

The Book of Romans

Not Ashamed of the Gospel

Romans 1:16-17 (Part 1)

The Link to verse 15

The reason Paul is eager to preach the gospel (v. 15) is that he is not ashamed of the gospel (v. 16). The preaching of the gospel is not just for unbelievers, but also has a purpose for believers as we shall see.

Paul Shamed *BECAUSE* of the Gospel but Not Ashamed *OF* the Gospel

Romans 1:16

Paul, as His Lord, was “shamed” because of the gospel in the sense that he was ridiculed, taunted, and made to look like a fool. He suffered greatly for the gospel’s sake.

The Example of Jesus

What did Jesus do when He was “shamed” by those who did not believe? Jesus despised the shame (Heb. 12:2). When shame tempted Him to abandon a clear and obedient witness, He despised it and would not yield or give in to it. His friends abandoned Him in fear and shame. He was stripped naked to shame Him. His reputation was put to shame in slander, but He set His heart on the joy of the future where very soon He would sit down at the right hand of the throne of God. Though He was being shamed, Jesus was not ashamed of His God and Father! When Jesus was tempted to be ashamed, he fixed His heart on the joy set before Him – the assured triumph of His death and resurrection and the joyful salvation of sinners for the glory of God.

How do you overcome feelings of shame when you are “shamed” for believing and heralding the gospel?

ANS: Ponder the power of the gospel to bring forgiven sinners to final and everlasting joy. Only the gospel of Jesus Christ can do this. Buddhism, Hinduism, or Islam do not have a Savior who can solve the problem of separation from a holy God because of sin, and offer sinners true hope by grace through faith and not works. The gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ alone is the power of God unto salvation that can save sinners and bring them safely into the presence of God (Acts 4:12).

There is temptation to be ashamed of the Gospel.

- The world thinks that the Gospel is foolishness. *1 Corinthians 1:18-32*
- Christ calls us to turn our backs on what the world holds as valuable to follow Him. *Philippians 3:4b-11*

We should not be ashamed of the Gospel because:

- It is the POWER OF GOD *Exodus 9:13-16, Ephesians 2:1-10, 1 Peter 1:5, Romans 6*
- For the SALVATION OF EVERYONE who believes: *Romans 3:22,4:11, 10:4, 11, Ephesians 2:11-18*

The gospel brings believers to the salvation of eternal safety and ever-increasing joy in the presence of a holy and glorious God. It is this future oriented focus of ultimate triumph that causes us to despise any shame (2 Thess. 2:13-14 – note the salvation referred to is not conversion that leads to sanctification, but rather salvation comes through sanctification. Thus, the salvation comes later. In this context it is that future triumph. See also Heb. 9:28; 1 Peter 1:5; Rom. 5:9,10; Rom. 13:11).

Ongoing belief is the condition of this salvation. The tense of the verb “believes” signifies ongoing action (i.e. to everyone who is believing). See also 1 Cor. 15:1-2. Faith that does not persevere is a vain or empty faith. James calls it dead (James 2:17, 26).

Let us feed our faith day by day with the promises of the triumphant gospel!

First for the Jew, and also for the Gentile

One of the underlying themes in the book of Romans is the one people of God. It is for “everyone who believes.” Scripture unfolds an eternal singleness of purpose in God to save His people (Jew and Gentile) in and through Jesus Christ. There is:

- **One saving purpose** (Eph. 1:9-12, 3:11)
 - Our sovereign God purposed in Himself the salvation of His people through the redemptive work of Christ.
- **One Redeemer** (John 14:6; 1 Tim. 2:5; Acts 4:12, 10:43)
 - Jesus Christ alone redeems and reconciles us to God.
- **One Covenant** (Heb. 13:20-21; Matt. 26:28; Heb. 8:6, 8, 13, 9:15, 12:24)
 - The New Covenant in Christ was purposed of God in eternity, prefigured in history, accomplished by Christ in time, and is the source for continued blessings for God’s people forever. Saying “one covenant” is not to say there were no other covenants but that this is where they all find their ultimate meaning and fulfillment.
- **One people** (John 10:16; 11:52; Eph. 2:13-19)
 - There is but one people of God, justified exclusively by grace through faith. Jews and Gentiles are saved the same way (Rom. 3:29-30; 10:12-13). Gentiles are brought in as full fellow heirs of all the promises of God (Eph. 2:12-19; 3:4-6).

The gospel was the fulfillment of the promises made to Abraham’s seed. This is the hope and glory of Israel (Isa. 45:17, 25). The New Covenant in Christ was their promised glory – their day of redemption. However, because of the worth of Christ, Gentiles, too, have become partakers of Israel’s spiritual blessings (Isa. 49:6; Rom. 15:27; 9:23-24).

In Christ we are neither ‘Jew’ nor ‘Gentile’ but ‘Christian’ – a ‘new humanity’ (Gal. 3:28-29).