

NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL

ROMANS 1:16 • TV-037A

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By

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Romans 1:16

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”

The Lord said to His disciples; *“Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. He that believeth not shall be damned.”*

The apostle Paul in the book of **1 Corinthians chapter 15** said: *“Brethren; I declare unto you the Gospel by which you’re saved, which you believe, wherein you stand. It’s the Gospel that I preached unto you.”*

And then he said; *“Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel.”* This is what I intend to do on this telecast and next week’s telecast. I’m going to bring two messages on the Gospel.

Today’s message will be on the subject: **“I’M NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL,”** and next week I’m going to speak on the subject: **“THE CREDENTIALS OF GOSPEL PREACHING.”**

Now, if I had two messages that I could preach to the whole world they would be these two messages: **“I’M NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL and THE CREDENTIALS OF GOSPEL PREACHING.”**

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Now I want you to listen to this message today and then listen again at the same time next week and hear the second message from **Romans chapter 1:1-6** on the: **“CREDENTIALS OF GOSPEL PREACHING.”**

Now, my text today is **verse 16 of Romans chapter 1**. Will you take your Bibles and follow along with me, now **Romans 1:16**: *“For I’m not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek or to the Gentile.”*

Now the apostle Paul knew from personal experience the opposition which the true Gospel experienced, the Gospel of substitution. The Gospel of redeeming grace encountered strong, severe opposition, wherever it was preached.

The Gospel of the crucified Christ was everywhere spoken against. Listen to what the Scripture says; *“To the Jew, (the religious leaders); it was a stumbling block. To the Gentile, (the pagan Gentile) it was sheer nonsense; it was foolishness.” “But to those who were being saved, the Gospel, the true Gospel, was the power of God unto salvation.”*

The Gospel of the crucified, risen, Redeemer, met with contempt, it met with ridicule, and it met with persecution. In fact, Paul called it in **Galatians 5:11**; *“the offense of the cross.”*

Why is the cross offensive? Why is the true Gospel offensive to the natural man? Why does he meet it with contempt and ridicule and persecution? Why are men ashamed of the Gospel of a crucified substitute?

Well, here are four reasons. Now you look at these carefully. I’ve weighed these over the years and I find that these are the four areas where we meet with the most opposition and the most contempt from natural men.

First of all: The Gospel addresses all men everywhere as sinners, all men!

I’m talking about in the pulpit and in the pew. I’m talking about in the church and in the world. I’m talking about the old and the young. I’m talking about the intellectual. I’m talking about those who are not intellectual.

I’m talking about the black man, the white man, the European, the American; the Gospel addresses all men everywhere as sinners. And this offends man’s dignity. *“There is none good, no not one. There’s none that seeketh after God. They’re all together become unprofitable. There is none righteous, no not one. The Lord God looked down from heaven upon the children of men to see if there was any that did do good.”* He found they’re altogether gone aside.

The Scripture tells us in **Romans chapter 5** that *“Christ died for the ungodly.”* Men do not consider themselves to be ungodly. In **Romans chapter 5, verse 8** it says; *“While we were yet sinners Christ died for us.”*

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Men do not label themselves sinners. They label other people sinners but not themselves. The Scripture in **Romans 5:10** says; *“When we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son,”* ungodly, sinners and enemies.

And Paul said in **1 Timothy 1:15**; *“This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, sinners.”* And Christ Himself said, *“He came to seek and to save the lost.”*

A man will never be found till he is lost. A man will never be clothed till he’s stripped. A man will never be raised until he’s slain. A man will never be brought to God until first of all he is slain by the law of God. And this offends man’s dignity.

The Gospel, the true Gospel, the Gospel of God’s redeeming grace, the Gospel of Christ’s merciful, gracious, substitutionary work, addresses you, and you, and me, as sinners. And this is hard to take; it offends man’s dignity.

Now I’ll show you the second area where we meet with contempt and persecution, where the Gospel encounters rejection, and that is the true Gospel comes to man as a revelation, and it offends man’s wisdom.

What does the Scripture say? Now look at the Word of God. Turn if you will to **1 Corinthians 2:9**; it declares: *“Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered the heart of man the things that God has prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by the Spirit.”* The Gospel comes as a revelation. It is not understood by the natural mind. *“The natural mind is enmity against God. It is not subject to the law of God and neither indeed can be.”*

When Peter gave that great confession, *“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God;”* our Lord said; *“Peter, flesh and blood did not reveal that to you but my Father which is in heaven revealed that to you.”* God hath revealed; that’s how the Gospel comes. It does not come by education; it comes by revelation.

