* the law? It was added [*and could not be canceled*] because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

20 Now a mediator is not *a mediator* of one, but God is one.

21 *Is* the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.

22 But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

- ***So we see that the purpose of the Law was never to bring salvation (righteousness), but had a different purpose, as he writes here, "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made...". The Law was given therefore not for righteousness sake but to set apart the Israelites looking forward to the coming Messiah. And through it there was no direct access to a righteous God but all was through "mediators".***
- ***There are no complex reasonings here. Even under the Law, he writes, quoting David, righteousness and therefore the blessings of God were not imputed because of keeping the law but apart from all those works. Even then under that law, righteousness was imputed or granted to sinners who never could keep that law.***

So these precious truths were a reality even for Jews under the Law of Moses! Wonderful and true. Praise God. And he concludes the chapter with reference to the Gentiles where the same principle surely applied. This is an argument from the lesser to the greater.

[READ] Romans 4:13-16

13 For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

14 For if they which are of the law *be* heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect:

15 Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, *there is* no transgression.

16 Therefore *it is* of faith, that *it might be* by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all ...

- *The critical verse here is it seems to me verse 15. He states with utmost simplicity and therefore power that Abraham's blessings were promised to come to him independently of law for there was no law given to him yet. So the blessings came, he writes here and as Gen. 15:6 states so simply, "by faith". That was the message of the gospel given to him. It really was that simple.*
- *And so Gentiles are included too therefore, if they are of the faith of Abraham, who is father of faith for all believers.*

IV. How Glorious Is Our Salvation? Christ's Sacrifice Is All Sufficient! Amen.

Romans 1:16 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.

- *And so he ends the section there in chapter four as he begins it in chapter one, but with this clear statement regarding grace today, that our salvation and our righteousness is entirely based on our faith and in no way on our works.*
- *And therefore he is assured and assures all that today it is simplicity indeed. For every barrier has been removed. There is no law of works standing in the way, no religious system to be observed, but liberty rules by grace. Grab, grace, grace!*

Conclusions and application:

"The Simplicity of Paul's Message and Ours Makes All The Difference!"

- ***Thanks and praise to Almighty God, our God, for giving us this revelation of his will, removing our blindnesses to it, and welcoming us into the family of God having justified us on the basis of our faith alone! And now, may we go forth bearing fruit with the word of life in Christ Jesus in our mouths always.***

Romans 1:16 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.

...

Romans 4:23-25

23 Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;

24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;

25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

"The Simplicity of the Message Makes All The Difference!" Dispensationally Considered! Amen and Amen!