

POWER AND REVELATION OF THE GOSPEL

ROMANS 1:16-19 • TV105A

A television broadcast sermon delivered

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 18TH, 1979

By

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Transcribed, edited and published

MAY 16TH, 2016

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Zebulon Baptist Church

6088 Zebulon Highway

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Romans 1:16-19

“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. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness. Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.”

I’m going to speak to you this morning from the book of **Romans chapter 1:16, 17, and 18**. Now, if you have your Bible I would like very much for you to follow along with me as I bring this message, **Romans chapter 1:16**.

Now, the subject is: **“THE POWER AND REVELATION OF THE GOSPEL,”** the power of the Gospel and what does the Gospel reveal?

Now, let’s listen to the Scripture, **chapter 1** of the book of **Romans** beginning with **verse 16**; Paul says: *“I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first, also to the Greek, for therein is the righteousness of God revealed.”*

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Now, remember that statement: *“I am not ashamed of the gospel; it’s the power of God unto salvation, and in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed.”*

Now watch the second statement: *“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven;” remember that, the wrath of God is revealed from heaven.”* And then the next verse: *“Because that which may be known of God is manifested.”*

Now, Paul knew from experience the opposition which the Gospel of God’s grace in Jesus Christ encountered everywhere. And it’s no different today; I am not talking about a Gospel or some Gospel, I am talking about the Gospel of the grace of God in Jesus Christ. It meets with opposition everywhere.

In the book of **Acts, chapter 28 verse 22**, someone said this: *“As concerning this truth (or this doctrine), we know that everywhere it is spoken against.”* They hated and despised our Lord when He was here on the earth. It says: *“He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows acquainted with grief.”*

Men would not hear him, they would not believe Him, and they would not come to Him. He said, *“You will not come to me that you might have life.”* And then He said: *“Let another come in his own name and him you will receive. I’ve come in my Father’s name and you receive me not.”*

And He said to his disciples: *“Marvel not my brethren if the world hate you; it hated me before it hated you. And I speak these things to you that you not be upset by them. When the time comes they will cast you out of the synagogue. They will hate you and everyone who persecutes you and mocks you and even kills you will think that he does God a favor.”*

And then the apostle Paul said this: *“That the preaching of the cross is to the religious people a stumbling block and to the Gentile it is sheer nonsense.”*

So, everywhere this Gospel of God’s grace, the Gospel of God’s mercy in Christ Jesus, the Gospel of the substitutionary work of Jesus Christ is spoken against. It meets with opposition but Paul said, *“I am not ashamed of the gospel.”* I am not ashamed to believe it, I am not ashamed to rest my soul upon it, I’m not ashamed to preach it, and I’m not ashamed to be identified with it.

Now, here are four reasons why the Gospel is offensive. Now, I want you to listen to these four reasons very carefully. This is the very heart and essence of Gospel truth. Here are four reasons why the Gospel of God’s redeeming grace is offensive to the natural man, to the religious man!

First of all: When the Gospel of Jesus Christ addresses all men and women as sinners, it offends man’s dignity!

How humbling, how humbling is the charge: *“There is none good, no not one.”* How degrading is the term *“ungodly;”* that’s degrading and people do not like to be referred to as *“ungodly.”*

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Yet, the Scripture says: *“Christ died for the ungodly, that when we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”*

And then how distasteful it is to find the court of heaven pronouncing every son of Adam guilty and guilty as charged. And that’s what the law says to everyone that is under the law, *“guilty before God.”* And it stops every mouth from boasting.

But when the Gospel of Christ addresses every person (and I’m talking about every one of you out there listening to my voice today), when the Gospel of Christ addresses you as a sinner, a sinner by birth, a sinner by nature, a sinner by choice, a sinner by practice, a sinner against a holy God, that is offensive.

“In your flesh dwelleth no good thing. In the flesh no man can please God. You’ve sinned and come short of the glory of God: All we like sheep have gone astray. There’s none good, no not one. There’s none righteous, no not one.”

Now that’s offensive. It offends man’s dignity. Man had rather been bragged upon than put down. He would rather be exalted than abased. He would rather you would talk about his good deeds than his evil deeds, and yet, we have no good deeds in the flesh.

Most of our deeds are motivated by selfishness and self-righteousness. Most of our religion is an outward form. There’s very little heart-worship. Christ said: *“You call me Lord with your lips but hearts are far from me.”* Your hearts are panting after the things of this world, flesh, materialism, and possessions.

Secondly: What makes the Gospel offensive is when the Gospel is declared to be a mystery!

