

Beginning the Year with Faith, Hope and Love

Romans 1:16-17

January 1, 2023

Introduction: This week our beloved Senior Pastor Emeritus, Earl Palmer, will once again preach at UPC where he served for well over twenty years, first as pastor of University Ministries and later, after stints in Manila in the Philippines and Berkeley California as Senior Pastor. Earl has a commitment to expositional preaching of biblical texts. He has a strong interest in pursuing theological themes that are present in classic and contemporary literature, with particular focus on such authors as C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Karl Barth. Dr. Palmer is one of the most gifted teachers of the Bible, with a unique style that unfolds the text and allows the listener to make great discoveries.

Prayer: Lord God, open your word to us through your Holy Spirit. Help us to find encouragement and direction that will serve us well in the days ahead. Amen.

Review: As you listened for God over the past week, what did you hear?

Read: Romans 1:16-17

Discussion:

1. Paul begins the letter to the Romans with a brief summary of the gospel in verses 1:1-6. What are some of the key points of the gospel mentioned in those verses?
2. Why is the gospel important according to Paul in verses 1:16-17?
3. Why does Paul say salvation came first to the Jew and then to the Gentile? (See also John 1:10-11, Romans 9:4-7)
4. What are some reasons one might be 'ashamed of the gospel'? Have you been (or are you now) ashamed of the gospel? If so, why?
5. What does the gospel mean to you today? How does it shape your everyday thoughts and actions?

Application: This week spend some time writing a brief summary of the gospel of Jesus Christ that you can commit to memory. Plan to share what you've written with someone else.

Prayer: Father thank you for the saving power of Jesus Christ. Help give us the courage to share that Good News with others. Amen.