



World Christian Fellowship

www.wcflondon.com
wcflondon@gmail.com

Romans 21 Not Ashamed of the Gospel

Romans 1:16-17, *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. ¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

Paul has concluded his opening statement, which has two parts.

- Part one has to do with the gospel of God, the content of the gospel.
- Part two has to do with Paul's own personal representation of that gospel.

Romans 1:1-7 is the first part.

Romans 1:8-15 is the second part.

Apostle Paul has discussed his message.

He also has discussed himself as the messenger.

The whole epistle is really an expansion of Romans 1:16-17.

Paul has been endeavoring to contact his audience. He has been endeavoring to make a connection, to get the people's attention.

Having got their attention, he establishes his thesis.

Today if you have taken the "gospel of God" and go to the streets. Sing, pray, and shout your faith and love to all who will listen:

Are you ashamed to do this?

What makes someone feel of shame?

Some examples.

A boy brags to his friends that he can outrun everyone and then h loses the running race.

Someone you do not like their family member in prison, and you made a public spectacle of that person and suddenly find your own family member is been arrested for misappropriation of funds.

Maybe you are the cool person, and you were invited for a state dinner and you took some professional advice to outdo everyone in that dinner and find out you are the odd one out there and made a fool of yourself before everyone.

Maybe you are in a drama and you are playing a crucial role which is only for 2 minutes then it comes in the climax and yet you fail to deliver that message at the right time.

Maybe you preached about morality so much whereas you yourself has been caught out and made known to everyone.

You feel so ashamed.

What would keep you from being embarrassed or ashamed in situations like that?

Paul is not ashamed of the gospel of Christ.

All the learned religionists, all the philosophers of Rome do not intimidate Paul.

- They did not intimidate him in Athens.
- They did not intimidate him in Corinth.
- They did not intimidate him in Ephesus.
- They did not even intimidate him in Jerusalem.

They are not about to intimidate him here.

- He is proud of the gospel.
- He is overjoyed at the privilege of proclamation.
- He is utterly and eager to preach Jesus Christ.

Even though it is a stumbling block to the Jew, and foolishness to the Gentile, the gospel is still the power of God unto salvation to all that believe, and Paul is not hesitant to preach it.

- He has been imprisoned in Philippi.
- He has been chased out of Thessalonica.
- He has been smuggled from Berea.
- He was laughed at in Athens.
- He was a fool in Corinth.
- He was nothing but an irritant and sore spot in Jerusalem.
- He was stoned while in Galatia.

Yet he will be eager to preach the gospel at Rome, also.

I guess all of us would like to be able to identify with Paul in that same way. But the fact is for you and for me very often we are ashamed of the gospel of Christ.

I do not think we would confess that.

I do not think we easily admit that, but that is the way it works out.

Because in those times when we could speak, we do not speak. When those times come when we could be bold, we are not bold.

Does he escape being ashamed because he keeps himself in the best light?

No.

Exactly the opposite.

Believing and preaching the gospel constantly put Paul in a bad light. It constantly stirred up other people to shame Paul.

He gives us a list of ways that he was shamed in the ministry of the gospel.

2 Corinthians 11:23-27, *Are they ministers of Christ?—I speak as a fool—I am more: in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. ²⁴From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. ²⁵Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; ²⁶in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; ²⁷in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness—*

1. Five different times Jews whipped him with 39 stripes.
2. Three times he was beaten with rods.
3. One time he was stoned, dragged out of the city, and forsaken as dead.
4. Three times he suffered shipwreck. A night and a day he spend in the deep.
5. Perils of waters – Floods or rivers as he journeyed.
6. Perils of robbers – those who would rob him as he was on his journey.
7. Perils by his own countrymen – his own people rejected him.
8. Perils by the heathen – the lost and unregenerate wicked ones – persecuted.
9. Perils in the city – as he would travel to the city to work or buy food.
10. Perils in the wilderness – animals or violent people.
11. Perils in the sea – as he was shipwrecked and faced storms etc.
12. Perils among false brethren – those who claimed to be Christians.

We face the hostility of the world. We face the unimpressiveness of the gospel. It talks about sin and blood and death. And it sounds so foolish and so silly to men.

We are afraid of what they might think, and so we tend to be silent when we should speak. But Paul calmly viewed the

disdain of the unbelievers. He understood the contempt and the ridicule of those who rejected Christ.

He faced death itself for the gospel, but never once did he become ashamed of Christ.

Timothy did.

2 Timothy 1:8, *Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God,*

Onesiphorus did not ashamed of the Gospel!

2 Timothy 1:16, *The Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain;*

But Paul never did. He would face anybody, anytime and preach Jesus Christ.

How the fear of men brings a trap?

Paul seemed to be able to overcome that in the power of God.

Paul's way of not being ashamed of the gospel was not that he could keep himself in the best light or that he had enough savvy that people always liked him and approved what he did.

