

Message Seven
**The Structure of the Gospel of God—
the Righteousness of God, the Life of Christ, and the Faith of the Believers**

Scripture Reading: Rom. 1:16-17; 3:22; 5:1-11; 10:17; Heb. 11:1; 12:1-2a

Rom. 1:16	For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one who believes, both to Jew first and to Greek.
Rom. 1:17	For the righteousness of God is revealed in it out of faith to faith, as it is written, "But the righteous shall have life and live by faith."
Rom. 3:22	Even the righteousness of God through the faith of Jesus Christ to all those who believe, for there is no distinction;
Rom. 5:1	Therefore having been justified out of faith, we have peace toward God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
Rom. 5:2	Through whom also we have obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand and boast because of the hope of the glory of God.
Rom. 5:3	And not only so, but we also boast in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces endurance;
Rom. 5:4	And endurance, approvedness; and approvedness, hope;
Rom. 5:5	And hope does not put us to shame, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.
Rom. 5:6	For while we were yet weak, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.
Rom. 5:7	For scarcely for a righteous man will anyone die, though perhaps for the good man someone would even dare to die.
Rom. 5:8	But God commends His own love to us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
Rom. 5:9	Much more then, having now been justified in His blood, we will be saved through Him from the wrath.
Rom. 5:10	For if we, being enemies, were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more we will be saved in His life, having been reconciled,
Rom. 5:11	And not only so, but also boasting in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.
Rom. 10:17	So faith comes out of hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.
Heb. 11:1	Now faith is the substantiation of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.
Heb. 12:1	Therefore let us also, having so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, put away every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us and run with endurance the race which is set before us,
Heb. 12:2	Looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down on the right hand of the throne of God.

I. The key word concerning the gospel of God in Romans and the banner of God's eternal economy is Romans 1:17, which reveals the structure of the gospel of God—"the righteous shall have life and live by faith."

II. The righteousness of God is the procedure of God's salvation judicially—vv. 16-17:

A. God cannot forgive sinful people without meeting the demands of His righteousness (Psa. 103:6-7); according to His righteousness, "the soul who sins, he shall die" (Ezek. 18:4) and "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23):

Psa. 103:6 Jehovah executes righteous acts, And judgments for all who are oppressed.

Psa. 103:7 He made His ways known to Moses; His acts, to the children of Israel.

Ezek. 18:4 Indeed all souls are Mine; indeed as is the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is Mine. The soul who sins, he shall die.

Rom. 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1. Christ died a vicarious death as the Substitute for sinners, a death that was legal according to God's law and was recognized and approved by God according to the law—Isa. 53:5-6; 2 Cor. 5:21; Matt. 27:45-46.

Isa. 53:5 But He was wounded because of our transgressions; He was crushed because of our iniquities; The chastening for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we have been healed.

Isa. 53:6 We all like sheep have gone astray; Each of us has turned to his own way, And Jehovah has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.

2 Cor. 5:21 Him who did not know sin He made sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Matt. 24:25 Behold, I have told you beforehand.

Matt. 24:26 Therefore if they say to you, Behold, He is in the wilderness, do not go forth; Behold, He is in the inner rooms, do not believe it.

2. Christ, the righteous One, was judged on behalf of us, the unrighteous, by the righteous God according to His righteousness, that He might remove the barrier of our sins and bring us to God—1 Pet. 3:18.

1 Pet. 3:18 For Christ also has suffered once for sins, the Righteous on behalf of the unrighteous, that He might bring you to God, on the one hand being put to death in the flesh, but on the other, made alive in the Spirit.

3. On the cross Jesus was made sin for us, condemned sin in the flesh, and by dying on our behalf fulfilled all God's righteousness; now for the sake of His righteousness, God must forgive us—2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 8:3, 10; John 19:30.

2 Cor. 5:21 Him who did not know sin He made sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.
Rom. 8:3 For that which the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin and concerning sin, condemned sin in the flesh.
John 19:30 Then when Jesus had taken the vinegar, He said, It is finished! And He bowed His head and delivered up His spirit.

- B. Because God is bound by His righteousness to forgive us, righteousness is the power of God's salvation and the unshakable foundation of our salvation—Rom. 1:16-17:

Rom. 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one who believes, both to Jew first and to Greek.

Rom. 1:17 For the righteousness of God is revealed in it out of faith to faith, as it is written, "But the righteous shall have life and live by faith."

1. Our experience of Christ rests on the foundation of God's righteousness, which is the solid, steadfast, and unshakable foundation of His throne (Psa. 89:14) and the base on which His kingdom is built (Rom. 14:17).

