

THEME: Witnessing - Not Ashamed Of The Gospel (Its Polarizing Affect)

There is no salvation apart from knowledge

God is continually brining me back to the simplicity of Romans 1:16, *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."* That which we are not ashamed of is *"the gospel"*. The gospel cannot be separated from knowledge. In the New Covenant church age, salvation cannot be separated from specific truths, specific knowledge gained only from the holy, eternal, inerrant, written Word of God. To say we are not ashamed of the gospel is to say we are not ashamed of presenting the plan of salvation clearly from the Word of God. No one can be saved as by a cataclysmic event. No one can be saved by an angelic appearance or a so called apparition of Jesus. No one can be saved by an ecstatic or spiritist emotional experience. Man's salvation is inseparable from the facts of the gospel as revealed in God's holy, eternal, inerrant, written Word. True, once the gospel has been clearly presented God often uses cataclysmic events to bring men to themselves as in the case of the prodigal son but these events can only save men when they turn them to the saving knowledge of Christ as previously presented or taught. An emphasis on the spectacular individual event makes it all too easy for the world (and even the church) to marginalize the universal truths of the gospel, which is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes. The gospel is not "my story", the gospel is not "your story", *"for what we preach is not ourselves but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants fro Jesus sake."* (II Corinthians 4:1) Our duty as witnesses is the content of the gospel not a one act biographical monologue.

Romans 1:16 deals not only with presentation but also with content

When I first memorized Romans 1:16 I leapt to the conclusion that the shame of the gospel came solely from the shyness or embarrassment of speaking up. I have learned over the years that this is not necessarily true. Some very bold extroverts who regularly engage others in Christian religious and philosophical discussions are never-the-less ashamed of the gospel and rarely bring it up. They do this for a number of reasons...

Some are ashamed because of the polarizing effects of the gospel

Early in the game they discovered that sharing Christ from the Word of God simply is not practical in that it is blatantly offensive to many people. How do you go about telling people devoted to thier religion that they are not only wrong but that they are going to Hell. Not only this but it is caustic. Sharing verses from the Bible and doing it the "old fashioned gospel way" truly upsets people. They get angry, they get offended, using the Bible and all that fire and brimstone stuff is counter productive. Last but not least many are offended at having the Bible out or quoting the Bible out loud. It is more than simply embarrassing in a rural, parochial sort of way, it is down right offensive to some. When it comes right down to it, it is just an embarrassment to all involved.

The problem with having a problem with the polarizing affects of the gospel is that this polarization is part of the prophetic will of God. To make the gospel inoffensive is to make the gospel something other than what it is. True, we do not make the gospel offensive, but equally true we do not fix it so that it does not offend. The gospel stands on its own. To some it will be the fragrance of life, to others the stench of death but it does not need to be fixed, rather it needs to be boldly presented.

It is the authors prayer that in doing these daily quiet times alone with God that the disciple will no longer be ashamed of the polarizing affects of the gospel. That he will come to see this as part of the prophetic will of God. That he will embrace the truth of Jesus teaching that *"if they persecute Me they will persecute you"*. Jesus never used a wrong illustration. Jesus never spoke out of turn. Jesus never came on too hard nor too soft. Jesus was never off queue nor out of sync. Jesus was never out of touch with His listeners. In fact of all the witnesses ever to live Jesus was the only perfect one, the only one to do it right every time and all the time. Yet Jesus was soundly rejected, persecuted and killed. We are not going to be able to do a better job at this witness thing than Jesus. The danger is, that if we do not accept the polarizing aspect of the gospel as part of its divine nature we will begin to soften, change and even extract those aspects which we deem to be part of the problem.

Rev. John S. Mahon
Grace Community Int.
07.15.09 - Nairobi, Kenya

QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD*JEREMIAH 15:16***THEME: Witnessing – Not Ashamed of the Gospel (It's Polarizing Affect)****PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Matthew 10:16-23****How does this passage relate to the theme?****When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:****How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?****PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Matthew 10:24 – 33****How does this passage relate to the theme?****When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:****How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?****PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Matthew 10: 34 – 39****How does this passage relate to the theme?****When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:****How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD

JEREMIAH 15:16

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PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Matthew 24:9 – 12; Mark 13:9 – 13; Luke 21:12 - 17

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Luke 6:22 & 23 & 26

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Matthew 5:11 – 16 (:11 & 12)

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD*JEREMIAH 15:16***THEME: Witnessing – Not Ashamed of the Gospel (It's Polarizing Affect)****PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: John 6:41 - 66****How does this passage relate to the theme?****When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:****How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?****PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: John 15:18 & 19; I John 3:13****How does this passage relate to the theme?****When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:****How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?****PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: John 15:20 & 21****How does this passage relate to the theme?****When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:****How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD*JEREMIAH 15:16***THEME: Witnessing – Not Ashamed of the Gospel (It's Polarizing Affect)****PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: John 15:22 – 27****How does this passage relate to the theme?****When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:****How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?****PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: John 16:1 – 4****How does this passage relate to the theme?****When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:****How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?****PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: John 16:5 – 11, 33****How does this passage relate to the theme?****When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:****How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

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PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Acts 14:1 – 22 (:4, 21 & 22)

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Acts 17:22 – 34 (:32); II Timothy 3:12

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: II Corinthians 2:14 – 17 (:16)

How does this passage relate to the theme?

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