

# Not Ashamed

Message 3

5.12.24

## **Romans 1:16–17 (CSB)**

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

<sup>17</sup> For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, just as it is written: **The righteous will live by faith.**”

### Introduction:

A. “You should be ashamed of yourself!”

1. Growing up, an adult would occasionally need to tell us we should be ashamed of ourselves.

a. Usually, it was from a teacher telling us boys that our behavior was embarrassing.

b. Like the time my English teacher in High School had to take a leave of absence due to a serious surgery and left me and my “partner” in crime in charge--- since we were “responsible.”

c. I can’t remember everything we did wrong during those weeks, but I do remember we created a game we called boppo.

d. Boppo involved taking the old-school heavy metal staplers and stapling the others pants to their leg.

e. She was embarrassed by our behavior when she returned and we were too.

f. Or the time we put the same teacher’s podium from her classroom and put it in the history room, only to find out that all of the yearbook money was in that podium and she thought we stole it.

2. Nowadays, it seems that shame isn't an emotion many people experience.

a. And when we do, the shame culture comes from strangers who have no relationship or investment in us.

b. Shame usually comes from the so-called "Karen's" who make a scene but have little substance.

B. However, in many other cultures, shame is a powerful motivator.

1. The honor/shame culture is what led the Japanese soldier in the 1940s to choose suicide instead of surrender.

2. Even in many cultures today, to publicly correct someone is to shame them and is a fate worse than death.

3. Paul's culture was an honor/shame culture.

C. So when Paul, who has already identified as a slave of Christ, says, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel," he is speaking from a deep place.

1. Paul is not afraid of being ridiculed or embarrassed for believing and proclaiming that Jesus is the resurrected Son of God who is crowned King.

a. Paul was willing to be shamed by the world for Christ because Jesus was willing to accept the shame of the cross for him.

b. Therefore Paul is not only willing to wear the Christian t-shirt, so to speak, but is willing to wear the stripes from a persecutor's lash.

c. Through all of the persecution, the riots, and bad publicity, Paul felt no ridicule, embarrassment, or shame about the Gospel.

3. Paul is not ashamed of the Gospel.

D. The word "Gospel" is a familiar word but you may not know what it actually means.

1. One of my favorite writers, Tim Keller, says it like this:

What is this “gospel” for which Paul is willing to glory in being a slave? What gospel would make Paul happy to lose everything in order to share it? First, it is worth reflecting on the word itself. “Gospel”—*euangeloi*—is literally “good herald.” In the first century, if on a far-flung battlefield an emperor won a great victory which secured his peace and established his authority, he would send heralds—*angeloi*—to declare his victory, peace and authority. Put most simply, the gospel is an announcement—a declaration. The gospel is not advice to be followed; it is news, good (*eu*) news about what has been done.<sup>1</sup>

2. The Good News is something that has already happened.
  - a. News is not predictive or speculative but a statement of facts.
  - b. The fact is this: Jesus ascended to heaven and is seated at the Father's right hand.
  - c. Paul declares that Jesus is the King.
3. Although we should be ashamed of plenty of things, the Gospel is not one of them.

What is Paul not ashamed of?

### 1. The Realness of Jesus

- A. The events of Jesus’ life, ministry, death, and resurrection were about 20 years old by this time.
  1. Think back 20 years ago:
    - a. What were you doing? (Julie and I were graduating from high school.)

---

<sup>1</sup> Timothy Keller, *Romans 1–7 for You*, ed. Carl Laferton, God’s Word for You (The Good Book Company, 2014), 12.

b. Twenty years sits in this weird time frame of “yes, I remember” and “wow, that seems like a different time ago.”

2. Yet, some events define us no matter how far back.

a. For those of us who were alive on 9/11 (23 years ago), we will always remember those days.

b. For the younger generations, pre-COVID and post-Covid will be defining markers.

3. For the early Church, the believers lived in the shadows of Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection.

a. There were still people alive who had been in Jerusalem that last week of Jesus’ life.

b. Some had heard Jesus’ teachings in person.

d. It is safe to say that there were still people alive who had ate of the loaves and fishes or had Jesus heal them personally.

4. Jesus was not merely a historical or religious figure but also a cultural figure.

a. They did not live in a world that was accepting of Jesus.

b. Roman culture was not yet Christian.

c. To take sides and choose Jesus was dangerous and costly.

B. Paul declared he was not ashamed of the Gospel, the Good News, that Jesus really lived, died, was resurrected, and ascended into heaven.

