

“The Power of God unto Salvation – Part 2”
Romans 1:16
(Preached at Trinity, February 11, 2007)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. We’ve been looking at **Verses 16-17**. They are the most important verses in the entire letter. They provide the theme – How a man or woman might be made right before God.
2. Paul began by stating: **Verse 16** – “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ”
 - A. In **Verse 15** he had stated that he was a debtor to all men. There is an obligation upon every Christian to carry the Gospel to the lost.
 - B. Brining the Gospel to the lost might be very intimidating because we live in a world where lost men do not want to hear the Gospel. It is foolishness to those in unbelief. Those who embrace it will be hated and despised. In spite of this Paul was setting forth to settle his debt. He was not ashamed of it but owned it as his own.
 - C. There is a difference between being shamed for the Gospel and being ashamed of the Gospel. We live in a world where people are naturally turned against the Gospel. Bringing the Gospel to the lost will often bring shame upon us but it must never make us ashamed.
3. In the second half of **Verse 16** Paul states why he was not ashamed of the Gospel – Because it is the power of God unto salvation.
4. Last week we focused upon the nature of this salvation.
 - A. First, you have to be absolutely clear about what you are being saved from
 1. Our problem is the issue of sin – salvation deals with the issue of sin
 2. Jesus Christ came to save His people from their sin
 - B. Second, you have to be clear as to the extent of your salvation
We have been delivered from the guilt of our sin, from the power of sin, and from the pollution of sin.
 - C. Third, you have to be clear as to the timing of your salvation
There is a present reality – we have been saved – Justification
There is an ongoing process in our salvation – we are being saved – sanctification
There will be a final consummation to our salvation – we will be saved – glorification
5. This is why Paul was not ashamed to preach the Gospel. It delivers the sinner from sin granting pardon and enabling the sinner to walk in newness of life.
We can carry the Gospel to the lost with boldness. We may be shamed by lost men who hate the Gospel, but we must never be ashamed.
6. Paul gives further insight as to his boldness in proclaiming this Gospel – He says, **Romans 1:16** – “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation . . .”
7. Why does Paul focus on this point? How is it that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation?

- I. The Gospel is the power of God because salvation is according to God's sovereign purpose – In other words, the Gospel is the power of God because it is God's plan.
- A. The most basic concept of Theology is this: "God has a plan"
- Isaiah 46:10** – "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not *yet* done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:"
1. God has planned and purposed every event in all of history down to the smallest event. Nothing occurs without God having ordered it.
 2. In the infinite expanse of eternity God ordered the salvation of an elect people
 3. It was God who determined to save a great number of human beings from their sin. This was according to God's plan, His counsel, His will.
Ephesians 1:5-6 – "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶ To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."
 4. This is mysterious to us
Robert Haldane: "The Gospel is the great and admirable mystery, which from the beginning of the world had been hid in God, into which the angels desire to look, whereby His manifold wisdom is made known unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places."
- B. It was God who determined to send forth His Son to redeem His elect people.
Galatians 4:4-5 – "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, ⁵ To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."
1. Jesus came into the world to save a particular people – His people
Matthew 1:21 – "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."
 2. It was by God's divine order that Jesus was crucified
Acts 4:27-28 – "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, ²⁸ For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."
 3. When Jesus had accomplished all that the Father had sent Him to do He boldly exclaimed, "It is finished."
 4. God will accomplish the salvation of His people – it is a powerful gospel.
- II. The Gospel is the power of God because the salvation of lost people demands supernatural power
- A. Some powerful changes need to take place before a man will flee from sin and Satan and turn to God.
1. Man by nature is opposed to God
Romans 3:18 – "There is no fear of God before their eyes."
Romans 1:30 – "haters of God"
Romans 8:7 – "Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God"

- a. The natural man hates the thought of an all powerful, sovereign God
 - (1) They hate His rule, they hate His law
 - (2) The lost man is characterized by lawlessness
 - b. Human nature is predisposed to sin

Romans 3:10 – “What then? are we better *than they*? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:”

Ephesians 2:2-3 – “Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: ³ Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.”
 - c. The lost man has a total inability to make any of the changes necessary to restore himself to a right relationship with God.
 - d. The lost man needs a new heart and a new nature
 - 2. Since we are also born enslaved by Satan we need a powerful rescue
 - a. Man cannot resist the most powerful creature God has ever made
 - b. Human beings are blinded by Satan

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 – “But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: ⁴ In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”
 - c. He keeps the lost from seeing the exceeding sinfulness of their sin
 - d. He keeps them from seeing the emptiness of a life apart from Christ
 - e. He keeps them from seeing that they deserve eternal judgment
 - 3. Since man is in love with this present world he needs to be awakened to a much more glorious kingdom
 - a. How can a man be brought to forsake that which he loves?
 - b. There needs to be a powerful and miraculous transformation

Romans 12:2 – “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”
- B. Who can perform such a transformation?
Who can accomplish such a deliverance?
- 1. Jesus answered His disciples

Matthew 19:26 – “But Jesus beheld *them*, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.”
 - 2. Jesus came to accomplish what no one else could

Acts 26:18 – “To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.”

3. Only God can bring the great transformation upon man – Only God is able to recreate him
 - a. Only God can cause light to dawn upon the sinners darkened heart
2 Corinthians 4:6 – “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”
 - b. Only God can bring new life to the dead sinner and draw him powerfully to Himself
 - c. Only God can powerfully deliver the sinner from sin and Satan

III. All of our Gospel labor must carry with it a recognition of our dependence upon this mighty power of God

- A. True preaching is dependent upon the power of God
1 Corinthians 2:4-5 – “And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: ⁵ That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.”
 1. Paul was continually aware of this power
1 Thessalonians 1:5 – “For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.”
1 Thessalonians 2:13 – “For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received *it* not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.”
 2. The Holy Spirit makes the Word of God effectual in the hearts of sinners
Romans 10:17 – “So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”
Hebrews 4:12 – “For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”
- B. As you go forth to spread the good news you must trust the power of God
 1. Paul was able to go forth without being ashamed because he knew of God’s great power to save.
 2. The Gospel has never been nor will ever be well received among the masses
 - a. Sinners will always hate sound doctrine – truth exposes
 - b. Sinners will love comfortable lies
This is why they will seek the sensational, entertaining, ego-building, popular preachers
 3. God accomplishes the miracle of the Gospel through His great power
 - a. It is God who makes His Word effectual
 - b. It isn’t in your ability to speak or in your ability to persuade
 - c. In the parable of the sower the same seed is sowed by the same sower. The only variable is the condition of the soil.

- d. Only God can prepare a man's heart to receive His Word. Only God can open blind eyes.
- 4. The message people need to hear will often be the one they least like to hear.
 - a. Sometimes when we faithfully deliver God's Word we will be the objects of abuse
We must never be ashamed of the Gospel. We must never change the Word
 - b. By trusting in the power of God we can always go forth with confidence

Conclusion:

1. Every believer must go forth with a confidence that the Gospel is the power of God
God is accomplishing His eternal purpose. Never has our salvation been a matter of chance or of our own ability to achieve it.
We all were helpless to change our predisposition towards sin
2. Salvation is a gift from God. It is His doing from start to finish.
Ephesians 2:8 – “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:”
3. Jesus came into the world to fully accomplish our salvation
 - A. He came to bring out the prisoners from prison and deliver us from darkness
 - B. He came to fully accomplish our redemption through His perfect ransom
4. By the almighty, sovereign power of God He is freeing His people from their sin. He is breathing into them spiritual life.