

Romans Chapter 1 Continued

Romans 1:12 "That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me."

In the last lesson, Paul had written to these Roman Christians that he would pray for them to receive spiritual gifts to enable them to minister also. Paul says above (we are in this together), we are fellow workers for Christ. This statement in verse 12 is a humble statement by Paul. He is trying to make them understand the equality of the believers in Christ.

Romans 1:13 "Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles."

Paul had felt even when he was at Ephesus, and Corinth, that God wanted him to go to Rome. He had desired from the beginning of his missionary journeys to go to his father's people, the Romans, and minister to them. Rome was a center of trade, and if the gospel of Jesus Christ could be established in Rome it could affect all of Europe.

Paul explains here, that he must continue to minister to the other Gentiles God has sent him to, until he gets to Rome.

Scripture catalogs 3 kinds of spiritual fruit:

1. Spiritual attitudes that characterize a Spirit led believer,
2. Righteous actions,
3. New converts.

In this context, Paul is probably referring to the third one, a desire that was eventually realized during his imprisonment in Rome.

Romans 1:14 "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise."

Debtor: Paul had an obligation to God to fulfill His divine mandate to minister to Gentiles.

This is just another way of saying that God is no respecter of persons. God wants the wise Greeks and the unwise to know Him. The very educated Greeks thought all others to be barbarians. They were extremely proud of their schools of learning. Worldly education however, does not impress God. God's message is for those who believe themselves to be high and mighty and also for the lowly. I have observed through the years that it is more difficult for those who think themselves wise to receive the good news of Jesus Christ than it is for the humble uneducated person. The wise person must figure everything out with his or her mind. Christianity is of the heart.

Romans 1:15 "So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also."

Paul is saying here that he will do everything he can to come to Rome and preach. In the book of Acts, we find that Paul did make it to Rome and preached in his home while he was under house arrest. All true ministers of God are the happiest when they can bring the true Word of God and see someone saved.

Verses 16 and 17 crystallize the thesis of the entire book, the gospel of Jesus Christ, which Paul will unfold and explain in the following chapters.

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."

Not ashamed: Neither ridicule, criticism or physical persecution, could curb Paul's boldness. He had been imprisoned in Philippi, chased out of Thessalonica, smuggled out of Berea, laughed at in Athens, regarded as a fool in Corinth, and stoned in Galatia, but Paul remained eager to preach the gospel in Rome.

Power: The English word "dynamite" comes from this Greek word. Although the message may sound foolish to some, the gospel is effective because it carries with it the omnipotence of God. Only God's power is able to overcome man's sinful nature and give him new life.

Salvation: Used 5 times in Romans, this key word basically means "deliverance" or "rescue". The power of the gospel delivers people from lostness, from the wrath of God, from willful spiritual ignorance, from evil self-indulgence and from the darkness of false religion. It rescues them from the ultimate penalty of their sin, i.e. the eternal separation from God and eternal punishment.

Believeth: To trust, rely on, or have faith in. When used of salvation, this word usually occurs in the present tense "is believing", which stresses that faith is not simply a one-time event, but an ongoing condition. True saving faith is supernatural, a gracious gift of God that He produces in the heart and is the only means by which a person can appropriate true righteousness.

Saving faith consists of 3 elements.

1. Mental: the mind understands the gospel and the truth about Christ,
2. Emotional: one embraces the truthfulness of those facts with sorrow over sin and joy over God's mercy and grace,
3. Volitional: the sinner submits his will to Christ and trust in Him alone as the only hope of salvation.

Genuine faith will always product authentic obedience (See 4:3).

Jew First: God chose Israel to be His witness nation and gave her distinct privileges. Christ's ministry was first to Israel, and it was through Israel that salvation was to come to the world.

Romans 1:17 "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."

"Righteousness of God" is better translated: "righteousness from God." A major theme of the book, appearing over 30 times in one form or another, righteousness is the state or condition of perfectly conforming to God's perfect law and holy character. Man falls woefully short of the divine standard of moral perfection, but the gospel reveals that on the basis of faith, and faith alone, God will impute His righteousness to ungodly sinners.

From faith to faith: This may be a parallel expression to "everyone who believes". As if Paul were singling out the faith of each individual believer, from one person's faith to another's faith to another's and so on. Or, each person has a portion of faith, but some seem to have more than others.

To make our faith stronger, we must use it. Each time we depend on our faith it becomes stronger. This (faith to faith), above just means that trials come and we must have faith to overcome each trial; as we do, our faith grows. The "just" means, as we have said before, just as if we had never sinned. Faith is believing in our hearts in things we cannot see with our physical eyes.

Romans 1:18 "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;"

This is not an impulsive outburst of anger aimed capriciously at people whom God does not like. It is the settled, determined response of a righteous God against sin.

