

Romans 1:8-17—The Just Shall Live By Faith

Memory Verse:

Romans 12:1-2 NKJV

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Outline:

1. Faith is required to persevere (1:8)
2. The importance and effectiveness of a consistent prayer life (1:9)
3. Paul's desire and motive for wanting to visit the church in Rome (1:10-13)
4. Motivated to share the gospel (1:14-15)
5. The essence or core of the gospel: *The just shall live by faith* (1:16-17)

Romans 1:8-17 NKJV

⁸ First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. ⁹ For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers, ¹⁰ making request if, by some means, now at last I may find a way in the will of God to come to you. ¹¹ For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established—¹² that is, that I may be encouraged together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.

¹³ Now I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that I often planned to come to you (but was hindered until now), that I might have some fruit among you also, just as among the other Gentiles. ¹⁴ I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to wise and to unwise. ¹⁵ So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also.

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

1. Faith is required to persevere

Romans 1:8 NKJV

First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

The church in Rome had a good reputation among other believers; other believers were encouraged to persevere through trials because the example of perseverance of the saints in Rome. This was especially important because of their location in the capital city of the empire where news spreads quickly. Paul is very grateful that they are bringing glory to God and not shame. It is good to ask ourselves, both individually and corporately, am I a faithful witness of Christ: Do I accurately represent Him, both in how I love and serve others practically, and also what I believe (is it according to the Bible).

v 8 Your faith is spoken of: Bruce explains why their faith needed to be strong. “The Christians of Rome were unpopular—reputed to be ‘enemies of the human race’ and credited with such vices as incest and cannibalism. In large numbers, then, they became the victims of the imperial malevolence—and it is this persecution of Christians under Nero that traditionally forms the setting for Paul’s martyrdom.”

Our faith also needs to be strong in today’s culture. Not only do we face criticism from the world as we hold to Biblical truth and values on issues like marriage, gender fluidity and 6 day creation etc, but the true church will also face opposition from those within the church that believe in a works based gospel and/or the prosperity gospel, and/or who follow any other false gospel.

In the days of the puritans, the greatest persecution came not from the world, but from the state sponsored church—in other words, from those who also professed to be believers. The true believers were marginalised while the false teachers enjoyed great popularity. But being popular doesn’t make you right. Listen to what Jesus says about being popular.

Luke 6:26 NLT

What sorrow awaits you who are praised by the crowds, for their ancestors also praised false prophets.

Luke 6:26 NKJV Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for so did their fathers to the false prophets.

Scripture tells us that in the last days there will be a great apostasy or falling away. Like in the dark ages when the Catholic church murdered many believers because they stood firm on the truth of the gospel (specifically the doctrine of substitutionary atonement—Jesus died in our place) and wouldn’t compromise their faith, so it will get harder and harder in these last days to maintain good doctrine (teaching) as more and more believers fall away from the truth; *the pressure to compromise and turn away from the clear teaching of Scripture will only increase—true believers will be more and more marginalised.*

1 Timothy 4:1-5 NLT

Now the Holy Spirit tells us clearly that in the last times some will turn away from the true faith; they will follow deceptive spirits and teachings that come from demons. ² These people are hypocrites and liars, and their consciences are dead. ³ They will say it is wrong to be married and wrong to eat certain foods. But God created those foods to be eaten with thanks by faithful people who know the truth. ⁴ Since everything God created is good, we should not reject any of it but receive it with thanks. ⁵ For we know it is made acceptable by the word of God and prayer.

The false teaching that is most obvious today, now Israel is back in their land as was repeatedly prophesied throughout Scripture, is that of replacement theology—the demonic teaching that proclaims that God has finished with or rejected the nation of Israel from being His chosen people. This false doctrine (teaching) is thoroughly refuted by Paul in Romans 11. For example, “I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not!” (Romans 11:1 NKJV).

The war in Gaza against the Hamas terrorists (who are worse than ISIS) has revealed just how much false teaching leads to sinful behaviour and faulty thinking or reasoning. There are massive numbers of professing believers who are actively supporting Hamas and persecuting the Jews. They express anger and disgust towards the Jews, speaking very negatively to and about them, and many even are violent towards God's chosen people. Why? Because they have been taught that God is angry and disgusted with the Jews, so much so that He has rejected them, and so these deceived people also hate and reject them. These deceived people and their misled churches need to remember what God promised to Abraham, "I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you (Genesis 12:3). As believers who hold to the word of God, we must stand strong on its truth and support the nation of Israel, even if it means that we will be persecuted and hated by others.