And you read the book of **Ephesians** and you will find one of Paul’s favorite words, is the word *“mystery.”* And when the Gospel is declared to be a mystery which is not understood by the natural mind or by the natural man it must be revealed by the Holy Spirit, and that offends man’s wisdom.

Oh how wise and intelligent we think we are. We really think we are smart and we have the answers. And yet, God says, *“Man’s wisdom is foolishness with God.”* God said, *“Your thoughts are not my thoughts, your ways are not my ways:*

He says: *“There’s a way that seems right unto men and the end thereof is death (and is destruction).”* In **1 Corinthians chapter 2** Paul declares: *“The natural eye hath not seen nor ear heard, nor entered the heart of man, the things that God’s prepared for them that love him: But God hath revealed them unto the believer by his Spirit.”*

The Gospel is a mystery that must be revealed. It’s not learned by natural wisdom and natural intellect. We are not educated into the kingdom of God; we are regenerated, born into the kingdom of God.

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So, the Gospel is a mystery that has been hid from generations. *“If they had known who Christ was they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.”* But He said: *“You neither know me nor my father.”* So, it’s a mystery. It must be revealed by the Holy Spirit. We are shut up to divine revelation.

What makes the Gospel offensive, Paul said: *“I am not ashamed of the gospel,”* the Gospel which denounces every son of Adam as a sinner and the Gospel which says that salvation is a revelation.

Thirdly: When the Gospel of Christ declares that mercy is not in man’s hands. Mercy is not in the hands of the church or the law. Mercy is in the hands of a sovereign God and *“that God will show mercy to whom he will show mercy and God will be gracious to whom he will be gracious;”* that offends man’s pride.

Now, he feels that he deserves something good from the hand of God. He does not feel that he deserves condemnation, judgment, and destruction. He feels that he deserves good from the hand of God and that God is obligated to show mercy to him at all times.

And when we say from the Word of God that, *“It is not of him that willeth, nor him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy, that the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil that the purpose of God might stand, the purpose of God according to election; it was said to her; the elder shall serve the younger. Jacob have I loved but Esau have I hated. I will be merciful to whom I will be merciful. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious. Salvation is of the Lord. He giveth it to whomsoever he will.”* That’s offensive; it offends man’s pride.

Now, this is what our Lord taught in the **4th chapter of Luke**. If you, who are familiar with your Bible, remember the story in Luke when our Lord went back to Nazareth where he was brought up.

“And as his custom was he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and he stood up to read,” and He read a passage of Scripture from **Isaiah 61** (and He said); *“the Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, to give sight to the blind, deliverance to the captive, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.”*

And He put the book down and He sat down and He said: *“This day is the Scripture revealed in your eyes. (I am that Messiah; I am that Redeemer).”*

And He was speaking to this Sabbath day congregation of people who claimed to know God and who claimed to belong to God, the people of God, Israel, the chosen nation, the special nation, the nation that was blessed of all nations.

They felt that God owed them something because of who they were. And this is what our Lord said, He said: *“Now listen to me; I want to tell you a truth. There were many widows in the land*

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of Israel in the days of the prophets, but none of them were fed but one (and she was a Gentile). And there were many lepers in the land of Israel, in the days of the prophet and none of them were healed but one, (a Gentile) by the name of Naaman.”

What’s our Lord saying here? He’s saying to these people who felt that God was obligated to them and God owed them something and because they were the national people and because they were the chosen people, and because they were the especially blessed people who had the prophets, the law, the ceremonies, and the sacrifices, that they had to be God’s people, they had to be saved, they had to receive mercy because of who they were.

And Christ said to them: “In the days of the prophet Elisha and Elijah; God passed by every leper and every widow and according to his own mercy and grace he healed a Gentile and fed a Gentile.”

Now, this is what I’m saying; the Gospel says that God is sovereign in mercy, that God only owes men judgment; He doesn’t owe them grace. He owes them punishment for sin. He doesn’t owe them forgiveness of sin. And if He does come to us in mercy, grace, and forgiveness, it’s because He will, not because we deserve it.

All right; now that’s offensive and it offends man’s pride. This is the reason Paul said, “I’m not ashamed of it; I’m not ashamed of the truth, the Gospel of Christ.”

Fourthly: When the Gospel of Christ exposes man’s inability to justify himself before God and shuts him up to the person and work of Christ alone; that our good deeds, our works, our religion, our righteousness, our vows, dedications, and decisions will not justify us before God, that we are only justified by the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. That offends man’s self-righteousness.

