

Living by Faith

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 04 June 2017

Preacher: Rev Trevor Hunt

[0 : 00] Now I want us to look at verse 17 in that chapter that we read from Romans chapter 1.

Romans 1 verse 17. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, as it is written, the just shall live by faith.

I want us to look together at this matter of faith, our faith, and living by faith.

Peter Barnum, the American circus entrepreneur, said probably of his patrons, there's a sucker born every minute.

And he's right, we see that on every hand. We see it on TV and in the newspapers. It seems there's no limit to what people will believe.

[1 : 16] Listen to some of the titles that have appeared in newspapers. Cow mattresses help cows produce more milk. Mom on a diet of only chicken lays huge egg.

World War II bomber found on the moon. Woman gave birth to a two-year-old baby who walks and talks in three days.

Adam and Eve's bones were found in Asia. Eve was a space alien. People actually believe these things and it's sad that they are taken in by such headlines as these and such stories that appear in the press.

But you know that there are many people who think that we as Christians are gullible because we believe in Christian truths.

And in faith in God. Have faith in God. We believe in miracles. And we believe in miracles. And we believe in an unseen God. And to them, there's no evidence.

[2 : 37] And we're gullible. But there's nothing gullible about believing the Lord. We are not in a faith, or don't have a faith in that which is unsubstantiated.

As you know, the Apostles' Creed is a creed which simply sets out historical events.

It speaks about God as the creator. It speaks about Christ coming, born of the Virgin Mary, suffering under Pontius Pilate. Dying, rising, ascending.

And all these happened in history. In and around Israel. At a certain time.

And we don't just believe fairy stories. As some would attribute to us. We believe in something that is solid and certain and sure.

[3 : 47] One of the things that we've just seen is the changing of a pound coin to a new design.

And we're having to change our coin. Because the old coin was so easily copied. That there were so many false, fake copies circulating.

That the government decided that we needed something more secure. So they've given us this multi-sided coin.

With two metals. To make it secure. It's got a kind of holograph on it as well. And you look at it and you can see a pound sign and a one.

And all this is designed to have... To be much more difficult to copy. But as soon after it began to be circulated.

[4 : 55] I heard that there were copies that had been made of it already. And when we get a coin we're never quite sure whether it's the genuine article.

And some would say that we're in the dark about the Gospel. And about the Lord Jesus Christ himself.

As having coins. But we know that Jesus is genuine. Because he rose from the dead.

And the evidence for his resurrection given to us in the Bible. And more than enough to substantiate beyond reasonable doubt.

That Jesus rose from the dead. He is genuine. And that's how the Apostle Paul begins this letter to the Romans. In telling us that the resurrection declares him to be with power the Son of God.

[6 : 04] He's genuine. And our faith is founded in him. And our faith in him is genuine. It may not be as strong as you would like.

It may be with some questions. And we go through periods of doubting. And asking ourselves is it right. But the facts that we believe are solidly founded.

They're genuine. Jesus Christ is who he says he is. And he tells us a lot of things in the Gospels about himself and what he'll do.

And so our faith is not in something that is fake. It's not in something that's uncertain.

We are not gullible in what we believe. So the Bible tells us that to believe in Jesus and to believe in what he did upon the cross brings to us life.

[7 : 12] Everlasting life. It brings to us the forgiveness of sins. And it makes us right with God. Where by nature we're all wrong with God.

For we're unrighteousness. But in Jesus Christ we are counted as righteous. We are counted as having the righteousness of Christ.

And that's our faith. That's what the scriptures say.

They stem from Abram. Who was declared in his old age. They're going to have descendants. And they're going to be so great.

That there be as the stars in the heavens. Or as the grain of sand on the seashore. Or in the desert. There will be so many.

[8 : 13] And yet here he was an old man. Sarah past the normal age of childbearing. How could it be? Could Abram believe God? It was counted to him for righteousness.

So the Apostle Paul tells us in our verse. That the just shall live by faith. And that's what I hope we all do.

But it may not be necessarily so. But that's, as I said this morning. Repeat again this evening. We need to make sure.

