

I Am Not Ashamed of The Gospel

Int.

1. Aim: To show why we should not be ashamed of the gospel.
2. Rom. 1:16 "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."
 - a. Ashamed = a feeling of disgrace or embarrassment
 - b. Apostle Paul among, if not the most successful men who has ever lived.
 - c. His life was to be a "pattern" for those who would believe on the Lord.
 - d. Great influence of his life attributed to "Christ living" in him (Gal. 2:20). "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."
 - e. Growth of the early church was result of his untiring labor, "planting," "building" - I Cor. 3:12-ff
3. Paul possessed qualities found in all successful men.
 - a. Courage. Work required "boldness" in preaching the gospel. Faced great dangers daily. Had to "fight with beast" (I Cor. 15:32).
 - b. Confidence (2 Tim. 1:12). Belief in what he was doing.
 - i. Not embarrassed, not ashamed - 2 Tim. 1:12). "For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."
 - ii. 2 Cor. 11:24 ff

- iii. Taught others that they were not to be ashamed (2 Tim. 1:7,8). "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. 8. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;"
4. Early church grew because disciples were bold in their way of life and in the way they taught others the gospel - Phil. 1:14 "And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear."
5. Key to growth of the church today is to have same confidence in the gospel and willingness to live it and teach it.

Discussion

I. THE CHALLENGE OF JESUS

- A. "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." Mark 8:38
- B. No other teacher has made such a requirement of followers. In itself, a claim to His divinity. The challenge: ONE MUST NOT BE ASHAMED OF HIM...HIS CLAIM OF BEING THE SON OF GOD, AND HIS WORD.
- C. Paul was not ashamed of the gospel (Rom. 1:16). Gospel centered in CHRIST CRUCIFIED. He was not ashamed of the "teachings of Christ."
 1. Paul lived at a time when it would have been difficult not to be ashamed of what he was doing.

- a. Religious leaders had rejected Christ as their Messiah: Viewed as an Imposter, "deserved to die" .
 - (1) JOHN 7:47-48 "Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived? 48. Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?"
 - (2) JOHN 19:7 "The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God."
 - b. Just about all of the "scholarship" of the Jews was opposed to what Paul believed.
2. Gospel message proclaimed that God provided salvation only through this despised, rejected, "dead" Jew.
 - a. This was the "stumbling stone" to the Jews (I Cor. 1:23). "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;"
 - b. "Gospel" was the "wisdom" God chose to bring to nothing the wisdom and philosophy of the world. Thus, it was "foolishness" to the Gentile I Cor. 1:27 "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;"
 - c. Not "many wise" accepted the gospel (I Cor. 1:26 "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:"

- d. "The wise of the world" had to turn to his "wisdom" in order to be saved. This was humiliating to the proud man. 1 Cor. 3:18. "Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise."
- e. The apostles were considered the "offscouring of the Earth". (The filth which men would scrape from their feet.) 1 Cor. 4:13. "Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day."
- f. Majority of early Christians were men of poverty James 2:5 "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?"
- g. No great temples, not "approved" by governments, etc.
- D. Even with all these things against him, there were many reasons why Paul was not ashamed of the gospel?
1. Convinced that it was "God's power" to save. (Men not ashamed of powerful things). Understood it as God's means of making men righteous (Rom. 1:17). He had come to see the gospel message as the fulfillment of the O.T.
 2. Could "certify" his message. He knew from where it came: Not of men, not something he had "reasoned out" over a period of time. GAL 1:11-12 "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. 12. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

3. Had seen its influence in lives of others (Col. 1:3-6; I Thess. 1:9). Note the changes brought about in Corinthians (I Cor. 6:9,10). Only hope for man.

"Religion" and "philosophy" had failed.

a. Colossians 1:3-6 "We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, 4. Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints, 5. For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel; 6. Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth:"

b. 1 Thessalonians 1:9. "For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;"

c. 1 Cor 6:9-11 v.11 "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

4. Not ashamed because of his "persuasion" of the one in whom he had placed his trust (2 Tim. 1:12).

E. Paul realized that it was possible for men to be ashamed of Christ and his word. This was the reason for his admonition to Timothy.

1. Some were ashamed to confess by mouth and life because of persecution

2. LUKE 8:13. "They on the rock [are they], which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away."

II. THERE ARE THOSE WHO ARE ASHAMED OF CHRIST TODAY.

- A. Those who reject claims of Christ and the gospel because it does not harmonize with "wisdom of men." These are the "enlightened" of the day.
1. Such reject as "ignorant superstition" everything beyond the "natural" as an explanation for the existence of the universe, life, etc.
 2. "Educators" who teach atheism as fact; ridicule belief in God.
 3. Young people influenced by these, accept teaching without question. Ashamed to have others know that believe in God, Christ, Word.
- B. Those who have obeyed first principles of the gospel but conduct is that which shows they are ashamed of it. Easy to sing, "I'M NOT ASHAMED TO OWN MY LORD" but difficult to practice.
1. Embarrassed to talk about the word of Christ to others. Feel uneasy, try to avoid discussions. Do not contend for the faith (Jude 3). TO BE ASHAMED OF THE WORD OF CHRIST IS TO BE ASHAMED OF HIM.
 - a. "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."
Jude 3
 - b. Those in religious groups who look for opportunities to "testify." We call such "fanatics," say "no one will listen." SOME DO. One thing for sure: No one will listen if one who knows truth never speaks.

- c. Knowledge of and conviction of the truth enables one to have confidence (2 Tim. 1:12). Confidence can be developed by encountering object of fear.
2. Those ashamed to let others know they are members of the Lord's church. (Such considered to be narrow minded, "think only ones saved.")
 - a. Avoid discussions because realize they hold teachings which are considered "strange" by religious neighbors.
 - b. Are you ashamed to discuss the "word of Christ" on such matters as "one church"; necessity of baptism; why not use instrumental music; etc.? Even teachers, preachers often avoid such subjects.
 3. Those who do not speak out against practices of evil. Eph. 5:11-12 "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. 12. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret."
 - a. Embarrassed that others know that one is a "Christian." (World expects to be different). SILENCE IS EXPRESSION OF EMBARRASSMENT, SHAME.
 - b. Peer pressure great on all, especially young. Reason for beginning use of alcohol, drugs, profane language, illicit sexual practices. Do not want to be regarded as different. Note the way Peter "proved" he was not a disciple (Mt.26:70-74).
 - c. Important that one not go along with practices that are wrong; but also, never be ashamed to let others know WHY DO NOT PRACTICE.

CONCLUSION

1. Takes courage to live to please God. Courage must be "added" (2 Pet.1:5).
2. No need for being ashamed of Christ, Word. "Not given us spirit of timidity, but of power" (2 Timothy 1:8). Truth enables one to conquer all opposition.
3. Those who are ashamed of living as the gospel demands are ashamed of Christ. Such will be denied before the Father (Mk. 8:38).
4. "Fearful" will have part in lake of fire (Rev. 21:8).
5. If we believe in Jesus as the Christ, have courage to obey His commands, live as a Christian so that you will not be put to shame at His coming (I Jn. 2:28). "And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming."

Sermon by Arthur Pigman - Sunday Evening January 1, 2012
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