Rom. 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

2. God has put Christ to death on our behalf, He has recognized the death of Christ as the full payment of our debt of sins, and the resurrected and ascended Christ sitting at the right hand of God is the "receipt" of this payment—4:24-25.

Rom. 4:24 But for ours also to whom it is to be accounted, who believe on Him who has raised Jesus our Lord from the dead,

Rom. 4:25 Who was delivered for our offenses and was raised for our justification.

3. Thus, whenever we claim the blood of Jesus and appeal to God's righteousness, He has no choice except to forgive us—1 John 1:9; *Hymns*, #1003.

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

- C. Life is the goal of God's salvation; thus, justification is "of life"; through justification we have come up to the standard of God's righteousness and correspond with it so that now He can impart His life into us—Rom. 5:18.

Rom. 5:18 So then as it was through one offense unto condemnation to all men, so also it was through one righteous act unto justification of life to all men.

III. The life of Christ is the purpose of God's salvation organically—v. 10:

Rom. 5:10 For if we, being enemies, were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more we will be saved in His life, having been reconciled.

- A. The result of our justification is the full enjoyment of God in Christ as our life; in God's organic salvation we have love, grace, peace, hope, life, glory, the Holy Spirit, Christ, and God as our enjoyment—vv. 1-11.

Rom. 5:1 Therefore having been justified out of faith, we have peace toward God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Rom. 5:2 Through whom also we have obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand and boast because of the hope of the glory of God.

Rom. 5:3 And not only so, but we also boast in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces endurance;

Rom. 5:4 And endurance, approvedness; and approvedness, hope;

Rom. 5:5 And hope does not put us to shame, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

Rom. 5:6 For while we were yet weak, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

Rom. 5:7 For scarcely for a righteous man will anyone die, though perhaps for the good man someone would even dare to die.

Rom. 5:8 But God commends His own love to us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Rom. 5:9 Much more then, having now been justified in His blood, we will be saved through Him from the wrath.

Rom. 5:10 For if we, being enemies, were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more we will be saved in His life, having been reconciled.

- B. The saving life of Christ is accomplishing the organic goal of God's dynamic salvation in the following ways—v. 10:

1. We have been justified by God in Christ as the righteousness from God to us so that we may live in this life before God—1:17.
Rom. 1:17 For the righteousness of God is revealed in it out of faith to faith, as it is written, "But the righteous shall have life and live by faith."

2. This life makes the God-justified believers the many sons of God (8:14; Heb. 2:10), who are the many brothers of Christ (Rom. 8:29) through regeneration (1 Pet. 1:3) by the Spirit of life (Rom. 8:2) with God's producing and multiplying life.
Rom. 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.
Heb. 2:10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and through whom are all things, in leading many sons into glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.
Rom. 8:29 Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers.
1 Pet. 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has regenerated us unto a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.
Rom. 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death.

3. This life is imparted into the dying believers so that they may grow in Christ out of death unto maturity—v. 11.
Rom. 8:11 And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

4. The indwelling Christ moves in the believers by the Spirit of life so that they may enjoy Christ's life with its peace—vv. 5-6.
Rom. 8:5 For those who are according to the flesh mind the things of the flesh; but those who are according to the spirit, the things of the Spirit.
Rom. 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

5. This life sanctifies us with the holy nature of God as the holy element—6:19-20.
Rom. 6:19 I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to uncleanness and lawlessness unto lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness unto sanctification.
Rom. 6:20 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free with regard to righteousness.

6. This life renews us, by the Spirit of life, based upon the washing of regeneration, from the old element of our old man into the new constitution of our new man—12:2b; Titus 3:5.
Rom. 12:2 And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.
Titus 3:5 Not out of works in righteousness which we did but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit.

7. This life transforms us metabolically by the Spirit of life with the element of Christ's divine life, from our old constitution to our new constitution, for the building up of Christ's organic Body—Rom. 12:2b, 5; 2 Cor. 3:18.
Rom. 12:2 And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.
Rom. 12:5 So we who are many are one Body in Christ, and individually members one of another.
2 Cor. 3:18 But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.

8. This life conforms us to the image of Christ as the firstborn Son of God so that we may be full-grown God-men for the Triune God's expression—Rom. 8:29.
Rom. 8:29 Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers.

9. This life glorifies us through the redemption of our body so that we may enter into the freedom of glory and our full sonship—vv. 21, 23, 30.
Rom. 8:21 In hope that the creation itself will also be freed from the slavery of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.
Rom. 8:23 And not only so, but we ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan in ourselves, eagerly awaiting sonship, the redemption of our body.
Rom. 8:30 And those whom He predestinated, these He also called; and those whom He called, these He also justified; and those whom He justified, these He also glorified.

