

Romans Part 27: REVIEW OF CENTRAL THEMES IN ROMANS

--two key Old Testament passages that comprise the backbone of Romans...

--Habakkuk 2:4: "the just shall live by his faith."

--Genesis 15:6: "Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness." (the NIV uses the word "credit" and the NKJV uses the word "imputed")

--again, as we keep emphasizing, the message of the apostles and the message of the New Testament is simply the fulfillment of the Old Testament... therefore they constantly use Old Testament passages as validation.

--in Acts 28:23 we see Paul under house arrest in Rome preaching what he wrote in his letter to the Christians in Rome years earlier: "So when they had appointed him a day, many came to him at his lodging, to whom he explained and solemnly testified of the kingdom of God, **persuading them concerning Jesus from both the Law of Moses and the Prophets**, from morning till evening."

--perhaps the most important word or concept in the entire book of Romans is the word "CREDIT."

--looking at the context of Genesis 15:6 quoted in Romans 4:2-5: "If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about-but not before God. 3 What does the Scripture say? **Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.**" 4 Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. 5 However, **to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness...**"

--Romans 3:21-22: "But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, **22 even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ...**"

--Philippians 3:8-9: "...not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, **the righteousness which is from God by faith...**"

--2 Corinthians 5:21: "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become **the righteousness of God in Him.**"

--"**the righteousness of faith**" (Romans 4:13; 9:30; 10:6)

--the central themes of salvation and sanctification are summed up by the verse "the just shall live by his faith."

--in context of Romans 1:16-17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, 'The just shall live by faith.'"

--"from faith to faith"

--from start to finish salvation is based on faith.

--we are not saved by faith and then have to keep our salvation through good works, as the Galatians mistakenly thought (Paul admonished them in Galatians 3:3: "Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?")

--"the just shall live by faith"

--that is, every part of our life is affected by our faith... we don't just believe in Christ and then file it away as an insurance policy, but rather we "live" by it day to day – and thus sanctification naturally follows salvation.

--Paul's explanation of the gospel in the book of Romans can be divided into the following main sections and themes:

<i>saved from the wrath of God against sin... to reflect the glory of God in sanctification</i>					
prologue (1:1-1:15)	SIN (1:18-3:20)	SALVATION (3:21-5:21)	SANCTIFICATION (6:1-8:39)	SERVICE (12:1-15:13)	epilogue (15:14-16:27)
	undergirded by God's SOVEREIGNTY (8:29-30; 9:1-11:36)				

--Romans ch. 6 explains how when we were saved we "died" to sin... "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?" (Romans 6:1-3)

--before we were saved sin ruled in our hearts – "sin reigned in death" (Romans 5:21)

--when we were saved the Holy Spirit brought new life to our heart (our spirit) and dethroned sin – we were "born of the Spirit" (John 3:8)

--when sin was dethroned we "died to sin."

--even though sin is dethroned it is still present in our flesh and therefore creates an intense battle between our spirit and our flesh.

--we have to daily crucify our flesh! Just as the hands and feet of Jesus were nailed to the cross to pay for our sins so we have to follow Him and nail the hands and feet of our sinful desires to the cross!

--crucifying our flesh becomes easier when we keep an eternal perspective and realize that it is part of our journey to heaven...

--Romans 6:5: "For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection."

--the sovereignty of God... because God is all-knowing and all-powerful our salvation is not left to random chance!

--Romans 8:28-30: "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. 29 For whom He **foreknew**, He also **predestined** to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He **called**, these He also **justified**; and whom He justified, these He also **glorified**."

--the links of salvation... foreknowledge of God... predestination... calling... justification... glorification (in heaven)

--Romans 1:18-20 explains how everyone who ever lived has a chance to respond to revelation from God in faith... whether it be the limited revelation from God in our hearts only or the full revelation of Scripture.

--"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 **because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen**, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, **so that they are without excuse...**" (Romans 1:18-20)

--the links of salvation are all stated in past tense... from God's perspective in eternity He sees the entire process of salvation in past tense! Before we were even born He could see the day when we will meet Him face to face in heaven!

--the links of salvation can only be properly understood in the light of God's omniscience and omnipotence. The links of salvation can easily be misunderstood when seen through the lens of finite human understanding.

--even though before we were saved we "were alienated and enemies" of God (Colossians 1:21) because of our sin, there is a sense in which God was by our side from the day we were born until the day we were saved and entered a personal relationship with Him.