

## **The Gospel of God (Part 3) "I Am Not Ashamed"**

Romans 1:16-17

Read Romans 1:16-17

1. According to the world, Christianity is something to be ashamed of. People look down their noses at Christians, thinking them as less than sophisticated. They think, "Perhaps Christians just can't understand the concept of evolution." "Christians always have their heads in the clouds." "They are so heavenly minded that they are no earthly good." "They are judgmental hypocrites." "They don't know how to have fun." "Christians are 'party poopers.'" Have you ever had insults such as these leveled against you? If so, what specifically did they say and do? If not, out of all the Christians in the world, what makes you exempt from such treatment?
  
2. When people hurl insults at you for being a Christian, drag God's name through the mud, and make fun of other believers, how does it make you feel? Be honest! Are you embarrassed? Angry? Sad?
  
3. Insults were nothing new to the apostle Paul. But he knew that these insults were not against him, but against the message that he preached. In Paul's world, the gospel was a shameful and a foolish message. Read 1 Corinthians 1:18-25. What is "foolishness" to "those who are perishing?" What is it to "us who are being saved?" What was it to the Jews? How should this encourage you when a non-believer rejects the gospel?

4. Sometimes we may pretend not to be ashamed on the outside, but on the inside we are very embarrassed. Paul was not like the little boy who refuses to admit that he is embarrassed, even though his face is flushed and he has tears running down his face. Paul explains in Romans 1:16-17 why he is not ashamed of the gospel. Before we look at its component parts, summarize in your own words Paul's reason(s) for not being ashamed of the gospel.

5. In verse 16, Paul explains that he is not ashamed of the gospel because of what it unleashes. In four words, what does the gospel unleash?

6. The Greek word that Paul used, which is translated in English "power," is *dunamis*. Our word "dynamite" also comes from this root. The Gospel is powerful. In what sense could it be said that the gospel is powerful? Refer to verses such as 2 Corinthians 6:17.

7. The gospel is the only thing that has the power to change the individual. Man cannot change himself from being a hopeless sinner deserving of hell, no matter how hard he tries. The Lord said through Jeremiah, "*Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots? Then can you also do good who are accustomed to do evil*" (Jer. 13:23). Man desperately needs to



10. Perhaps some people are afraid to share the gospel because they are afraid it will not work. Like a used car salesman, they are somewhat embarrassed by their product. Now that you know that the gospel is God's power, what confidence can you derive from its saving ability?
11. The gospel is not powerful just for being powerful sake, it has a purpose. From verse 16, what is the gospel's powerful purpose?
12. The term salvation can refer to three different tenses in the believer's life -past, present, and future. At the moment of salvation, the term "justification" is used. If you are a believer, this describes the past tense aspect of salvation. What is the biblical term used to describe the present aspect of salvation in your life? What is the biblical term used to describe the future aspect of salvation?
13. Is the gospel's saving power limited to any people group or social class? How do you know this? How should this affect your evangelism?

14. In verse 17, Paul says that he is not ashamed of the gospel because of what it is. He basically gives the entire gospel in a nutshell here. What does the word "it" refer to at the beginning of 17? What does "it" reveal?

15. Do some research in a Study Bible, Bible Dictionary, or commentary and discuss the meaning of the following terms from verse 17. There may be some disagreement among writers as to what these terms mean. Which view do you take and why do you take it? ("I take his view because he is my pastor" is not a legitimate answer):

*"The Righteousness of God"*

*"From faith to faith"*

16. Sure Paul *said* he was not ashamed of the gospel and gave a few reasons why, but I wonder if he really lived this out practically. What evidence do we have from the rest of Scripture which proves how unashamed Paul was of this message. Take some time on this question and refer to passages such as 2 Corinthians 4:7-14. Name some ways that you can apply this to your work for Christ today? How can you practically live out your boldness?

So we have seen that Paul was not ashamed of the gospel, and he was not ashamed of it for good reasons. He was not ashamed because of what it does and what it is. It is powerful, it saves, and it saves all those who believe. It reveals the way of salvation which is based on the righteousness of God. It reveals the means of salvation which is faith. When we really believe what the gospel is and what it does, we will be able to stand with Paul and say, "I am not ashamed."

If you are still under the category of being a person who thinks that the gospel is foolishness, know too that you fall under the category of being among "those who are perishing" (1 Corinthians 1:18). Learn that nothing has the power to give you abundant and eternal life. You cannot attain it by legalism, you cannot purchase it with money, you cannot be born into it, and you cannot avoid dealing with it by filling your life up with temporary sinful pleasures. The gospel is the only thing that works, and it is very powerful. It has the power to restore you to being the creature God created you to be: one who glorifies Him and enjoys Him forever.