Now, if we want to learn the things of the material world, if we want to learn the things of the physical world, or of the universe, you take a book and you apply your mind to it, you study it. That’s how you come to know these things.

But when you open the Bible you are shut up to the revelation of the Holy Spirit. God wrote it; God must teach it. *“It’s spiritually discerned.”* That’s what the Scripture says. The reason, *“the natural man receiveth not the things of God is because they’re spiritually discerned, (that is) spiritually understood.”* And men are not spiritually alive; *“They are dead in trespasses and sin.”*

We preach that the Gospel comes as a revelation; that’s what the new birth is. That’s what Christ said to Nicodemus, *“I have told you earthly things and you don’t believe? How would you believe if I told you heavenly things?”*

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“How would you understand heavenly things? If you don’t understand earthly things, how would you comprehend heavenly things?” Except a man is born again he cannot see (discern, understand) the kingdom of God.

The Bible has to be taught by its author, the Holy Spirit. *“And when He is come, the Spirit of truth; (this is what the Master said talking to the disciples) he said, “I go away but I won’t leave you comfortless.”*

“The Holy Spirit will come to you and He will take the things of mine and show them to you. He will not speak of Himself. He will not magnify His office. He will not exalt Himself; He will glorify me. He will take the things of mine and show them unto you.”

It has to come by revelation. And that’s a place where men object to this true Gospel. They’re dependent upon God and not upon their natural minds. This offends their natural wisdom.

Now the third area; here’s where we get in trouble. The Gospel of substitution offends man’s pride.

Now you give a man something to do, anything, you give him something to do, you give him a pilgrimage to take to a Holy Land, let him crawl on broken glass so many miles to get to some religious mecca.

Give him some works of charity, give him something to do, reformation, turning over a new leaf, joining the church, being baptized, taking the Sacrament, doing works of charity; give him something to do to earn his salvation, to earn his way into heaven, and he will be content, he will be content.

But his pride will not permit him to come to the cross as an empty-handed beggar, crying with Toplady:

**“In my hands no price I bring
Simply to the cross of Jesus Christ I cling.”**

His pride won’t let him do that. And when we preach salvation by the death of a substitute, by the sacrifice of the Son of God, as a free gift of God’s grace, given to all men everywhere, who can come empty-handed; when we preach it that way it’s offensive to man’s pride.

He’d rather stand with the Publican in the temple who said; “God I thank you I’m not like other men. I’m a religious person. I tithed, I fast, I give alms to the poor; I do all these things. I’m not even like this publican.”

That’s where man had rather stand. And that’s where he will stand. Even at the Judgment our Lord said; “Many will say unto me in that day, Lord we preached in your name and we cast out devils in your name. And we performed many wonderful works in your name. Therefore, we

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demand, we expect to be taken into heaven, on the basis of what we did for you.” But He replied, *“I never knew you.”* Salvation is by grace. Salvation is a gift. Salvation is based on the merits of another.

Salvation comes not through work; *“By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified.”* That’s what the Scripture says, *“By works of righteousness which we’ve done?”* No sir, not by works of righteousness, but according to His free grace, and men will not take that. It offends their pride.

They will not stand with the Publican in the temple who smote upon his breast and cried in anguish and with a broken heart; *“God be merciful to me the sinner.”*

They will not stand with the Publican in the temple and own their sinner-hood nor will they take their place at the feet of Christ with the harlot weeping tears of repentance and begging for mercy and for grace. Salvation is the gift of God given to empty-handed sinners and that offends man’s pride. And it comes by the sacrifice and the merit of Jesus Christ our substitute.

Now the fourth area: This is what’s offensive; Paul said, *“The offense of the cross”*

And this is where it’s offensive; addressing all men everywhere as sinners offends man’s dignity.

And to tell a man that salvation and knowledge of God’s Word comes by revelation offends his wisdom. And to tell him that he’s shut up to the mercy of God, as an empty-handed beggar he comes to Christ, having nothing, knowing nothing, can produce nothing; it all comes as a gift purchased by the death of God’s Son. That offends his pride.

But now; here’s the fourth area: When we preach the Gospel of sovereign grace, when we preach the Gospel of God almighty’s, sovereign grace; it offends man’s concept of the freedom of his will.

He continually cries, *“We be free, we be free.”* That’s what the Pharisee said when Christ came, *“We be free.”* But did you know that God says the opposite? God says; *“It’s not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth but of God that showeth mercy.”*

God says; *“I will be merciful to whom I will be merciful. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious.”* The Scripture says; *“We’re born not of blood, not of the will of the flesh, not of the will of man, but we’re born of God.”*

Jonah cried in **Jonah 2:9**; *“Salvation’s of the Lord.”* And my friends; we are as helpless and hopeless as Jonah was in the belly of that fish. Salvation, deliverance, is of the Lord.