10. This life makes us reign as kings over Satan, sin, and death—5:17, 21.

Rom. 5:17 For if by the offense of the one death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

Rom. 5:21 In order that just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

11. All the above ten items are for the producing and building up of the organic Body of Christ expressed as the local churches; this is covered in the last five chapters of the book of Romans.

IV. The faith of the believers is the substantiation of God's salvation practically—Heb. 11:1:

Heb. 11:1 Now faith is the substantiation of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

A. The faith of the believers is actually not their own faith but Christ entering into them to be their faith—Rom. 1:12; 3:22 and footnote 1; Gal. 2:16 and footnote 1.

Rom. 1:12 That is, that I with you may be encouraged among you through the faith which is in one another, both yours and mine.

Rom. 3:22 Even the righteousness of God through the faith of Jesus Christ to all those who believe, for there is no distinction.

Gal. 2:16 And knowing that a man is not justified out of works of law, but through faith in Jesus Christ, we also have believed into Christ Jesus that we might be justified out of faith in Christ and not out of the works of law, because out of the works of law no flesh will be justified.

B. Our believing into Christ is our appreciation of Him as a reaction to His attraction—Rom. 10:17; Heb. 12:1-2a; cf. Acts 14:27.

Rom. 10:17 So faith comes out of hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

Heb. 12:1 Therefore let us also, having so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, put away every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us and run with endurance the race which is set before us,

Heb. 12:2 Looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down on the right hand of the throne of God.

Acts 14:27 And when they arrived and gathered the church together, they declared the things that God had done with them and that He had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles.

C. Faith comes out of the hearing of the word; when we come to the living Word (Christ) in the written word (the Bible), He becomes the applied word (the Spirit) of faith to us—Rom. 10:8, 17; Gal. 3:2; cf. Heb. 3:12.

Rom. 10:8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of the faith which we proclaim,

Rom. 10:17 So faith comes out of hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

Gal. 3:2 This only I wish to learn from you, Did you receive the Spirit out of the works of law or out of the hearing of faith?

Heb. 3:12 Beware, brothers, lest perhaps there be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief in falling away from the living God.

D. When man hears Christ, knows Him, appreciates Him, and treasures Him, He causes faith to be generated in man, becoming the faith in man that enables man to believe in Him—12:2a; Rom. 10:17; Gal. 3:2, 5; 5:6.

Heb. 12:2 Looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down on the right hand of the throne of God.

Rom. 10:17 So faith comes out of hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

Gal. 3:2 This only I wish to learn from you, Did you receive the Spirit out of the works of law or out of the hearing of faith?

Gal. 3:5 He therefore who bountifully supplies to you the Spirit and does works of power among you, does He do it out of the works of law or out of the hearing of faith?

Gal. 5:6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision avails anything nor uncircumcision, but faith avails, operating through love.

E. Faith is to believe that God is and we are not; He must be the only One, the unique One, in everything, and we must be nothing in everything—Heb. 11:1, 5-6.

Heb. 11:1 Now faith is the substantiation of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Heb. 11:5 By faith Enoch was translated so that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God had translated him. For before his translation he obtained the testimony that he had been well pleasing to God.

Heb. 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing to Him, for he who comes forward to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

F. As believers, we live by faith and infuse Christ as faith into others by exercising our spirit of faith (2 Cor. 4:13; Rom. 10:14-17; Acts 26:22-29) so that they may be brought into the following organic relationships with Christ for His purpose:

2 Cor. 4:13 And having the same spirit of faith according to that which is written, "I believed, therefore I spoke," we also believe, therefore we also speak.

Rom. 10:14 How then shall they call upon Him into whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe into Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without one who proclaims Him?

Rom. 10:15 And how shall they proclaim Him unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who announce the news of good things!"

Rom. 10:16 But not all have obeyed the gospel, for Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?"

Rom. 10:17 So faith comes out of hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

Acts. 26:22 Having therefore obtained the help which is from God, I have stood unto this day, testifying both to small and great, saying nothing apart from the things which both the prophets and Moses have said would take place,

Acts. 26:23 That the Christ would suffer and that He, being the first to rise from the dead, would announce light both to the people and to the Gentiles.

Acts. 26:24 And as he was saying these things in his defense, Festus said with a loud voice, You are insane, Paul. Much learning is driving you insane.

Acts. 26:25 But Paul said, I am not insane, most excellent Festus, but I am uttering words of truth and soberness.

Acts. 26:26 For the king knows about these things, to whom also I speak freely, for I am persuaded that none of these things have escaped his notice; for this has not been done in a corner.

Acts. 26:27 King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe.

Acts. 26:28 And Agrippa replied to Paul, By so little are you trying to persuade me to become a Christian?