That we do have Christian faith. That our trust is in Jesus Christ. Not in our service. Or any such thing.

That we're not gullible in that sense. But that our faith is firmly in Jesus Christ. And if, as we come to the end of this day.

[9 : 17] And we think about it. We believe. We come to see that you're not in Christ. It's not too late.

Before this day ends. And I urge you. To settle the matter with him. Put your trust in him. Depend upon him.

As the only grounds of your salvation. Those of us who have come to put our trust in Christ.

Find also that we must go on doing so. We're told in Hebrews. In that letter to the Hebrews. And in chapter 11.

Which is the great chapter on faith. Giving a catalogue of those who were faithful. Those from the Old Testament. Who believed. But who didn't receive the promise.

[10 : 16] That is Christ. That they died before Christ came. And yet they believed in him. They believed in the one who would come. And they're the example.

To us Christians. Of persevering faith. But we're told in that chapter. And in verse 6. That without faith.

It's impossible to please God. Faith then is the core. Of our Christian living. As well as our first coming. Into salvation.

We must go on in faith. If we've come to Christ. If we've put our trust in him. We must go on putting our trust in him.

We must go on in our faith. So Paul says. That the just live by faith. It's not that we just come to life by faith.

[11 : 18] We go on living in faith. For the rest of our lives here. And our faith. Is the key to unlock the door.

To certainty. And to eternity. There's a story. Of an elderly lady.

Who was very upset. By all of her real. And imaginary troubles. And out of frustration. Her family told her. Grandma.

We've done all we can. Do for you. You'll just have to trust God. For the rest. And a look of despair. Spread over her face. And she replied. Oh dear. Has it come to that? But you see. For the church. It's always that.

[12 : 13] It's always. That our trust. Must be in God. Not in ourselves. Or anyone else. It must be in God.

And that must always be. The pattern and way of our life. Not when things have got so desperate. There's nothing else. Our walk and our way.

Must be in faith. We begin with faith. And we end with faith. So let's have a look at this faith. That Paul is speaking about. In this letter. Of his to the Romans. Where he says. That. He's preaching.

The gospel of righteousness. A righteousness. From God. Which is revealed. He makes the point. That God's work.

[13 : 11] Is a powerful way. With the word of God. Is in a powerful way. With the word of God. Here we have. Righteousness. Revealed to us.

It's not something we've. We've chipped up on. And we've discovered. For ourselves. It's been revealed to us. God.

Has declared this. In his word. God has shown us the way. And pointed to us. The way.

In which we live. We are to live. A lot of the passages. That Paul points. In which Paul points out the truth.

Indicates that. Everyone who believes. In this message. Of the gospel. Is saved from their sin. Is. It shows us.

[14 : 08] That Christ. Is the center point. Of our faith. When Paul writes. That. In the gospel. There's a righteousness.

From God. Revealed. He's really speaking. Of the righteousness. Of the Lord. Jesus Christ. It's not our own. Righteousness.

It's the righteousness. Of Christ. Jesus Christ. Is the message. Of the gospel. And. He's the center. Of the gospel. And it's really about. His sinless life. His life. Of righteousness. And his death. For us. Upon the cross.

His atoning sacrifice. On the cross. And then. His resurrection. To life. As the. Seal. Of what he has done.

[15 : 03] You see. If Christ. Had not done. These things. If he had not. Lived righteously. If he had. One sin. His bones.

Would still be. Somewhere. If he had not. Atoned. For us. On the cross. And took away.

Our sin. Made it his own. Died. In our place. Upon the cross. With no hope. There's nothing else. It all rests. In Christ. And this. He is the center. Of the gospel. He is the. One. Who is. The only savior. Now of course.

That's not politically. Correct. To speak. In those terms. All different religions. Will be clamoring. And hammering. On that door. Saying. You can't say that.

[15 : 59] But there is only one. Who has died. Upon the cross. There is only one. Who has. Taken our sin. The son of God. Whom God sent.

Jesus Christ. The only way. To life. Everlasting. The only way. To forgiveness. Is. It's not through Muhammad.

