

I Am Not Ashamed

by Anton Bosch

The gospel is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, and we should not be ashamed to proclaim it boldly.

Scripture: John 3:16, Romans 1:16, Romans 5:15, Romans 9:33, 1 Corinthians 1:23, 1 Corinthians 15:3, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 5:11

Topics: "Gospel Message", "Christian Courage"

Description

Anton Bosch addresses the issue of modern churches diluting the gospel message to attract more people, offering worldly promises in exchange for attendance and offerings, while avoiding topics like sin, repentance, and judgment. He emphasizes that the power of the gospel lies in its ability to save and transform lives, urging believers not to be ashamed of proclaiming it boldly. Bosch highlights how the gospel alone can provide the cure for the deadly disease of sin, offering salvation and eternal life through faith in Christ's sacrifice and resurrection.

Transcript

Modern churches are watering down the gospel and changing the message into one that will sell easily. They bribe, deceive and seduce people to attend and to join their churches. Coffee, entertainment, networking, wealth, health and sex are all promised in exchange for additional numbers and bigger offerings. The same time anything that offends and that could be an obstacle to the joiners is removed. Thus the cross, references to sin, repentance and judgment are deleted along with anything that may hint at the possibility that any kind of commitment would be required.

This all leads me to conclude that they are either ashamed of the Gospel or they do not believe that the gospel is powerful enough to draw people without adding all the frosting, cherries and cream on top. Clearly they no longer believe or agree with Paul who said:

"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." (Romans 1:16)

Why could or should Paul have been ashamed? Surely feeling shame is not something that one would connect with the Gospel? Yet, the very fact that people have felt the need to change and camouflage the gospel indicates that they are ashamed of the message of the gospel.

Even at the time of Paul, the Gospel carried a certain reproach. Some of the Galatians, for instance, were being circumcised in order to win the approval of the Judaisers and thus escape the "the offence of the cross" (Galatians 5:11). Paul strongly rebuked them for this and he even doubted that they were saved! (Galatians 4:20).

Paul quotes Isaiah in speaking of Jesus: "Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence" but then he adds "and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. " (Romans 9:33). To the Corinthians he says that the message of Christ crucified is "to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness" (1Corinthians 1:23). So, it should be no surprise if many in our day want to bypass the offence of the Gospel.

But we need to be reminded that we ought not be ashamed of the Gospel - just as Paul was not ashamed. He wanted everyone to hear that message and so he traveled to the farthest reaches to proclaim the message. It was not something to be hidden under a bushel. It was to be proclaimed in the streets, palaces and prisons. He spoke of it to the poor and the rich, the slave and the noble.

The reason he was not ashamed of the gospel was because it was (and still is) the power of God unto salvation. The message of the cross is not weakness, it is power because it alone can break the power of sin, forgive sins and translate people from darkness to light and from hell to heaven. The Gospel alone can make the unrighteous righteous and justify the sinner. There is no other message, system or religion that can do that. For that reason we should not be ashamed and on the contrary we should be bold to proclaim this a wonderful gift of God.

It would be very strange if someone found a simple cure for every form of cancer but was ashamed of it and never spoke about it. I am sure that if someone found such a cure, they would proclaim it to the whole world. But the Gospel is the cure for an even worse disease than cancer. It is the cure for sin. The disease of sin is guaranteed to kill everyone who is infected by it - there are no survivors. But worse, every person who is born into this world is infected by sin and is therefore under the sentence of death. (Romans 5). Should we not be shouting from the rooftops that we have found the answer?

Instead churches, preachers and "christians" no longer want to speak about this glorious, powerful gospel. They will preach everything else except the one message that can save. Yes, they will speak about how to live positively (while waiting to die), how to be successful in order to hide the fact that you are under the sentence of death and how to have great sex so you can enjoy this life before heading for eternal damnation. (See last week's article.)

Only one message and one message alone matters. There is only one message that can save from sin and its consequences. Only one message that can fix the problems of our society and only one message that can address every problem that has ever beset mankind: "that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures" (1Corinthians 15:3-4). And "that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

Without the Gospel nothing else matters. Preachers can teach people how to think positively but without the gospel they will go to hell with a positive attitude. You can teach them to have healthy families and without the gospel the family circle will be unbroken in the lake of fire. Every religion in the world helps people to improve themselves but only one message can save.

No other system, philosophy or religion can deal with the basic desires and instincts of man. Yet the gospel can change our cravings and place within us a desire for spiritual things. Every other philosophy deals with behavior only while the gospel alone can change every aspect of who we are: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2Corinthians 5:17).

The gospel is not only for some people and it does not only work on some but it is for "everyone who believes". No one is excluded. You cannot be too good, bad, rich, poor, educated, uneducated rich or poor. The gospel is for every race, age and background. It is truly and literally for "everyone".

Neither does the gospel cost anything. It cannot be bought with money, good deeds, sacrifice or achievement. All that is required is to simply believe - it is indeed the free gift of God (Romans 5:15-18).

Let's join with Paul and shout from the rooftops that "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." (Romans 1:16).

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