

Living by Faith

Key Verse: *“I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”*
—Romans 1:16

Selected Scripture:
Romans 1:8-17

by whom God’s eternal plan of salvation for humanity would commence.

All of the apostles needed to be eyewitnesses that the Master was raised from the tomb following his crucifixion. As a result of his Damascus Road encounter with the risen Christ, Paul also was authorized to testify about this miraculous event and its glorious import.—Gal. 3:8; I Cor. 15:9; Rom. 1:1-5

“Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ: To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son,

IN PAUL’S EPISTLE TO THE brethren in Rome he referred to an earlier promise made to Abraham when God indicated that through him and his “seed” all the nations of the earth would be blessed. (Gen. 22:18; Rom. 4:1-22) Furthermore, this was affirmed not only by the sacrificial death of Jesus, but also by his resurrection from the dead, having then received divine power and authority to be the instrument

that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers.”—Rom. 1:6-9

Following his greetings to the brethren at Rome, indicating his appreciation of their example of faith, Paul informs them of his earnest prayers on their behalf. He also expresses his desire to visit for the purpose of imparting some spiritual gifts that would enable them to be even more effective servants in the ministry.—vss. 10-15

In our Key Verse, Paul makes two important points. First, he emphasizes faith in the power of the Gospel is the manner in which we receive salvation, as opposed to works in general or those of the Mosaic Law. Additionally, the apostle points out that this offer was made to the Jews first, even though as a whole, they had difficulty in grasping the concept that justification is attained through faith in and acceptance of the ransom sacrifice of our Savior.

In verses 19-23 of our lesson, Paul continues by pointing out that mankind in general is still under divine condemnation and not presently in covenant relationship with God. Most do not properly acknowledge their condition of unrighteousness and do not honor the Creator nor appreciate his attributes. Many, in fact, engage in endless speculations and foolishly worship creatures such as birds, beasts and creeping things such as snakes.

Members of the Early Church and other consecrated, spirit begotten believers in Christ since that time have manifested faith in the Bible’s teaching that evil will not continue forever. Such are inspired by precious promises of Scripture pointing to an era when righteousness will prevail during God’s kingdom, and all evil will be destroyed. (Acts 3:20-26) How thankful mankind will be when they learn to appreciate the wisdom, justice, love and power of our most gracious and benevolent Heavenly Father. ■