

Grace, Unmerited?  
Appendix ii

## Faith, Works, and Grace in Romans

### sermon outline: "**Theme of Romans**"

Text: **Romans 1:1-17**

Introduction.

- A. 2 Timothy 3:16- All Scriptures are God-breathed.
- B. God does not give contradictory statements.
  - 1. What He says to one church He says to all churches (1 Corinthians 7:17; 14:33).
  - 2. Consistency of the Scriptures proof of inspiration. God cannot lie (Hebrews 6:18).
- I. The theme of the book of Romans is in the first chapter and in the last chapter.
  - A. It is through Jesus that we have grace and Paul's duty was to bring about an **obedience to the faith** (Romans 1:5). Note: emphasize "the faith".
  - B. Paul concludes with the topic of his work: the gospel leads to **obedience to the faith** (Romans 16:25-27).
  - C. The definition of "works" is any act: "what one does"
  - D. The definition of "grace" is "acceptance"; "favor" (*Strong's Greek Dictionary*)
- II. All need salvation.
  - A. All ungodly and unrighteous men condemned (Romans 1:19-23).
    - 1. What had God expected from man?
      - (a) They did not glorify God;
      - (b) They were not thankful to Him
    - 2. Their moral and religious works were devised by their vain imaginations (1:21).
  - B. Jews were possessors of the Oracles (Law of the Old Covenant 2:17-3:20).
    - 1. Guilty of violating this Law (Old Covenant Law, 2:1)
    - 2. Those Circumcised did not give special privileges other than the advantage of having in hand the Law (oracles, 3:1-8)..
    - 3. Jews were held responsible for obeying that Law (covenant, 2:12).
    - 4. Ethnic, religious heritage, physical parentage worthless (Isaiah 29:13).

- C. The Law itself states that everyone has sinned.
1. Examples: Psalm 14:1-3; 53:1-3; 5:9; 140:3; 10:7; Proverbs 1:16; 3:15-17; Isaiah 59:7-8; Psalm 36:1.
  2. Solution to being saved from sin for both Jew and Gentile ( 3:21-31).
- D. God's righteousness revealed beyond the Torah Law given to Jews.
1. God's righteousness is in the gospel, God's power to save (1:16, 17).
  2. God's righteousness shown in Jesus' sacrifice and resurrection. (Hebrews 9:15)
  3. Sins are not ignored but handled by the death of Jesus (3:25;6:23).
  4. God is not arbitrary but is just in justifying the obedient believer. "The just shall live by faith" (1:17).
- E. Trusting obedience versus the unrighteous works of man
1. Abraham 4:1-3, Father of the Faithful (in trusting obedience).
    - a. He was accepted for his trusting obedience (works of the Faith) to God's Word.
      - 1) Abraham could not claim circumcision (like Jews). This quote is from Genesis 15:6. He was circumcised in Genesis 17 (4:10).
      - 2) Abraham did not claim the Law, the Torah. It was not given to him (Exodus 20:1-3).
      - 3). Abraham did not obligate God by his works in the flesh (4:1,4)
    - b. When did God owe Abraham acceptance (grace)?
      - 1) Not in his lifestyle in the flesh (4:1).
      - 2) Accepted when he believed God (in this example: the promise of a child) (4:5, 20)
      - 3) God is not obligated to save any descendant of Adam and Eve including Abraham, Genesis 3:3.
        - a) Man's works (actions) do not merit God's acceptance (Proverbs 16:2,3).
        - b) This does not nullify works (actions) commanded by God (Proverbs 16:7).
        - c) When Abraham does God's works, Paul calls this "believing God" and he is pronounced "righteous" before God.(4:3).
        - d) "Believing God" is Paul's epistle theme: "obedience to the Faith".
    - 4) Why would God owe a man anything?
      - a. God is obligated to keep His promises to the believer.
      - b. This is accounted for righteousness to God. (4:13; 6:16; 9:8,9).
  - c. Can one earn or be worthy of salvation?
    - 1) Not by doing "his own thing," Jeremiah 10:23,

- 2) He is worthy when he "trustingly obeys" God.(6:16; 2:5-7).
2. David was not accepted by his sinful works (4:6)
  - a. David was accepted when he trustingly obeyed God's Law.
    - 1) Law taught one to confess his sins and pray (4:6; 2:13) (Leviticus 5:5; 16:21; 26:40; Numbers 5:7; 21:7).
    - 2) This illustration clarifies Paul's statements about Abraham's vain works.
    - 3) David obeyed God; his works of trusting obedience were what made him approved and accepted.
  - c. Compare to the (NT) Faith's requirement of confessions of a Christian who sins (1 John 1:7-10).
  - d. Obedience "leads to" righteousness (6:16).

F. Does the Law of Moses make any person righteous?

1. When Paul speaks of not being under the Law, he continues to talk to the ones to whom the Oracles were delivered: the Jews.
  - a. No one could take pride in the Law which offered no hope without Jesus the Messiah fulfilling the sacrifice anti-type.
  - b. The Law of Moses was a schoolmaster to bring Jews to Christ. When Christ comes, we are no longer under the Law. Galatians 3:23.
2. As Paul points out, we are under the Law of Faith. Romans 3:27. Hence, "obedience to the Faith", the theme of Romans.
3. If keeping the Law of Moses could save, then the Faith would be unnecessary (Romans 4:14-17).

III.. Those looking only at Romans 4 could come away with the idea that faith and works are contrasting ideas. This is what is called, taking something out of context.

- A. Recall that Paul's intent is to encourage the "obedience to the Faith" - Romans 1:5.
- B. Relying on the works of the Law of Moses alone can not save. Galatians 3:10-14.
- C. It is said that James' epistle was targeting the false teaching of faith without works saving one. Since that is so, then Romans would have been targeting the "works only" brethren.
  1. Gentiles' works could not save themselves.
  2. The Jews' works by the Law of Moses could not save without Jesus' redemption. The Faith had come and the Law was now ineffectual (nailed to the cross Colossians 2:14-17).
  3. Jews' heritage could not save.

- D. The writer of Romans never says that all works are unnecessary (Romans 2:5-8).
1. Jesus' Great Commission which we are under today says that without faith we are damned (Mark 16:15-16).
  2. Jesus also said that to be saved we had to be baptized. Believe + baptism = salvation. If baptism is a work then we cannot be saved with works in conjunction with believing.
  3. If one is baptized without believing, can he hope to be saved?
  4. If one claims to believe only without the works of the Faith, will he yet be saved? Would it not be a "dead" faith as James said? Would Abraham have been called the Father of the Faithful if he said he believed but divorced Sarah? As James 2:22 points out Abraham's faith had to be wrought with obedience.

Modified by Gaylon West from an outline from a church of Christ website.