2. The importance and effectiveness of a consistent prayer life

Romans 1:9 NKJV

For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers

Paul understood the importance of prayer. Remember that the amount we pray is a direct measure of how much we are depending on God. Without prayer, without depending on God, we will not achieve anything of eternal value. Prayer not only causes God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven (see Luke 11:2), but also changes us to be conformed into the image of Christ. When we pray for a person our attitude towards them changes to become more humble, forgiving, and loving. If we are having problems relating to or getting along with someone, then it means that we need to pray for them more. The most important aspect of prayer is how it changes our attitude towards the person we are praying for.

v 9 For God is my witness: They couldn't physically see Paul praying for them so Paul calls God to be his witness that what he was saying was true. It's much easier to say that we are praying than to actually pray. Am I regularly praying for other believers? Am I regularly praying for my spouse and children? God is my witness.

3. Paul's desire and motive for wanting to visit the church in Rome

Romans 1:10-13 NKJV

Making request if, by some means, now at last I may find a way in the will of God to come to you. ¹¹ For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established—¹² that is, that I may be encouraged together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.

¹³ Now I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that I often planned to come to you (but was hindered until now), that I might have some fruit among you also, just as among the other Gentiles.

v 10 Making request if, by some means, now at last I may find a way in the will of God to come to you: This is Paul humbly submitting himself to God's will. He has desires to do things, good things that will benefit the kingdom of God, but understands that the realisation and/or timing is completely in God's hands. He asks and then submits to God's answer. This is how we should be seeking God's will for our lives. Just because God gives us a desire for something doesn't mean that it's exactly what God wants for us at that moment; sometimes it's just to change our direction to head down another completely different path.

An example: My journey that ended up with both me and Merissa both going to Bible college started with me having a desire to go to a Bible college. So I started looking at the Bible colleges in Perth. Merissa and I even talked about how she would support me while I wasn't working. Then God showed us that He wanted us to go to America. So it ended up being that both Merissa and I studied at Bible college overseas, but it started as a desire for one person to go to Bible college in Perth. The timeframe was about 3 months.

v 11 For I long to see you: Believers really are, or should be, one big family. When people love and are in fellowship with God, they naturally love each other. "*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.*" ³⁵*By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.*" (John 13:34-35 NKJV). This natural affection that believers should have towards each other is what sets Christians apart from the world.

An example: When we went back to America to visit the friends we had made in Bible College a few years earlier, we only had to pay for accommodation for one night during our 30 day stay. We travelled from state to state, and as long as there was someone we knew in that state, we had a place to stay, and we experienced rich fellowship. This is what it was like in Paul's day, with believers receiving hospitality from other believers as they travelled from city to city doing God's work in building up the churches.

v 11 That I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established: Paul's motive in wanting to visit them was to bless them. He wanted to share what God had given him with others. Paul said to the Corinthians, "I will gladly spend myself and all I have for you" (2 Corinthians 12:15 NLT).

Everything God gives us is for us to share with others, especially our brothers and sisters in Christ. Jesus said 'It is more blessed [happy] to give than to receive' (Acts 20:35). Still water soon turns putrid, but a flowing stream stays fresh. Let God's love and blessings flow through you by being others-centred or selfless.

v 12 That is, that I may be encouraged together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me: This is another important principle—mutual edification. The truth is that we can never really give without receiving something back. The testimony from a group that participated in a short term mission trip went like this—"we went to Thailand to bless the children at the school, but the children ended up blessing us." When we abide in Christ and live selflessly, putting others first, then our joy overflows. Yes it costs something to be unselfish, but it's always worth it. Don't be a blessing scrooge, just looking for what you can get and storing it away; in the end you'll be miserable and lonely. Instead, give your blessings away, and you'll receive more. Use your gifts and talents for the kingdom, for the edification and building up of the church. The joy of giving is the greatest joy of all. Jesus leads by example when he selflessly gave the greatest sacrifice of all time—Himself on behalf of sinful humanity.

Hebrews 12:2b AMP

He, for the joy [of obtaining the prize] that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising and ignoring the shame, and is now seated at the right hand of the throne of God. [Ps. 110:1.]

v 13 Now I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that I often planned to come to you (but was hindered until now), that I might have some fruit among you also, just as among the other Gentiles: As was discussed previously, just because God gives us a desire, it doesn't mean that it is necessarily for now. All circumstances are allowed by God, so rather than be frustrated when things don't go the way we think they should, we should be thankful that God is leading us in the way that is best for us.

