

**Title: I'm Not Ashamed**

Text: Romans 1:16-17

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Place: Decatur Church of God

Theme: Romans

What brings you shame? Is it a dirty car or a dirty house? Is it having too much money or not enough money? Is it your sexual history or a life that lacks moral purity? Is it that you have no social conscience? What brings you shame?

On the other hand, where is it that you have no shame? Is it your care for the hungry? Maybe it is in your love for God or your love for your family?

Paul reveals an area where he has no shame.

***Romans 1:16-17***

*I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. <sup>17</sup>For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."*

\* John Ensor in "The Great Work of the Gospel" tells about an incident in his younger years.

When I was a teenager, I stole a hat. What is worse, I arrived at the store with a wad of cash in my pocket. Staring at the price tag, I thought, "Hey, why should I spend my money on that hat? I can get it for nothing by pinching it, then save my money for something else."

As I headed for the door, the store manager stopped me. I [suddenly] wished I were dead. The manager saw I was not yet a hardened criminal and sent me home with instructions to have my parents call him back with the news or he would call the police. I went home to take my lumps. To this day, I remember what my

18-year-old sister said when she overheard me confessing: "How totally embarrassing. I've got a brother who's a thief!"

She called me a thief! ...

[But] becoming ashamed of what we are as a result of what we do is a good thing and a necessary part of getting real about guilt. If you commit adultery, you are an adulterer. If you lie, you become a liar. I stole, and I had become a thief. It led me to my room weeping and ashamed of myself. But that was good! Painful, but good.

There are experiences in our life that bring shame and should. On the other hand there are decisions and actions that we may take that do not result in shame.

## I. I am not ashamed of the gospel.

A. Remember the gospel is "the good news of Jesus Christ."

\* As Christians we have the mandate!

### *Matthew 28:19-20*

*Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,<sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

1. That is who we are!
2. That is what we are to be about!

B. I am not ashamed to do what I am supposed to do.

\* In college I held a number of different jobs. I worked "repo" for W. T. Grants, I stocked groceries for Rice Food Markets, and I ran machinery for FMC Corporation, WECO Division, a machine shop.

To pick up a payment, to put ketchup and mustard on a shelf, or to create a union joint for oil pipelines did not cause me

shame. That was what I was being paid to perform. Shame would have been the result of not doing my job.

I want to be about the work of Christ! That work is to proclaim the gospel.

## **II. The gospel is the power of God for the salvation of everyone.**

### **A. The power of God.**

\* During the last year we have witnessed the awesome power of earthquakes, tidal waves, tornadoes, and hurricanes. All of us here, no doubt, respect the power of these forces of nature. And yet there are those who still think of Jesus as meek and mild.

On the day that the people of Jerusalem hung this meek and mild man on the cross, at his death, the sky turned black, the earth shook, graves were opened, people who were dead were seen in the streets of Jerusalem, and very significant to me was the curtain that kept people from the Holy of Holies, the place of God was ripped in half.

There is real power in God.

### **B. What is significant to us is the power of God for our salvation.**

\* John Stott writes, "The Holy Spirit takes our human words, spoken in great weakness and frailty, and he carries them home with power to the mind, the heart, the conscience, and the will of the hearers in such a way that they see and believe."

Who is given the opportunity to believe?

## **III. It is the power of God for the salvation of the Jew and of the Gentile.**

### **A. The Jew is given an opportunity to believe.**

1 The chosen of God, who rejected the Christ, are given the chance to repent and receive the gospel.

B. I thank God, it didn't end there but the gospel opportunity was expanded to include all the non-Jews.

1 That means you and me!

2 The concept of "Gentiles" applies to everyone who is not a Jew.

\* Have you ever read a technical manual that leaves you clueless? Maybe that is where you find yourself this morning. What does this all mean to you?

#### IV. In this gospel a righteousness from God is revealed.

A. What is righteousness?

\* The reformer, Martin Luther was transformed by these verses. He discovered that our righteousness is a gift from God in Jesus Christ through faith, not something we can create or establish through our own merit.

1 Righteousness has to do with our acceptability to God.

2 Not due to our performance or accomplishments.

#### *Galatians 3:11a*

*Clearly no one is justified before God by the law...*

3 Only because of Jesus Christ.

B. And God makes it known to us.

#### *Romans 3:21*

*But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify.*

- It is obvious from the scripture that God has had this idea for some time.

**V. A righteousness that is by faith from the very beginning.**

- A. It is a righteousness experienced by Abraham, Moses, and Samuel.

*Isaiah 9:1, 6-7*

*Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the Gentiles, by the way of the sea, along the Jordan--*

*<sup>6</sup>For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup>Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.*

- B. This is God's plan for today.

*Ephesians 2:4-5*

*<sup>4</sup>But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, <sup>5</sup>made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace you have been saved.*

**VI. Thus the righteous will live by faith.**

*Habakkuk 2:4b*

*... the righteous will live by his faith--*

**Galatians 3:11**

*Clearly no one is justified before God by the law, because, "The righteous will live by faith."*

**Hebrews 10:38a**

*But my righteous one will live by faith.*

- A. It is clear that we are to be a people of faith.
  - 1 Not a people of cults and sects.
  - 2 Not church members.
  - 3 A people of faith.
  
- B. And thus we will live.
  - 1 Not our four score and ten...
  - 2 But for all eternity.

With that promise is mind can you see why we are not ashamed?

**Let's read this together...**

### **THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE UNASHAMED**

I am a member of the Fellowship of the Unashamed. I have Holy Spirit power. The die has been cast. I have stepped over the line. The decision has been made. I will not look back, let up, slow down, back away, or be still. I am a disciple of Jesus Christ.

My past is redeemed, my present is exciting, and my future is secure. I will no longer abide low living, sight-walking, small planning, smooth knees, colorless dreams, tame visions, dwarfed goals, and cheap grace.

I no longer need pre-eminence, prosperity, position, promotions, plaudits, or popularity. I do not have to be right, first, tops, recognized, praised, regarded, or rewarded. I now live in Him, lean on Him, love through Him, and labor with Him.

My pace is set, my gait is fast, my goal is heaven, my road is narrow, my way is rough, my companions dear, my Guide reliable, and mission clear.

I cannot be bought, compromised, deterred, lured away, turned back, diluted, or delayed. I will not flinch in the face of sacrifice, hesitate in the presence of adversity, negotiate at the table of the enemy, ponder at the pool of popularity, or meander in the maze of mediocrity.

I will not give up, back up, let up, or shut up until I have preached up, prayed up, paid up, stored up, and stayed up for the cause of Christ. I must go until He returns, give until I drop, preach until all know, and work until He comes.

For when He comes to get His own, He will have no problem recognizing me. You see, I am a member of the Fellowship of the Unashamed!

**Are you?**