



7/9/25

Today's passage helped bring me some clarity on a verse I've known since I was a kid, but never really thought about in depth... "Humble yourselves therefore before the Lord, and He will exalt you" (James 4:10). I get the humbling myself part, but HOW does He exalt me? What does that mean? Today's passage shows me that trying to have glory for myself drives me away from God... so I don't think God's exaltation is glory or honor in the sight of man. It's not that we couldn't be honored by other people as we honor the Lord, but that's not the goal. I think He exalts us to a higher and deeper level of joy, peace, hope, and love... where we are more aware of His goodness than ever before. Fighting for my own honor and glory will only lead me to frustration and worry. But God gives more grace. What do you think? Does that make sense??? I'm still trying to wrap my head around it.

*Blessings,
Jonna*

Romans 1:16-23

Paul had just spoken of his obligation to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, whether they were considered wise or foolish. His mission was to encourage them in their faith, and to be encouraged by their faith. This was such a deep conviction of his that he was willing to die for it, and did. Why???

Vs. 16-17 ~ "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, 'The righteous shall live by faith.'"

"I am not ashamed of the gospel!" No prison cell or persecution would humiliate Paul. No amount of suffering would deter him from speaking the way, the truth, and the life. The good news of the gospel is the power of God that brings eternal life to all who believe in Him. No human power is enough to save me from eternal condemnation. Only the power of God. What amazing love God has for me that He would send His only begotten Son to pay what I could not pay.

It is through the gospel that God reveals His righteousness that comes from faith for faith. God's righteousness in me begins and ends with FAITH. Righteousness is a free gift from Jesus, though it was NOT free for Him. It cost Him everything so that I could have freedom in Him.

This is so important for me to get. Anything I do that is not motivated by my faith in the Lord IS NOT RIGHTEOUS no matter how good it looks to others. If I do good things, righteous deeds, to make myself look good or to try to be good enough for God, it means nothing. I need to be reminded of this all the time. According to Hebrews 11:1, 6... genuine faith that saves means that I put my full confidence in who God is, that I am absolutely convinced that Jesus IS the way, the truth, and the life and no man comes to the Father but by Him, and that I am wholeheartedly committed to draw near to Him and seek Him. This is what makes me righteous before God.

To be righteous means to be "right with... to be approved of." If I am righteous, right with, approved of by God, it really doesn't matter what the world thinks of me. Part of what I'm putting my faith in is that God is above all and His opinion matters more than all. O Lord, please help me to grow from faith to faith... in Jesus... never me.

Vs. 18-23 ~ If faith in God makes me righteous, what does lack of faith in God do? It brings God's wrath on all who reject Him. This is the part of the gospel we always want to avoid or ignore. But avoiding the truth doesn't change the truth. God's wrath comes on all who refuse to believe in Him because they are...

- *Ungodly... you can't be godly without God*
- *Unrighteous... because righteousness only comes through faith in Jesus*

By their lack of faith which makes them unrighteous, they SUPPRESS the truth by holding fast to a lie. "For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them." God does not hide Himself or His truth. "The HEAVENS declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims His handiwork" (Psalm 19:1). Who breathes on this earth that has not experienced the glory of God from the heavens? Even those who don't have all their senses can experience at least some of His glory. Every single person who has lived, who does live, or who will live can perceive and understand God's eternal power and divine nature in EVERYTHING He has made. God has not hidden Himself. So anyone who denies Him is without excuse. They may make up excuses, but when they stand before Him, they will have no defense.

They can see His attributes. They all know that He exists, even those who say they don't, but they refuse to honor Him or give thanks to Him for all that He is and all that He's done for us. There will not be one person facing eternal condemnation who will be able to say, "But I didn't know" or "I wanted You, but You didn't want me." None. Let me never forget the price You paid for me. Let me never be ashamed of the gospel. And let me not forget that I have no reason to

think I'm superior to others because of my faith and their lack of faith. Whether I have faith or no faith, I fall short of the glory of God. Without Jesus, we are ALL without hope.

But sadly, for the ones without faith, they are dishonoring the truth of who God is. If they deny the truth, they certainly won't be thankful for anything He's done. To dishonor God and refuse to thank Him is to build a heart of stone against Him. It's to let the mind become more and more futile, empty. It's to become a fool who blissfully walks in darkness... But 1 John 2:8 says, "The darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining." Those who deny Jesus rather than SELF claim that their denial makes them wise, but it makes them a fool. They foolishly exchange the glory of our eternal, immortal God for the things that pass away... for the selfish pleasures that have no value. And they call it righteous. But changing definitions cannot change the truth. And walking in darkness while claiming to walk in the light does not shine forth truth no matter how many words are spoken.

Lord, how do I respond to this? First, please help me to live by faith in You and not in SELF. Let me not be ashamed of the gospel in any way. Second, help me to be humble. My righteousness is a gift from You. I have nothing to boast about except for the cross of Christ. I pray that I will honor You and live in gratitude because You have made me Your own. Let me be wise in the ways of the Lord and considered a fool to the world. Let me lift up the glory of God and see all things through Your eyes. Let me live wholeheartedly for You.