If He leaves us where we are we perish. If He comes to us in mercy, we live. That is where the Gospel is offensive. It’s the Gospel of God’s sovereign grace.

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Now then, Paul declares in our text, **Romans 1:16**: *“I’m not ashamed of this Gospel of Christ.”* Evidentially, evidentially there’s a danger of even those who trust the Lord, who believe the Gospel, even those who know Christ.

Evidentially there is a possibility of our yielding to the pressure of the religious world and finding ourselves ashamed of the Gospel. I know this is true. And you say, “I know this is true. The people I work with just don’t believe in Him. The people to whom I preach they just might not receive it and so I just preach something else.”

Now Paul said to Timothy; he warned Timothy, he warned Timothy in **2 Timothy 1:8**; he said: *“Timothy; don’t be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord.”*

And then in **2 Timothy 1:12** he restates his position; he says: “For this cause, because I preach the Gospel, because I kept back nothing profitable unto you, because I didn’t refrain from declaring unto you the whole counsel of God; I suffer these things, *“nevertheless, I am not ashamed, I know whom I have believed.”*

“I’m not ashamed of covenant mercies. I’m not ashamed to declare what the Scripture says about man’s total, utter ruin, by the fall. I’m not ashamed to declare man’s utter inability. Salvation is by revelation.”

“I’m not ashamed to declare that God almighty has a people to whom He gave to His Son. I’m not ashamed to declare that Christ is an effectual substitute. He’s an effectual Redeemer.”

“He died for His people. His blood is effectual to putting away of all our sin, that He was buried and rose again. He is at the right hand of God as our Mediator and He’s coming back again to raise the dead.”

And our hope, health, strength, refuge, and redemption are in Jesus Christ. I am not ashamed. He said, *“For this cause I suffer these things but I am not ashamed.”* He was beaten, he was stoned, he was shipwrecked, he was cast into prison, and finally he was martyred because he dared to preach the Gospel, the Gospel of grace.

He said, “If I please men I’m not the servant of Jesus Christ. But I will die a servant of Jesus Christ.” He complimented on Onesiphorus over there in **2 Timothy 1:16** in this same chapter that I’ve been quoting from; he said, *“Timothy, don’t you be ashamed of the Gospel.”* He said, “I’ve suffered a lot for the Gospel but I’m not ashamed.” And then he said about Onesiphorus; he said: *“God grant mercy to Onesiphorus; he was not ashamed.”*

And then our Lord warns us. Listen to **Mark chapter 8:38**; the Master is speaking here and He says; *“Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, (not of the legends, traditions, and customs of religion) but whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when He comes in the glory of the Holy angels:*

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**“Ashamed of Jesus, yes I may
When I’ve no sin to wash away
No fear to quail, no soul to save
Till then nor is my boasting vain
Till then I’ll boast a Saviour slain
And oh may this my glory be
That He is not ashamed of me.”**

In **verses 17, 18, 19, and 20 of Romans 1** Paul gives four reasons why he’s not ashamed of the Gospel, four reasons. Now listen to them carefully, he says; “I’m not ashamed of the Gospel, the Gospel of revelation, the Gospel of substitution, the Gospel of sovereign grace, and the Gospel of God almighty’s mercies in Christ.”

Here’s the first reason: I’m not ashamed of the Gospel because; *“It is the power of God unto salvation.”*

Now the church is not the power of God unto salvation; the Gospel is. Baptism, the ordinances, the sacraments, the Lord’s Table; these are not the power of God unto salvation. The law is not the power of God unto salvation; the Gospel is. *“The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation.”*

Now, when we talk about the Gospel *“being the power of God unto salvation”* we are speaking of two things and this is vital; this is foundation truth. This is that which if you do not know it you’ve missed the Gospel. *“It’s the power of God unto salvation.”*

And when we talk about, *“the Gospel being the power of God unto salvation”* we’re talking about two things; it’s the power toward God and it’s the power toward men.

Now, when we say the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation (the power or means toward God); we’re saying this, that the Gospel of Christ is the means by which the attributes of God are glorified and enable God to be just and justify the ungodly, enable God to be Saviour and King, Redeemer, and Judge.

Now my friends; God is holy. God almighty is holy and His holiness must be honored. His holiness must be glorified. He cannot just overlook sin any more than a judge down in the courtroom can overlook crime.