4. Motivated to share the gospel

Romans 1:14-15 NKJV

I am a debtor both to Greeks [Greek speaking, those who are considered cultured or civilised] and to barbarians [those who don't speak Greek, who are considered to be rough or uncivilised], both to wise (intelligent) and to unwise (unintelligent or foolish). ¹⁵ So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also.

Paul feels that he has a debt to share the gospel to everyone. Why? It was the same motivation that Jesus gave the disciples when He sent them out to preach the gospel—*Freely you have received, freely give.*

Matthew 10:7-8 NKJV And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' ⁸ Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. *Freely you have received, freely give.*

The idea is that because God has given us and loved us so much already, we should want to give something back. "Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law" (Romans 13:8). What better way to be a blessing to somebody and give something back than by sharing with someone the good news that can save their soul. Sharing the gospel is the most loving thing we can do.

v 15 I am ready: "Spurgeon wondered if Paul didn't use the words "**I am ready**" as his motto. Almost the first words out of his mouth when he was saved were, "*Lord, what do you want me to do?*" (Acts 9:6).

- Paul was ready to preach and to serve (Romans 1:15)
- Paul was ready to suffer (Acts 21:13)
- Paul was ready to do unpleasant work (2 Corinthians 10:6)
- Paul was ready to die (2 Timothy 4:6)" (David Guzik)

v 15 I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also: Talk about being brave. Preaching the gospel in the capital of this oppressive empire which loved to persecute Christians could be compared to swimming with crocodiles or sharks. It's like volunteering to be a missionary in Iran or Yemen.

Paul would eventually go to Rome, but not as a free man. Ironically, the Roman empire protected Paul from the Jews as he preached there for two years in his own rented house while he awaited his first trial before Caesar. Eventually Paul would be executed in Rome after being arrested a second time.

“I do not suppose that Paul guessed that he would be sent there at the government’s expense, but he was. The Roman Empire had to find a ship for him, and a fit escort for him, too; and he entered the city as an ambassador in bonds. When our hearts are set on a thing, and we pray for it, God may grant us the blessing; but, it may be, in a way that we never looked for. You shall go to Rome, Paul; but you shall go in chains.” (Spurgeon)

5. The essence or core of the gospel: *The just shall live by faith*

Romans 1:16-17 NKJV

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. ¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “*The just shall live by faith.*”

These two verses are the topic, theme or thesis for the book of Romans. Paul will spend the rest of the book explaining them, in particular “**the just**”.

v 16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: Paul’s day is very similar to ours, with much sexual immorality, violence, paganism, occultic practices, drugs etc. Of course this brings resistance to the gospel which leads to persecution. Almost everywhere Paul went his life was in danger, he was frequently assaulted, and he was almost constantly run out of town on his missionary trips. The world we live in is much the same. In the majority of countries Christians face strong persecution, and in western countries the pressure to compromise our values is increasing rapidly. To be effective in the world today Christians must have the same attitude that Paul had and declare along with him—“**For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ**”. Of course this means that we are willing to count the cost and endure persecution.

v 16 power: In this world there is the illusion of power, with big armies and powerful governments. But none of those governments or armies have or will last. Only the gospel remains unchanged—there is only one *King of Kings and Lord of Lords*.

“Power is the one thing that Rome boasted of the most. Greece might have its philosophy, but Rome had its power” (Wiersbe).

“Despite all their power, the Romans—like all men—were powerless to make themselves righteous before God. The ancient philosopher Seneca called Rome “a cesspool of iniquity” and the ancient writer Juvenal called it a “filthy sewer into which the dregs of the empire flood.”” (David Guzik)

v 16 For it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes: This is the reason that Paul is not ashamed of the gospel of Christ—it has the power to change lives, to transfer or convey people from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light. *“He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins”* (Colossians 1:13).

The gospel is absolutely true and infinitely powerfully—it is exactly what the whole world needs to hear—yet it is also mainly rejected, and often violently, by most people. Like Paul, every believer is an ambassador of the gospel. *“Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God. ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him”* (2 Corinthians 5:20-21 NKJV).

