

THE REVELATION OF THE GOSPEL

ROMANS 1:16-19 • TV161A

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Romans 1:16-19

“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. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, the just shall live by faith. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.”

I'd like for you to open your Bible today to the **Book of Romans**. I'll be speaking from the **First chapter of the Book of Romans** and I will be reading **verse 16**.

This will serve as a text for the subject: **“THE REVELATIONS OF THE GOSPEL.”** We might call this sermon: **“I AM NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL.”** Either way, **“THE REVELATIONS OF THE GOSPEL OR I AM NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL.”**

That is exactly the way Paul begins this verse; he says, *“I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”*

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Paul knew from personal experience the opposition and hatred which the true Gospel encountered everywhere. The Gospel of Christ and Him crucified was everywhere spoken against, despised and rejected. It is said of our Lord **in Isaiah 53**: *“He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.”*

Paul wrote in **1 Corinthians** to the religious, *“the gospel is offensive and it as stumbling block: And to the Greeks (to the pagan and to the heathen) the gospel is foolishness or sheer nonsense.”*

In other words, the message of guilt and grace, the message of the fall in Adam and restoration in Christ, the message of sin and redemption through a crucified Redeemer, not only met with ridicule and persecution but utter, complete, contempt.

In **Galatians 5:11**, Paul called it, *“the offense of the cross.”* He says, “The cross is offensive; it is offensive to the natural man.” What is the offense of the cross? Why is the cross, the preaching of the cross, the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and Him crucified; why is that offensive to the natural man?

I want to give you four reasons why I believe that the preaching of the Gospel of substitution (the Gospel of Christ crucified) is offensive to the natural man:

First of all: The Gospel addresses all men as sinners, and this offends man’s dignity. Man will admit that he is not perfect. He will admit that he is not perfect in the sight of God or in the sight of the law, but men do not like being called sinners; they resent being called sinners.

Yet, the Word of God is plain; *“all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. There’s none good, no not one. Every imagination of man’s heart is only evil continually.”*

The Scripture says, *“Christ came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief,”* that Christ died for the ungodly. But still, the Gospel, which addresses all men as sinners, guilty sinners in the sight of God, offends man’s dignity.

Secondly: The second reason why the Gospel of Christ or the Gospel of substitution is offensive is that it comes as a revelation; the Gospel comes as a divine revelation and that offends man’s wisdom.

Oh how wise and intelligent we like to feel that we are, and yet the Word of God plainly declares that the *“natural man receiveth not the things of God.”* They are not understood by them because they are *“spiritually discerned”* and he cannot understand them. Our Lord said, *“No man knoweth the father except the Son and he to whom the Son will reveal him.”*

Our Lord asked the disciples one day, *“Whom do you say that I the Son of man am?”* Peter said, *“Well; thou art the Christ the Son of the living God.”* Our Master said, *“Flesh and blood did not reveal that to you but my Father which is in heaven.”*

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So, the Gospel comes as a divine revelation and this offends the wisdom of natural men. They feel that they are wise and that they are intelligent. Yet, our Lord said; *“the Father hath hid these things from the wise and the prudent and revealed them to babes.”* The god of this world hath blinded the minds of natural men.

Then the Scripture says, *“The carnal mind, (the natural mind of man), is enmity against God. It is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed, can it be.”* So, the Gospel is a divine revelation and this is offensive. It offends the natural man’s wisdom.

Thirdly: Then the gospel of substitution, the Gospel of the atonement, the Gospel of a crucified Saviour in our place and stead offends man’s pride! If you will give man something religious to do in order to save himself, if you will give him something religious to perform in order to establish for himself righteousness, he will gladly do it.

Give him a law to keep. Give him a ceremony to observe. Give him a duty to perform and he will put forth every effort, but his pride will not let him come to God as a beggar. His pride will not let him fall in the dust at the feet of Christ and sue for mercy.

Yet, the Scripture plainly says, *“It’s not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to his mercy he hath saved us.”* The Scripture plainly says no flesh is justified by keeping the law, *“by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight.”*

Peter writes in **1 Peter 1**: *“We are not redeemed with corruptible things such as silver and gold, (works or deeds) from our vain conversation, received by tradition from our fathers but with the precious blood of Christ as a lamb without blemish and without spot.”*

The Gospel of substitution is offensive. The Gospel of works is not offensive. The Gospel of human merit is not offensive. The Gospel of self-righteousness is not offensive but the Gospel of substitution, the Gospel of divine mercy, the Gospel of free grace offends man’s pride.

