

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  |
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| Message oriented.  | Spirit oriented.  |
| Appeals to rational arguments.<br>Attempts to reach minds & hearts w/out HS. | Utilizes the moment-by-moment leading of HS<br>The HS gives revelation into the hearer's life.                |
| Gets "decisions" but "not disciples."  | Sets the believer free from major obstacles<br>so they might experience growth                                |
| Those reached do <i>not</i> go on to mature faith.                           | Authenticates conversion.<br>Gives new believer <i>conversion</i> confidence.<br>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).

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| An Earnest Appeal To Practice Biblical Christianity & Evangelism. |
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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*!