Acts. 26:29 And Paul said, I would to God that both by little and by much, not only you, but also all those who hear me today might become even such as I am, except for these bonds.

1. **Christ is the cultivated olive tree and the vine, and we are His branches—Rom. 11:17, 24; John 15:1-8.**
 - Rom. 11:17 But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them and became a fellow partaker of the root of fatness of the olive tree.
 - Rom. 11:24 For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree and were grafted contrary to nature into the cultivated olive tree, how much more will these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree!
 - John 15:1 I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman.
 - John 15:2 Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes it away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it that it may bear more fruit.
 - John 15:3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.
 - John 15:4 Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me.
 - John 15:5 I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.
 - John 15:6 If one does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is dried up; and they gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.
 - John 15:7 If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you.
 - John 15:8 In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and so you will become My disciples.
2. **Christ is the Head, and we are His members—1 Cor. 12:12, 27.**
 - 1 Cor. 12:12 For even as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ.
 - 1 Cor. 12:27 Now you are the Body of Christ, and members individually.
3. **Christ is the breath of life, the water of life, and the bread of life, and we are His breathers, drinkers, and eaters—John 20:22; 4:10, 14; 7:37-39a; 6:35, 51-63, 68.**
 - John 20:22 And when He had said this, He breathed into them and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit.
 - John 4:10 Jesus answered and said to her, If you knew the gift of God and who it is who says to you, Give Me a drink, you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.
 - John 4:14 But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall by no means thirst forever; but the water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water gushing up into eternal life.
 - John 7:37 Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.
 - John 7:38 He who believes into Me, as the Scripture said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.
 - John 7:39 But this He said concerning the Spirit, whom those who believed into Him were about to receive; for the Spirit was not yet, because Jesus had not yet been glorified.
 - John 6:35 Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall by no means hunger, and he who believes into Me shall by no means ever thirst.
 - John 6:51 I am the living bread which came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever; And the bread which I will give is My flesh, given for the life of the world.
 - John 6:52 The Jews then contended with one another, saying, How can this man give us His flesh to eat?
 - John 6:53 Jesus therefore said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you do not have life within yourselves.
 - John 6:54 He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up in the last day.
 - John 6:55 For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink.
 - John 6:56 He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me and I in him.
 - John 6:57 As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.
 - John 6:58 This is the bread which came down out of heaven, not as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread shall live forever.

John 6:59 He said these things in a synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.
 John 6:60 Many therefore of His disciples, when they heard this, said, This word is hard; who can hear it?
 John 6:61 But Jesus, knowing in Himself that His disciples were murmuring about this, said to them, Does this stumble you?
 John 6:62 Then what if you saw the Son of Man ascending to where He was before?
 John 6:63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.
 John 6:68 Simon Peter answered Him, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life.

4. Christ is the Bridegroom, and we are His bride—3:29-30; 2 Cor. 11:2-3.

John 3:29 He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices with joy because of the bridegroom's voice. This joy of mine therefore is made full.
 John 3:30 He must increase, but I must decrease.
 2 Cor. 11:2 For I am jealous over you with a jealousy of God; for I betrothed you to one husband to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.
 2 Cor. 11:3 But I fear lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your thoughts would be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity toward Christ.

G. Faith is the subjective God applied to our being; thus, just as nothing is impossible to God, nothing is impossible to faith—Matt. 17:20; 19:26.

Matt. 17:20 And He said to them, Because of your little faith; for truly I say to you, If you have faith like a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, Move from here to there, and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you.
 Matt. 19:26 And looking upon them, Jesus said to them, With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.

H. The great irrepressible and unlimited power of faith motivates thousands to suffer for the Lord, risk their lives, and become overcoming sent ones and martyrs to spread the gospel of God's eternal economy unto the uttermost part of the earth—Luke 18:8; Rom. 16:3-4; Acts 20:24; 1 Tim. 1:4, 11-12; Matt. 24:14; Acts 1:8.

Luke 18:8 I tell you that He will carry out their avenging quickly. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?
 Rom. 16:3 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus,
 Rom. 16:4 Who risked their own necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles;
 Acts 20:24 And Sopater of Berea, the son of Pyrrhus, accompanied him, as well as Aristarchus and Secundus of the Thessalonians and Gaius of Derbe and Timothy and the Asians, Tychicus and Trophimus.
 1 Tim. 1:4 Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.
 1 Tim. 1:11 According to the gospel of the glory of the blessed God, with which I was entrusted.
 1 Tim. 1:12 I give thanks to Him who empowers me, Christ Jesus our Lord, that He has counted me faithful, appointing me to the ministry,
 Acts 1:8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth.