

Not Ashamed of the Gospel

Preacher: Joe R

Date: May 10, 2026

Church: 16th Avenue Gospel Chapel

References: Romans 1, Romans 1:1; Romans 1:9; Romans 1:11-12; Romans 1:14-16; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 6:14; Matthew 28:19-20; Romans 10:17; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Zechariah 3:2; Psalm 40:2

Maybe just initially I should say thank you for your prayers regarding my own physical needs. Things are progressing and I certainly appreciate your thoughts and prayers. Being Mother's Day, I just thought prior to coming on—and that is that it would appear that the women who followed the Lord Jesus were the last ones at the cross or among the last ones at the cross. It is quite evident that they were the first at the tomb to herald His resurrection to others. Everywhere the gospel has gone, motherhood, womanhood have been exalted and appreciated. And I just want to say this morning to all of you mothers, thank you for your sacrifice, for your love for the Lord Jesus, for your love for your family, for your children, and all of us men who know and love the Lord bless you and exalt you because the Lord has exalted womanhood and motherhood, and we stand with the Lord in that regard.

Now, let's take our Bibles and turn to **Romans chapter 1**, please. Romans chapter 1. I believe the gospel is mentioned—I believe 11 times. I'm not exactly sure about that, but somewhere in that neighborhood in the book of Romans. Now, I've heard from early on in my Christian life as a new believer, I heard that the book of Romans could also be called the Gospel of Romans. And I believe it to be true. It is probably the number one book in the New Testament that has identified and promoted the gospel, probably more than any of the other books in the New Testament. It's certainly one that has been preached on, appreciated, and loved; written about and promoted by mouth all over the world today.

And I'm just going to focus this morning on the first 16 verses for our thought and our devotion this morning. The word gospel in those first 16 verses appears four times. Let me point them out to you. Verse 1:

[Romans 1:1 NKJV] - Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God

Verse 9:

[Romans 1:9 NKJV] - For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers,

Verse 15:

[Romans 1:14-16 NKJV] ¹⁴ I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to wise and to unwise. ¹⁵ So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also. 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.

Four times in those 16 verses the gospel is mentioned. Now, the word gospel—we know this—means **good news**. And certainly it is good news that Christ died for our sins, that He was buried, and that He was raised again the third day. Just a note about that: when we are sharing the gospel, **don't stop with death**. Make sure you get the resurrection in. It is the capstone to the gospel.

Now, if we said verse 1 talks about being separated to the gospel, verse 9 talks about serving in the gospel, verse 15 talks about sharing the gospel—preach sharing the gospel—and verse 16, not ashamed of the gospel. Let's briefly this morning look at that little four-point outline.

Separated to the Gospel

The first consideration is that Paul says that he's separated to or unto the gospel. Now, if you're separated to something—bear with me now—you are separated **from** something. And that indeed is the good news: that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins, was buried and rose again the third day, is the gospel message. When that gospel message is appreciated and put into practice by faith—that is, we see ourselves in need of that message—we reach out by faith. We trust Christ as our Savior. An amazing thing happens you don't even know about: you're separated unto the gospel at that point.

Now, Paul would explain this a little later in **1 Corinthians chapter 12**. For time, we're not going to turn there. But in verse 13, it talks about:

[1 Corinthians 12:13 NKJV] - For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body--whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free--and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

Okay, what is that? Well, that's not water baptism. That's **spirit baptism**. That verse tells us that all believers are baptized into the body. If you can think about it this way: when you trust Christ as your Savior, you're taken out of your old position, which was in Adam, sinful and separated from God, and placed into your new position in the body of Christ. He's chosen a place for you. The Holy Spirit's given you gifts. God has appointed you a place in that body. And my whole point in reminding you of that is you have a **new position**. You've been sanctified. You've been set apart. You've been taken out of your old position and placed into your new position.

The word separated comes from the same word, sanctified or set apart for God. And when we trust the Lord Jesus, when we believe the gospel message, not only are we separated to Him, placed into Him, our new position, but bear with me: we're taken out of our old position. We're no longer in Adam. We're now **in Christ**. And so we are separated unto the gospel. Paul would write again in Galatians that we have been separated from the world and unto the Lord. Crucified—the word that he uses there in **Galatians 6:14**:

[Galatians 6:14 NKJV] - But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

Crucified, put to death. The world is put to death to me and I'm put to death to the world. New position, new life, new creation.

[2 Corinthians 5:17 NKJV] - Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

Serving in the Gospel

Now let's talk about verse 9 for a moment. He talks about serving. I like the progression of verse 9 after verse 1 for serving. Several reasons. One in particular, salvation—that is, sins

forgiven, new life in Christ, guaranteed of heaven, abundant life on earth—all of these things. That's not the end. That's not it. It's not like, "Oh, finally I'm saved and I got saved and that's the end." No, that's just the **beginning**.

You see, God has created us in Christ Jesus to serve Him. If He gave you a gift, which He did; if He's placed you into the body, which He has; in the place you can exercise that gift, which He has; and you're still here—guess what? He wants you to **serve Him**. You have the privilege. This is not something that we've got to do as Christians. This is a privilege to serve the Lord.

