



**Antivirus
Romans 1
Small Group Plan**

The Bible contains both bad news and good news. The bad news has to do with us, and the good news has to do with God's work in Jesus:

*God demonstrates his own love for us in this:
While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
— Romans 5:8 —*

*Once you were alienated from God
and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior.
But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death
to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation.
— Colossians 1:21-22 —*

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel,
because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes:
first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.
For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed
a righteousness that is by faith from first to last,
just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."
— Romans 1:16-17 —*

OPEN IT / INTRODUCE IT ...

- Why is it important to understand and accept the “bad news” in our life?

LOOK AT IT / STUDY IT ...

GOD

— *The Origin of the Gospel* —

Verse 16a

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel,
because it is the power of God ...*

- What does Paul say is the “gospel”? See verses 2-3.
- Why is the gospel “powerful” and how did it bring courage to Paul?

SALVATION

— *The Outcome of the Gospel* —

Verse 16b

... for the salvation ...

- How does the “gospel” bring salvation?
- How does the concept **atonement** factor into this discussion?

EVERYONE

— *The Outreach of the Gospel* —

Verse 16c

*... to everyone who believes:
first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.*

- Why did God’s world-wide outreach begin “first” with the Jews?
- The scope of our ministry — “everyone” — can be overwhelming. What do you do to make outreach manageable?

FAITH

— *The Outcome of the Gospel* —

Verse 17

*For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed —
a righteousness that is by faith from first to last,
just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”*

- Faith bring us to God, but it doesn’t end at discovery.
- How does “faith” continue to grow through a Christian’s entire lifetime?

USE IT / APPLY IT ...

As an additional study here is correspondence from May 2015 between Christopher DiMarco and me regarding **Romans 1:17**.

Christopher,

During our group study on Tuesday morning you asked about the phrase “*from faith to faith*” from Romans 1:17. After our conversation I did a little more research.

To translate each Greek word literally the sentence comes out:

δικαιοσύνη γὰρ Θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ ἀποκαλύπτεται ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν
(Righteousness) (because) (of God) (in) (it) (is revealed) (by/from) (faith) (to) (faith)

As you can see, that last phrase, “*faith to faith*” does have the word “*faith*” repeated twice.

The translations have interpreted it in several ways. In the list below, the first translations are more literal while the others attempt to interpret:

- KJV** – “*the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith*”
- ESV** – “*the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith*”
- NAS** – “*the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith*”
- RSV** – “*the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith*”
- NCV** – “*God makes people right with himself—that it begins and ends with faith.*”
- NLT** – “*God makes us right in his sight. This is accomplished from start to finish by faith.*”
- GNT** – “*God puts people right with himself: it is through faith from beginning to end.*”
- NIV** – “*the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last*”
- The Message** – “*God’s plan to rescue everyone ... starting with Jews and then right on to everyone else!*”
- The Passion** – “*righteousness ... moves us from receiving life through faith, to living by faith.*”

The phrase you asked about is literally “*out of faith into faith*” or “*from faith to faith.*” I found several explanations of this phrase, some more imaginative than others. Here are three that seem to be the most reasonable:

- (1) The focus could be on the **origin of faith** and could be read, “*from the faith of God, who makes the offer, to the faith of humanity who receives the offer.*” More simply put, we could say, “*from God’s faith to our faith.*” God’s faithfulness comes first and ours is simply a response. I thought of several scriptures that describe our response to God or our reflection of God’s faith (2 Cor, 1:3-4, 5:18, Col 3:13, 1 Pet 4:10).
- (2) Paul could be talking about the **spread of faith** by evangelism and could be rendered, “*from one believer’s faith to another believer’s faith.*” (1 Cor 14:25).
- (3) Paul may be describing the **growth of faith** in an individual believer’s life, and could be rendered, “*from one degree of faith to another*” or “*from one level of faith to a deeper level of faith.*” (2 Pet 1:5-7).

It was a great question Christopher, and it led me to a few hours of very helpful study. I hope this is helpful to you. I always enjoy our group and the thoughts and questions it brings to the surface.

Bob