In the book of **Romans chapter 10** Paul talks about his people Israel, a religious people. And he said: “*My heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved.*” He said, “*I bear them record; they have a zeal of God; (they are religious: And they have an enthusiasm for God) but it’s not according to knowledge.*”

And this is the reason I know it’s not according to knowledge and why I know that their religion is based on ignorance is because; “*They are going about to establish their own righteousness before God and will not submit themselves to the righteousness of God which is in Christ Jesus the Lord: For Christ is (the goal, or consummation) or the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.*”

He’s our only hope of acceptance with God. He’s our only hope of forgiveness. He’s our only hope of deliverance. He’s our only hope of salvation. It’s not in ourselves; it’s in Christ and that offends man’s self-righteousness.

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You see; you are striped before you are clothed and you are slain before you are given life. And the sinner has got to be lost before he's found. He's got to be humbled before he is exalted. That's what's offensive, it's that abasing and humility, humiliation of the flesh.

But there you have the Gospel and the offense of the cross in declaring every man is a sinner, in declaring that God almighty is a sovereign in this thing of mercy, in declaring that the Gospel is a revelation that comes by the Holy Spirit working in the human heart giving new life.

Fifthly: Then it declares that salvation is by substitution; it's by the blood shedding of Christ on Calvary's cross, by the obedience of the Son of God!

Now, this is what Paul is talking about when he says: *"I am not ashamed of the gospel."*

And you see, it must be real; there must be a real danger, even for those who know something about the Gospel to be led astray by this world, by the pressures of the world, by the pressures of the religious world, and the pressures of the business world, and the pressures of the social world and the political world.

We are led into a religion that covers everything and touches nothing, a religion that is just a mist or a haze and receives all kinds of heresies and errors and points out no truth. Paul said in **2 Timothy, that's chapter 1:8**, *"Timothy, don't be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner; don't be ashamed."*

Then Paul, he restated his own position in **verse 12 of 2 Timothy 1**; he says: *"Nevertheless; I'm not ashamed. I know whom I have believed."* Then he brags on Onesiphorus; he says: *"The Lord grant mercy in that day; he wasn't ashamed of my chain (or me)."*

But our Master warned about this, He said in **Mark 8:38**: *"Whosoever, therefore, shall be ashamed of me, in this sinful and adulteress generation, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of the Father with the holy angels."* I'm not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ.

And now Paul sets forth in the clearest term possible, the power of that Gospel, and the revelations of that Gospel. He says: *"I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; it's the power of God unto salvation."*

Now, let me show you four things:

First of all: The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation!

He said: *"It is the power of God."* That's a very important word, that one little word; *"it is the power of God."* What's Paul doing? He's saying, there is one Gospel, *"it (not they) it is the power of God."*

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There is but one Gospel. There is but one way of salvation. There is but one way of redemption for all men of all ages. I'm talking about all the way back to Abel and all the way ahead to the last one who shall believe, whether there is a tribulation, or a millennium, or whatever; there will be no other Gospel.

There's only one Gospel. There's only one way of salvation, and there's only one way of redemption. And by setting forth this one way of salvation Paul cuts off all others. He says, "*There's none other name under heaven given among men, whereby, we must be saved.*"

He said, "*Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, Christ the Lord.*" He said, "*If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that gospel which I have preached, (I don't care if an angel from heaven) let him be accursed.*"

There's only one way. Christ said, "*I'm the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh to the Father but by me.*" The Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation. "*I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God.*"

Now, this is important; I want you to listen a minute! You know, a lot of preachers think; "Well, you can't preach theology to a general congregation." Well, my friend; if you preach the Gospel, you preach theology; theology is the study of God. "*Eternal life is to know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.*"

But now listen carefully to this; it says, "*The gospel is the power of God unto salvation,*" meaning by that, that the Gospel is the instrument of God's power to salvation.

In other words; the power of God to save is not the strength of God to do what He will; God can make another world, there's nobody stopping Him. God can make another sun; there is nobody to stop Him, and another moon.

But, the power of God to save a sinner is not in His strength to do what He will and the power of God to save a sinner is not in the determination of God to save a sinner.

There are a lot of people who have built their hopes upon the fact that they are one of the elect that they are saved because God predestinated to save a people and they are automatically saved. Oh no, no my friend; election is not salvation, predestination is not salvation; it's unto salvation.

God's power to save is not in His strength, it's not in His determination to save; the power of God to save is in the Gospel which honors God's law and satisfies God's justice and enables a holy God to be just and justify a sinner.

