

Why Should You Not be Ashamed of the Gospel

Intro:

1. Why do you suppose so few of us witness like we should?
 - a. Is it because you feel you would be stereotyped as a religious fanatic?
 - b. Is it because you are afraid that your witness wouldn't be received - it might be rejected?
2. You feel like standing up with Peter & proclaiming, **Even if all fall away, I will not . . . ! (Mk 14:29)**
3. Yet, like Peter, you end up denying the Lord time & again.
4. Are you so ashamed of the Lord that you are reluctant to introduce Him to those you know?

Romans 1:15-17

5. In verse 16 & 17 there are 4 reasons why you don't have to be ashamed of the gospel!

I. Because It is the Gospel of Righteousness - v17

A. **Gospel** (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον) = the "Good News".

1. **ILL: Courier bringing the victory announcement to the king.**
2. Paul defines what the Christian gospel is.
 - a. **1 Cor 15:1-4 - Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day.**
 - b. So - the gospel is the story of the death, burial & resurrection of the Lord!
 - c. **Rom 5:21 says that eternal life comes through Jesus Christ because only He is the way & the truth & the life. No one comes to the Father except through Him - Jn 14:6.**

B. **Righteousness** (δικαιοσύνη) = justification, to be considered not guilty, to cause to be in a right relationship.

1. In ancient times, the gods were impersonal & had to be appeased to win their favor.
2. Justification was determined by how good you lived. When you goofed, you made a sacrifice to be put back in good standing.
3. Righteousness doesn't mean to find reasons to prove you are good.
4. Righteousness doesn't mean God makes you a good person.
5. Righteousness, here, means God treats you as though you were never a sinner!
6. Because of what Lord Jesus did on the cross, you have the opportunity to be considered by God as His child - you can have a loving father-child relationship.

II. Because It's the Power of God - v16

A. Have you ever dreamed that you had the miraculous gift the apostles had to perform miracles?

1. **ILL: Michael's attempt to raise the dead.**
2. God has chosen not to perform these supernatural events routinely today like He did in the first century.

B. **Power** (δύναμις) = is where we get our word "dynamite". It's a mighty, unconquerable force.

1. The gospel has the power, in & of itself, to persuade, to convict & to convert.
2. If you dare to proclaim His gospel to your lost & dying family, friends & acquaintances - you will reap the joy of using the power of God!

III. Because It's for Salvation - v16

- A. **Salvation** (σωτηρία) = deliverance from danger, to be rescued.
- B. What are you saved from? The NT uses this word these ways.
1. You are saved from danger. **ILL: Jesus stills the storm.** (Matt 8:23-27).
 2. You are saved from this wicked world. **Acts 2:40 - Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.**
 3. You are saved from being lost. The Lord said, **For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.** - Lk 19:10.
 4. You are saved from sin. The angel came to Joseph & said, **She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.** - Matt 1:21.
 5. You are saved from the wrath of God.
 - a. There is wrath for those who choose to remain separated from God.
 - b. **II Thess 1:7-8 - the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.**

IV. Because It's for Everyone Who has Faith - v16-17

- A. It's for everyone! Salvation is available to everyone regardless of race, background, appearance or citizenship.
- B. Who has faith. What's faith?
1. In **II Thess 1:4** it means loyalty.
 2. In **I Cor 15:17** it is a conviction that something is true.
 3. In **II Cor 13:5** it is the Christian way.
 4. In **II Cor 5:7** it is an indestructible hope.
 5. It's an absolute trust - You can bet your life that there is a God who cares for you like a Father cares for his child!
- C. Faith progressing in believers in stages or degrees.
1. **Receptivity** - "I'm willing to listen."
 2. **Mental Assent** - "What you say is true."
 3. **Total Surrender** - **I have been bought with a price & am no longer my own** - I Cor 6:19-20.

If you've been a bit cowardly with your witness lately, remember that you're cheating yourself of using the power of God. People will respond to the wonderful message of the death, burial & resurrection of our Lord!

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