

Cornerstone Bible Church

Ashamed of the Gospel

(Romans 1:1-16)

Survey of Romans part 4

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Introduction:

Have you ever been manipulated into a guilt trip with these words from Jesus? “**Whoever is ashamed of Me of my words in this sinful and adulterous generation, I will be ashamed of him, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.**”?

evn th/| genea/| tau,th| (Spanish: “**en la generación ésta**”) a very specific address to His time and epoch.

Jesus said these words to His disciples, at a time when the controversy about Him reached a high point

Jesus reminded them of the eternal worth of following Him in light of the growing opposition.

Introduction:

These words are not meant to guilt-trip people into evangelizing, passing tracks and stand up for Jesus.

If you have been taught that, jettison your guilt!

Today we come to a famous text in the NT **Romans 1:16-17**

“¹⁴I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish.

¹⁵Thus, for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

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

¹⁷For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."

THE CONNECTOR: Paul's eagerness to preach the Gospel in Rome, was the motivation to write Romans verse 15.

- 1. I'm under obligation verse 14.** Paul is not describing a guilt-driven motivation.
 - The text reads: "**I'm a debtor**". Paul understood he owed the Gospel to every person, as a monetary debt.
 - **Greeks**: the “Hellenes”, the learned, cultured, educated and intellectual.
 - *“Rome conquered Greece militarily, but Greece conquered Rome culturally.”*
 - **Illustration**: Being a Greek was like being a Brit, they lost the American Revolutionary war, but they are still admired for their sophistication, dry humor and accent?

1. I'm under obligation.

- **Barbarians**: the despised minorities who remained in the outskirts of the Empire. They were equivalent to the poor and uneducated immigrants of Paul's day whose speech was unintelligible.
- **Wise and fool**: is a redundancy. The learned who had acquiesced culture and good habits, and the unlearned, crass and rustic illiterate.
- Paul stood under (not over) all class of people because he considered himself their debtor of the gospel.

1. I'm under obligation.

- Practical: James 2 reminds us not to despise the poor.
- We owe the Gospel to all men! Who cares their standing on earth; they are just a breath away from the grave. Psalm 49 “**man in his pomp, will not endure.**”
- The condition of considering himself a debtor of the gospel to all men, caused his eagerness to preach it.

2. Not ashamed of the Gospel? What's the point?

- As a Jew, he should have rejected the gospel.
- As a Jew, previously persecuted by Rome, he should have kept quiet about the Gospel.
- Paul was now a Christian, he was twice rejected both by the surrounding culture and his own people.

1. I'm under obligation.

2. **Not ashamed of the Gospel?** What's the point?

AN OSTRACIZED DEBTOR, WAS GOD'S AMBASSADOR FOR THE GOSPEL.

Practical: Does this connect with us?

⇒ The gospel is increasingly a source of contention, contempt and rejection in our times.

⇒ Many of us Christians are making every effort to remove the scandal of the cross.

⇒ Nothing wrong with being winsome, appealing and attractive for the Gospel, but never at its expense.

⇒ **It is impossible to remove the madness or the stumbling block, of preaching a crucified Savior!**

3. Why wasn't Paul ashamed of the Gospel?

1. It is the power of God unto salvation

- a) This is an Attributive (not a predicative) sentence.
 - The verb does not predicate something about the Gospel
 - It is not that the gospel displays, shows or contains the Power of God;.
 - The Gospel IS the Power of God to save.
 - $A = B$ means equivalence or dimensional equality
 - $A \equiv B$ means A is identical to B, is more emphatic!
 - THE GOSPEL IS **the power of God to save**.

3. Why wasn't Paul ashamed of the Gospel?

1. It is the power of God unto salvation

- It is scary to think then what on earth is modern Christianity producing, if it is not preaching the gospel but prescribing directives and advice.
- Preach the Gospel, unleash the lion and shoot the canon. **The gospel doesn't need our help!**
- By implication: the Gospel has no equivalence. whatever else we preach, IS NOT SAVING people, only the Gospel **is** the Power of God to save.

