

For I Am Not Ashamed

by Welcome Detweiler

The gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation, and it is not something to be ashamed of.

Duration: 10:26

Scripture: Isaiah 53:6, Matthew 6:33, Romans 1:16, 1 Corinthians 15:1-2

Topics: "The Gospel", "Salvation"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes that ignorance cannot be an excuse for rejecting the gospel message. The cost of the gospel was the life of the sinless Son of God, and therefore, it should not be taken lightly. The preacher urges the listeners to stand beneath the shadows of the cross and truly understand the sacrifice that was made for them. The gospel of Christ is offered freely to all who believe, regardless of their poverty or simplicity. The power of the gospel has the ability to transform lives and bring salvation to those who have a desire to be saved.

Transcript

I am reading a very familiar text found in the Epistles of the Romans, chapter 1 and verse 16. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. The central theme of this text is the gospel of Christ.

To understand this text, we must be clear as to the definition of the term, the gospel of Christ. If I should resort to the opinions of men to receive a definition for the gospel of Christ, I think I would get a variety of replies that would put Heinz's 57 varieties in the dark. Even if I limited the answers to educated men, who have studied religion for many years, I would still get a wide variety of opposing definitions.

So it seems more reasonable that I should confine my search for a definition of the gospel to God's infallible word. From the Bible, I learn that it is definitely not a religious dogma, nor is it a code of ethics. The Bible is its own dictionary, and in 1 Corinthians 15, we have a clear and unmistakable definition of the gospel of Christ.

Listen to these verses. I declare unto you the gospel, which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand, by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you, first of all, that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he arose again the third day according to the scriptures.

This is God's clear definition of the gospel, and any definition that any man may coin that will conflict with this is false. The gospel is a comprehensive term, and may include many other things that are not mentioned in this scriptural definition, but at least we can say the axis of the gospel is the death, the burial, and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Without these, there could be no gospel.

The gospel of Christ is based upon the inspired, unchangeable, and eternal word of God. It is without fault or flaw. It is positive, permanent, and powerful.

The gospel message has changed individuals, cities, nations, continents, and best of all, it has redeemed and released souls from the slavery of sin. The gospel of Christ is the only gospel that represents and produces power. Could I be ashamed of a gospel, a power that can lift a human derelict steeped in sin's cruel slavery, and transform him into a child of God, completely changing his appetites and his ambitions and his whole manner of life? The gospel of Christ has done all this and more.

This effect has been produced thousands of times in the past and stands ready to do it again to anyone who has a desire to be saved. Paul, the writer of this text, could speak from his own experience, and he could say, I was a zealous, sincere representative of the empty forms and ceremonies of religion, depending on my religion to give me an accepted standing before a holy God. But one day the mighty, amazing power of the gospel of Christ arrested me on the road to Damascus and caused me to abhor and forsake all my cherished religion in order to procure peace with God.

And I got it through the death, the burial, and the resurrection of Christ. If the power of the gospel could be measured, we could well say it took more power to rescue a self-righteous Saul of Tarsus than to save a Mary Magdalene who represented an open, deep-dyed sinner. Some years ago, an active deacon in a certain church found out that he was not saved, and I need hardly tell you that he soon trusted the Savior after he saw his unsafe condition.

Shortly after his conversion, he heard a converted drunkard giving his testimony, and everyone who listened said, Wasn't that a wonderful testimony of the power of the gospel? The newly converted deacon replied, Yes, it was, but I am still inclined to believe that when God awakens and saves an active deacon in a church, that's even more wonderful. Why should Paul be ashamed of the gospel of Christ when he himself experienced such a humanly impossible deliverance? Little wonder that we hear him saying in Galatians 6.14, But God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. The gospel of Christ that Paul preached was centered on the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

To the Corinthians he wrote, For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but to us which are saved it is the power of God unto salvation. I pause to remind you that if you think lightly of the preaching of the cross, you are one of those who will perish in a lost eternity. And I care not whether you occupy the pulpit or the pew.

The preaching of the cross, the gospel of Christ, is the only gospel that represents power. All else are harmless, powerless, dead inventions that may appeal to the intellect but fail to reach the heart. In presenting the gospel of Christ we present it boldly, without any hesitancy, not hoping that it may produce power, but being absolutely certain that it will.

Not merely in some cases, but in every case. A guaranteed product, if you please. Who could be ashamed of a guaranteed product, especially when God does the guaranteeing? I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation.

To whom? The answer? To everyone that believeth. The gospel of Christ actually meets you in the form of a challenge. The gospel of Christ claims to know no bounds, no exceptions.

And while you may say, I know it wouldn't work in my case, that is sufficient proof that you have never tried it. For the record stands undaunted, no one has ever come to Christ for salvation who has not received power to become a child of God. God invites you to accept His challenge.

He would like to prove to you that what He has done for others, He guarantees to do for you. There are many poor, sin-sick sinners who have a desire to be saved, but who are not saved because they have never given God a chance. He will never display His power in your life unless you commit yourself to Him and trust His blessed Son as your Savior.

The power of the gospel is offered only to everyone that believeth. The gospel of Christ is free, so that poverty can be no excuse. The gospel of Christ is simple, so that even a child can grasp the simple truth of Christ's substitutionary sacrifice.

Listen to the simplicity of this text. All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Ignorance can be no excuse. You may search heaven and earth, but you will not find a reasonable excuse to reject the gospel message. Before it could be offered to you, it involved a great cost, the very life of the spotless Son of God.

Since such a cost was involved, surely you do not want to miss it. I ask you to stand beneath the shadows of the cross and gaze into the face of the only one who could save you. Then open your heart and receive him by faith as your own personal Savior and Lord.

The fact that Christ loved you enough to die for you in such a cruel manner ought to melt your heart. For as you look up into his face, you can almost hear him saying the words of the hymn that the choir was singing a few minutes ago, I gave my life for thee, my precious blood I shed that thou might'st ransom be, and quicken from the dead. I gave, I gave my life for thee, what hast thou given for me.

My Father's house of light, my glory-circled throne, I left for earthly night, for wandering sad and lone. I left, I left it all for thee, hast thou left aught for me. I suffered much for thee, more than thy tongue can tell, of bitterest agony to rescue thee from hell.

I have borne, I have borne it all for thee, what hast thou borne for me. And I have brought to thee down from my home above salvation full and free, my pardon and my love. I bring, I bring rich gifts to thee, what hast thou brought to me.

My weary, sin-sick listener, I beseech you to receive this loving Savior this very moment. Then you too can rejoice in the knowledge of sins forgiven, and you will be able to say, I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for I have proved that it is the power of God unto salvation. Our gracious Father, now we ask thy blessing to rest upon thy precious word.

Grant that through it some precious soul may trust the Savior. We ask in the Lord Jesus' precious and worthy name. Amen.

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