

The Just Shall Live By Faith

Sunday, MAY 5TH, 1991

Romans 1:16-17

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

The Title of my message today, is: "The Just Shall Live By Faith." This one statement (*the just shall live by faith*) occurs in the Word of God four times.

I want you to open your Bible to Romans Chapter One. I occasionally receive mail from people who tell me they like to follow in the scripture as I am preaching, so I will give you a moment to find the text.

This message will be taken from Romans Chapter One: verses 16 and 17. The apostle Paul is the writer. He boldly states in verse 16; "*I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ.*" Though it be foolishness to the world and though it be a stumbling block to the religious, Paul says; "*I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ.*" I am not ashamed to believe it, I am not ashamed to profess it, I'm not ashamed to preach it, and I am not ashamed to die for it, the gospel of Jesus Christ.

What is this gospel of Jesus Christ? Well, God was manifest in the flesh. God became a man and dwelt among us and we beheld His glory. The Almighty God, who was born of a virgin, made under the law, made of a woman, came into this world and lived in human flesh. "*God was manifest in the flesh.*" God was made unto His own law. God became obedient unto His own law on behalf of His people. God in Christ; took our sin in His body on the tree and died to reconcile us to Himself.

God became a man, an obedient, and a submissive servant. He was made in the form of a servant, in the likeness of sinful flesh and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. He died on that cross and was buried and rose again for our justification. That's right, that's the gospel we preach. He ascended back to heaven where He ever lives to make intercession for us. Peter summed it up this way; "*He died the just for the unjust that He might bring us, (sinners) to God.*"

Paul, in the Book of Hebrews put it this way; "*Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.*"

In Philippians 2:6-8; *“Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”*

This is what Paul is saying; “I am not ashamed of this gospel. This gospel is foolishness to the world and is a stumbling block to the Jew and to the religious. I am not ashamed of it. I am not ashamed to preach it, I am not ashamed to profess it or believe it. I rest in the gospel, and am even ready die for it.”

Notice the next line, in verse 16: *“I’m not ashamed of this gospel of Christ, for this gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth. To the Jew first, and also to the Greeks.”* Sinners are not saved and justified and redeemed by their works or by their merit. They are redeemed and justified by faith in Christ Jesus. *“He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life. He that believeth not the Son of God, hath not life, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.”*

Paul said to the Philippian jailor, *“Believe.”* He didn’t say work, but *“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.”* Abraham is an example. He is a pattern and the father of all believers. The scripture says; *“Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness.”* Paul wrote in Ephesians, *“By grace are you saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. It is not of works lest any man should boast.”* To the Roman Centurion, our Lord said, *“If you can believe, all things are possible to them that believe.”* This gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth.

“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For, God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him, should not perish but have everlasting life.”

In Romans 1:16, Paul said; *“I am not ashamed of the gospel.”* I won’t take away from the gospel, and I won’t add to it, I am not ashamed of it. I’m going to preach it as it is to men as they are for the glory of God. I’m not ashamed of it because this gospel of the Incarnate Christ, the crucified Christ, the risen Christ, the ascended Christ, the seated Christ and the exalted Christ is *“The power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth.”*

Verse 17: *“For in this gospel of Christ is the righteousness of God revealed.”* What’s revealed in this gospel? The Holiness of God is revealed, the righteousness of God, the

justice of God, the love of God, and the covenant of grace. All of these things are revealed in this gospel. They are understood and are made known by this gospel. All of the mercy and grace of God to sinners in Christ is revealed in this gospel. It is revealed *“From faith to faith.”*

What does that mean, from *“faith to faith?”* What this means is from one degree of faith to another. The more we read this gospel and hear this gospel, the more we know of the righteousness of God. The more we know of the Holiness of God and the more we understand the justice of God. We understand the character and attributes of God. We see more of the love of God. We see the mercy of God and we see that covenant of grace that David talked about; *“God hath made with me a covenant ordered in all things and sure.”* The more that we hear this gospel, and read this gospel; the more we understand how God can be just and justify the ungodly.