It's not through Buddha. It's not through the Hindu gods. It's not through Richard Dawkins. And human in death.

It is. Through Jesus Christ. Alone. There is no other way. In which we can be saved. Our faith must be in him.

And him alone. But God's righteousness. Has been revealed. It's been revealed. In that there is no other. Than Christ.

[17 : 01] But it's also been revealed. In that Christ. Gives to us. His righteousness. And thereby. We are cleansed.

Through sin. There is an exchange. Taking place. We have been given. The righteousness. Of Christ. Not our own righteousness.

We don't stand. Before God. And say. How great I am. Look at. What kind of life. I lead. Even as Christians. We stand.

And can stand. Before God. Clothed in the robes. Of the righteousness. Of Christ. That's the only way. We can stand.

So Christ. Is righteousness. But he's also. Our righteousness. His righteousness. Is imparted.

[17 : 58] To us. Through faith. And this. Of course. Is the function. And purpose. Of the preaching. Of the gospel. This is why.

Paul. Emphasized. In his preaching. Christ. And him. Crucified. That was the center. Of his preaching. Because.

That was the center. Of our salvation. It's because. Christ died. That we are saved. This truth. Is the basis.

Of our salvation. It's the explanation. Of how we are saved. Through faith. And we can only be saved.

Because of what God. Has done for us. We can't lift ourselves. Up to him. It's impossible. However good we try to be.

[18 : 57] We fail. We've already failed. And come short. Even if we should be good. From now on. It's only what we should be doing.

Anyway. And can't pay for the past. By nature. We're born into sin. And by choice.

We've chosen in nature. To ignore. Deny. And reject. God's plan of salvation. Until that day.

When the Holy Spirit came. And opened our eyes. And opened our hearts. And for the first time.

We saw. And we believed. But we can't save ourselves.

By any means. But there is. This good news. That salvation. Comes through Jesus Christ.

[20 : 06] And it's free of charge. To us. It's simply. That we believe. And believe. That Christ is our. Savior.

Through his death. Upon the cross. Salvation is ours. So we may have to understand.

This message of the gospel. And know how we're safe. Faith. Faith. Faith. Faith. But going on from there. There is faith. For living.

As those who have believed. Then we are to go on. In faith. In this righteousness. That comes by faith.

That we lean upon. We live. By faith. The righteous. Live by faith. Says Paul. In our text. The way that the righteous.

[21 : 04] Notness of God. Is given to us. Is only. Through faith. That's the good news.

The bad news. Is if we don't have faith. In this truth. Then we don't have life. The righteousness of God. Is offered to us. Only if we exercise.

Faith. And believe it. And go on. Believe in it. The righteousness. Comes to us. By faith. From first. To last. We have to receive. The righteousness. Of Christ. And then we have to walk. In the righteousness. Of Christ. Many of us.

Have faith. To receive. His righteousness. What a great. Blessing. That is. But. In biblical faith.

[22 : 06] Having received. His righteousness. We have to have faith. To go on in it. It isn't that we.

Are saved. Through Christ. And then we're left. To get on with it. And try and. Live out. A perfect life.

There are. If you know. Your own heart. You know. Even as a Christian. You can't do that. You still fail. And come short.

You still need. The righteousness. Of Christ. One day.

A man had been. Spending. A hard day. Working. And he came. And he came. Into the house. And he flopped himself.

[23 : 00] Into a large. Comfortable. Armchair. And said. It's good to rest. My whole weight. On this chair. That was.

John Payton. Who was trying. To. Instruct. The. People. Of the South Sea.

Island tribe. That way. He was. Who didn't have. A word. For faith. What that word. Meant. And. To give. An understanding. And when. He flopped down. In the chair. And realized. That he was. Resting.

His whole weight. To the chair. He suddenly said. That's it. I'll. Translate. Faith. As.

[23 : 56] Resting. One's. All weight. On God. That's how we're. To live. As Christians. Resting. Our. All weight.

On God. That's what. Faith. For us. As Christians. Is. When we. Believe. In God. The way. The Bible.

Tells us. To do. We indeed. Are resting. Our whole weight. On him. By faith. We have. The righteousness.

