

- I. Introduction
 - A. Opening Greeting (1:1-7)
 - B. Travel Plans (1:8-15)
 - C. Theme (1:16-17)
- II. Credenda: “The Righteous by Faith” Shall Live
 - A. God’s Wrath vs. Unrighteousness (1:18-3:20)
 - B. The Revelation of God’s Righteousness (3:21-4:25)
 - C. The Triumph of God’s Righteousness (5-8)
 - D. The Universality of God’s Righteousness (9-11)
- III. Agenda: The Righteous “Shall Live by Faith”
 - A. Transformed not Conformed (12-13)
 - B. Patient not Proud (14-15:13)
- IV. Conclusion
 - A. Paul, Minister to the Gentiles (15:14-21)
 - B. Travel Plans (15:22-33)
 - C. Closing Greetings and Benediction (16)

The Foundation of our Fortitude

Romans, Part XXVII

Romans 5:6-11

Stuart W. Bryan

I. The Warning of Rabshekah (2 Kg 18:21)

Sometimes we place confidence in people or institutions only to have that confidence betray us. As Solomon writes, “*Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble Is like a bad _____ and a _____ out of joint*” (Prov 25:19).

II. The Foundation of Fortitude

⁶For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. ⁸But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. ¹⁰For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. ¹¹And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

A. Not in ourselves or our deeds (6,8,10 cf. 3:9-20, 23)

First, Paul’s words reveal that the foundation of our fortitude is not in ourselves. Why not? Because, as he has already emphasized, “*all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God*” (Rom 3:23). Paul repeats this conclusion in our text (vv. 6,8,10). His descriptions echo Romans 3:9-20, “*What then? Are we better than they? Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin...²⁰Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*”

B. But in God and His love (cf. 2 Cor 5:18-21)

So where is our confidence? Our confidence is in the _____ of God. Paul uses a form of argument called *a fortiori* – from strength, from the greater to the lesser (*much more then...* 9,10). If God demonstrated His _____ for us when we were in rebellion against Him, then, having rescued us from our sin, shall He not continue His work in our lives and ultimately deliver us from judgment? Absolutely!

Paul teaches us something important about *reconciliation*. John Murray writes:

“Reconciliation presupposes disrupted relations between God and men. It implies enmity and alienation. This alienation is twofold, our alienation from God and God’s alienation from us. The cause of the alienation is, of course, our sin, but the alienation consists not only in our unholy enmity against God but also in God’s holy alienation from us” (Murray, 29).

Because our alienation from God is twofold, reconciliation is also twofold. On the one hand, our reconciliation was accomplished in the death of Christ (10): “*when we were enemies we _____ reconciled to God...*” On the other hand, reconciliation is applied personally when we, by the grace of God and the working of the Spirit, turn from our sin and *receive that reconciliation* (11). So Paul writes to the Corinthians:

¹⁸Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. ²⁰Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. ²¹For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Notice that *God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself* so that we can now summon sinners, "*Be reconciled to God!*" There is nothing in the way of peace with God other than one's own stubborn unbelief.

III. Christian Confidence

A. Boasting in God (1 Cor 1:26-31)

So what should characterize our lives? A holy and joyful and thankful confidence in God that boasts in God and His love for us. We "... [_____] *in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation*" (5:11).

The Apostle Paul writes to the Corinthians;

²⁶For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; ²⁷but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, ²⁸and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, ²⁹so that no man may boast before God. ³⁰But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, ³¹so that, just as it is written, "Let him who boasts, boast in the lord." (1 Cor 1:26-31, NASB)

B. A Lifting up for the Downcast (2 Cor 4:7-10)

G.K. Chesterton tells the story of King Alfred in his epic poem, *The Ballad of the White Horse*. At the lowest point of his reign, Alfred enters the Viking camp posing as a minstrel and sings for them. Then, after one of the Viking King Guthrum's earls mocks his faith in the crucified God, Alfred sings again:

*"I will even answer the mighty earl
That asked of Wessex men
Why they be meek and monkish folk,
And bow to the White Lord's broken yoke;
What sign have we save blood and smoke?
Here is my answer then.*

*"That on you is fallen the shadow,
And not upon the Name;
That though we scatter and though we fly,
And you hang over us like the sky,
You are more tired of victory,
Than we are tired of shame."*

Alfred in Chesterton p. 59

Because unbelief is burdened by sin and guilt, even its victories are tainted by remorse. But we Christians have been set free from sin and guilt, reconciled to God, and freed to serve Him without shame and without remorse. So we say with Paul:

⁷But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; ⁸we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; ⁹persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; ¹⁰always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. (2 Cor 4:7-10)

IV. Conclusion