I consider that for me to deny or be ashamed of the gospel is the equivalent of denying my Saviour, because I am saying that what Christ did for me is shameful, unimportant, and isn’t worth talking about. If I struggle to share my faith, I need to pray and also ask for specific prayer like Paul did. *“Praying ... for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak”* (Ephesians 6:18-20 NKJV).

Remember that to have the power to be bold and share our faith effectively, we must first be “filled with the Spirit” (see Ephesians 5:18), which is the same as “walking in the Spirit” (see Galatians 5:16 and 25), “walking in the light” (see Ephesians 5:8 and 1 John 1:7), and the Spirit coming upon us like Jesus promised in Acts 1:8—*But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.* This happened to the disciples in Acts 2:4, and then again later on in Acts 4:29-31—*Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, ³⁰ by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus.” ³¹ **And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.***

Notice that the filling of the Spirit comes only when the person is humble before God, depending on God, and seeking the Glory of God (not their own). Only then can the believer experience the power of God working through them to produce the fruit of the Holy Spirit, overcome their sinful nature (see Galatians 5:22-25), and of course receive the boldness, wisdom, and courage needed to share the gospel in a hostile and Christ rejecting world.

v 16 To salvation: We must ask the question, “What are we saved from?” The answer is in the next verse where it talks about **the righteousness of God**.

v 16 Everyone who believes: The word believes is in the active voice, not passive, which means that this is something that the individual must do, and not something that is done to them. Salvation is a free choice. It is open to everyone, but only if they choose to believe. Salvation is a gift that must be received. Receiving a gift is not a work, because you did nothing to earn or deserve it.

v 16 For the Jew first and also for the Greek: Simply put, God gave his people Israel the advantage of hearing the good news of the gospel first before it went to the gentiles or non-Jewish people. This was the way it was when Jesus sent out the disciples to preach, and also how the gospel was spread in the early church. It makes sense that the nation who was waiting for the Messiah would hear about Him first. The gospel always went to the non-Jewish people eventually, for example, Jesus talking to the Samaritans in John chapter 4.

Matthew 10:5-8 NKJV

These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: “Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. ⁶ But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. ⁷ And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ ⁸ Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.

Acts 13:34-36 NKJV

On the next Sabbath almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God. ⁴⁵ But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy; and contradicting and blaspheming, they opposed the things spoken by Paul. ⁴⁶ Then Paul and Barnabas grew bold and said, “It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you [the Jews] first; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles.

Acts 18:5-6 NKJV

When Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia, Paul was compelled by the Spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ. ⁶ But when they opposed him and blasphemed, he shook his garments and said to them, “Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles.”

v 17 For in it [the gospel] the righteousness of God is revealed: The gospel reveals the righteousness of God to those who choose to believe.

v 17 The righteousness of God: We talked last week about how there are two ways to understand **the righteousness of God** in the context of the gospel here in Romans.

The wrong understanding of **the righteousness of God** (law based thinking):

The unbiblical, erroneous, or law based way to think of **the righteousness of God** is that God will perfectly or righteously judge me for every sin I have committed. Therefore I must be extremely careful to make up for, compensate for, make amends for, nullify, cancel out, counter balance, counteract or offset every sin that I’ve committed by doing good works and/or punishing myself (penance—punishment inflicted on oneself as an outward expression of repentance for wrongdoing).

Remember how Martin Luther originally and erroneously considered **the righteousness of God** to be God righteously judging every sin he committed. This caused Luther to always feel condemned. Therefore he worked harder and harder to be good and whipped or punished himself more and more in order to pay off or work off his sins. He hated God because although he saw God as holy and perfect, there was no love, only constant judgement and condemnation. Why? Because he never knew if he had been good enough or punished himself enough to pay off or atone for his sins. He never knew if he was accepted by God—he was a miserable man.

Simply put, this false, law based, and unbiblical understanding of **the righteousness of God** says that the individual believer must in effect atone for their own sins by good works and penance. Of course this false because since the wages, consequence, or penalty of sin is death (see Romans 6:23, Ezekiel 18:4, 20). Therefore, I am not able to pay or atone for even one of the many sins that I have committed. This is why we must completely reject a works based gospel.

The correct understanding of **the righteousness of God** (grace based thinking):

In contrast, the biblical or correct understanding of **the righteousness of God** is the divine or perfect righteousness of God that is imputed (transferred or given to) the sinner. In effect, **the righteousness of God** is God's perfect righteousness that I receive (the gospel of grace), not the perfect righteousness that I try to achieve (a works based gospel).

