



Sermon Growth Guide

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The Case for Salvation | Romans 1:13-20

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Key Verse: “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.” (Romans 1:16)

Big Idea: The Gospel of Jesus Christ is not a message to be ashamed of, even though it does not fit well with worldly principles, because it alone carries the power of salvation to lost human beings who embrace its deep truths.

Foundations

Paul was under a divine obligation to preach the gospel (see 1 Cor. 9:16-18), which made him eager to get the message out to as many as possible. In v. 15, he highlights his desire to preach the gospel even in Rome, with the hope that the Roman church might help send him on mission to the far reaches of civilization (Iberian peninsula) where the gospel had not yet penetrated (see Romans 15:18-24, 28-29).

The gospel is “good news” because human beings face the reality of bad news: the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all human sin. Though God has given us ample proof of His glory through the created order, we have rejected Him and made other things our priorities in life.

In the end, we cannot escape the just wrath of God by our own efforts – the powers and accomplishments of this world cannot save us from judgment. Only the redemption found in Christ can rescue us, and this must be received as a gift of grace, by putting our trust in His work of salvation rather than turning to anything or anyone else.

Understanding God’s Word

Together read Romans 1:13-20.

Why might a pagan or even a Jew consider the message of the gospel something to be ashamed of? (Check out 1 Cor. 1:18-31)

The concept of the wrath of God is not in vogue today in many circles, even within the Church. Why does Paul consider the wrath of God so essential to understand?

How does righteousness come through faith? Is this a one-time event or a lifestyle choice?

Applying God’s Word

How does a deeper understanding of the wrath of God impact how you view the people around you? If all human beings are “without excuse” (1:20), whether Jew or Gentile, rich or poor, powerful or weak, male or female, then doesn’t that mean that all need the truth of the gospel? Why are we so hesitant to share it with others?

Witnessing God’s Word

Why is the gospel better “good news” than anything the world has to offer in comparison? Have you ever felt ashamed of or embarrassed by the gospel, so that you drew back from sharing it with others? Try to analyze why, in light of the needs of fallen human beings and of the redeeming love of God. What made Paul so eager to preach the gospel? How can we develop that same eagerness in the places to which God has called us?