

BLESSING ISRAEL WITH JESUS, PART 2

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, NIV)

HIT IT WITH POWER.” “Increase Your Smash Factor.” “Drive It Like Bubba.” These are the kinds of teasers you’ll find on the front cover of any golf magazine these days. It may be an appeal to our baser instincts as golfers, but those editors are smart; they know that no one likes to be the one hitting first from the fairway all day long!

If you stand back and assess the way of the world, as we so often call it, you’ll land the same place many philosophers and theologians have landed. They will tell you that our troubles come from the quest for any one of these three things: money, sex, and power. Aside from the golf course, perhaps, you don’t want to be called “power hungry.” It’s never a compliment.

Yet in his letter to the Romans, Paul unabashedly wrote of the power of God displayed through the gospel message. Let’s ask two important questions about this passage today:

What is this gospel that will bring God’s power to us?

The answer to this question lies in the following verse, where Paul explained that in the gospel God reveals a righteousness that comes by faith (rather than by works). Such a righteousness can only come from God, through the death of his perfect Son, Jesus. No matter how strong we are—physically, intellectually, even spiritually—we cannot muster up such righteousness. Only God is so powerful.

For whom is this gospel meant?

The gospel and the salvation it brings are available to everyone. It was news to both Jews and Gentiles that Gentiles could also lay hold of the Savior’s righteousness. But Peter had preached the prophecy of Joel—“I will pour out my Spirit on *all* people”—on the day of Pentecost, and then he had obeyed the Lord by taking the wonder of this message to the home of Cornelius, the Roman centurion through whom the door to the household of faith was thrown open to the Gentiles.

Are you Jewish? Or are you a Gentile (non-Jew)? These are incidental questions in God’s unfolded plan, that through Jesus, all could receive salvation, which is the power of God’s work in us. And thus, we preach this gospel to all.

Opening questions How much effort are you willing to put in to being a longer hitter, better iron player, or improved putter? • When you consider God’s power, where does your mind go?

READING Romans 1:8-17; Romans 10:17, Colossians 3:16, Ephesians 6:17

The gospel for all people

In Romans 1, how eager do we find Paul in desiring to share the gospel? With help from today’s devotion, how would you explain the gospel in short order? With whom can you share this message in the next few days?

The gospel and the word of Christ

In today’s accompanying video, Jeffrey Cranford and Seth Postell talk about the importance of the word of God in reaching people with the gospel message. How do the Romans, Colossians, and Ephesians verses confirm the role of the word?

How would you assess your knowledge of the Bible? How would you assess your knowledge of Jesus? In what way do you see these fitting together?

Written by Jeff Hopper ©2015 Links Players International. A 6-minute video accompanies today’s study at <https://youtu.be/ZNbpK2NgpBI>