Fourthly: The Gospel of sovereign mercy; what do I mean by sovereign mercy? I mean just this, God said, *“I will show mercy to whom I will show mercy. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious.”*

Man just has to obligate God. It is in the nature of the sinner, in some way, to try to obligate a sovereign God. But, when we preach the Gospel of sovereign mercy it offends man’s concept of the freedom of his own will.

God is sovereign and that is what the Scripture teaches. Listen to the Word of God: *“Who can lay anything to the charge of God’s elect; it is God that justifieth?”*

Listen to the Scripture: *“It is not of him that willeth; it is not of him that runneth; it is of God that showeth mercy.”*

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Listen to **John chapter 1**: *“To as many has received him, to them gave he the privilege to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born not of fleshly inheritance, not of the will of the flesh, not of the will of man but they are born of God.”*

But, this kind of message, the sovereign mercy of God, given to whom He will, offends man’s concept of the freedom of his own will. The Lord Jesus Christ said, *“Can I not do with my own what I will?”* The sinner wants to reverse that and he wants to say to God, *“Cannot I do with myself what I will?”*

The Lord has sovereign power over all creatures. When our Lord prayed in **John 17**, He said, *“Father; thou hast given me authority over all flesh that I should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given me.”*

When our Lord was down in Nazareth; you will find the record of this event in the **4th chapter of Luke**. He was preaching to a host of religious people, people who felt they were God’s people, people who felt they had a corner on God.

This was Israel and they felt that God was obligated to them. Our Lord stood before that congregation of Israelites and He said; (listen to me; I am going to tell you the truth), *“there were many widows in the land of Israel in the days of the prophet but God fed none of them.”*

He chose to feed a Gentile, a widow of Sarepta and He said as He continued; *“there were many lepers in the land of Israel, in the days of the prophet; God healed none of them, but he chose to heal a man who was a gentile by the name of Naaman of Syria.”*

That crowd grew so angry that *“they rose up and thrust him out of the building and led him out to the brow of a cliff, a hill in which their city was built and would have cast him off head long.”* What offended them?

Our Lord said; *“I will be merciful to whom I will be merciful. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious.”* God is not obligated to us in any way except to show justice. God is only obligated to be just. He will be just and He can be merciful. He will be righteous and He can be gracious.

One day our Lord came down from the mountain and a leper ran to meet him. The Scripture says, *“The leper, fell down and worshipped the Master and looked up and said, Lord; if you will, you can make me clean, if you will.”*

My friend; that is true, if He will, He can make you clean. If He will, He can save your soul. If He will, He can put away your guilt but it is His will and not yours in which it depends. *“It is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth but of God that showeth mercy.”*

So, Paul says; *“I am not ashamed.”* He declares in plain terms; *“I am not ashamed of the gospel”* (which addresses all men as sinners, though it offends their dignity). *“I am not ashamed of the gospel”* (which comes as a divine revelation, though it offends men’s wisdom).

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“I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ crucified,” (a definite atonement, a definite sin-offering and sacrifice, though it offends man’s pride).

I am not ashamed of free and sovereign grace, though it offends man’s concept of the freedom of his will. The will is free to do what it will. The will is free to act according to its nature but our nature is evil and sin. Christ said, *“You will not come to me that you might have life.”*

Paul is stating this; *“I am not ashamed of the gospel”* enforces upon us this warning. Evidently, there is a danger, evidently there is a danger to those who have heard the Gospel and who have believed the Gospel and who have received the Gospel themselves, to yield to the pressures of this world.

Evidently, there is a temptation, there is a danger of even of those who believe the Gospel to yield to the pressures of the world and be ashamed of the Gospel. That is the reason he keeps saying, *“I am not ashamed of the gospel; I am not ashamed of the gospel.”*

That is why he said to the Corinthians; *“I am determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified. I am determined.”*

In **2nd Timothy 1:8** he warns Timothy, perhaps Timothy was his favorite, perhaps Timothy was his son in the ministry. Perhaps his mantle fell upon Timothy. Here he is warning this young man, he says; *“be not thou, therefore, ashamed of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Don’t you be ashamed of the gospel.”*

Evidently, the pressures of the world and the pressures from the religious groups, and all of the sorts of pressures brought to bear upon the minister of Christ or upon the people of Christ that they might yield to being ashamed of the Gospel.

In **2nd Timothy 1:12**, right after this, he restates his position. He says to Timothy; *“Now, don’t you be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord.”* He says, *“I suffer persecution; nevertheless, I am not ashamed.”* Here he is saying it again; *“I am not ashamed.”*

Don’t you be ashamed; I am not ashamed; *“I know whom I have believed and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.”*

And then on down three or four verses, in **verse 16** he compliments a man named Onesiphorus and he says this about him; *“he was not ashamed.”*

In **Mark 8:38**, our Lord warns us, he says this; *“Whosoever, therefore, shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this sinful and adulteress generation, of him shall the son of man be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his father with the holy angels.”*

Paul summed the whole matter up in **Galatians the 6th chapter, verse 14**, when he said; *“God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. I am not ashamed of the*

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gospel of God.” It is God’s Gospel, it is not man’s Gospel and it is not my Gospel, it is God’s Gospel.

