

ROMANS - Live By Faith, With No Shame

Romans 1:1-18

REFLECT

This week's main theme; Romans 1:16-17, For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith." We should ask ourselves; are we ashamed of the gospel of Christ? I believe perhaps Paul wrestled with that very emotion. Why? "Faith in Jesus Christ," that's it! Even though this was so simple Paul was; a Hebrew of Hebrews, a Jew's Jew, circumcised on the 8th day, and a Pharisee. Concerning righteousness, which is in the law, Paul said he was blameless. His life was the "perfect life" of being pleasing to God; concerning his acceptability to God, his i's were dotted and his t's had been crossed. What a challenge this simple gospel may have been for him...until he discovered, that the gospel of Christ is the power of God to Salvation. Then...all of his works he counted as loss and as rubbish so that he may gain Christ. Phil. 3:8

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In v.7, Paul made it known to us that we are "called to be saints." What has been your experience with friends, family, employees or even acquaintances, that may pray to a saint or look to a saint for protection? Tell us the kind of conversations you have had with folks of that persuasion.
2. In v.10, Paul lets the church know how much he "longed" to see them. He makes the statement; "making request if, by "some means," now at last I may find a way in the will of God to come to you." In the KJV it say by "any means." I personally don't think Paul ever envisioned that the "means" would be by way of being imprisoned, being ship wrecked, and being bitten by a poisonous viper. Would anyone share a time when you wanted something so badly from God that you might have said the same thing.....by "any means" God! What in your life have you gone through, that had you known what was involved ahead of time, you may have opted out. Ex. When coming to start the church in Tallahassee, had we known ahead of time what that looked like we may not have come.
3. In v.13, Paul told the Church of Rome how he had planned to come to them but was "hindered." We see here how God's timing won out. Can you think of a time, an opportunity, or even a job that you now see you jumped into too quickly and it wasn't in God's timing. Was your experience a wrong move, if so what were the consequences?
4. In verse 16 Paul says he isn't ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of God. He makes this statement because he knew how easy it is to feel insecure or ashamed. What are some examples in your life where you have been ashamed or felt insecure about your faith? Why do you think it's so easy to feel that way? How can you increase your faith in the future to not shy away from the power of the Gospel?