"*The gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation.*" If Christ had not died, nobody would have been saved. Even God cannot save a man at the expense of His law, at the expense of His justice, at the expense of His righteousness, and at the expense of His holiness. God is just; He's righteous.

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So, the Gospel “*is the power of God unto salvation.*” It’s the instrument of God’s power. It’s that which enables God to save, that permits God to save, that releases the hands of God to save, which are tied by His law, righteousness, the attributes of justice and holiness.

“*It’s the power of God unto salvation.*” What is the word salvation? It means deliverance! That’s the reason sometimes in the Bible the word salvation does not refer to the salvation of the soul at all.

In the book of **Philippians** when Paul said: “*Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;*” that verse has nothing, whatsoever, to do with the redemption of a man’s soul.

He is talking about working out their deliverance from troubles in the church, division in the church, and Peter and Paul talking about something resulting in their salvation, deliverance from jail, and deliverance from the hands of enemies. But the word “*salvation*” means deliverance.

When it refers to the soul; this Gospel of Christ, the substitutionary work of Christ, is the power of God. It enables God to save us, that is deliver us from the penalty of sin, from the curse of the law, from the condemnation of God’s judgment, from the power of sin, from the practice of sin, someday by His grace from the very presence of sin.

This one Gospel of Christ, “*is the power of God unto salvation, (deliverance) to everyone that believeth.*” Now, no man is saved without believing. “*He that believeth on the Son hath life.*” We are justified by faith. No man is saved without hearing and believing the Gospel.

What is faith? Faith embraces the promises of God: “*Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness.*” Faith not only receives the promises of God but it embraces the merits of Christ, resting in Him and Him alone, ceasing from my own labors and works and entering into His rest.

And then faith commits the soul to Christ. Paul said: “*He is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.*”

I’m not ashamed of the Gospel. Why should I be? “*It is the power of God unto salvation;*” it is deliverance from sins penalty, power, practice, and presence unto everyone that believeth, not only to the Jew but to the Gentile as well. God has a redeemed people out of every tribe, kindred, nation, and tongue under heaven.

Secondly: “*For in the gospel is the righteousness of God revealed*”

Now, would you listen a moment? This is not hard; this is just so. Somebody said, “That’s awful deep;” no it’s just so, it’s not deep, it’s just so and it’s just true; “*For therein, (that is in the Gospel) is the righteousness of God revealed.*”

Now, when we talk about the righteousness of God revealed in the Gospel, we are not talking about God’s own, individual, personal, holiness. That’s revealed in many ways. But, we are

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talking about this, now listen to me; Paul is talking about this; he is talking about that imputed holiness and righteousness of God which enables a sinner to be received of God and accepted into His fellowship.

The righteousness of God here is really the righteousness which God gives us in Christ. It's that righteousness which He imputes unto us and reckons unto us and with which He covers us in order that we might be accepted of Him. David said, *"Who shall stand in his presence? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart."* Job said, *"How can man be just with God? How can he be clean that is born of a woman?"*

Now, God almighty can demand no more than perfection but He can be satisfied with no less than perfection. So, I've got to have that kind of perfection, that kind of righteousness, and that kind of holiness.

Our Lord looked at the Pharisees, the most religious, moral, outstanding men, outwardly of His day and said to His disciples: *"Now, if your righteousness doesn't exceed theirs, you won't enter the kingdom of God."*

And that upset the disciples. Well, we are not as good as those men outwardly. Christ is not talking about an outward goodness; He is talking about an inward holiness and an inward righteousness and an inward purity which is imputed to us, given to us, or reckoned to us, because Christ obeyed God's law in our place and stead as a man.

Thirdly: *"Therein is the wrath of God revealed!"*

Now, I know that a lot of writers do not feel that this verse refers to the Gospel at all. They may be right, I do not know. The wrath of God is revealed in the death of Adam in the garden, the sentence of death upon Adam.

The wrath of God is revealed in the flood. The wrath of God is revealed at the destruction of Sodom and the wrath of God is revealed at the destruction of Jerusalem. But let me tell you something; I personally don't believe that there is any place in the Bible where the wrath of God against sin is so clearly revealed as at Calvary, *"He spared not his own Son."* God will punish sin. If you don't believe it go to Calvary and there's Christ bearing no sins of His own but bearing our sin.

Fourthly: Then, by the Gospel; that which may be known of God is revealed!

Philip said: *"Lord; show us the Father."* Our Lord said, *"He that hath seen me hath seen the Father!"*