1. For us today, are we ashamed of these truths?

2. It isn’t enough to believe that Jesus was a real person, for even Islam declares Jesus to be a prophet.

- a. It isn't enough to believe that Jesus died, for all humanity dies at some point.
- b. Resurrection isn't unknown either, for Lazarus was resurrected temporarily, the unknown man who encountered Elisha's bones was resurrected, and at Jesus' death, graves were opened, and people were seen walking the city streets.

3. The Apostle Paul was not ashamed of any of these elements, and we cannot either.

- a. Does the Cross offend you?
- b. Does believing in His bodily resurrection offend you, especially when science says it's impossible?
- c. But all of these truths are necessary to the Gospel, and they are connected to the Ascension.
- d. But what does the ascension mean, and why is it so important?

## 2. Not ashamed of The Kingship of Jesus.

A. Thursday last week (May 9) was Ascension Day.

- 1. 40 days after Easter is the day Jesus ascended to heaven.
- 2. But what does this mean, and why is it important?

B. The ascension means that Jesus is seated on the throne as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

- 1. The Gospel message is more than you can go to heaven and escape hell.
- 2. The Gospel message isn't that Jesus will someday be king.
- 3. The Gospel message is that Jesus is already king, and the King is returning to set everything right.
  - a. Paul repeatedly calls Jesus the Christ.
  - b. Jesus Christ, our Lord, is King Jesus King.

3. In Rome, starting with August Caesar, every emperor called himself the King of kings, and their birthdays were hailed as "Good news," the Gospel message that Jesus was King was treasonous.

a. But even though the message was treason, it was still good.

b. No matter who claims to be king, or savior, or rescuer, or anything else, Jesus is the only true, eternal king.

C. We live in the already, not yet, of Jesus' kingship.

1. Revelation depicts Jesus' Second Coming, at which point everything is finished and accomplished.

2. On Earth, we anticipate the full reality of Jesus' kingship, expressed every time we pray the Lord's prayer: Thy Kingdom come thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven.

3. In the meantime, we must remember that Jesus IS King.

a. When does this matter:

b. It matters when:

1. We go to the doctor and don't get the news we want.

2. We turn on the news and see wars, rumors of wars, and the proliferation of knowledge and nonsense.

3. It matters during bull markets, bear markets, and election seasons.

4. The Kingship of Jesus matters when we stand at the grave of a loved one.

5. The Kingship of Jesus always matters.

c. The Apostle Paul refused to live his life ashamed of this Good News that declares Jesus as King.

What is Paul not ashamed of? Paul is not ashamed of the realness of Jesus or the Kingship of Jesus.

### 3. The Inclusiveness of Jesus.

A. The word "inclusive" is a good word that has been corrupted and perverted.

1. The word "inclusive" should be Good News.
2. Inclusive should mean that human and sinful barriers have been removed and replaced with God's design.
3. Paul said the Gospel is for Jews and Gentiles.

a. in Galatians 3:28, Paul goes further:

<sup>28</sup> There is no Jew or Greek, slave or free, male and female; since you are all one in Christ Jesus.

b. The Gospel has a leveling function as all people are equal at the foot of the Cross.

Notice what the Apostle Peter preached in Acts 2:

#### **Acts 2:14–36 (CSB)**

<sup>14</sup> Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice, and proclaimed to them, "Fellow Jews and all you residents of Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and pay attention to my words. <sup>15</sup> For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it's only nine in the morning. <sup>16</sup> On the contrary, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

<sup>17</sup> **And it will be** in the last days, says God,  
that **I will pour out my Spirit on all people;**  
**then your sons and your daughters will prophesy,**  
**your young men will see visions,**  
**and your old men will dream dreams.**

<sup>18</sup> **I will even pour out my Spirit**

**on my servants in those days, both men and women**

and they will prophesy.

