

Adam Sandiford

This week's message is titled gospel and righteousness, the same yet different. The scripture reading is Romans 1:14-17. I'm obligated both to Greeks and non Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish. That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are in Rome. For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes; first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. For in the Gospel, the righteousness of God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last. Just as it is written, the righteous will live by faith.

Don Smith

Good morning, everyone. Delighted to have you with us today and appreciate so many of you who travel distances to be with us. We're really very grateful that you do that for us. A number of years ago, we decided that we would put somewhat of a motto to our church, and it's a very basic, simple one, but a very good one I think: Love God, love each other and serve the world. One of the ways that we love God is coming together to worship, to love each other. We ask people to be involved with other people in the congregation, whether it be through a Bible study, a small group, or whatever. And we have a variety of those, and then just loving the world. And it's unique that we have a congregation here in Beamsville where many of us travel from our own villages and community. And we hope that we can be good examples and speak the gospel to our lives and share with their neighbors. So we're delighted to have you with us. We're very grateful that you are here. We don't do this as often as probably we should. But let's just take a moment to stand up where we are to say good morning to one another. And especially if you don't know someone to introduce yourself, let's go ahead and do that.

Thank you for being with us this morning. Glad you're here. For a number of weeks, we've been in the book of Romans, chapter one. I was reflecting back, I think it was 1978. I'm not great with the exact dates. I was attending a Bible College in Ohio. And many of our classes would be in the church building. And so from Monday to Friday, we were actively involved in learning and teaching and so forth. And on Sunday, I would drive from Ohio to Indiana. Not very long, about an hour, I guess, and preach for the church there. But what's interesting to me is that the church building in Ohio and the church building in Indiana, look very much like it: Had their name across the building, of course, Church of Christ in Ohio and Church of Christ in Indiana. And for all intents and purposes, they were very much the same. Because if you went to a worship service in Ohio and went to worship service in Indiana where it was, it would be very similar to how we conduct a worship service. There was somebody who would welcome everyone. Typically, there would be a song, maybe two songs, a prayer, another song, communion, another song, and then the minister would preach. And then there would be a final song, a prayer and a dismissal. Come back for the evening worship. And that's pretty much the experience that those two churches went through. Everything looked like everything seemed alike. But they couldn't be more different. Because when you left one of the church buildings, there was this feeling of what a family Christ, so grateful for our salvation in Christ. And the other one, when you left the building was, "you better do this, right?" There was some type of a threat attached to the message. You better get it right. And so in one experience, you felt this great joy throughout the week. With the other experience, there was this dark cloud seemingly upon us. All week long: "You better do it right. You better think right. You better get it right. You better do it or else. Or Else. OR ELSE!" When I read Romans chapter one, I'm sure there were people who felt one way or the other. So the Apostle Paul is wanting to and constantly in his letters. He's wanting to comfort people. Sometimes confront people who had a heavy hand on other

people. Paul is wanting to say there is one gospel, the gospel is for all that gospel has come to set us free. Because the gospel is the death, the burial and the resurrection of Christ Jesus, and what that means to each one of us. So when we have communion, we take the bread, we take the cup, it's a reminder of Christ himself, his death, his shed blood for our sins, and that's what Good Friday is all about. In fact, that's what our life is all about, that He gave His life for us to live.

And so when Paul says in Romans chapter one, and we've been looking at this now for a while, in verses 16 and 17, he says this, I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it's the power of God that brings salvation to everyone. First for the Jew, then for the Gentile, for in the Gospel, or righteousness, meaning being right with God, a righteousness of God has revealed a righteousness that is by faith. We believe this from first to last, Jew to Gentile, just as it's written, the righteous will live by faith, not a threatening faith, not a condemning faith, but a joyful faith. So maybe we can read Romans 1:16. I am not ashamed of the gospel this way. I'm not embarrassed by the gospel. So this is where now even though we're together in a room with one another, where I would ask each one of us to ask ourselves this very question. What am I, in regard to the gospel? How do I feel about the gospel? Paul says, I'm not ashamed of the gospel. I'm not embarrassed by the gospel. I'm not afraid of the gospel. I'm not threatened by the gospel. Let me ask you, where are you when it comes to the gospel?

