

p1. Meeker Christian Church January 8, 2023

We are going to pick up with a couple of sermons from our Romans study series then we will spend a week or two on elders and deacons before the annual election the end of the month.

So far in the Romans we have looked at:

1 - Romans 1:1 The more we know or learn about Paul, the more challenged we will become in our own glorious assignment of being “set apart” for the gospel of God.

2 - Romans 1:2 The significant theme of the second verse is that God had long ago started instructing the leaders of the nation of Israel as to the promise and inevitability of a Savior coming to earth.

3 - Romans 1:3-7 IT IS ONLY, SINGULARLY, AND COMPLETELY BECAUSE OF JESUS CHRIST THAT CIVILIZATION HAS AND CAN CONTINUE TO EXIST.

4 - Romans 1:8-10 We learned it is a sacred duty to be thankful. It is a sacred obligation to be thankful. It is a sacred privilege to be thankful. It is a sacred practice to express thankfulness.

5 - Romans 1:11-15 Your spiritual gifts and their service to others makes you spiritually strong and physically productive for personally growth in faith.

6 - **Today** then is **Romans 1:16-17** *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.”*

In praying for what truths from these two verses to dwell this morning I settled on these:

#1 Romans 1:16 begins: *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ* – that implies that some are ashamed and being ashamed is one way God convicts a soul of sin.! This word “ashamed” seems to have lost favor, usage and certainly application in our modern day, but no so in God’s word: 105 times in the NKJV the word “ashamed” appears, 22 of those times are in the book of Psalms. From the Greek we learn the depth of the

p2 meaning of ashamed as: shame, disgrace, shameful, disgraceful, embarrassed In the Hebrew language it has the idea of the feelings one has when their private parts are exposed. Or for a male to have his beard shaved or ½ clipped! These definitions take in much more than our standard definition of shame. It includes humiliation, loss of dignity and pride. I think that is what David was really afraid of when he used the word 22 time in Psalms. The word is seldom used now-a-days and where it has it has been watered down and no longer has the impact it once did though this definition remains: It is an ADJECTIVE meaning to be embarrassed or guilty because of one's actions, characteristics, or associations: as in: "you should be ashamed of yourself" ·

synonyms: to help catch the importance of “ashamed” on a violater.

sorry · shamefaced · abashed · sheepish · guilty · conscience-stricken · guilt-ridden · contrite · remorseful · repentant · penitent · hangdog · regretful · rueful · apologetic · embarrassed · mortified · red-faced · chagrined · humiliated · uncomfortable · discomfited · distressed · in sackcloth and ashes · compunctious · blush

The Bible considers it a powerful adjective response that one should never experience in living or proclaiming the gospel message or in personal righteous living. As a word study to reinforce the depth of the Biblical meaning of ashamed we read these verses:

Luke 9:26 *For whoever is **ashamed** of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be **ashamed** when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels.*

2 Thessalonians 3:14 *And if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be **ashamed**.*

2 Timothy 2:15 *Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be **ashamed**, rightly dividing the word of truth*

1 Peter 3:16 *having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be **ashamed**.* /// The one who chooses to live righteously will live so as not to be ashamed and also and even more difficult is to not be swayed or affected by those in the population who have seared the sense of

p3 shame and insist on living and leading others in their perverted ways. I believe that is what Solomon meant when he was inspired to write in Proverbs 14:12 *There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.*

FOOTNOTE: This makes a good lesson why we should read more than one version if we are really digging into a passage of scripture: For instance our verse in question Romans 1:16 from the NKJV *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ.*- in The **Contemporary English Version** has chosen to render like this: 1:16a *I am proud of the good news!* Admittedly that does capture one inflection of the meaning-we should be proud of the gospel message, but it misses the all consuming fear, dread and consequences of being “ashamed” in a lifestyle contrary to the gospel - nor does it hint of the consequences of being ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ! Those consequences are far more serious than any of these concepts describe/// for they are the difference between eternal joy and eternal punishment.

#2 The second part of of our verse this morning is Romans 1:16b NKJV *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes.* Let me define some words to keep us on the same page: gospel – is the “good news of Jesus Christ” it encompasses in one word the full message and purpose of God becoming man in the earthly essence of Jesus Christ to live, die and be resurrected on earth for the salvation of everyone who hears, understands, accepts, and become obedient to God’s loving grace.

