

RCC in the Word
Week of June 10
Romans 1:16-17

¹⁶For 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. ¹⁷For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”

This is perhaps one of the most recognized verses that Paul wrote and for great reason. We have several examples in the New Testament through the book of Acts and Paul's letters that display his love for God, His son, and the Gospel. There is a great symmetry with these verses, our study in Isaiah and the expositional preaching in Revelations during this season.

In Romans 1, we find that Paul commends the Church of Rome for being a flourishing church in the center of the Roman Empire and for being a beacon in the midst of everything worldly about Rome. The church in Rome was “famous.” Matthew Henry wrote of this, saying “It is a desirable thing to be famous for faith...if they had not been persecuted, they had not been famous...The faith of the Roman Christians came to be thus talked of, not only because it was excelling in itself, but because it was eminent and observable in its circumstances.” It was in the center of the world at this time.

Even though the church in Rome was flourishing, Paul made a point to let them know he was praying for them. Why? There was still work to be done and being in the forefront of the world's eye brought on even more pressure to stay the course. The righteous must live by faith.

In this first chapter, Paul speaks of being indebted to both Greeks and barbarians (v 14). Paul considered himself to be in debt to all he came in contact with, to all he heard about and to those he longed to minister in different parts of the world and he prayed for them unceasingly.

These few points should perk our senses as Christians:

In Isaiah chapter 62, verse 6 we see that God has placed watchmen on the wall so that they would never be silent all the day and all the night. What are they to not be silent about? They are to profess to the world about the righteousness and salvation through the completed work of the Anointed One, Christ. Perhaps more importantly, they are to pray without ceasing that this work of the Anointed One be completed once and for all.

In Revelation chapter 2, we have learned through the preaching of God's word that living out this faith, being unashamed of the Gospel, can be very hard (v 10)(v13). Christians can face overwhelming pressure to conform to worldly customs, be persecuted for their beliefs, be tortured and even die for their belief in Christ. This was the same in the times of Paul's ministry and it is the same today. In America we are blessed that we currently do not fear for our lives because of our belief in Christ but we are faced daily with thwarting the relentless pressures of this society calling on The Church to conform

to this world. In other parts of the world, Christians are tortured and even martyred for living by faith and not being ashamed of the gospel.

Redeemer Saints, how are we doing in these matters? Are we being faithful watchmen on the wall? Are we proclaiming the gospel to the world? Are we praying without ceasing that God's will and work be accomplished through the Anointed One? Do we feel indebted to those around us? Are we indebted to each other as members of a local body? Indebted to family members who are lost? To coworkers? To friends, neighbors, and to those who God places in our paths?

I do not find it a coincidence that these three studies; preaching in Revelation, study in Isaiah, and our devotion series all are centering on these issues. I feel convicted to pray more, to stand, unashamed, beside Paul on the wall as a watchman, and to act more in the world.

-Written by Gregg Childers