

## I Am Not Ashamed Of The Gospel

Romans 1:16

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.”

**I have before me the most powerful force in human history, the Word of God.** It is *eternal*; it is *sovereign*; it is *unchanging*; it is *inspired*; and it is *anointed*. This is not a good book "Gone with the Wind" is a good book. **This is the living, breathing, Word of Almighty God.** The Bible is beyond all other books as a *river* is beyond a *drop of water*. The Bible is beyond all other books as the *blazing sun* is beyond the glow of a *single candle* on a child's birthday cake. **The Bible is beyond all other books as the mountains are beyond a single grain of sand.** The Bible is the *sincere milk* of God for the newborn child of God; it is also *meat* for men. The Bible is the *pillow* on which the saints of God have rested their heads throughout the ceaseless ages of time and eternity. **The Bible is the sword of the Lord.** It is a *bright star* in a dark world, leading the masses of humanity toward the *Son* of the living God. *Humanist* are saying that the Bible is a *myth* wrong!! **It is the living, breathing, Word of Almighty God, it does not change, and it is true!** I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

**This Book is authored by the Holy Spirit; every word is saturated with the kingdom of God.** This is the only book in print whose words can *conquer disease*. This is the only book in print that makes every *demon of Satan* tremble when you read its verses. **This is the only book in print that will close the mouths of lions and literally silence Satan himself.** I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

**This is the only book that can change your life.** You can read Shakespeare, Bryon, Shelly, and others, but they will *not* change you. But when you open this book and begin to read, the *power* of the

pages of this Word will change you. It will make the sinner forsake his ways. It will break the bondage of sin. It will remove the stench of iniquity from your soul. It will take the *pain out of death and dying.* It takes the gloom from the grave, and gives a hope that is steadfast and sure that on Resurrection morning there will be a new beginning around the throne of God. I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

The Bible is a twoedged sword, which divides the *marrow from the bone; it divides light from darkness; it divides truth from error.* Truth is *not* what I say it is. Truth is *not* what you think it is. Truth is *not what some college professor says it is.* Truth is described for us in John 17:17 when Jesus declared to God the Father, "Your word is truth." And it is written for all to see! I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

The Bible is a *vain of gold that leads us to the unsearchable riches of the Lord.* The world has become an *insane asylum* and the *inmates* are in charge. We have reached a point where America is rotting at the core with *AIDS*, and *Satanism*, and *homosexuality*, and *incest*, and *child abuse*, and *drug addiction*, and every kind of *moral malady* known to man. Is there any hope for America? Yes! It is found in the *preaching* of the Word of the living God!

The Bible is a book of *love*; it is a book of *mystery*; it is a book of *revelation*; it is a book of *life*; it is a book of *prophecy*; it is a book about *financial counseling*; it is a book that offers *direction* for every step we take in our everyday living!

This truth still stands today in spite of all the advances in human knowledge and attainment. Modern man may try to hide behind "*scientific*" discovery, psychology, or philosophy. He may run to his *wealth*, or *education* or the *belief* of a humanistic society, but we today, as with Paul then, have nothing to be ashamed of concerning the Gospel of God.

**Why do I believe in the Bible?** Because I am convinced beyond any doubt that it is the *divinely inspired* in its *totality, inerrant in doctrine, infallible in authority, immeasurable in influence, personal in application, regenerative in power, diverse in its unity, and infinitely trustworthy. **Why?** Because *God* wrote it!*

**I am not ashamed of the gospel because it reveals to us that Jesus cares for us more than we could ever know.** No matter what *mistakes you have made* or what *kind of mess you may be in,* He still loves you.

**The love of Christ is beyond measure.** It cannot be compared to degrees of human love. To illustrate His compassion for us, Jesus compared His love to that of a *shepherd* who would leave ninety-nine sheep in the fold and risk all to search for one that was lost, as seen in Luke 15:4, "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, does not leave the ninety nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he finds it?"

