

ROMANS: PART 68
MARCH 16, 1997

The Religion Of Signs & Wonders Vs The Word of God
Romans 10 (Another Excursus)

A Review of Romans 10:6-15

1. The righteousness that comes through **faith** requires that: Vs 6-12.
 - ◆ *You not seek to do any additional thing* (The Gospel of Christ alone is powerful to save)
 - ◆ *you not seek additional revelation* (The Gospel is completely revealed)
 - ⇒ *you not seek miracles* (The Gospel is God's adequate witness: Mt 12:38f; Lk 16:19f)
 - ◆ this righteousness is *not beyond* you, it's accessible: You *confess & believe* in your heart.
2. The righteousness thru faith is dispensed thru **preaching -- not miracles!** Vs 13-15.

A Movement In Christ's Church Today

1. The "Signs & Wonders" movement:
 - ◆ A quickly growing phenomena over the past 20 years
 - ◆ Embraces the notion that *miracles* are the best way to do evangelism
 - ◆ Best articulated through Fuller Seminary, the Vineyard Movement (John Wimber).
 - ◆ Power Evangelism, Power Healing
 - ◆ Kevin Springer, Jackie Deere, Sam Storms, Michael Green, Richard Foster, John White.
2. The "Signs & Wonders" view of spiritual warfare:
 - ◆ The kingdom of God has come into this world but its opposed by Satan's kingdom
 - ◆ Christians are involved in a spiritual battle against the devil & demonic forces
 - ◆ Christians are Jesus' soldiers in this conflict
 - ◆ Christians have been given authority to oppose Satan & cast him out. These clashes between us & Satan are "power encounters" -- tests of strength. Who will win?
3. The "Signs & Wonders" view of evangelism:
 - ◆ Christians evangelize thru miraculous demonstrations of God's power. *signs & wonders*
 - ◆ Christians evangelize by casting out demons, healing the sick,
 - ◆ Christians evangelize by receiving personal revelations from God what another person has done or is thinking. *words of knowledge*

PROGRAMMATIC EVANGELISM	POWER EVANGELISM
Message oriented.	Spirit oriented.
Appeals to rational arguments. Attempts to reach minds & hearts w/out HS.	Utilizes the moment-by-moment leading of HS The HS gives revelation into the hearer's life.
Gets "decisions" but "not disciples."	Sets the believer free from major obstacles so they might experience growth
Those reached do <i>not</i> go on to mature faith.	Authenticates conversion. Gives new believer <i>conversion</i> confidence. Provides a solid foundation.
An <i>inadequate</i> conversion experience.	The most <i>effective</i> means for true growth.

Evaluation.

1. These are fellow believers whom we should love & encourage
2. Agreed: much of our traditional evangelism is weak, intellectual only, formal. We must repent
3. Concerning our spiritual battle, we agree that we are in a spiritual battle:
 - ◆ However miracles are not the tool with which God equips us to face Satan. Eph 6!
 - ◆ We are to be clothed with the armor of Christian character, including the *Word of God*
 - ◆ We must heed the *warning* of facing demons. Jude 1:8-10; II Pet 2:10,11
4. Concerning miracles, we agree that God performs miracles today:
 - ◆ But we have a miracle-working *God* no longer a miracle-working *Church*
 - ◆ The days of the Apostolic Church have past. Their *signs & wonders* have ceased.

- ◆ God has given to us prayer. "If it be Thy will...."
- ◆ The majority of *people-produced* miracles have been exposed as fraudulent. More exposures are forthcoming. CF. Counterfeit Miracles B.B. Warfield

5. The Biblical "signs & wonders" refer to major isolated events in history.
 - ◆ First, Exodus. Ex 7:3-4; Deut 26:8; 28:45-46; Acts 7:36
 - ◆ Second, Elijah & Elisha. Ps 74:9.
 - ◆ Third, Christ. Acts 2:19-22; Joel 2:30.
 - ◆ Fourth, Christ's Apostles. Acts 2:43; 5:12; II Cor 12:12; Heb 2:3,4.
 - ◆ We are not Moses, Elijah or Elisha, Christ, Apostles, or in the Apostolic age.
 - ◆ These *redemptive* acts served to both *authenticate* the speaker in this new era of revelation and *point to* the nature of Christ's redeeming work.
 - ◆ Faith is *remembering* these works & *believing* them. Faith is not looking for a continual circus of miracles. Mt 12:39.
6. There are deceptive signs & wonders. Deut 13:1-3; Mt 24:24; Rev 13:13.
 - ◆ By themselves miracles prove *nothing*, in some cases they may be from Satan.
 - ◆ They may even occur to test your faithfulness to God's Gospel and Scripture. Deut 13
7. For a thorough evaluation of this movement: Power Religion, pp. 61-136, M.S.Horton (Ed).

An Earnest Appeal To Practice Biblical Christianity & Evangelism.

1. Please, do not cheapen true miracles!
 - ◆ Every person who is sick, tempted, fearful, depressed is not demon-possessed. Thus when he overcomes these things he has not experienced "exorcism"
 - ◆ Every person who comes out of a difficult time has not been "*healed*"
 - ◆ God can & does cast out demons from those who are truly demon-possessed. He can & does heal truly sick people. This is *miraculous*. In such a circumstance we ought to pray (with humility) for His grace, *and* accept how He wisely & lovingly answers our requests.
2. Please, do not cheapen suffering!
 - ◆ There are sufferings that are given by God to Christians for their growth & His glory.
 - ◆ I.E. Job, Paul, Hebrews 11, Joni, etc..
 - ◆ It is a cruel Gospel to say to the afflicted that their suffering is unnecessary & Satanic. It is a terrible burden to assume that all one needs is enough faith to escape the problem.
3. Please, remember the warnings of Mt 7:22,23; I Cor 13:1-8.
4. Please, do not cheapen God's Gospel!
 - ◆ God's mighty act has been done! Christ died & rose on behalf of sinners! Lk 16:19-31
 - ◆ The *greatest* prophet performed no miracle, John preached Christ. Mt 11:2-15; Jn 10:40f
 - ◆ Jesus did not come to perform miracles. He came to preach salvation. Mk 1:37,38.
 - ◆ His Apostles' primary work was to preach the Gospel. Acts 6:2
 - ◆ Paul preached Christ -- something more powerful than miracles. I Cor 1:22,23; 14:18,19; Rom 1:16,17.
 - ◆ Our fallen world does not need *the Gospel of power* -- it needs *the power of the Gospel!*