<sup>19</sup> **I will display wonders in the heaven** above

**and signs on the earth** below:

**blood and fire and a cloud of smoke.**

<sup>20</sup> **The sun will be turned to darkness**

**and the moon to blood**

**before the great and glorious day of the Lord comes.**

<sup>21</sup> **Then everyone who calls**

**on the name of the Lord will be saved.'**

<sup>22</sup> "Fellow Israelites, listen to these words: This Jesus of Nazareth was a man attested to you by God with miracles, wonders, and signs that God did among you through him, just as you yourselves know. <sup>23</sup> Though he was delivered up according to God's determined plan and foreknowledge, you used lawless people to nail him to a cross and kill him. <sup>24</sup> God raised him up, ending the pains of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by death. **SKIP to 32**

<sup>32</sup> "God has raised this Jesus; we are all witnesses of this. <sup>33</sup> Therefore, since he has been exalted to the right hand of God and has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit, he has poured out what you both see and hear. <sup>34</sup> For it was not David who ascended into the heavens, but he himself says:

**The Lord declared to my Lord,**

**'Sit at my right hand**

<sup>35</sup> **until I make your enemies your footstool.'**

<sup>36</sup> "Therefore let all the house of Israel know with certainty that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah."

B. Even Peter, who was not as welcoming as Paul, declared that the Gospel and the Promised Holy Spirit were for all people:



1. Slaves, Freed, sons and daughters (daughters usually had no inheritance), Jews, and Greeks were all eligible to enter the Kingdom, participate in the Kingdom, and to be used in the Kingdom

2. They were eligible because of Vs. 36: "Know with certainty that God has made Jesus Lord and Messiah."

3. Past tense, finished language.

C. The Gospel, the Good News that Jesus is King, is available to every person without respect to race, nationality, male and female, rich and poor.

1. It isn't only Good news for Jews, but for Gentiles.

2. The same message that saves Americans saves Israelis, and Africans, Japanese, Germans, and Mexicans.

3. There is only one Gospel message, and it is for EVERYONE who believes.

4. Sin is inclusive, Paul says in Romans, "For All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

a. There is not a person that sin has not touched.

b. Romans 5 teaches that just as Adam sinned and all felt the consequence, Jesus died so all could experience the benefits.

5. But that leads us to the exclusiveness of Jesus.

What is Paul not ashamed of?

4. The Exclusiveness of Jesus.

<sup>16</sup> For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes,

A. Everyone who believes...

1. The entry into the Kingdom of God is belief.

2. Belief that Jesus is the Son of God, crowned King, and returning in power and authority.

B. **Belief is more than intellectual knowledge.**

1. Belief must be walked out in our everyday life.

2. If Jesus is REALLY King and Lord in my life, then I will live by His Word and His Decrees.

a. Jesus is King whether we want to admit it or not.

b. But we must believe to walk in salvation under God's blessings, power, and authority.

C. Our next sermon will start to dig into the meaning of righteousness:

1. But briefly explained, this righteousness means to be in "right" relationship with God.

2. It is a legal term meaning in right relationship with God, made possible through Jesus' sacrifice on the Cross, and our belief in the Gospel.

a. We can live as Children of God because of Jesus' righteousness.

b. We are co-heirs with Christ Jesus because of Jesus.

c. We are lawful citizens in good standing in God's Kingdom because of this righteousness through God which is applied to all who believe.

D. Although the Gospel is for EVERYONE, only those who believe and "live by faith" are part of the Kingdom.

1. The Gospel is inclusive.

2. The Gospel is also exclusive, as we must BELIEVE and accept the requirements set forth by God.

3. The "righteous will live by faith."

## Where do I go from here?

### A. First, do you believe?

1. Too often, we compare our beliefs to someone else.
  - a. I'm better than him.
  - b. But I'm not as strong as her in my belief.
2. But that's not the question: Do you believe?
3. I know today is full of graduations and celebrating moms, but would you find time today to reflect and ask, "do I believe that Jesus is King?"

### B. When you ask that question, ask what kind of servant am I?

1. Scripture depicts two kinds of servants:
  - a. Faithful and wicked.
  - b. And our beliefs and actions determine how we will be classified.
2. Today, after you ask yourself if you believe, ask the Lord what kind of servant am I?

## Prayer Time:

A. Today's a big day so I want to close this service a little differently:

### 1. **Would the women in the room please stand for prayer:**

To the women in the room:

God did not make a mistake when He created you. So may no man or demon condemn you, for you are fearfully and wonderfully made in God's image.

Just as the first persons to be entrusted with the Gospel were women, may God use you to powerfully and compellingly carry the message of the Gospel to every piece, part, and parcel of this creation.

Truly may the Lord's daughters prophecy to the nations. May He fill your mouth with words to declare and your heart with dreams to share.

May the God of all comfort strengthen you, as you carry the burdens, pain, hopes, and dreams of the many people who look to you for support and help.

May God richly and abundantly bless you and keep you and may His face shine upon you all the days of your life.

Have men stand and final prayer.