

The Church
Message
Romans 1:16-17

- We will go backwards from the sermon – read Romans 1:1-17 slowly and then read the section in the study notes below titled *What to Anticipate in Romans 1:1-17*.
 - What connections did you make? Elaborate.
 - Where do you find the Trinity in this text?
 - Why is it important to identify and acknowledge the trinitarian work in salvation? In what other doctrines do you find the Trinity?
 - What, in this text, is directed from heaven to us and what is directed from us to heaven?

- How has the NT book of Romans been important in your relationship with the Lord? Would you be comfortable leading a study of Romans with a new believer? If you would like to be used in this way, what could you do to prepare for such a role? One suggestion is to join a discipleship group when offered in the spring – learn how to lead a group.

- What behavior/attitudes/speech might you see when believers are ashamed of the gospel? Has this ever been you? How will this text encourage you to be bold in your witness?

- Read Romans 1:14-15 alongside of 1 Corinthians 9:19-23 and Colossians 4:2-6. How should you prepare to share the gospel with those who are different than yourself? What can you do to keep from compromising your Christian obligations to “become all things to all people that some might be saved?”

- Take time to encourage one another with gospel truth. Since, according to Romans 10:17, “faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of Christ (the gospel), perhaps read Colossians 3:12-17 together – the “you’s” in this text are plural).

Study Notes

Thoughts and Quotes from the Sermon

James Montgomery Boice: Christianity has been the most powerful transforming force in human history – and the book of Romans is the most basic, most comprehensive statement of true Christianity.

To find support for Boice’s statement, see *Dominion*, by Tom Holland, and *Priests of History*, by Sarah Irving-Stonebraker.

What to Anticipate in Romans 1:1-17

1. The gospel (good news) did not begin with the coming of Jesus or with the writings of Paul – it was first promised in the Garden and subsequently proclaimed by God’s prophets in the Old Testament
2. The gospel is a trinitarian affair
3. The gospel is subversive
4. The gospel divides all people into two groups – those who belong to Jesus and those who do not
5. The gospel is designed to be lived at its fullest in community
6. Believers are obligated (and privileged) to share the gospel of Jesus with people from all walks of life
7. The gospel is good news for believers and unbelievers alike

Protoevangelium means “the first mention of the gospel.” In Genesis 3:15 when God was pronouncing judgment on the serpent (Satan) for his role in tempting Eve to sin (with Adam’s indulgence), God said that he would put enmity between the serpent and the woman’s offspring. It was a prophesy that Satan would bruise Jesus’ heel, but Jesus would crush Satan’s head. This happened at the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus.

We can never reason our way to God, but once we believe, there is more than enough evidence to sustain our belief. We must take the step of faith, though, and believe that God sent Jesus to die in our place.

The role that Romans 1:17 played in Martin Luther’s conversion:

<https://learn.ligonier.org/articles/story-martin-luthers-conversion>

Portion of the sermon regarding Luther’s conversion that didn’t make the final draft: Immediately after Romans 1:17, God, through Paul, goes on to say that all fall short of God’s glory. Not only those who are openly defiant of God’s law in their conduct and ways, but also those who are moral, and even the religious stand condemned before God because of their sins. Since righteousness is required of the

one who will be accepted by God, and since our righteousness will never be good enough, we need a Savior. We are told in Romans 3:24-25 that God put forward Jesus' blood as a propitiation for our sins to be received by faith so that we might be justified by God's grace. Since we all know what that means, we will move on.

Some theologians define propitiation as a covering for sins. That is why some translations refer to Jesus' atoning sacrifice. John Stott says that this definition is not strong enough. Stott claims that God's wrath was exhausted on Jesus, who took our place and absorbed the righteous wrath of God that we deserved. When we believe, or when we receive this good news by faith, God's righteousness is credited to our account.

Miles Stanford To be disappointed with yourself is to have believed in yourself.

Application from the Sermon

1. When God reveals your sin to you, look for Jesus
2. The truth of the gospel is the most important message you will ever share with anyone – never be ashamed of Jesus!
3. Do not move away from faith after you are saved – continue to believe the gospel until the faith you have been given becomes sight

Questions to be answered during our series on The Church (with a new one this week):

1. What is the biblical foundation for the church?
2. What is the difference between the universal church and the local church? If I am a member of the universal church, why do I need to be a member of a local church?
3. Speaking of membership, is church membership biblical? Why is membership encouraged at Grace?
4. What is the biblical structure for church leadership? How do our elders and deacons function?
5. Why do we require members to attend for at least a year before:
 - being considered as a deacon?
 - leading a ministry?
 - serving on a leadership team?
 - leading a home group?

6. Why do we require membership for two years before being considered as an elder?
7. If one of our core values is “every member a minister,” what can I do at Grace during my first year? What if the Holy Spirit has given me leadership giftings?
8. Why is home group attendance expected before being considered for leadership on any ministry team?
9. Why do we observe the Lord’s Supper twice a month? Do we consider the Table and baptism to be sacraments or ordinances?
10. Why the increased emphasis on giving this year?
11. Why do we recite creeds on occasion? Isn’t that somewhat Catholic?
12. Why do we not have an invitation at the end of the sermon?
13. Should I ask the elders to pray for me if I have a chronic illness or a major need in my life?
14. Why are only men allowed to serve as elders and deacons at Grace?
15. If we offer services online, is it okay for me to watch at home rather than attend?
16. What about missions? How many missionaries do we support? How does a missionary receive support from Grace? What about short-term trips? Does membership play a role?

Scripture Associated with the Message

Genesis 3:15 I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and her offspring;
he shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise his heel.”

Matthew 16:18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and **on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.**

Habakkuk 2:4 “Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him,
but **the righteous shall live by his faith.**

Galatians 3:11 Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, **for “The righteous shall live by faith.”**

Hebrews 10:37 For,

“Yet a little while,
and the coming one will come and will not delay;

38 but **my righteous one shall live by faith,**
and if he shrinks back,
my soul has no pleasure in him.”

Romans 3:19 Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. **20 For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.**

21 But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— 22 the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. 26 It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

27 Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. **28 For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.**

Colossians 2:6 Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, 7 rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Romans 10:17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ (or the word about Christ, or the gospel).

Colossians 3:12 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, 13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. 14 And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. 15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all

wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. 17 And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Colossians 4:2 Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving. 3 At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison— 4 that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak.

5 Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. 6 Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

2 Corinthians 4:7 But we have this treasure (the gospel of the glory of Christ) in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. 8 We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; 9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; 10 always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our bodies.