



I Am Not Ashamed!

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I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes. Romans 1:16

Do you find it odd that Paul says he's "unashamed" of the gospel? Paul had a lot in his past to be ashamed of—he had hurt people who followed Jesus. But why would he ever be ashamed of the good news of sins forgiven in Jesus? The message of the cross tells us that God became human in Jesus and died to pay for the sins of the world. That message can sound foolish or even make people angry. Our sinful hearts want to believe we can earn God's love by being good enough. Yet Paul was not ashamed of this message because this promise brought salvation to everyone who believes. Your sin is forgiven! You've been clothed in Christ! That's not a cause for shame, but for rejoicing!

But maybe that's not your issue. "I'm not ashamed of the gospel; I'm just bored with it. I've heard it all before." Or, "I'm not ashamed of the gospel; I've moved past it. Give me something harder to learn than 'Jesus loves me.'" Or maybe you're not ashamed of the gospel; you're ashamed of yourself. "If anybody knew what I've done—or the good things I haven't done—they wouldn't want me around." You might even wonder whether Jesus wants you. In despair, I say, "I'm not ashamed of the gospel, I'm just not worthy of it."

The Holy Spirit uses God's Word to show us how much we need Jesus. He also uses that Word to show us how completely Jesus has rescued us and to give us faith in him. Paul said, "In the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last" (Romans 1:17). Righteousness means being right with God. We cannot earn it. Jesus gives us his perfect goodness as a gift, received through faith.

Now you can admit your sins instead of hiding them. You can rejoice that Jesus came to rescue you. Your sins do not have the final word—your Savior does. Jesus removes the shackles of sin from your hands, and you're free now. That's the gospel. You never outgrow your need for it, and you never need to earn it. Christ's righteousness is yours through faith. Because of Jesus, you can face each day forgiven and unashamed.

Questions to Consider

- What do you do when you feel sad about doing something wrong? Who forgives you?
- Wrap yourself up in a big blanket. Just as the blanket covers you, Jesus' perfect goodness covers all your sins. Because of Jesus, how does God see you? (Hint: "clothed in Christ")
- Why might someone who thinks they can earn God's love get upset when told they need Jesus to save them?
- Why is it so important to keep returning to the simple truth of Jesus' love for you—even when you've heard it many times?
- Bored with the gospel, feeling you've outgrown the gospel, or feeling unworthy of the gospel: which is the biggest temptation for you? How does this devotion answer it?
- How does the promise that Jesus makes you right with God as a gift set you free to live joyfully in this world?