

The righteous shall live by faith. (Romans 1:17)

I. Romans: Paul's Greatest Writing on Faith (vv. 1-7)

- a. Paul wrote *Romans*, while in Corinth, 3 years prior to before he was taken their as a prisoner.
- b. The letter was carried to the Christians in Rome by Deaconess Phoebe of the church at Cencrea.
- c. *Romans* is a letter that brought revival to the church (The Protestant Reformation). As we study *Romans*, we can experience revival in our hearts, homes and in our church.
- d. The function of an epistle (letters) was to convey a specific message. Who the letter was from carried weight. Paul presented in credentials as a servant, an apostle, preacher and missionary.
- e. The audience: the churches in Rome were not founded by Peter or any other apostle. If they had been, Paul would not have planned to visit Rome, because his policy was not to build on another's foundation. (Romans 15:20-21)

II. A Minister's Heart is Expressed (vv.8-15)

- a. Note the repetition of the word *called*. Paul was called to be an apostle. The believers were *called* of Christ; and they are *called* by name "saints."
- b. Salvation is not something that we do for God; it is God who *calls* us to His saving grace.
- c. Although he did not plant these churches, Paul had a deep concern for their spiritual fitness.
 1. He was thankful for their proclaimed faith *in all the world* (Roman Empire).
 2. Paul prayed for them without ceasing.
 3. He loved them. This is a pastor's heart in a great missionary. (Romans 16 Priscilla, Aquila) Persis)
 4. Paul was eager to preach gospel so that he may have some fruit among them. Ministers should have a hunger to preach and teach. Paul had an eagerness to win souls.

III. No Shame in the Gospel (v.16-17)

- a. Rome was a proud city, and the gospel came from Jerusalem a city that Rome had conquered.
- b. Romans were proud intellectuals who were known for their philosophers and philosophies.
- c. The gospel was identified with a poor Jewish carpenter who was crucified. At that time, most believers were from poor and uneducated backgrounds and not from an elite Roman class.
- d. Christians, regardless of social status, considered each other as "brothers and sisters".
- e. Paul presents several reasons why he was not "ashamed of the gospel".
 1. He was convinced that the gospel came from the Son of God. He calls it the gospel of God.(v.1)
 2. The gospel represents the power of God. The gospel has the power to transform lives, set captives free, heal marriages, bring obedience to our children, and soften harden hearts.
 3. The outcome of the gospel is "salvation" meaning deliverance or rescue.
 4. The gospel is concerned with outreach *to everyone who believes*. The gospel is color blind, not hindered by religion or social status.
- f. *To the Jew first* does not mean that the Jew is better than the Gentile. (Matt 10:5-7)

IV. Thoughts and Considerations for Action

- a. God does not ask men to behave in order to be saved, but to believe.
- b. The gospel reveals a righteousness that is *by faith*. In the O.T. righteousness was *by works*, but those who sinned discovered they could not obey God's Law and His righteous demands.
- c. When we study *Romans*, we walk into a courtroom. Both Jew and Gentile are called to the stand and found guilty before God.
- d. Then Paul explains God's amazing plan for salvation – justification by faith.
- e. The book of *Romans* declares to us – "Be right!" Be right with yourself, and others.