Then, watch this phrase: Paul says; *“I’m not ashamed of this gospel, this gospel of Christ. It is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth. To the Jew first, also to the Greek.”* In this gospel and in this message we see how God can be just and justifier. We can see how His righteousness can be satisfied and His law honored. We can see how His character is honored because the, *“Just shall live by faith.”*

Who are these people? These people are those who are justified in Christ. They are those who have believed. They are those who have received the Son of God. They are justified by the obedience and the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. *“He, of God, is made unto them, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.”* That is who the just are!

They are not just in themselves. They are not righteous in themselves. They will be quick to tell you that. They are not perfect in themselves. They are not worthy and they don’t deserve any of the mercy, grace or favor of God. They don’t deserve the least of His mercies. They are just in Christ. *“Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”* So, these justified ones are those who are justified in Christ. They are not guilty. They are forgiven and pardoned. Their sins have been put away. This statement, as I told you before, *“The just shall live by faith,”* is in the Word of God four times.

For your information, if you want to write this down, it is found in Habakkuk Chapter 2:4. This statement is found in Galatians in Chapter 3:11 and is found in Hebrews Chapter 10:38 and also found in our text, Romans 1:17; *“The just, (the justified, the believer), shall live by faith.”* He begins life, he continues life and he goes on to eternal

life by faith. This must be of some importance because it occurs again and again in God's Word four times. The scripture says; "*The just shall live by faith.*"

What does it mean? Here is the key. You have to get this. We don't live upon faith. Faith is not our strength and faith is not our foundation. We live by faith upon Christ. That is the key. The just shall live not upon faith. The scripture does not say; we shall live upon faith but that the just shall live by faith and upon Christ. That is very, very important that we believe Him and receive Him. We live by faith, upon our Lord. Do you see that?

In other words, I don't find peace in faith. I don't have peace because I believe. Christ is my peace. "*He made peace through the blood of His cross.*" Do you understand that? He is our peace. I believe in Him and I receive Him for He is my peace.

I do not rest in my faith. I rest in Christ. By faith, I came to Christ. He said; "*You come to Me and I will give you rest.*" That is faith, when you are coming to Christ. The rest is that which He gives. The rest is found in Him and not in my faith. You have to understand this. Faith is not my wisdom or righteousness or my sanctification. Christ is my wisdom and my righteousness and my sanctification. By faith, I look to Christ. My hope is not in my faith. Some people might say; "How do you know that you are saved?" The answer is not that I believe. My hope is not in the fact that I believe; my hope is in Christ, whom I believe. My hope is in whom I rest, in whom I trust and upon whom I cast myself. I rest in Christ's arms. Do you see that? We don't find peace in faith; we find peace in Christ. We also find rest, wisdom, righteousness and hope.

Paul said; "*I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me. The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me.*" The just shall live, not upon faith, but by faith upon Christ.

Here are seven things that I am going to give you along with scripture references on this subject, "The Just Shall Live By Faith." First of all, how do we live by faith upon Christ? The scripture says; "*The just shall live by faith*" (upon Christ). First of all, we live upon the name of Christ. The scripture says; "*Whatsoever you shall ask the Father in My name it shall be forgiven you. Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved.*"

Did you ever have a door open to you in the name of someone else? We just came up to this television station to do this program. We came to the door and the door was locked. They have a security system here. You push a button and a man's voice comes over the speaker that says; "Who is it?" The people who are with me give my name. That opens

the door. They say; “Henry Mahan, and we’re here to do the program with Henry Mahan.” That lets everybody in. They come in on that name.

One time, several years ago, when the Pittsburgh Pirates won the World’s Championship, the National League Pennant in 1979, I believe. I had a good friend who played on that ball team, and I went to Pittsburgh. I was in a meeting with a dear friend near the Pittsburgh area. We called Phil Garner who played for the Pittsburgh Pirates and he said to come down to the gate.