I am not ashamed of God’s Gospel because He planned it and He purposed it. I am not ashamed because He executed it. He sent His son into the world and He applied it. *“God who separated me from my mother’s womb was pleased to reveal his Son in me.”*

He sustains it; *“We are kept by the power of God through faith (and he will perfect it), for he is able to raise our vile bodies (in that great day) and make them like unto his own body. I am not ashamed of the gospel of God, for it is the Gospel concerning his Son.”*

Jesus Christ is the sum of it, He is the essence of the Gospel, He is the substance of the Gospel, He is the Saviour and He is the only High Priest and the great Mediator: *“And of God Jesus Christ is made unto us (all that we need), wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.”* He is the Gospel; the Gospel is concerning God’s Son.

Over here in the **Book of Colossians** it says, *“In Christ dwelleth all the fullness of God, the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and you are complete in Christ. I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.”*

Then, Paul gives us, and I want to take the time today to give you these four things. He gives us four reasons. I want you to listen carefully to them. If you would like to, write them down. Write down these four things or follow me in your Bible in **Romans 1:16, 17, 18, and 19**. He gives four reasons why he is not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

First of all: He says, *“I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ (for that Gospel, that Gospel which addresses all men as sinners, that Gospel of divine revelation, that Gospel of the sin-offering, of the sin-offering, a sacrifice, a Substitute, a Mediator, that Gospel of God’s sovereign mercy) is the power of God unto salvation.”*

Why is it the power of God? The word *“power”* there means dynamite; it is the dynamite of God, it is the power of God. This Gospel is the *“power of God unto salvation.”*

Why?

First of all it is because it is the sacrifice of Christ presented in the Gospel which enables God to be *“both just and justifier of them who believe in Christ.”* All sacrifices in the Old Testament, the sacrifices of the lamb and the rams and so forth, and the sheep and so forth; all of those sacrifices were directed toward God.

The lamb was slain before the Lord. The ram was slain before the Lord. The bullock was slain before the Lord. The blood was poured out upon the altar before the Lord because God almighty must have a sacrifice.

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All of those lambs, bullocks, and so forth, were pictures of Christ. So, Christ's sin-offering and Christ's sacrifice and Christ's atonement is before the Lord. It is in order that God's justice might be satisfied.

Our Lord came down here and obeyed the law that the law might be honored and He died on the cross that God's justice might be satisfied. So, this Gospel is the "*power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth*" because it honors God's law, because it satisfies God's justice, because it enables a holy God to be true to His divine attributes and pardons guilty men.

Then, not only has that, but the Word of the Gospel begets life; that's right, begets life in the dead sinner. James wrote this: "*Of his own will beget he us with the word of truth.*" Peter said this; "*We are begotten again, not with corruptible seed, but with the incorruptible seed* (which is the Word of God)."

It's the Word of God that awakens, the Holy Spirit using the Word of God. It is the Word of God that convicts men of sin. It's the Word of God that shuts men up to the mercy of God in Christ. It is the Word of the Gospel that begets faith in the sinner's heart.

"Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. But, how shall they call on him in whom they have not believed and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard and how shall they hear without a preacher?"

So, Paul says; "*I am not ashamed of the Gospel; (it is essential, it is imperative; it is absolutely necessary because the Gospel) it is the power of God unto salvation.*"

It is that Word of the Gospel that quickens dead sinners, that begets faith that leads sinners to look to Christ. It is the Gospel that justifies God, enables God to be just and justifier.

It is the Gospel that opens blind eyes, that unstops deaf ears, that softens hard hearts, that sets free the captive, that calls men to Christ. So, I say with Paul today; "I am not ashamed of the Gospel either. It is the power of God unto salvation."

Secondly: Look at **verse 17:** He says, "*I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ because, therein, (that is in the Gospel), is the righteousness of God revealed (or the holiness of God).*"

Paul is not talking here, of God's personal, essential, righteousness and holiness; "*God is holy;*" God is holy and we know that he is holy. The Word says He is holy. He has revealed Himself as holy.

His essential and personal holiness is revealed in the Gospel but almighty God is revealing here in the Gospel that holiness and that righteousness which He has been pleased to give to sinners through the sacrifice and obedience of His Son. That is the holiness we are talking about.

