

Wait, Watch, and Listen

Part 4

August 13, 2017

I **SLIDE** Brief Review

A) In the beginning

- 1) We began with Elijah in the cave
- 2) Moved to Elisha and waiting
- 3) We are to prepare a way in the desert while we wait
- 4) This led us to Habakkuk and cries against injustice
- 5) How long, O God, is this going to continue?
- 6) How long will the wicked prosper and pervert justice?

B) **SLIDE Proverbs 29:18 (CJB)** ¹⁸ Without a prophetic vision, the people throw off all restraint; but he who keeps *Torah* is happy.

- 1) This is not our vision; it is God's vision
- 2) Without God actively in our lives, we will cast off restraint
- 3) But when we keep His Word, we have peace, blessings, and happiness

C) Before looking at the vision...

- 1) God has prepared a multi-course banquet for us
- 2) Sit back, listen with His ears, partake, and be filled - but not stuffed.
- 3) We are going to take a closer look at the world that led to Habakkuk's cries to the LORD by looking at Romans.

II **SLIDE** Paul's Message

A) **Romans 1:1-6 (NIV)** ¹ Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God-- ² the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures ³ regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David, ⁴ and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord. ⁵ Through him and for his name's sake, we

received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith. ⁶ And you also are among those who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.

- 1) Some background: we are all servants of Jesus Christ
- 2) Paul was called to be an apostle to the Gentiles
 - a) We are all called in one way or another to take the Good News to the world
 - b) We have all been set apart - separated from the world - for one purpose: for the gospel of God
- 3) Verse 2: There is only ONE Gospel
 - a) Only one Gospel contains news that is good for all mankind for all time in every place
 - b) God has been promising us this Gospel from the beginning
 - c) It is the Gospel contained in the Old Testament; it is the Gospel that came alive in Jesus Christ
- 4) Verses 3-4: this Gospel speaks of only One person: Jesus Christ
 - a) Jesus was fully human and was a descendant of King David
 - b) He was also the Son of God, which was proven by His resurrection
 - c) If we don't believe in this Jesus, then we do not believe in God
 - d) Play around with this Gospel, and we play around with life
- 5) Verse 5 - Jesus is the source of grace, purpose, and faith
 - a) All good things come THROUGH Jesus
 - b) He does this for His name's sake, not for ours
 - c) He is fulfilling His promises to us that His name should never be misused or maligned
 - d) Thus, we are to live for Jesus in such a way that we do not bring any disdain on His name
 - e) We obey for His sake, not for our glory
- 6) Verse 6 - not about predestination
 - a) Paul tells us that everyone - including the Gentiles (you and me) - are called to belong
 - b) We live and speak so as to invite everyone

B) **SLIDE Romans 1:8 (NIV)** ⁸ First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world.

- 1) We are going to read about a world without restraint
- 2) Paul is going to describe a world in which we are familiar
- 3) However, in the midst of a decaying world, Paul gives thanks for those who are remaining faithful
- 4) In the midst of the Israelites celebrating the golden calf, there remained those whose faith stood out
- 5) There is always a remnant whose faith will shine like a bright light
- 6) We are called to be part of that remnant.

III World without Restraint

A) **SLIDE Romans 1:16-32 (NIV)** ¹⁶ I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

- 1) Paul makes his position very clear, as should we
- 2) Paul lets everyone know where he stands, what he believes, and why he believes it
- 3) From his statement, we can tell that some were ashamed of the gospel
- 4) People criticized the gospel; they maligned it; they changed it
- 5) Ashamed =
 - a) to bring shame upon oneself
 - b) to withdraw; to apologize
 - c) In other words, believing in the good news about Jesus brought embarrassment and shame to some so they withdrew their stand and apologized for the good news

- 6) **SLIDE Mark 8:38 (NIV)** [Jesus said,] ³⁸ *If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels."*
- 7) Are we ashamed to be identified as Christians?
- 8) Are we ashamed to be seen with a Bible outside of church?
- 9) Are we ashamed to pray out loud?
- 10) Are we ashamed to bless our meals in restaurants, especially if we are not with Christian friends?
- 11) Are we ashamed to deny a party invitation because of ungodly behavior?
- 12) Are we ashamed to correct - not criticize - another for a non-Biblical or incorrect Biblical view?
- 13) Being ashamed of the Gospel is nothing new
- 14) We find it throughout the Old Testament
- 15) Paul faced it
- 16) Now it is our turn
- B) **SLIDE** Why should we not be ashamed of the Gospel?
- 1) First...
- a) ...it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.
- b) Am I ashamed to say I have had two back surgeries?
- c) Am I ashamed to tell you I take injections every week for my arthritis?
- d) Am I ashamed to tell you I take medicine for my cholesterol?
- e) No! Because it helps me
- f) Why would anyone be ashamed of a Gospel that contains the power to save anyone and everyone who believes?
- g) Because if the world tried to shame Jesus, it will try to shame us
- h) **Acts 4:12 (NIV)** Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."

2) **SLIDE** Second...

- a) ¹⁷ For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."
- b) This reason hits at the central issue that causes people to reject the Gospel
- c) Righteousness
 - i) Justice; That which is just
 - ii) State mandated by God
 - iii) God's standards
- d) **SLIDE** Two types of righteousness
 - i) By works
 - Paul tells us over and over that our works will never result in salvation or in righteousness
 - Yet, we still see this belief all around us
 - People believe that they are good enough on their own to gain salvation
 - They believe that their social justice is righteous enough
 - They believe they can achieve God's standards by substituting theirs for His
 - This righteousness is very popular because it requires no sacrifice or change
 - Ever heard anyone criticize God for sending good people to hell?
 - Ever hear of anyone who determined that their interpretation of the Bible was better than the original because it was more up-to-date and inclusive?
 - ii) **SLIDE** By faith
 - Now Paul tells us that there is only one righteousness: a righteousness that comes through faith
 - He states our good works will never put God in our debt
 - This upsets people because it means they have to change, repent, accept Jesus, and walk by faith

- 3) **SLIDE Habakkuk 2:3-4 (NIV)** ³ For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay. ⁴ "See, he is puffed up; his desires are not upright-- but the righteous will live by his faith--

- a) Look carefully at verse 4
- b) Following the promise of the vision, God gives a warning
- c) The "he" in verse 4 is probably referring to the Chaldeans
- d) **SLIDE** However, it also refers to those who are puffed up, proud, or arrogant
- e) It can refer to those who are proud of their own abilities and their own righteousness
- f) God specifically tells us that the righteous will live by faith.
- g) Therefore, if we preach the good news that the righteousness from works does not count, we will be attacked.
- h) When we preach the Good News that righteousness comes only through faith in Jesus Christ, people will ridicule us
- i) Now we can see why Paul tells us not to be ashamed of the Gospel

C) **SLIDE** The TRUE Gospel

- 1) In Habakkuk's world, the people turned away from God's righteousness and adopted their own.
- 2) Paul was seeing the same thing, as are we
- 3) However, the true Gospel of Jesus Christ attacks the righteousness of the world
- 4) It demolishes man's reasoning
- 5) It tells us that every person must change
- 6) And the world does not like that
- 7) **SLIDE 1 Corinthians 1:18-21 (NIV)** ¹⁸ For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹ For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate." ²⁰ Where is the wise man? Where is

the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹ For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.

- 8) If the world sees the message of the cross as foolishness, then the world will see us as foolish for believing it
- 9) This can cause some to be ashamed of the Gospel because they do not want to appear foolish

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