In Pittsburgh, I am a no-body. No one knows me in Pittsburgh. No one knew me at Three River’s Stadium. My name will get me nowhere at Three River’s Stadium or Pittsburgh, either one. We went down and gave his name and they opened the door. With his name, I even went into the dressing room. On another occasion, I went into the dugout, using his name. Do you see that? Everything was open for me. I am a no-body. They don’t know me, but it was all opened to me by using my friend’s name that played on that team.

That is what God is saying; *“There is no other name under heaven, given among men whereby we must be saved.”* The entrance into God’s presence, the entrance into heaven and the entrance into eternal life are in the name of Christ Jesus our Lord. *“Whatsoever you ask the Father in My name,”* is what the scripture says. This is not in your name or in the name of an apostle, or in the name of Mary, or not in the name of your church or in the name of your Pastor. The answer is, *“In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.”* The justified live on that name. That name gets us into the presence of God.

Secondly: Faith lives upon the blood of Christ. When the High Priest of old went into the Holy of Holies, he came into the presence of God. There, in the Holy of Holies was the ark, the mercy seat, and the Shechinah glory, the presence of God. When that High Priest came into that Holy of Holies, he came not without blood. He wouldn’t dare go into that place without blood.

There was a lamb slain and it was roasted on the altar. The lamb’s blood was brought into the Holy of Holies. *“The blood maketh atonement for the soul.”* God said; *“I’ve given you the blood upon the altar.”* That High Priest did not dare to come into the Holy of Holies without blood or he too would have been slain. Dare I go into the presence of God, of a Holy God? Dare I stand in the Holy Place? *“Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Who shall stand in His Holy Place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart who has never lifted up his soul to vanity, who has never sworn deceitfully.”* That is not me!

Well, how can we come into God's presence? We come by the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son. "*He cleanseth us from all sin.*" This is what the great High Priest did, back in the Old Testament days. He went into the tabernacle. He went into the Holy of Holies under the veil, right in front of the mercy seat. He took the blood and that blood sprinkled on the mercy seat made atonement.

The blood was only representative blood. The blood was only the blood of an animal. Yet, it allowed him to come until Christ came, the Lamb of God, and shed His blood. Now, we go not into the Holy place made with hands, but we will go someday, into the presence of God by the blood of Jesus. This will be a new and living way, with His blood. "What can wash away my sin, nothing but the blood of Jesus?"

Thirdly: Faith lives on the flesh and blood of Christ. I've read this scripture so many times and I imagine that you have. The scripture is in John 6:51: "*I am the bread from heaven, the living bread. I came down from heaven. If any man eat this bread and drink My blood, he will live forever. Who so eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life.*" The Jews said; "*Can this Man give us His flesh and blood to eat?*" No, what does this mean?

Well, here is the best explanation I can find. Israel, in the wilderness, is a picture of true Israel. Israel, in the wilderness, is a picture of the church in the world. How did Israel survive 40 years in the desert? The desert didn't provide them with any food. The desert didn't provide them with anything but heat, bugs, dirt, and the sand and wearisome ways. They ate bread that came from heaven. They drank water out of the rock. That is the way that we survive in this world. I'm talking about believers, spiritually.

I know we are taken care of physically in the world. We have a good place to live, sleep and eat. Spiritually, that is what true Israel is. This world makes no contribution to us spiritually. This world is really detrimental to us spiritually. How do we survive? How do we live and how do we live spiritually?

Christ is our bread and Christ is our drink. Everything here is dead and dying and yet we live. We live on Christ. We eat His flesh and drink His blood. In the same way, He is the bread from heaven and He is the smitten rock that followed them:

Bread of heaven on Thee I feed
Thy flesh is meat indeed.
Ever may my soul be fed
With true and living bread.

So, *“The just shall live by faith”* upon Christ. We are feeding upon Christ and living upon Christ. We rest in Christ and we take all of our strength and nourishment not from the world. We take all of our strength and nourishment from Him.