3. Why wasn't Paul ashamed of the Gospel?

1. It is the power of God unto salvation
2. **Because in it, the righteousness of God is revealed** v. 18
Paul's Jewish audience understood the phrase.

What is the Righteousness of God?

- a) It stems from His holiness (God's "otherness")
- b) It is displayed by the Law and the prophets
- c) It is evidenced in inflexible justice. "He will not take the guilty as innocent."
- d) It interacts in a verdict of retribution or reward. "The soul that sins will die." / "The man who does these things shall live by them."

3. Why wasn't Paul ashamed of the Gospel?

1. It is the power of God unto salvation
2. **Because in it, the righteousness of God is revealed v. 18**
 - The Gospel message is inherently tied to the Law.
 - **No Law? Then no Gospel.**
 - If the Law does not declare men guilty, there's no reason to call the ensuing message good news.
 - Medicine only works for the sick. Jesus said "The healthy have no need of medicine but only the sick... I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."
 - Not that there's any righteous person, but people cannot repent unless they are told they are sinners. J.O. invitation

3. Why wasn't Paul ashamed of the Gospel?

1. It is the power of God unto salvation
2. Because in it, the righteousness of God is revealed v.18

3. It reveals God's righteousness from faith to faith.

a. The prepositional axis

From <----- Righteousness -----> To
Faith Revealed Faith

Ek: Ek / From - The source is faith

Eis: Eis / For (toward) - The purpose & direction is faith

- The Gospel doesn't start on faith to lead us to the Law (the Galatian error).
- Hence the statement in verse 16: "As it is written, the righteous shall live by faith."

3. Why wasn't Paul ashamed of the Gospel?

1. It is the power of God unto salvation

2. Because in it, the righteousness of God is revealed v.18

3. It reveals God's righteousness from faith to faith.

- The righteous “shall live” by faith, not works.
- “Shall live” in the eschatological fulfillment of life eternal
- “Shall live” also in the day to day living.
- There's not a second of the righteous life, where he/she does not stand by faith.

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

The order is not qualitative but chronological

a) Jew first, not because they stand on higher grounds, but because to them the Gospel was preached first.

b) **The condition:** “**to everyone who believes.**”

- “Everyone” - when it comes to salvation - is everyone who believes: *panti. tw/| pisteu,onti*
- **ALL** (is not always each and everyone) 1 John 2:1 / 1 Timothy 2:3
- Do not feel compelled to disclaim the Gospel every time you preach it, Paul did not.
- Use Biblical language. “*Jesus died for you...*”

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

- Use Biblical language. “*Jesus died for you...*”
- “...if you believe.”
- If a person does not believe, the Gospel is foolishness and madness to him or her.
- The gospel is an aroma of life to those who are saved, and an aroma of death to those who are perishing
- Jesus didn’t pay for people who die considering that He was a fool. Otherwise, everyone will be saved.

CONCLUSION

1. Preaching the Gospel

- a. Implies revealing God's Righteousness in the Law
- b. Explaining God's Righteousness (in Christ's *obedience*).
- c. Describing God's righteousness on the cross
(*substitutionary / vicarious death*)

2. Living by faith:

- a. Living by faith in Christ when you do well.
- b. It also means living by faith in Christ when you do bad.
- c. It means trafficking on the lanes of faith
 - ✓ At Home in your marriage
 - ✓ Raising your children
 - ✓ Dealing with your neighbors

CONCLUSION

- Let us not be known for a staunch, strict and rigorist life
- Let our trademark be, the displaying of a forgiving and friendly disposition distilled from the Grace bestowed on those who know what forgiveness is.
- Yes it is true that people soften as we grow old, perhaps it is because we also grow more aware of how much we've been forgiven.

“For I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power of God to save everyone who believes.”

END