Now, the gospel Paul states very clearly is specific. Sometimes one might say, well, this is the gospel truth, meaning there's some force behind this. We believe it to be true. But the gospel is very specific. You know, the apostle Paul talks about the gospel throughout his letters and in First Corinthians, he tells us what the gospel is: Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel, which you believed in, what you believe in now, I want you to believe in this gospel. I remind you the gospel of Jesus Christ talks about his death and his burial and his resurrection. I'm not ashamed of the gospel. It's the power of God for salvation for all who believe. Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of this gospel, which you have believed. And once you've taken your stand by this gospel, you are saved, if you hold firmly to these things that you believed, otherwise, you believed in vain. For what I received from the Lord, I passed on to us first importance that Jesus Christ died for your sins, according to the Scriptures that he was buried. But he rose again on the third day appearing to many according to the Scriptures. And I'm not ashamed of it. I'm not ashamed of that. I'm not embarrassed by that. I'm not threatened by that, because this gospel invites all of us to come to be part of him. So when the gospel is first preached, it comes after the death of Jesus, although Jesus made it very clear while he was alive, what he wanted to have preached, and he says, to all those who are listening, he said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go and preach the gospel to all nations, those that believe in baptized will be saved." Mark 16:16 says the same thing to a group of disciples who've been following Jesus for three years. They don't want Jesus to leave. Jesus is about to leave, and he reminds them to believe, don't stop believing. Go and preach the gospel to all nations. He who believes and is baptized will be saved. Don't go and preach the gospel if you don't believe in the Gospel. Don't share your Christian faith if you really don't have a Christian faith. Meaning, I know this is important, but I really, I'd rather tell you about it, than really live it. Because the gospel is a very personal, spiritually intimate relationship that we have with Christ Himself. And our baptism is an expression of joy and acceptance in Christ.

All throughout the New Testament, there are these reminders. Now brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of this gospel which I preached to you what you believe, on which you've taken your stand by this gospel, you're saved, if you hold firmly to those things, otherwise you believed in vain. For what I received from the Lord, I passed on to us first importance that Jesus Christ died for us and came back for

us, lives for us. So go to all the world, all authority, Jesus, that all authority in heaven and on earth has been given unto me. Go and preach the gospel, or in Colossians, 2:12. In baptism, he says, you were buried with him and raised with him through your faith in the power of God that raised Jesus from the dead, saying all that to say this

Would you ever give up your eternal salvation? If it meant that another person would be saved? Probably one of the most difficult questions ever to be asked how would we answer? Would you ever give up your salvation, if it meant that someone else would be saved? Someone says, "What's this all about?" Well, Paul, talks about this in the book of Romans. And in the book of Romans, as you know, Paul has said, I'm not ashamed of the gospel. It's the power of God that brings salvation, but I would be willing to give it up. I would be willing to give it up. Someone says, "Where?" Notice with me, if you will, this amazing passage in Romans chapter nine, and this is one of the unique parts of the gospel in Romans chapter nine, verses one through five, Romans 9:1-5. Here's a process I speak the truth and Christ not lying. My conscience confirms it through the Holy Spirit. I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I, myself, were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my people. Those of my own race, the people of Israel, there is the adoption. There's the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship, and the promises. There are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of the Messiah, who was God overall, forever praised Amen. Paul said I would give up my salvation if it means meant that my people would come to Christ. And then First Corinthians chapter nine, Paul talks more about this starting in verse 19. He says this: Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone to win as many as possible. To the Jews, I became like a Jew to win the Jews. To those under the law, I became like one under the law, though I myself am not under the law, as to when those under the law meaning those who dedicated themselves to the Old Testament, 10 commandments, to all the rules to all the regulations, if they thought that was the way to get to Christ. Paul said, I'll help them but they need to know Christ. If you want to follow all those laws. Go ahead, but it's going to lead you to Christ. And then he says, verse 21, to those not having the law, I became like one not having the law though. I'm not free from God's law but under Christ's law, so as to when those having it. In other words, those who want to stay strong in that are those who enjoy freedom in Christ no matter what. I want to preach the gospel. Then he says this to the weak, I became weak to win the weak. I'm so grateful Paul said that. Because I think there are times in all of our lives when we don't feel as strong in our faith, as we'd like. Maybe there are occasions when we feel weak, we're not ashamed of the gospel. We're not embarrassed by the gospel. We're not afraid of the gospel. But maybe, maybe we don't really concentrate so much on who Jesus is in our life. I have become all things to all people so that by all means possible, I might save some, I do all this for the sake of the gospel that I might share in its glory and blessings.