Power in this usage is an expression of the word omnipotent which is an ADJECTIVE meaning the unlimited power of creator GOD, HE is able to do anything: I hasten to add that all power encompasses all truth, the source and sustenance of reality is based on the truth of GOD by the power of GOD for the purpose of God./// Which purpose is our next word to define: *for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes,* salvation means preservation or deliverance from harm, ruin, or loss: the Greek word *sōtēria* (from 4982 /*sōzō*, "to save, rescue") –*salvation*, i.e. God's rescue delivers believers out of destruction *and into*

p4 His safety. Do you remember the story of Moses when having led the Hebrew nation out of captivity as slaves in Egypt into the desert where they were attacked by the fierce desert tribe of Amalekites? As long as Moses held the staff over his head, the Hebrews prevailed but when his arms became tired and could no longer hold the staff, the Amalekites prevailed. The picture of God symbolized as the staff and when the Hebrews were under God's power they prevailed but as soon as they shifted away from God's power the enemy prevailed. That application is so powerful for us today: Believers who stay under the power of God's word - the Bible - will prevail for their eternal inheritance, but to shift away or be ignorant of God's power in their lives has consequences on earth as well as in heaven.

In our verse, Romans 1:16 *For I am not ashamed of the gospel*, Paul again instructs by example; He believes in, lives and proclaims the good news of Jesus and he does so as the verse continues *because it is the power of God*; **the power is there but just like Paul, we must tap** into it to avail ourselves of that power.

I have been wanting to share this example for a long time, it is especially revealing to agnostics, but also clarifies why each individual must tap into the power of the universe for their lives.

People often try to analyze the Bible and then often discard what it says because they don't agree or don't understand it. i.e. because they don't understand or agree they don't plug into it's power.

Let me ask this question: do you believe in electricity? If you do does that mean you understand everything there is to know about electricity, like the details of hydro-electric generation, geo thermal generation, coal fired generation, wind powered generation, sun powered generation, nuclear or fission powered generation, or the newest I have read about is opposite of fission that split atoms to some process that compresses atoms and that releases energy.

P5 Now if you approach electricity with the same requirement you have of the Bible, you would not be using electricity because you do not and cannot know everything about it! And here is yet another tid-bit for you: in addition to all that electricity stuff, GOD already knows everyone of those answers plus where the elements came from behind every aspect of electricity plus everything else in the universe.

So if we wonder why GOD'S power does not shed light in for our lives - it is like refusing or being ignorant of turning on the light switch in a dark house. The power is there, but you have to do something to utilize it! Paul is showing us that the more we come in contact with the gospel revelation the more light switches we turn on to receive and utilize God's omnipotent sovereign power in our daily lives! Oh yes let me hasten to add that the reason you do use electricity is because you were taught to use it, see the example of others using it, and have your own experience using it. The same thing applies for righteousness before God.

And #3 for today what does our scripture say that power does? *that power brings salvation to everyone who believes*: belief is like turning on the light switch. You might not know every nuance of electricity production but you know it works by the results you get when you turn on the switch. **Same thing with GOD!!!** turn on your faith and belief by gaining knowledge of how the Bible record shows it works, how others have written about it in their lives, how you see it works for others, and your own observations and experiences how it has worked.

But as with any illustration there is a limit – and the limit is that too much electricity can easily become too bad, whereas too much power from GOD only produces even more of living and loving in the wonders of creation.

#4 As the verse explains, the power was given *first to the Jew, then to the Greeks* which the term Greek here is just another word for gentiles, or anyone who is not a Jew by birth. The implication was then and remains now that the Jews have a particular place in God's plan. We don't have to know all the nuances of that just like electricity to

P6 accept it. The Bible is replete with verses in that regard but I just read two for you to think about:

Old Testament: Deuteronomy 7:6(speaking to Jesus) *“For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth.*

New Testament: Romans 10:12 *For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him.*

God loves Israel and wants them saved and so should we. God loves gentiles and wants them saved, and so should we... Romans 1:16-17 *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

#5 and final for this morning is the capstone for this message Romans 1:17 *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.”*

Sharing the gospel message with others by example, word and deed is a testimony of growing **faith** expressing the salvation you have experienced, it is the evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit in your heart and soul, it is the absolute proof of God’s omnipotence having unlimited power; able to do anything; manifest as HE chooses in your body for HIS purpose and glory. ///And do you then acknowledge?? - that when all that happens in you – you become a SACRED instrument for God? You have then become: - *“The just shall live by **faith**.”*

I am excited with many of you for the reasonable conclusion that the return of Jesus is imminent, but until then I have been rejoicing for the incredible excitement of serving the God of the universe, living by faith and I boldly pray for us – everyone of us - to be actively praying and participating in reaching others with the gospel message of Jesus.

~~And therein lies the travesty in the lives of the multitudes described as wandering in darkness Isaiah 9:2 *The people who walked in darkness Have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined.*~~

Romans 1:16-17 frequent reference

Luke 9:26

2 Thessalonians 3:14

2 Timothy 2:15

1 Peter 3:16

Proverbs 14:12

Deuteronomy 7:6

Romans 10:12