Fourthly: Faith lives on the righteousness of Christ. Now, every one of us knows this. If you know anything about the Bible at all and if you know anything about yourself at all, you know of your identification with Adam, in the fall. They call it original sin. *“As by one man’s disobedience, sin entered into the world and death by sin, so death passed upon all men.”* *By one man’s disobedience we were made sinners. As in Adam all die.”*

Do you understand that? Do you know anything about that? That is original sin. That is what we call representation. God created one man and his name was Adam, (which means red earth). We all came out of his loins. When he stood, we stood. When he fell, we fell. When he sinned, we sinned. When he died spiritually, we died, the whole human race. That is our nature. We are born that way. David said; *“In sin my mother conceived me. I was brought forth speaking lies.”* We know that!

We know that our nature is sinful. We know that there is no difference and *“All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”* We even know that our goodness and our works are not without sin. Nothing we do is perfect or God-perfect. *“There is none good but God.”* Christ said that Himself. Isaiah wrote; *“Our righteousnesses and our goodness are in God’s sight are filthy rags. Even the plowing of the wicked is sin. O wretched man that I am,”* Paul moaned and groaned. *“My sins are ever before me,”* David said.

Then, how can we be righteous which God demands and requires? How can we be accepted of God? How can we walk with God? How can we fellowship with God? I will tell you how. The answer is in Christ! He is our righteousness, and He is our holiness. *“In the Lord have I righteousness. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”* This is in plain and simple language, substitution.

“As in Adam we die, in Christ we are made alive. We are born the image of the earthy; we’ll bare the image of the heavenly. By one man’s disobedience we were made sinners, by another man’s obedience we were made righteous.” Do you understand that? This is substitution and satisfaction. That is the heart of the gospel.

Fifthly: Faith lives on the Word of God. *“The just shall live by faith.”* We live on the name of Christ, on the righteousness of Christ and now, on the Word of Christ. You know, the Bible talks about many precious things. You hear about many precious things

in the Bible. *“Unto you that believe, He is precious.”* His precious blood redeems us. *“Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.”* Those things are precious and valuable.

Also, Peter said; *“It is given unto us exceeding great and precious promises.”* In other words, to the believer, to the justified, God’s Word is precious. His Word is precious and we live on that Word. How do we live on it? *“Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. Comfort one another with these Words.”* Spiritual growth is *“Desiring the sincere milk of the Word that you may grow thereby. Thy Word O Lord is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. In Thy Word, you have caused me to hope.”* The just live upon the Word of God.

How firm a foundation

Ye saints of the Lord,

Is laid for your faith

In His excellent Word

One day, Peter was standing down by the seashore. They had been fishing all night and caught nothing. They were cleaning their nets and the Lord Jesus walked up and said; *“Have you caught anything?”* They said, *“Nothing. We have toiled all night and have not caught anything.”* He said; *“Put your nets back in the boat and cast your boat out there and put the net over the side.”* Peter said; *“Lord, we have toiled all night, we are tired and we have caught nothing. Nevertheless, at your Word we will let down the net.”* My friend, that is the believer’s daily meat, the Word of God. This is his daily strength.

Sixthly: Faith lives on the intercession of Christ. John wrote in First John 2: *“My little children, I write unto you that you sin not, but if any man sin, we have an Advocate.”* I may be condemned by the world, the law may condemn me and I may be condemned by my own conscience. Yet, I have an Advocate, I have a lawyer. I have one who intercedes. I have one who pleads for me. I have one who has never lost a case. I have one who has the Father’s ear. I have one who is the Father’s Son. I have one pleading for me who has somewhat to offer. He offers His own blood, His own scars and His own suffering for my justification. So, I live because of the intercession of Christ. He pleads for me and prays for me.

Last of all, number seven: Faith lives on the offices of Christ. Do you mean that the Lord Jesus has offices? Yes, He is our Prophet, Priest and King. He’s the Captain of our

salvation. He's our Mediator. He's the Lord our Righteousness. He is our Banner. Christ is all of these things. David said; *"The Lord is my shepherd."* He has assumed responsibility for me and I shall not want. *"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul. He leadeth me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Although I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for He is with me. His rod and staff comfort me. He prepares a table before me in the presence of my enemies. Surely, goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."*

I live by faith on Christ.