



NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL

Introduction: Thanksgiving & Family Dynamics

- Romans addresses how this “big dysfunctional family” can be united under God’s promises.

Series Overview: Romans 1–4

- Romans is about **God’s righteousness** and forming a **new global family**.
- “Righteousness of God” = **God doing what is right**, fulfilling His promises.
- God’s righteousness is revealed through **His faithfulness**, not human effort.

Paul’s Background (Romans 1:1–7)

- Paul (formerly Saul), a devout Jewish Rabbi, believed righteousness came through **Law obedience**.
- He persecuted the early church, thinking it undermined righteousness.
- His **conversion** revealed God’s plan — righteousness through **the Good News (Gospel)**.
- The Gospel: Jesus, promised by prophets, born of David’s line, declared God’s Son by resurrection.
- Paul is sent to proclaim this Good News to **Gentiles** (non-Jews).

Historical Context: The Roman Church

- Roman Christians included **Jews and Gentiles** with major cultural/religious differences.
- Jews expelled from Rome (49 AD) returned to find **Gentile-led churches**.
- Disputes arose: Do Gentiles need to follow Jewish customs (Law, Sabbath, Kosher)?
- Deep tension mirrored today’s church disagreements (worship style, theology, justice vs. morality, politics).
- Paul’s purpose: show how the **Gospel unites** diverse believers.

“Romans advocates for a community where people who think they’re right live with others who also think they’re right.” – J.R. Daniel Kirk

Paul’s Longing & Message (Romans 1:8–17)

- Paul prays for and desires to visit the Roman believers to strengthen their faith.
- Central declaration: “I am not ashamed of the Gospel.”
- The Gospel = God’s **power** to save **Jews and Gentiles** alike by **faith**.

Why Shame?

- **Romans**: Gospel proclaimed Jesus as Lord — offensive in a culture that worshiped **Caesar**.
- **Jews**: Gospel seemed weak — salvation without strict adherence to the **Law**.
- Yet God’s “foolishness” is wiser and stronger than human wisdom.

Application

- The Gospel is not entry-level — it’s the **ongoing power** for salvation and transformation.
- True unity, freedom, and righteousness come **through faith in Christ**, not Law or human effort.
- The Gospel = **Power of God at work**, continually needed by all believers.
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Connect Group Discussion

Warm up:

1. Go around the room and share what your “love languages” are. What makes you feel the most loved:
 - affirming words
 - acts of service
 - gifts
 - physical touch
 - quality time
2. What stood out to you from Sunday’s sermon?

Study & Discussion:

1. In what ways does Paul’s vision of the church in Romans challenge our modern tendency to separate from those we disagree with? How can the Gospel practically unite people with very different convictions today?
2. If “God’s righteousness” means fulfilling His promises rather than enforcing human standards, how does that reshape our understanding of what it means to be righteous in our own lives and communities?
3. The Roman world valued power and conquest, yet the Gospel proclaims a crucified and risen King. What does this paradox teach us about the kind of power God values, and how might that confront our cultural expectations?
4. The Jewish believers trusted the Law to shape holiness, while Paul points to faith in Christ. Where do we, today, rely on our own “laws” (rules, traditions, systems) rather than faith in God’s grace to make us righteous?

5. Paul declares he is “not ashamed of the Gospel.” What might make believers today hesitant or “ashamed” to live out or share the Good News, and what practices could help us recover confidence in its power?

Practice: “Bridge the Table”

Theme: Living out the unifying power of the Gospel

This week, intentionally reach out to someone whose perspective, background, or approach to faith differs from yours — perhaps within your church, family, or circle of friends.

Steps:

1. **Pray** each day for humility and openness — ask God to remind you that His righteousness, not yours, holds the family of faith together.
2. **Initiate a Conversation or Meal** — invite them for coffee, lunch, or a walk. Practice *listening without correcting*; seek understanding rather than agreement.
3. **Reflect** afterward:
 - What did I learn about God’s grace and unity through this encounter?
 - Where did I feel challenged to trust the Gospel’s power over my own sense of “rightness”?

Purpose:

To embody the Gospel that unites Jew and Gentile, left and right, old and young — a living reminder that God’s righteousness builds family where human righteousness builds walls.