Just because he feels sorry for the criminal, because he feels sorry for the guilty; he can’t just erase sin or erase crime. The Scripture says; *“Every transgression shall receive a just recompense of reward.”*

And God is holy. And God almighty must punish sin. God is just. These are the attributes of God. He is sovereign, He is holy, He is merciful, He is love, He is just, and He is righteous. These are all of His attributes.

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And the Gospel enables Him to be a Saviour and at the same time honor each attribute and to give expression to each attribute. God is holy. His law is holy. And in order for Him to save us that law has to be honored.

Christ said, *“I didn’t come to destroy the law. (I didn’t come to whittle the law down. I didn’t come to take away some of the strength of the law to enable you to keep it) I came to fulfill it.”* That’s what He did.

He fulfilled the law and He honored the law. God’s just. He cannot forgive nor justify us at the expense of His justice. And so, *“the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation”* in that it is the means and the power that enables almighty God to occupy a throne of justice and a throne of grace, to occupy a throne of righteousness and a throne of love.

It enables a holy God to occupy a throne of holiness and at the same time a throne of forgiveness and pardon because our sins were laid on Christ. *“By His stripes we were healed.”* Do you see that? *“It’s the power of God unto salvation.”*

It’s not only power toward God but it’s the power toward men. It’s that which disarms the sinner. It’s that which awakens the sinner. It’s that which gives eyes to the blind. It’s that which gives ears to the deaf. It’s that which gives life to the dead.

That’s what the Gospel is. It’s the seed. That is what over here in **1 Peter chapter 1:23** he says; *“We’re born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible seed, by the Word of God that liveth forever.”*

And James says in **chapter 1:18**: *“Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth.”* The Gospel which we preach of Christ’s merit, of Christ’s righteousness, of Christ’s death, and Christ’s substitutionary work enables God almighty to be just and pardon your sins.

It enables God to be holy and forgive your iniquity because Christ took your place, honored the law and died under the judgment and wrath of a holy God.

Now the second reason why Paul said he wasn’t ashamed of the Gospel; *“For therein is the righteousness of God revealed”*

That’s what I’ve been talking about. The righteousness of God is not revealed in the law; it’s revealed in the Gospel. The righteousness of God is not revealed in church ceremonies; it’s revealed in the Gospel.

The greatness of God is revealed in creation. The power of God’s revealed in providence. The love of God is revealed in incarnation: *“For God so loved the world that He gave His Son.”* The righteousness of God is revealed on the cross.

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Job said, *“How can man be just with God? How can he be clean that’s born of a woman? Behold the moon; it shineth not. The stars are not clean in His sight. How much more abominable is man that drinks iniquity like the water.”*

I’ll tell you how God almighty can justify a sinner and remain just; that is that Christ takes that sinner’s place. *“Christ who knew no sin, who had no sin; takes our place and bears our sins.”*

And there in that cross; take a look at the perfect life of Christ. Take a look at the death of Christ and there you see the righteousness of God, the righteousness of God revealed.

Colossians chapter 1:21 says: *“And you that were at one time alienated, enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death to present you holy.”*

He’s talking about you and me, *“Holy and unblameable in His sight.”* We’re so careful to make sure that we’ve got a good reputation in the sight of men but in Christ we have a perfect holiness in His sight. We are unblameable in His sight.”

Now the third reason: Paul said, *“I’m not ashamed of the Gospel because it’s the power of God unto salvation”* I’m not ashamed of the Gospel because in that cross is the righteousness of God revealed. And He says, in that cross is the wrath of God revealed too.

Now I know the wrath of God against sin is revealed in the fall of Adam: *“Death came upon all men.”* He was shut out of the Garden. I know the wrath of God is revealed in the flood when the whole world was covered with water.

I know the wrath of God is revealed with the fires of Sodom and Gomorrah. I know the wrath of God is revealed in the destruction of Jerusalem. But I don’t know of any place where the wrath of God against sin is more clearly seen than in the death of His Son. *“God spared not His own Son.”*

And Christ bore not His sins, but my sins. He was dying under the wrath of God because of imputed sin, not His own, but the sins of another. *“He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him.”*

Will God punish sin? Go to the cross and you’ll find out. You don’t have to go to the Garden or Sodom and Gomorrah or Jerusalem; go to the cross. *“God spared not His own Son.”*

And then in closing: I’m not ashamed of the Gospel because in the Gospel that which may be known of God is revealed.

One of the apostles said to the Master one day: *“Show us the Father.”* And our Master said; *“Phillip have I been with you so long and you don’t know me? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.”*

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I'm not ashamed of the Gospel because it reveals the Father. It reveals His love and grace, His righteousness and mercy, His holiness, and His justice. It's all seen in the Gospel, in the cross!