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Our Lord Jesus Christ said this to His disciples; *“Except your righteousness, (your holiness, exceed the holiness of the best men on this earth), the Scribes and the Pharisees; you won’t enter the kingdom of heaven.”*

Well, that holiness, that righteousness, is revealed right here in this Gospel. The Scripture says, *“Without holiness no man will see the Lord.”* We don’t have that kind of holiness by nature. We don’t have that holiness in this flesh; *“in the flesh dwelleth no good thing; in the flesh no man can please God.”*

Still, it is true; without holiness no man will see the Lord. So, where can I find this holiness? It is revealed in the Gospel. That is what he is saying here; *“I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for, therein, in the gospel, is the righteousness of God revealed, (the holiness of God).”* Not God’s essential, personal holiness, but the righteousness of God which is Christ, which is imputed to sinners, which is reckoned to our account, which is given to us through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Listen to some Scriptures: **Galatians 4:** *“In the fullness of the time, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law.”*

That is why He came; that is why He was made of a woman, why He became a man, why He was made under the law, to redeem us, to give us holiness, to give us acceptance with God.

Listen to this Scripture: *“Christ is the end of the law, (the goal or consummation of the law), to everyone that believeth, for righteousness.”*

Christ is our righteousness. Listen to this: *“By the disobedience of Adam we became sinners. By the obedience of Christ we are made righteous.”*

Listen to this Scripture in **2nd Corinthians 5: 21:** *“He was made sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”*

So, Paul says; *“I am not ashamed of the gospel,”* (substitution, the Gospel of grace) for right there in that Gospel (not in the law, the law didn’t reveal our righteousness or works that God will accept) it is in the Gospel; that is where it is revealed, the holiness of God, the righteousness of God for sinners.

It might be considered in three ways: When God purposed it! He purposed it *“from the foundation of the world.”* When God provided it, when Christ came into the world and when God revealed it, when He revealed it in us and to us and made us partakers by faith of his righteousness *“that he might be just and justifier of all who believe on Christ.”*

Why did Christ come to the world? Why did he live here 33 years? Why did He die on a cross in the flesh? He did it that we might have a perfect righteousness, not that righteousness which we have worked out but which He worked out by His obedience. Do you see what I am saying? It is in the Gospel which that holiness is revealed.

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Thirdly: Paul, in **verse 18** says; *“I am not ashamed of the Gospel for therein is the wrath of God revealed*

Now, the wrath of God is revealed in the sentence of death upon Adam; I know that, when God cast him out of the garden. The wrath of God is revealed in the flood when He sent judgment upon the whole world; I know that.

The wrath of God is revealed in the fires of Sodom and Gomorrah; I know that. My friend, nowhere; I don't believe that you can find anywhere that the wrath of God is revealed against sin any more than Calvary.

At Calvary, there God spared not His own Son. His Son was not dying on that cross for His own sins; He had no sin. He was bearing our iniquities, our transgressions, our guilt, our sicknesses, our sorrows, and our grief.

He was bearing our sins as a substitute and God's wrath and judgment fell upon Him in unparalleled grief; God spared not His Son. I say that at Calvary is a clear demonstration of God's wrath against sin.

Will God punish sin? You may say, “Well, He did it.” He did it in the flood, He did it in the cities of the plains, and He did here and there on Jerusalem in 70 A D. Yes, and He punished sin at Calvary in Christ crucified.

Calvary is a greater proof and a better example of the judgment and wrath of God, for there He spared not His own Son. I am not ashamed of the Gospel; in the Gospel is the wrath of God revealed.

Fourthly: In closing, **verse 19:** *“I am not ashamed of the gospel for that which may be known of God is manifested in them.”*

How can I know God? The disciples asked that question. They said to the Master; *“Show us the Father.”* The Master said, *“Have I been so long time with you and yet you don't know me? He that hath seen me hath seen me hath seen my Father.”*

He that hath seen Christ with eyes of faith recorded in the Word, revealed by the Holy Spirit has seen the Father.

Will God show mercy to sinners? Christ was merciful. He said, *“He came to seek and to save sinners. He came to call not the righteous but sinners to repentance.”* Will God show mercy to guilty sinners? Will God show grace? *“Can he be clean that is born of a woman?”*

“How can man be just with God?” This is all revealed in the Gospel. He can be just with God in the person of a substitute, in the person of one who died in his stead, and in the person of one

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who obeyed perfectly God's divine and holy law, imputing onto that sinner a righteousness with which God will be pleased.

So, this is what Paul is saying: "*I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, (though he was crucified), for it is the power of God to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. In that gospel is the righteousness, (the holiness of God revealed).*" That's where it is manifested, right there in the Gospel.

In that Gospel we see the wrath and judgment of God. In that Gospel all that may be known of God is manifested to His elect!