Romans 1:14, *I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to wise and to unwise.*

When Paul looked out on the huge world of unbelief in his day, he felt a debt to all. He did not look with utter contempt on the pagans of his day.

Beware of doing this.

Our conservative lifestyle has been so politicized that we slip easily into feeling contempt rather than debt to unbelieving people. Not so with Paul, though he hated sin. Rather, he felt so overwhelmed with undeserved grace that he knew himself a debtor to all Greek and barbarian, wise and foolish.

Did they want him to pay them his debt?

Do the unbelieving neighbours and colleagues around us want what we offer?

Not many.

1 Corinthians 1:22–23, *For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; ²³but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness,*

Paul had a debt to pay to Jews and Greeks and barbarians, but most of them as today did not want his message of love and grace and hope. It was foolishness and a stumbling block.

The gospel does two things:

It brings out shaming behavior in those who will not believe it.

It gives freedom from shame to those who do believe it.

Paul not only ashamed of the Gospel rather he found glory in it.

Galatians 6:14, *But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.*

What did Jesus do with shame?

- Jesus was abandoned by his friends.
- Falsely accused of blasphemy,
- Beaten with rods,
- Ridiculed,
- Taunted,
- Stripped of his clothes,
- Scourged with a whip,
- Tortured in public, and
- Crucified on the cross like a criminal.

John 16:22, *Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own, and will leave Me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.*

John 19:1-3, *So then Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him. ² And the soldiers twisted a crown of thorns and put it on His head,*

and they put on Him a purple robe. ³ Then they said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they struck Him with their hands.

Matthew 27:38-40, *Then two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and another on the left. ³⁹ And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads ⁴⁰ and saying, "You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross."*

Why did Jesus take such shame on Himself?

Hebrews 12:2, *looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

When shame began to threaten his heart and to tempt him to abandon a clear and obedient witness to God and to the gospel.

Jesus said to shame,

"Shame, I despise you.

I will not yield to you.

I will not give to you any satisfaction.

You may do with Me whatever you please, but I will not obey you or follow you or give in to you. I will not let you rule me."

How could He do that?

for the joy that was set before Him

Shame was stripping away every earthly support that Jesus had.

- His disciples gave way in shaming abandonment,
- His reputation gave way in shaming slander,
- His decency gave way in shaming nakedness, and
- His comfort gave way in shaming torture.

Jesus set his heart not on the supports of the present, but on the joy of the future where very soon he would sit down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Though Jesus was being shamed He was not ashamed of His Father and God.

Why?

Because God had power to save Him from death!

Grant Him all satisfying glory at His right hand forever.

Why was Paul bold?

V 16, *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

We go from the heart of the apostle to the heart of this letter to Romans.

He is bold to preach because of what the gospel is, because of what the gospel does.

The reason why Paul is not overcome by the temptation to be ashamed of the gospel, but quite the contrary, the reason that he proclaims it so joyously, so anxiously is because it is powerful, it changes lives.

Paul knows that so believed more witness in the ministry. His supreme passion was to see men saved.

Romans 9:2-3, *that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. ³For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh,*

- He did not care about his personal comfort.
- He did not care about his reputation.
- He did not care about his popularity,
- Even he offered his life as a compromise to a clear gospel.

He would preach the gospel because he knew what it could do. It could change people.

Why the Gospel offends people?

The gospel proclaims about one person, Jesus Christ.

Born in a stable,
Not even room for birth.
Born in a poor family,
Brought up in a small village,
Worked as a carpenter,
Hated by all the religious people,
Crucified with criminals.

The world ridicules Him whereas we proclaim that He is the one saves you.

Gospel is NOT a philosophy but based on truth.

There are telling people today that Jesus will make you well. Jesus will give you healing. You will never be sick. You will never have a cold. Life will be blissful in the physical dimension. They are offering the very thing that Jesus rejected.

A second man came.

Luke 9:57-58, *Now it happened as they journeyed on the road, that someone said to Him, "Lord, I will follow You wherever You go." ⁵⁸And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."*

The man was looking for comfort.

Luke 9:59-60, then He said to another, *“Follow Me.”* But he said, *“Lord, let me first go and bury my father.”* ⁶⁰Jesus said to him, *“Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God.”*

The point was the man’s father was not even dead yet. But he wanted to hang around to get the inheritance.

Luke 9:61-62, And another also said, *“Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go and bid them farewell who are at my house.”* ⁶²But Jesus said to him, *“No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”*

These people are playing into the hands of the lies of Satan. The things that keep men from Christ are personal comfort.

They are afraid of giving up comfort.

They are afraid of personal possessions.

They are afraid of losing those.

These false teachers come and offer the very thing that keeps men from Christ to them. Thus, they bypass the real gospel for a hypocrisy.

We must confront people with the gospel, being unashamed to speak it.

John 14:6, *Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*

Acts 4:12, *Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."*

Matthew 10:27-31, *"Whatever I tell you in the dark, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, preach on the housetops. ²⁸ And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will. ³⁰ But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹ Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.*