So my question for all of us, as Paul talks about this, from the beginning of this book, it's, it's a deep book, the book of Romans. It's a joyful book. It's not a threatening book. But it's a reminder of the expense that was paid so that we can enjoy the gospel, not—not just the expense of Christ's death, burial and resurrection for us. But all the people, people like Paul and others who are dedicating their lives, sharing the people, no matter their culture, this is righteous. This is good. Righteous means being right with God. So when Paul says, I'm not ashamed of the gospel, I'm not embarrassed by the gospel. I'm not afraid of the gospel. Not threatened by the gospel, because it's the power of God that brings salvation to me to you and everyone else to the Jew and to the Gentile. For in the Gospel, a righteousness of God is revealed or righteousness that is by faith. And yes, Paul said, I would give up my

salvation. If it meant my people would be saved. Would you under any circumstance, give up your salvation, if it meant that someone you know and love would be saved. I think for many of us, we'd say, absolutely. Don, really, you would give up your own salvation? If it meant someone else's be saved. Absolutely. And you know who I'm talking about? There are people in your life that you love more than you love yourself. Would you give up your salvation, if that meant your son wouldn't be saved? Your daughter would be saved. Your husband would be saved. Your wife would be saved. The friend that you love most would be saved. Yeah. You know what's unique about that? That's exactly what Jesus did for us. Would you give up your life for Jesus? I gave up my life, so that everyone could be saved. And I'm not ashamed of it. And I'm not threatened by it. And I'm not afraid by because Christ has given himself to us. Not just what we know, not just the religious factor x, not just the things that are incorporated all throughout the Scripture, but because we can know Him. How do you feel about the gospel?

So I go back to the beginning, attending a school, all week long, attending that church, preaching for a church, same gospel being preached, one had some fear attached to it. One had some joy attached to it. Paul said, I'm not ashamed of the gospel. I don't know how anybody else is feeling. But I'm not ashamed of the gospel. It's the power of God for salvation, for all who believes first for the Jew, then for the Gentile, for all of us. And then Paul talks about the gospel, the death, the burial, excuse me, and the resurrection of Christ Jesus, all for us. I hope that as we continue on some of the book of Romans, we can go deeper into this. It's a, it's an intellectual book, but more than anything else, it is deeply personal and emotional process. I'm going to tell you what the gospel is. And I'm going to tell you what righteousness is. And it has everything to do with Christ. Yep. Yeah. I would give it up if it meant that someone else would be saved. That's what Jesus did for us. I gave it up. I gave up my life, so that someone else 2000 years would like, 2000 years later, here we are. And Jesus gave himself up for us. I'm not ashamed of it. I'll never be ashamed. We can be thankful and grateful and share the gospel as best we can. Let's pray:

Father God, we are beyond grateful for you reminding us how much you love us. That you gave yourself, for us, to us. May we as your people who love you so much as well love one another. May we enjoy our faith, may we share our faith with others. May we be so willing to give up our own lives for the sake of others, knowing that we probably will never have to do that, but to share the gospel, the righteousness that we have, because of you.

Adam Sandiford

Thanks for listening to this week's sermon. The Beamsville Church of Christ meets Sunday mornings at 4900 John St, Beamsville, Ontario. We have classes for all ages at 9:30 and the worship service begins at 10:30. You can subscribe to our podcast through Apple podcasts, Google Play Music Store or your favorite podcast app, just search for Beamsville. All our past sermons and more information about our congregation are available at beamsvillechurchofchrist.ca.

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