

## I Love to Tell the Story

I noticed something I tended to gloss over in Romans 1:15-17 (NKJV). See if anything jumps out at you.

<sup>15</sup> So, as much as is in me, *I am* ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also.

<sup>16</sup> For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. <sup>17</sup> For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.”

Paul wrote this epistle to the “saints” in Rome, not the general population. He wrote to the believers trusting Christ instead of the unbelievers who didn’t. Yet he tells the Roman Christians he eagerly wants to preach the gospel to them, even though they had already heard and believed. It seems odd, but then again, it doesn’t.

In another place (1 Corinthians 15:1-4), he defines the gospel for the readers as the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. The word “gospel” means “good news.” While Jesus always spoke the truth to people, not everything He said was “good news.” When you think about the judgment scene in Matthew 25, there was good news in blessings for the righteous but regretful news in condemnation for the unrighteous.

We cannot become Jesus’ genuine disciples without taking in the events of the cross. The Romans heard the account of the horrific death of God’s Son and actively followed Him. Yet, Paul wants to repeat the story to them.

The repetition of the crucifixion is anything but redundant. Every teacher knows that repetition is a powerful tool for learning. Let me repeat that. Every teacher knows that repetition is a powerful tool for learning. The more we hear something, the more ingrained it is in our hearts and minds, and the more likely we are to act on it. David wrote, “Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.”<sup>1</sup>

When God told the Hebrews to teach their children “diligently” in Deuteronomy 6, He included repetition. He said, “... when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.”<sup>2</sup> Learning about God and His word is never “one and done.” We must revisit His words regularly to remember and do. We need the repetition of the cross to remember the ugliness of our sins and the beauty of God’s grace and experience a profound sense of gratitude.

As I age and reread the gospel accounts, I find myself more emotional than when I was younger. I am more grateful and wonder-filled for God’s revelation of His love for me on the cross. Repetition.

If we fail to repeat the story of Christ’s suffering, we either grow unemotional and uncaring or desperate and discouraged. Some feel so self-assured in their biblical knowledge they stop with surface-level excursions in the text. Or, they may even feel so despondent that they want to give up, knowing they can never do enough to merit eternal life. They are right that they can’t earn it. They need to look in another direction – at the cross instead of themselves, for we are saved by grace (seen in the cross) through faith (trusting in Jesus as the sin offering), not of works in trying to earn God’s approval (Ephesians 2:8-10). Repetition keeps us humble and focused.

The cross also fuels our compassion for others. If we have the “mind of Christ” (Philippians 2:5), we understand the kindhearted aspect of the crucifixion. Jesus died for me (Galatians 2:20) and for the whole world. It is a gift to be distributed to everyone, for without it, men are lost, and civilization is ruined. The American statesman **Daniel Webster** stated:

---

<sup>1</sup> Psalm 119:11 (NKJV)

<sup>2</sup> See Deuteronomy 6:4-9

If truth be not diffused, error will be; If God and His Word are not known and received, the devil and his works will gain the ascendancy. If the evangelical volume does not reach every hamlet, the pages of a corrupt and licentious literature will. If the power of the Gospel is not felt throughout the length and breadth of the land, anarchy and misrule, degradation and misery, corruption and darkness will reign without mitigation or end."

We need to hear and tell the crucifixion story repeatedly. God's power on the cross is to save all who will believe and motivate those who already believe.

We sometimes sing an old church hymn called "I Love to Tell the Story." The first stanza is:

I love to tell the story ...  
Of unseen things above,  
Of Jesus and His glory,  
Of Jesus and His love.  
I love to tell the story,  
Because I know 'tis true;  
It satisfies my longings  
As nothing else can do.

The final section is:  
I love to tell the story;  
For those who know it best  
Seem hungering and thirsting  
To hear it like the rest.  
And when, in scenes of glory,  
I sing the new, new song,  
'Twill be the old, old story,  
That I have loved so long

The gospel keeps our eyes where they belong – on Christ, the Author and Finisher of our faith. Let's continue hearing and repeating His good news. Our personal and national lives are dependent on Him. Isaiah said:

For unto us, a Child is born,  
Unto us a Son is given;  
And the government will be upon His shoulder.  
And His name will be called  
Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.<sup>3</sup>

Keep The Light of *Gospel Repetition* Burning!

GodNAmerica.com

---

<sup>3</sup> Isaiah 9:6 (NKJV, emphasis added)