

The Power of the Gospel
Dr. Michael A. Cox
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Text: Romans 1:16-17

Romans: [Bibliography](#) or [Manuscripts and Greek Exegesis](#)

UBS 4th Edition Paragraph Topic: The Power of the Gospel

Central Idea of Message: The gospel is the power of God's righteousness demonstrated toward mankind in salvation.

Introduction: The gospel demonstrates God's power and righteousness. Paul teaches that no man can attain the righteousness of God on his own; yet, it is this towering height of righteousness that is required by God for salvation. How, then, can anyone reconcile unattainability and requirement? The answer is by God's righteous demands being met by himself and by his righteousness being imputed to everyone who believes!

The gospel packs a powerful punch by presenting God's righteousness as attainable by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

- I. The Gospel (v. 16)
 - A. **The product of the gospel is confidence**
 1. It is something of which to be proud, not ashamed
 2. The gospel has been ridiculed many times throughout history, especially in locations where philosophy, academia, or outright paganism reign supreme, like Athens and Rome (cf. Acts 17:18, 32)
 3. **A Christian is one who is neither ashamed of the gospel nor a shame to it (cf. Henry 6:367)**
 - a) Paul was not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ because he had confidence in it
 - b) I am not ashamed of the gospel I preach
 - c) It is much easier to stand tall and firm for something when we have confidence in it
 4. Are you ashamed of the gospel?
 - a) Ashamed for others to know your hero and savior is a Jewish carpenter executed as a criminal?
 - b) Ashamed in the form of cowardly silence?
 - c) Ashamed in the form of worldly compromise?
 - d) Ashamed to say you believe the Bible?

- e) Ashamed that doing so might damage your popularity?
- f) Nothing could turn Paul against the gospel!
- 5. **We should all be ashamed of un-Christian beliefs and behavior dressed up as Christian**
 - a) Infant baptism
 - b) Transubstantiation
 - c) Mormonism: becoming a god and populating one's own planet! Are they kidding!
 - d) Limited atonement: only for the elect
 - e) Irresistible grace: cannot say no to God
 - f) Prosperity theology: name it and claim it
 - g) Baptism as necessary for salvation
 - h) Dark skin color as the curse on Cain
 - i) Eternal security as a license to sin
 - j) Insecurity of the believer: loss of salvation
 - k) Homosexuality and its acceptance presented as compassionate Christianity
 - l) **Wokism is a term used to describe a state of mind which is alert to, and thus finds, racism and social injustice everywhere it looks (genders, races, transgenders, sexual orientation), dressed up as Christianity**
- B. **The source of the gospel is Christ**
 - 1. Good news, which also implies "bad news" exists
 - 2. **The gospel is good news to receive, not a code to keep (cf. MacGorman 24), but this does not mean the gospel sets no standards, it only means that grace is not received by keeping a code but by embracing the risen Savior**
- C. **The nature of the gospel is that it is the power of God**
 - 1. **Δύναμις**: dynamic power and divine energy (Vincent 3:9)
 - 2. God's power can be seen at work in lives
 - 3. One test of anything is to examine the results which are produced
 - a) More than a theory
 - b) The gospel gets results!
 - 4. **Christians are not powerless to reduce the evil in the world because the gospel is God's power to change lives**
 - 5. **If we want less evil in the world, we must evangelize it with the Christian message and work to see the gospel implemented, starting with ourselves!**

D. **The goal of the gospel is salvation**

- a) Deliverance from sin and its penalty
- b) Rescue from the wrath of God
- c) The term "salvation" presupposes peril or danger from which humans need to be rescued (cf. MacGorman 23)
- d) Righteousness made possible (cf. Morgan 8:20)
- e) **The gospel is not the power of God for salvation to every person; Universalism is disallowed; it is the power of God for salvation to all who believe**

2. **All who believe may experience salvation, for Scripture teaches that whosoever will may come to Christ in repentance and faith: it is for everyone**

- a) Related Scriptures
 - (1) The Lord responds to all who call upon him in truth (Ps. 145:18)
 - (2) The Lord hears the cry of those who fear him and promises to save them (Ps. 145:19)
 - (3) Everyone who asks receives, he who seeks finds, and to those who knock the door shall be opened (Matt. 11:10)
 - (4) Everyone who asks receives (Luke 11:10)
 - (5) John the Baptist came to witness to the light that all might believe (John 1:7)
 - (6) Jesus is the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29)
 - (7) God does not show partiality regarding salvation (Acts 10:34)
 - (8) God declares that all people everywhere should repent (Acts 17:30)
 - (9) Rejecters will not believe, not "cannot" believe (Acts 28:24)
 - (10) Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved (Rom. 10:13)
 - (11) God wants to show mercy to all (Rom. 11:32)
 - (12) Christ died for all (2 Cor. 5:15)
 - (13) God was in Christ reconciling the entire world to himself (2 Cor. 5:19)
 - (14) Paul admonished everyone to come to Christ so he could present everyone complete in Christ (Col. 1:28)
 - (15) It is not God's will that any perish but that all repent (2 Pet. 3:9)

- (a) God wants all to be saved
 - (b) Christ died for all (not Universalism)
 - (c) Yet, some are unsaved
 - (d) They are unsaved due to their own rejection of God, not God's rejection of them
 - (e) But, some choose to receive Christ
 - (f) Man is not so totally depraved that he cannot respond affirmatively to God's grace
 - (g) Election is not unconditional
 - (h) The atoning work of Christ is unlimited in its scope
 - (i) The grace of God is resistible
- b) Believe
- (1) Trust
 - (2) Personal commitment (cf. Mickelsen 1185)
 - (3) Handing over of one's self
 - (4) Wholehearted involvement in the truth being believed (cf. Mickelsen 1185)
 - (5) Faith is believing obedience (James 1:22; 2:17; cf. Barrett 28)
- c) Personal responsibility to the gospel through faith is emphasized (cf. McBeth 42)
- d) The equality of sinners and the equality of faith are stressed: if you are a sinner you can believe in Jesus Christ and be saved
- e) **God does not require people to behave in order to be saved but to believe (cf. Wiersbe, *Exposition*, 1:517)**
- E. **The scope of the gospel is all people**
- 1. Jews
 - a) Salvation is from a Jew (John 4:22)
 - b) Began in Jerusalem among Jews (Acts 1:8)
 - 2. Gentiles
 - a) Jews were first in chronology
 - b) Jews were also first in penalty (Rom. 2:9)
 - c) God's plan includes all of mankind
 - d) It is the same salvation experienced by all
 - 3. There is only one God therefore there is only one gospel (cf. Barrett 29)
 - 4. **"How marvelous it is to have a message of power that can be taken to all people!" (Wiersbe, *Exposition*, 1:517)**
- F. **The inclusion of the gospel is all who believe**

1. Its grace imparted must be appropriated by faith (cf. Eph. 2:8-9)
2. Its righteousness imputed must be acquired by faith
3. **There is no saving, life-altering power in faith apart from the object of that faith being the risen Christ**
4. Such faith admits one's own inability and acknowledges Christ's unique ability

II. The Righteousness of God (v. 17)

A. **The glory of the gospel is the righteousness of God**

1. God's righteousness is on brilliant display!
 - a) A particular kind of righteousness which includes both God's status and activity and mankind's status after grace is received
 - b) Our righteous status comes only through faith
 - c) **How is God's righteousness shown? By putting those who believe in right standing with him through their faith in Christ**
 - d) **Faith, not works, rituals, or keeping a code, is the only means by which God can impute his righteousness to people**
2. Is revealed
 - a) Unveiled in Christ
 - b) Disclosed in the gospel
 - c) **Without God's disclosure of his son, mankind could never have conceived such a righteousness, never mind attain it**

B. **The result of the gospel is growing, abiding faith**

1. From faith (trust)
 - a) Faith is the medium of obtaining God's righteousness
 - b) Faith is the starting point and faith is the ending point for salvation
 - c) From start to finish (cf. Moody 168)
2. To faith (greater trust)
 - a) **Faith is progressive, often beginning small but growing exponentially (cf. Matt. 17:20)**
 - b) From faith to faith means those who truly begin the walk of faith finish the walk of faith: genuine believers continue to believe
3. **Christians enter a more abundant life with the development of their faith (cf. 2 Cor. 3:18)**
4. Righteous

- a) Justified and sanctified
 - b) God has it and God bestows it (Robertson 4:327)
 - c) Union with God in character (Vincent 3:12)
5. Faith is the means by which the saving power of the gospel is appropriated
- a) Living by faith
 - (1) Is the opposite of living by works: but mankind is required to do something to be saved, that something is repent (Acts 17:30) and believe (John 6:28-29)
 - (2) Is the opposite of living by sight
 - (3) Is the opposite of living by flesh
 - (4) Is the opposite of living by emotion
 - (5) "The righteous will live by faith" (Hab. 2:4; cf. Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38)
 - (a) The soul of the proud is not right within him or her, but the soul of the humble is right
 - (b) **The proud exist by effort while the humble exist by faith**
 - b) Righteousness by faith is no new idea
 - (1) Martin Luther did not discover this for the world in the 16th century
 - (2) Martin Luther discovered this for himself and proclaimed this truth to much of Europe
 - (3) Baptist and Anabaptist groups and individuals had believed this all along, from the first century forward and never wavered
 - (a) Montanists [A.D. 150]
 - (b) Novatians [A.D. 250]
 - (c) Donatists [A.D. 315]
 - (d) Arnoldists [A.D. 1130]
 - (e) Petrobrusians [A.D. 1139]
 - (f) John Wycliff [A.D. 1328]
 - (g) John Huss [A.D. 1373]
 - (h) Savonarola [A.D. 1452]
 - (i) Mennonites [A.D. 1526]

Conclusion: Hymn #377, "Faith is the Victory." **Is the power of the gospel alive in you and are you unashamed of it?**