

Romans: The Integrity of God

"No Shame for Him"

Romans 1:16-17

When Paul says, *"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ,"* he speaks out of personal experience. The gospel of Christ contained a message that caused many to be ashamed. The pagans branded the gospel *"atheism."* The Jews said it gave too much freedom and led to sin. The Greeks said a crucified Savior was *"a stumbling block."* Everywhere, the gospel was, and is, opposed. Young Timothy might have experienced shame for the gospel (II Timothy 1:8; 16). What is the good news of Christ that leads some to shame? *"God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them"* (II Corinthians 5:19). God has done for sinners what no sinner could do for himself. He took our sins and "imputed" them to Christ. This is an accounting word that means *"charged them to an account."* The gospel is a revelation of facts. God has done it!

I. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is problematic . . .

The gospel is not a problem, but when delivered to sinners it *can cause* problems.

- (A). **A person is stripped of any self-reliance** . . . There is nothing that the natural man can do but believe. The problem with most people is they like to *"work off their debts"* because they aren't that big, and they *"feel good"* about their efforts.
- (B). **A person will stumble over a Savior** . . . *"beautiful wife, good kids, great job, and you want to talk to me about a man being nailed to a cross? No!"* he says.
- (C). **A person can't see his own sin** . . . so atonement, imputation, and the cross have no meaning. In fact, the self-reliant, proud, blind sinner is often antagonistic.

II. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is power . . .

Though Paul knew conflict would ambush him everywhere he preached the gospel, he was **never** *ashamed* to tell it to others because the gospel is power in God's hands. It is God's power (*dunamis*) for the salvation (deliverance) of everyone that believes.

- (A). It is dynamic good news to me that the **penalty** of my sin is paid.
The *"wages of sin is death"* (Rom. 6:23) and my Savior has died in my place.
- (B). It is dynamic good news to me that the **power** behind my sin is destroyed.
"Through death he destroyed him (Satan) that had the power of death" (Heb. 2:11).
- (C). It is dynamic good news to me that the **pollution** of sin in my heart is cleansed.
The gospel brings a *"cleansed heart"* and produces a new nature (Rom. 8:9).
This happens as the gospel is *"revealed"* (I Thess. 2:13; I Pet. 1:23; Jn 17:17).

III. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is personal . . .

The Holy Spirit takes the gospel word, softens the heart, and *"the righteousness of God"* (both an attribute and a blessing) *"by faith"* is revealed to our faith. Simply put,

"Righteousness by faith is granted only to those who by the Spirit believe!"

We can't change the heart, but we can share the truth. The Spirit changes hearts.

"The just shall live by faith" is better translated *"the just one by faith shall live!"*

The difference is clear --- you are not really living unless you trust Christ alone!