Paralleling the story of the lost sheep to that of lost humanity, Jesus said in verse 7, "I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance." **What a beautiful picture our Lord painted with His words.** In this great analogy He expressed how much He *cares* for us.

**I have often wondered how a shepherd could know that one specific sheep was missing from the fold.** There is no indication in the story that he had to be told that the sheep was missing. No undershepherd announced it to him. **Rather, our Lord indicated that the shepherd knew each sheep individually; therefore, he knew which one was missing.** He didn't have to keep a running count to know one was missing. He knew which one was missing.

**By using this analogy, Jesus reminds us that He knows each one of us individually.** You are not just a *number* in the mind of God;

you are a specific person of individual significance to the Lord. This fact helps us to understand that God cares about us individually and personally. Although Christ came to save the masses of humanity and die for the whole world, He also came to die for you individually and specifically. And regardless of all our problems, mistakes, and errors, God loves us individually and personally. He knows your name and your needs, and He is prepared to meet the deepest longings of your heart.

In our Lord's parable about the lost sheep, we notice that the shepherd tenderly picked up the sheep and carried it on his shoulders. He could have reprimanded it and ordered it home, but he picked it up and carried it home instead.

I can imagine the joy of that little sheep when he was found by the shepherd. I can picture him, lost, alone, cold, and afraid. I can see him struggling to stay afoot on the rocky mountain ledges. I can see the panic in his eyes as he hears the distant howling wolves.

The strange thing about sheep is that when they get lost, they become helpless and cannot find their way. They must be sought, or they could forever be lost. In the beauty of our Lord's parable, the shepherd went searching for the sheep and called it to himself.

Our Lord could not have chosen a more appropriate picture to illustrate His love for us. How more vividly could He tell us to trust Him to carry our burdens and bring us safely to heaven? "I will take you just as you are," is what He is implying by this parable. "I will love you and forgive you." Then He puts us on His shoulders and carries us home.

In the Parable of the Lord Sheep, Jesus said that the shepherd took him HOME to the fold. Listen, God does not find us in order to lose us. He does not forgive us and then condemn us. In John 10:27-28 Jesus says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither

shall any man pluck them out of my hand." The unique quality of our spiritual life is that it lasts forever. It is not eternal one moment and then temporal the next. It lasts forever, and those who have it live forever.

When Christ claims us for Himself, He brings us into a permanent and eternal relationship with Himself. Once He puts you on His shoulder, He will never let you down. Once you are safe within His fold, you will never be lost again. God's love is unconditional. It is based upon His grace and not our merits. His is not a conditional love that demands that we meet His criteria in order to remain in His fold.

If our security depended on our ability not to fail, we would all be lost. Our security depends on His power to save us and to sustain us. We can persevere because His Spirit is at work in us.

Christ, our Shepherd, has left the fold of heaven to seek us among the rocks of this life. When He finds us, He saves us because we cannot save ourselves. He rescues us from destruction and carries us home to heaven.

When we forsake all human efforts to save ourselves and cast ourselves on His mercy, we will always find Him ready to receive us. It doesn't matter how badly you may have failed, He has succeeded in securing your redemption. It doesn't matter what you may have done wrong, He has done right for you. It doesn't matter who has rejected you, He will accept you for He is the gentle Shepherd who cares for you! And because of what Jesus Christ has done for me, and I am not ashamed of the Gospel!

Today we have walked another mile down the pathway that leads you home. As you met both strangers and friends, did you mention the name of the Lord? Did you tell someone about Jesus? Did you warn your best friend that "death" is the "wages of sin"? Did you show someone the plan of salvation? Did you tell anyone that He's coming again? Did you talk about Jesus, or the things of this world?

## **Or were you ashamed of the Gospel?**

If you are not saved, why not today?

### **Please Stand for Prayer.**

Father,

Thank You for Your Word that is forever true. Thank You for loving and accepting me just as I am! Give me the faith and courage to live my life in a way that is pleasing to You and a guiding light to others. In Jesus name. Amen.