

The Bible 20/20 Week 43: “The Power of the Gospel” (11-1-20)

Reading this week: Romans 1-16

Introduction: New Series about the Church - “Rediscovering the Power of the Church”

Romans 1:15-16 (ESV)

(15) So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome. (16) For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is **the power of God** for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

Note: Paul’s Letter to the Roman Church - Offers real, lasting hope for a deeply broken world, and a divided church. His offer? The Power of the Gospel

Today: “The Power of the Gospel” - What’s Wrong, What’s Right, What’s Needed

1) What’s Wrong

Romans 1:18 (ESV)

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness **suppress the truth**.

Note: Next couple verses make it clear - Creation leaves us with no excuse - it points to a Creator!

Romans 1:21-23 (ESV)

(21) For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and **their foolish hearts were darkened**. (22) Claiming to be wise, they became fools, (23) and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

Note: Suppress truth, Hearts darkened, now We will worship anything but God, because we have to worship!

Romans 1:24-25 (ESV)

(24) Therefore **God gave them up** in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, (25) because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

Note: When God is rejected, then anything goes!

Romans 1:26a (ESV)

For this reason **God gave them up** to dishonorable passions.

Note: You can’t read the NT honestly without seeing the high sexual ethic that is still in place

Romans 1:28 (ESV)

And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, **God gave them up** to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.

Note: “Gave them up” - “paradidōmi” (Thayer): To give into the hands of another, to give over into one’s power or use

Try this on for size and see if it fits our current cultural moment . . .

Romans 1:29-32 (ESV)

(29) They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, (30) slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, (31) foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. (32) Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.

Paul is warning a broken culture about what happens when we leave God out . . .

Ignorance sets in and then idol worship & chasing our passions and desires becomes our aim

This same mindset is permeating our culture, but before we judge others, consider again the list we read, and those last words “they give approval to those who practice them”

Consider our Idols:

- Money & Success
- Comfort & Control
- Sexual Immorality - What we practice, what we watch and celebrate
- Ourselves - Self-Obsessed, consumed with how we are “perceived” not with our true character

External religious practice is no better than what is described here, and is no substitute for true faith . . .

Warning to the Jews (and now to us as the “people of God”) . . .

Romans 2:1 (ESV)

Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things.

Romans 2:23-24 (ESV)

(23) You who boast in the law dishonor God by breaking the law. (24) For, as it is written, “The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.”

Romans 2:28-29 (ESV)

(28) For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. (29) But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.

Paul warns against: 1) Judging others 2) Hypocrisy 3) External religion

- It's time for the church to re-discover the Gospel.
- To not allow the culture around us to permeate our lives
- We need a reminder and renewal of Gospel Power, and we need to be active carriers of it to a world in need
- Is the Gospel Virus easily spread through your life?

2) What's Right

If there is so much wrong, then what is right?

Paul quoting the Psalms . . .

Romans 3:10-12 (ESV)

(10) as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; (11) no one understands; no one seeks for God. (12) All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one."

Then Paul makes it perfectly simple and clear . . .

Romans 3:23 (ESV)

for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Note: No One!

Gospel Power comes by first understanding our great weakness & need . . .

In the verses surrounding Romans 3:23 - showing how we are all broken, God's righteousness is highlighted 4 times . . .

Romans 3:23-26 (ESV)

(23) for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, (24) and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, (25) whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show **God's righteousness**, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. (26) It was to show **his righteousness** at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Note: God alone, and any who place their faith in Jesus

3) What's Needed

(a) Repentance - Leave the Old Way

Romans 2:4 (ESV)

Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?

Note: Are you presumptuous or repentant?

(b) Faith - A New Way

Romans 5:1-5 (ESV)

(1) Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. (2) Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. (3) Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, (4) and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, (5) and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Note: Forgiveness, Righteousness, Faith, & Endurance