**Romans Series**

**"*Centering-in*"**

**Romans 1:14-23 - 3/15/20**

\**Why is the gospel to be central in Christ's Church?*

\*\**Why are the eternal truths of the Bible so essential?*

**Romans 1:14-17**

\*1) Because We're Not Ashamed Of Its Power, & We Give Praise For Its Persistence

The power of the gospel was and is... Self-evident, inwardly evidenced, outwardly obvious, and obviously overpowering toward those who listen to and believe on it.

It was, is and will continue to harvest exponential fruit - turning the world upside-down until Jesus returns, as it is a powerful gospel!

We also see that the gospel is persistent, which therefore produces persistence within its adherents. **\*Vs.17**

This persistence is not because of us or our faith, but because of God and His faithfulness - as the gospel is "*the power of God*" for salvation to everyone who believes.

*" 'Dunamis' (Greek), is related to the English word, 'dynamite'... And as dynamite blasts rock into pieces, so does the Gospel in a spiritual sense - blasting the rock-like resistance of a sin-hardened heart."*

The gospel changes us from the inside-out through God's good grace and forgiveness - giving us a clean slate and a fresh start as new creations in Christ who are now in good standing due to the righteousness of Jesus and the cross.

It's not about a longer "to-do" list but a love relationship whereby we continue to fall in love with Jesus over and over again.

The gospel, which means "*good news*" is only good (subjectively speaking), if you receive it.

Ultimately, the gospel is the only thing/truth to center your life on.

In this next section we'll be centering on truth as we consider another question... Why are the eternal truths of the Bible so essential?

**Romans 1:18-20**

\*\*2) Because If We Suppress Them, We Will Be Without Excuse

Ultimately, there are no atheists. Nor are there any agnostics. Ultimately, there won't be any spiritual neutrality. Nor will there be an insistence of ignorance, nor claims of confusion.

In the end, God will hold each individual soul accountable for His general revelation, through creation.

Out of the greatest examples of love and compassion that we could ever show, God help us to come alongside those who "*suppress the truth in unrighteousness*".

What the Bible considers "unrighteousness", which causes people to want to "suppress" ('bind, detain or restrain') such truth, which in reality is impossible; yet mankind will delude, justify or even codify itself with laws, systems and structures in order to attempt to detain the truth - we as God's people need to be loving, compassionate, merciful and bold enough to "*speak the truth in love*" regarding such unrighteousness.

*"God hates sin with a holy and righteous fury, and so should we. When we find ourselves amused by sin it's time for us to focus on the cross, and as we see the price paid for our sin it reminds us that it's no laughing matter."*

**Romans 1:21-23**

\*\*3) Because If We Don't Honor Them (Him), Our Lives Will Ultimately Be Futile & Our Hearts, Darkened

"Honoring" God with your very life is what we're talking about here.

To casually attend church doesn't get it. Nor does attending each week (even 2-3 times a week), if your heart and life are a million miles away from God. Nor does 'living in church', while daily reading your Bible and praying, if your living in sin.

Desiring Him, His ways and His will for our lives (even though we fall or fail daily), is much of what it looks like to honor God, giving thanks.

Beware of those who profess to be wise but have actually become fools, which would include anyone who doesn't truly seek to honor God.

They may be educated, intelligent, well-spoken, personable, kind, compassionate, good-willed, reasonable, hard working, family-oriented, etc., but if their lives are such that they don't appear to know and honor God (desiring Him, His ways and His will), then we need to proceed with caution or possibly even do an 'about-face'.

The people we spend most of our time with and the cultural influences, such as books, music, social media and television that we allow into our hearts and minds, can have a dramatic influence on us. This is why Solomon warned of the dangers of wanting to spend time with those who do evil (Proverbs 24:1+2).

How sad, the futility and foolishness of life without God which we see in so many who are kind and loving or who have so much to offer, yet apart from Christ, they've exchanged the incorruptible God, for an image in the form of corruptible man. God help us to be aware and diligent regarding such influences.