Substitutionary atonement and **the righteousness of God**:

2 Corinthians 5:21 NKJV

For [God the Father] made [Jesus] who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become **the righteousness of God** [the Father] in [Jesus].

I believe that 2 Corinthians 5:21 is the clearest explanation of the doctrine or teaching of substitutionary atonement in the whole Bible. It says that the perfect Jesus became sin, while the sinner becomes **the righteousness of God** (meaning as righteous and as perfect as God). There is a double transfer here. My sin is transferred or imputed to Jesus, and at the same time **the righteousness of God** is transferred from Jesus to me—God sees me as being as righteous and perfect as Jesus, like I lived a perfect life.

On the cross the sins of the whole world were imputed or transferred from sinful mankind onto Jesus. This meant that the Father saw Jesus as being guilty, as though He had committed all the sins of all mankind, and therefore He was punished for all those sins. *Jesus death on the cross was the complete and final payment of the sins of all mankind* (see 1 John 2:2). Also, the Father now sees those who are *in Christ*—those who have chosen to believe and receive Christ's righteousness (**the righteousness of God**)—as being as righteous and perfect as He is.

It's incredible to think that I can become as righteous or as perfect as God, but this is exactly what God does. When a person repents and believes, they are not only forgiven, but are also given the status of being as righteous or perfect as God—they *receive the righteousness of God* and therefore, now they are in Christ, *become the righteousness of God*.

Colossians 1:19-22 NLT

For God [the Father] in all his fullness was pleased to live in Christ,²⁰ and through Him God reconciled everything to Himself. He made peace with everything in heaven and on earth by means of Christ's blood on the cross.

²¹ This includes you who were once far away from God. You were His enemies, separated from Him by your evil thoughts and actions. ²² **Yet now He has reconciled you to Himself through the death of Christ in His physical body. As a result, He has brought you into His own presence, and you are holy and blameless as you stand before Him without a single fault.**

A practical analogy that may help us to understand this spiritual truth is to imagine that I am bankrupt, having a huge debt and no money in the bank. However, someone else is extremely rich and has no debt. Then the rich person asks me, would you like to have all the money in my account and I'll take on all your debt? If I accept this generous offer I suddenly become, not just debt free, but also very rich. On the other hand, the rich person not only has no money, but also is responsible for my huge debt.

We had a debt that we could not pay, Jesus paid a debt that he did not owe.

The following are quotes which help us to consolidate our understanding of these vital teachings or doctrines—**the righteousness of God** and substitutionary atonement.

“It is essential to understand exactly what the **righteousness of God** revealed by the gospel is. It does not speak of the holy righteousness of God that *condemns* the guilty sinner, but of the God-kind of **righteousness** that is *given to* the sinner who puts their trust in Jesus Christ.” (David Guzik)

“If God justifies a sinner, it does not mean that he finds reasons to prove that he was right—far from it. It does not even mean, at this point, that he makes the sinner a good man. It means that *God treats the sinner as if he had not been a sinner at all.*” (William Barclay)

“It was the happiest day in Luther’s life when he discovered that ‘God’s Righteousness’ as used in Romans means *God’s verdict of righteousness upon the believer.*” (Lenski)

“This declaration is even greater when we understand that this is the **righteousness of God** given to the believer. It is not the righteousness of even the most holy *man*, nor is it the righteousness of innocent Adam in Eden. It is God’s righteousness.” (David Guzik)

“The righteousness which is unto justification is one characterised by the perfection belonging to all that God is and does. It is a ‘God-righteousness’.” (Murray)

v 17 From faith to faith: We don’t just start our Christian walk by faith, by believing in Jesus, but we also continue our Christian walk by faith.

“He says not, from faith to works, or from works to faith; but **from faith to faith**, i.e. only by faith.” (Poole)

Galatians 3:2-3 NLT

Let me ask you this one question: Did you receive the Holy Spirit by obeying the law of Moses? Of course not! You received the Spirit because you believed the message you heard about Christ. ³ How foolish can you be? After starting your new lives in the Spirit, why are you now trying to become perfect by your own human effort?

v 17 The just shall live by faith: **The just** refers to those who have been justified, meaning to be declared not guilty and have received **the righteousness of Christ**. How do we achieve this positional standing of being perfect in God’s sight? Not by works but by faith—**The just shall live by faith**.