Of Christ. And that's how we live. Resting. Our whole weight. Upon him. And so it is. That our lives. Are. To be led. In that way. And lived. In that way. The righteous. Will live. [24 : 50] By faith. It's one of the great statements. Of scripture. Faith is the only way.

We can. It's the only way. In which we can. Please God. God. Today. People. And I suppose. Especially. In terms of. Terrorist action. And. The kinds of things. That are happening. In our. Western world.

Here. People have become. Very fascinated. About. How to survive. And that should be. Our spiritual. Fascination.

If you like. Of our spiritual. Survival. How do we survive. As Christians. It's by faith. And by faith alone.

[25 : 45] We continue. That faith. In trust. This year. Is the. 500th. Anniversary.

Of. That great. Reformer. Martin Luther. Who. Brought about. A spiritual. Revolution. To the church. And. To Christianity. He'd been. Trying. To earn. His salvation. By doing. Good works. For God. And. Any. One of us. Can relate. To this story. In that. Martin Luther. Became. Very frustrated. Because. He wasn't.

He wasn't. Getting on. Very well. With it. He was. A. A monk. And. He. Was. Taught. That. He must. [26 : 42] Do. Everything. To. To. To. Atone. For himself. To. Live. Before. God. By his.

Own. Efforts. And. Endeavors. And. His. Good. Works. And. He wrote. These words. To himself. He said. But. What. Works.

What. Works. Can. Come. From. A. Heart. Like. Mine. How. Can. I. Stand. Before. The. Holiness. Of. My. Judge. With. Works. Polluted.

In. Every. In. Their. Very. In. Their. Very. Source. Have you. Felt. That. Have you. Seen. That. Of. Yourself. Everything. You. Do. Even.

The. Best. That. You. Do. Is. Corrupted. And. Comes. Short. And. You. Struggle. To. Make. Yourself. Better. And.

[27 : 36] You. Still. Come. Short. And. You. Still. Cannot. Reach. That. Standard. Of. Holiness. As. Martin. Ruther.

Was. Trying. To. Do. And. He. Was. Frustrated. With. This. Discouragement. How. To. Be. Righteous. Before. God. And. He. Began. To. Study. This. Book. Of. Romans. Paul's. Letter. To. The. Romans. And.

He. Came. Across. This. Verse. This. 17th. Verse. Of. The. First. Chapter. The. Righteous. Will. Live. By. Faith. And.

God. Used. It. To. Speak. To. His. Heart. And. One. Day. Martin. Luther. Was. In. A. Church. In. Rome. Rome. Which. Was.

[28 : 28] Said. To. To. Be. A. Set. Of. A. Stairs. Stone. Stairs. That. Supposedly. Had. Been. The. Stairs. That. Led. Up. To. Pilate's.

House. In. Jerusalem. Upon. Which. Jesus. Walked. And. These. Holy. Stairs. That. Had. Been. Customary. For.

Pilgrims. Coming. To. Rome. To. Go. Up. On. The. Up. These. Stairs. On. Their. Knees. And. They. Would. Pause.

To. Pray. At. Various. Intervals. Where. There. Were. Stains. On. The. Steps. Said. To. Have. Come. From. The. Bleeding. Wounds. Of. Jesus.

And. It. Was. As. Martin. Luther. Was. Doing. This. That. God. Brought. These. Words. Of. Scripture. To. Luther's. Mind. That.

[29 : 22] Just. Shall. Live. By. Faith. And. Luther. At. That. Point. Saw. Clearly. His. Superstition. And.

He. Realized. That. He. Could. Never. Save. Himself. However. Hard. He. Tried. He. Could. Never. Attain. The. Righteousness.

Of. Christ. On. His. Own. And. That. He. Could. Only. Be. Saved. Entirely. By. Christ. That. He. Received. By.

Faith. He. Came. Down. Those. Stairs. A. New. Man. Of course. It. Led. Under. Him. And. From. God.

To. The. Great. Reformation. Of. The. Church. Of. The. Sixteenth. Century. Luther's. Eyes. Were. Open. To.