"Is revealed": More accurately, "is constantly revealed". The word essentially means "to uncover, make visible, or make known." God reveals His wrath in two ways:

1. Indirectly, through the natural consequences of violating His universal moral law,
2. Directly through His personal intervention. The Old Testament record for the sentence passed on Adam and Eve to the worldwide flood, from the fire and brimstone that leveled Sodom to the Babylonian captivity, clearly displays this kind of intervention.

The most graphic revelation of God's holy wrath and hatred against sin was when He poured out divine judgment on His Son on the cross.

God has various kinds of wrath:

1. Eternal wrath, which is hell,
2. Eschatological wrath, which is the final Day of the Lord,
3. Cataclysmic wrath like the flood and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah,
4. Consequential wrath, which is the principle of sowing and reaping,

5. The wrath of abandonment, which is removing restraint and letting people go to their sins.

Here it is that fifth form. God's abandoning the wicked continually through history to pursue their sin and its consequences.

“Ungodliness”: This indicates a lack of reverence for, devotion to, and worship of the true God. A defective relationship with Him.

“Unrighteousness”: This refers to the result of ungodliness: a lack of conformity in thought, word and deed to the character and law of God.

“Hold the truth in unrighteousness”: Although the evidence from conscience, creation and God's Word is irrefutable, men choose to resist and oppose God's truth by holding fast to their sin.

Romans 1:19 "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed [it] unto them."

Manifest means to make visible, real, or to make known. God has not hidden Himself. He has made Himself real to mankind throughout all ages in his creation. He has especially shown Himself to mankind in His Son (Jesus Christ).

God has sovereignty planted evidence of His existence in the very nature of man by reason and moral law.

Romans 1:20 "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:"

“Invisible things”: Or attributes, referring specifically to the two mentioned in this verse.

1. “The things that are made”: The creation delivers a clear, unmistakable message about God's person.
2. “His eternal power”: The Creator, who made all that we see around us and constantly sustains it, must be a being of awesome power.

“They are without excuse:” God holds all men responsible for their refusal to acknowledge what He has shown them of Himself in His creation. Even those who have never had an opportunity to hear the gospel, have received a clear witness about the existence and character of God and have suppressed it. If a person will respond to the revelation he has, even if it is solely natural revelation, God will provide some means for that person to hear the gospel. (Acts 8:26-39; 10:1-48; 17:27).

Romans 1:21 "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."

“Knew God”: Man is conscious of God’s existence, power and divine nature through general revelation. (verses 19-20).

“They glorified him not”: Man’s chief end is to glorify God, and Scripture constantly demands it. To glorify Him is to honor Him, to acknowledge His attributes, and to praise Him for His perfections. It is to recognize His glory and extol Him for it. Failing to give Him glory is man’s greatest affront to his Creator.

“Neither were thankful”: They refused to acknowledge that every good thing they enjoyed came from God.

“Vain in their imaginations”: meaning futile in their thoughts. Man’s search for meaning and purpose will produce only vain, meaningless conclusions.

“Heart was darkened”: When man rejects the truth, the darkness of spiritual falsehood replaces it.

Romans Chapter 1 Continued Questions

1. What is Paul trying to convey to these people of Rome when he speaks of their mutual faith?
2. In verse 13 what does Paul want them to not be ignorant of?
3. What did Paul want to have among them in verse 13?
4. When had Paul known God intended him to go to Rome?
5. Who were Paul's father's people?
6. If the gospel of Christ were preached at Rome, why would it help all of Europe?
7. What 2 did Paul say he was debtor to?
8. Who did the educated Greeks think all others were?
9. Who is it more difficult for to receive the message of salvation?
10. In verse 15 Paul said, he was ready to do what?
11. What unusual circumstance did Paul preach under in Rome?
12. What did Paul say he was not ashamed of?
13. Who is salvation for?
14. In what order was salvation offered?
15. What does Romans chapter 10 verse 9 say about salvation?

16. Who did Jesus bring the message to first?
17. When did this change?
18. Why did Paul keep trying to preach to the Jews, when God had called him to the Gentiles?
19. What does believeth mean?
20. Verse 17 says, the righteousness of God is revealed from ____ to ____.
21. The ____ shall live by faith.
22. What does Hebrews chapter 11 verse 6 say about faith?
23. What 2 things is the wrath of God revealed from heaven against?
24. Show 2 instances in the Old Testament where God sent His wrath.
25. Show one New Testament Scripture where God's wrath is shown to someone.
26. Why do some people think the Lord is slack in coming back to the earth?
27. What does manifest mean?
28. Why does verse 20 say everyone is without excuse?
29. What does Colossians chapter 2 verse 9 say about Jesus?
30. What reveals God to us, even if we have never heard a sermon?
31. Verse 21 says, they became vain in their ____.
32. What happened to their heart in verse 21?
33. What is at enmity against God?
34. The walk in God's Light is what kind of walk?