

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Romans: Charter Of God's Salvation Grace
Part I: Stating The Theme That God POWERFULLY Saves By Faith Alone In Christ's Gospel
(Romans 1:1-17)

I. Introduction

- A. Much human religious effort presumes man can produce his own salvation before God.
- B. Yet, as Paul revealed in Romans 1:1-17, God **powerfully saves** people **by faith alone in Christ's Gospel**:

II. Stating The Theme That God POWERFULLY Saves By Faith Alone In Christ's Gospel.

- A. Paul's Roman epistle was penned to a self-sufficient people who seemed humanly foreboding to disciple:
 - 1. Roman pagans were proud of their human prowess over the nations they conquered: by B. C. 139, the subjugated Jews were expelled from Rome (The Cambridge Anc. His., v. X., p. 491), so as Christians were considered a sect of Judaism (Acts 18:14-15), the Romans would have viewed them as inferior!
 - 2. Christian Jews saw Christ as the Hebrew Messiah, and Gentiles as barely justified by God, Acts 11, 15.
 - 3. Thus, unedifying tensions between Romans and Jews and Jewish Christians within the city of Rome would have made ministry to them all humanly a formidable task!
- B. Yet, Paul was not intimidated by those in Rome: he knew that all men, including them, were saved by God's great power through faith alone in Christ without human merit as noted in Romans 1:1-17:
 - 1. Paul introduced himself as a slave of Jesus Christ, but one who was called to be an apostle separated unto the Gospel of God, Romans 1:1. Naming the Gospel as **God's** Gospel emphasized the **divine** authority and **impact** of Paul's **calling** and thus his **ministry!** (John Murray, Romans, 1975 (NIC), p. 3.
 - 2. Paul noted this Gospel is **God's supremely powerful** one as to its **origin**, Romans 1:2-4:
 - a. Paul clarified this Gospel had been promised by the Old Testament prophets in holy Scripture, 1:2.
 - b. That Gospel involved news of the Son of God, God-in-the-flesh, Who was of David's seed but shown to man to be God Incarnate in power by the Holy Spirit via His resurrection, Romans 1:3-4.
 - 3. Paul noted this Gospel is God's **supremely powerful** one as to its **objective**, Romans 1:5-7:
 - a. Paul revealed that he had received spiritual equipping ("grace" as used in Romans 12:3) and apostleship designed to cause men from all nations, including Rome (by implication), to obey God's command to trust in Christ for salvation, Romans 1:5.
 - b. For this reason, though no apostle had yet evangelized Rome (Romans 15:20-23; 1:15), Christians were there by contact from believers elsewhere who spoke Christ's great, powerful Gospel, 1:6-7.
 - 4. Paul noted this Gospel is God's **supremely powerful** one as to its **application**, Romans 1:8-16:
 - a. Paul stated his interest in the believers at Rome, and hoped to be able to visit there as he had often wished but had been hindered from doing (Romans 1:8-10) in order to edify them, Rom. 1:11-13a.
 - b. Paul also noted that he had wanted to visit Rome to preach the Gospel there out of a sense of debt to the lost who needed it, and with the unashamed expectation that he would gain converts there, for he was convinced the Gospel was so powerful, it would save anyone even in Rome, Romans 1:13b-16.
 - 5. Paul noted this Gospel is God's **supremely powerful** one as to its **means**, Romans 1:17:
 - a. Paul held God's righteousness was available "out of [*ek*] faith unto [*eis*] faith" in Romans 1:17.
 - b. Though much discussion has existed in the commentaries as to the precise meaning of this phrase, we note that Paul cited Habakkuk 2:4 in Romans 1:17b to explain this expression, and then referred to it again in Galatians 3:11 to argue that justification was by faith without works. As he extensively teaches in Romans 3:21-28 that justification is by faith without works, "from faith to faith" in Romans 1:17 must thus mean that justification was by faith "from start to finish," or by faith alone apart from works, cf. Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978 ed., fn. to 1:17.!
 - c. Thus, Paul explained that **God's power ALONE saved by FAITH ALONE APART FROM ANY HUMAN MERIT OR WORK, be it of Roman or Jewish or any other human entity** , Rom. 1:17!

Lesson: Due to the **DIVINE** nature of his call and gifting and the power of the **GOSPEL**, Paul was not ashamed to preach it, for by faith alone in it, God's righteousness was applied to the one who believed.

Application: May we rest in the **DIVINE** nature of our call, gifting and power in the Gospel we give that we not be ashamed of it, but trust it to apply God's righteousness to all who merely believe it!