

ROMANS: RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH FROM START TO FINISH

I. Validating The Messenger Of Righteousness By Faith From Start To Finish

(Romans 1:1-7)

I. Introduction

- A. The theme of the epistle to the Romans is that God's righteousness is available to man by faith from start to finish (Romans 1:16-17; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 441).
- B. This belief is often not accepted in Christendom: Some claim one must have faith plus works to be justified, and others say that though we are justified by faith, we cannot righteously live the Christian life by faith.
- C. We then do well to consider the validity of the messenger of that claim that God's righteousness is available by faith from start to finish, and it is provided for us in Romans 1:1-7 (as follows):

II. Validating The Messenger Of Righteousness By Faith From Start To Finish, Romans 1:1-7.

- A. The messenger of the epistle was Paul, who called himself a slave of Jesus Christ, Romans 1:1a. A slave was owned by his master (Ibid., p. 440) and he gave an account to that master (Romans 14:4), so the words that were written in this epistle were words for which the author knew he would be held accountable by Christ for writing. Thus, Paul would write in this epistle only what he knew was acceptable to his Master, Jesus Christ!
- B. The messenger Paul was also called to be an apostle, one who had been delegated authority by Christ to minister His truth to others, Romans 1:1b; Ibid. Paul must have had Christ's delegated authority as an apostle because he was also Christ's slave, accountable to Christ for how he used His Master's delegated authority.
- C. Paul claimed that he was "separated unto" (KJV) or "set apart" (NIV) to preach the salvation Gospel of God, meaning he had been permanently set apart by God (perfect passive participle of *aphorizo*, "set apart;" Ibid.; U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 529; The Analyt. Grk. Lex., 1972, p. 63) unto the commitment to proclaim the Gospel of Christ, Romans 1:1c. Paul clarified that God had directed him always to be fully focused on the Gospel of Christ about which he would write and explain in this epistle!
- D. That Gospel had been promised before by the Hebrew prophets in the Holy Scriptures (Romans 1:2), the most obvious passage being Isaiah 53:7-11. There Isaiah predicted that by acknowledging the Messiah [by faith], God would justify sinners because the Messiah would have born their sins as their Substitutionary Atonement!
- E. The Hebrew Scriptures also predicted that this Messiah would be of the seed of David according to His humanity (Romans 1:3), what Isaiah 11:10 and Jeremiah 23:5-6 foretold.
- F. Jesus Christ was finally declared to be the Son of God with power through the Holy Spirit by way of His bodily resurrection from the dead, Romans 1:4; Ibid., B. K. C., N. T. For Paul to claim that a sheer miracle like Christ's bodily resurrection from the dead validated all these other claims of His identity as the Messiah meant that Paul had to have clear evidence that this miracle actually occurred, and Paul had it (as follows):
 1. In writing to believers at Corinth, some of whom denied belief in a bodily resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:12), Paul stated that over 500 believers saw the risen Lord at one time, the majority of whom were still alive when Paul wrote 1 Corinthians around A. D. 56, 1 Corinthians 15:6. (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, p. 1619, "Introduction to the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians")
 2. Paul's epistle to the Romans was written around A. D. 58, only two years later, so his readers could check his claim made in 1 Corinthians 15:12 about still-living witnesses of the risen Lord's appearance! (Ibid., p. 1593, "Introduction to the Letter of Paul to the Romans")
 3. Besides, Paul himself was converted from trying to kill Christians and eradicate the faith to become its chief human promoter by the risen Lord's own appearance to him, 1 Corinthians 15:8-11 with Acts 9:1-19.
- G. Paul added that he with the other apostles had received "the grace of apostleship" (Ibid., B. K. C., N. T.) to minister the Gospel among all nations for Christ's name, Romans 1:5.
- H. With these validations of his calling and person, Paul sent his greetings to the believers in Rome, Rom. 1:6-7.

Lesson: Paul who wrote of God's righteousness that was available by faith from start to finish was a credible messenger of God, for (1) he was Christ's slave, accountable to Christ for what he wrote, (2) Christ had delegated authority to Paul to minister the Gospel, (3) God had set him apart for a lifelong focus on preaching the Gospel, (4) that Gospel was predicted in the Old Testament, (5) the Messiah to be believed in that Gospel was also predicted in the Hebrew Scriptures, (6) He had been predicted to be of David's seed, (7) Christ was proved to be that Messiah by His resurrection, (8) and Paul was given the grace of apostleship to minister this Gospel to all nations.

Application: May we believe Paul's claims in Romans of obtaining righteousness by faith from start to finish.