

Home Group Helps

Romans 1:16-17

The Reformation: Rediscovering Justification

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

I. Good News (v.16a) – ¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel

II. God’s Power (v.16b) – for it is the power of God

III. Great Salvation (v.16c) – for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

IV. Glorious Grace! (v.17) – ¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”

1. Launching Question(s):

- What effects of the Protestant Reformation have you realized in your own life?

2. Observation Question(s):

- Paul states that he is “not ashamed of the Gospel” (v.16). The word for “ashamed” can also be translated as “offended.” According to the sermon, what are some ways non-believers ARE “ashamed/offended” by the Gospel?
- Why should you NOT be ashamed/offended by the Gospel?
- Paul ministered in a pagan/Greek/Roman culture. The pagan ideal of the gods was *apatha* (apathy) that the gods are completely detached from human needs and concerns.
- How does Paul’s statement that the Gospel “is the power of God for salvation” run counter to this common view of deity?

3. Interpretation Question(s):

- The breakthrough for Luther, personally, and the starting point of the Reformation came when Luther translated the term “the righteousness of God is revealed” in v. 17. Luther was not looking at the Latin, as did the Catholic fathers, but at the original Greek where the word *dikaios*, *dikaiosune*, didn’t mean “to make righteous,” but rather “to *regard* as righteous, to *count* as righteous, to *declare* as righteous” – that is to be justified.
- Westminster Confession of Faith Larger Catechism Question 70 asks:
 - **Question:** What is justification?
 - **Answer:** Justification is an act of God's free grace unto sinners, in which he pardons all their sins, accepts and accounts their persons righteous in his sight; not for anything wrought in them, or done by them, but only for the perfect obedience and full satisfaction of Christ, by God imputed to them, and received by faith alone.
- Knowing this, what difference did Luther’s correct interpretation make?
- How did it turn the whole system of Catholic doctrine on its head (see Romans 4:5; Philippians 3:8-9)?

4. Reflection Question(s):

- How should the fact that God Himself declares you justified affect your outlook in life, your worship, even your emotions?

5. Application Question(s):

- What sin are you struggling with? How are you rejecting the gospel when you sin in that way? How will believing the gospel help transform your struggle?

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