So you might say, "Well, I'm not a preacher." That's okay. If we were all preachers, who would we be preaching to? You know what I'm getting at. So we all have different gifts. We all have different parts in the body. But we've been created to serve Him, to be subject to Him in a good way, to show Him reverence and honor and appreciation. It is our privilege to serve the **best of masters**.

You say, "Well, I'm not a preacher. I'm not a Sunday school teacher. I'm just an ordinary Christian." Good for you. Wonderful. Because in the passage where Paul mentions serving Him in verse 9 and following, I want you to notice that the first thing he mentions in the sphere of serving the Lord is—are you ready? **Prayer**. Hey, now don't tell me you can't pray. Oh, you may not be publicly praying, but you can have a ministry of prayer. You know people, you can pray for them. You have loved ones, you can pray for them. You have neighbors, you can pray for them. You have grandchildren and children, you can pray for them.

You say, "Well, I'm a shut-in, I can't get out, I don't mingle." That's okay, you make a list. You know people, you write it down, you put it on your list. I wish—now I'm gonna do the—here's my prayer list. You see that scribbling on that prayer list on the front? A grandchild did that. Yeah. They got a hold of my prayer list and they just went like this on my prayer list. I have to have lists like that, a list that reminds me to pray for people. But you serve the Lord by praying. He's given you one of the greatest privileges in serving Him by praying. You can do that anytime, anywhere—eyes open, eyes closed. I was going to say driving your car—**don't close your eyes**—but riding your bike, you could do. Prayer is available. It's probably one of the Christians' most neglected resources. And I'd be the first to raise my hand to say, I don't pray enough. But it's available and it's there: prayer.

And then as we read the other verses following that, he talks about coming to them. He talks about a longing to see them. Dear friends, do you have a burden for your brothers and sisters in Christ? Do you make every effort? She says, "Well, I can't drive. I can't get there." Do you have a phone? Do you have an email? Can you still write a letter? Can you put a stamp on it? However you can connect with your brothers and sisters in Christ. Are you

listening? **That's serving.** That's serving the Lord. And we do it happily to encourage others.

You'll notice he says in verse 11:

[Romans 1:11-12 NKJV] ¹¹ For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established-- ¹² that is, that I may be encouraged together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.

Of course, Paul wanted to teach them. If you have a gift in that area, then you teach. You exhort. Maybe you have a gift of mercy or a gift of grace or a gift of hospitality. Whatever He gives you to do, you do. You say, "Well, I can't, I'm no good at any of that. All I can do is help." Oh, come on, folks. **Help is number one on the list.** If we don't have people who just pick up the chair, sweep the floor, arrange the meetings, wash the dishes, cook the food, set up the tables—if you didn't have people that were constantly, constantly helping, you could hardly have a meeting. Somebody's done all that before you came and sat down this morning. And Paul says that is serving.

He also mentions in verse 12, encouragement. You know, sometimes all people need is a good handshake, an arm around their shoulder. "I'm thinking of you. I'm praying for you." How could you encourage someone today? Hey, some of the most humbling correspondence that I get is when I get a correspondence from someone that says, "I pray for you." And I go, "Oh, my goodness. People are praying." I know my own life. You know your own life. You know we need prayer. But it humbles us, does it not, to think that people are praying for us, and it encourages us.

Sharing the Gospel

Those are just some of the ways. There's thousands of ways to serve the Lord. Look at verse 14 and 15. Verse 14, he's a **debtor**. That is, he feels, "I owe something. I have a requirement. I have a responsibility with this gospel." Well, of course, there's the mandate. There's the Great Commission.

[Matthew 28:19-20 NKJV] ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

The Lord Jesus has said, "Go into all the world." And Paul says, "That's me. I'm a debtor to Greeks and barbarians, to wise and unwise." He said, "Every class of people, I have a responsibility. I'm a debtor to them." And he says in verse 15, "As much as in me is." You got that? Stop right there. You say, "I don't know much." You don't **have** to know much. You don't have to be able to quote all the books of the Bible. It's nice if you can. But you know you got saved. And you know how you got saved. And you've learned something since you've been saved. And Paul would put it like this: "As much as in me is." How much is in you? What do you know? You are a debtor. Can you just share what you **do** know? Don't use "I don't know anything" as an excuse not to share. Paul said he wanted to share "as much as in me is."

And then he uses the word **ready**. Could I ask you, are you ready? Ready to share the gospel. This particular word ready, Dr. Vaughn and his expository word dictionary suggest that it means ready—yes, I'm ready, I've prepared, I'm ready to do something—but it also has inherent in that word **willing and eager**.

Oh, okay. Well, "I let the evangelist do that." I don't know. No, we're not all evangelists. I got it. But we're all **witnesses**. And we need boldness in the Lord, not in ourselves. And Paul says, "As much as in me is, I am willing and eager." First part's okay. I get that. I'm willing. "Got to do it? Okay, I'm willing to do it. I want to be an obedient Christian." But are you **eager** to do it? Just remember somebody shared with you. Just remember that faith comes by hearing.

[Romans 10:17 NKJV] - So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Just remember we have the wonderful privilege to share Christ with other people. Willing and eager to preach. Just as much as in you is. Just however far you've gone, how much you know, what gift you have. Are you willing and eager?

Not Ashamed of the Gospel

And then verse 16. This is really the explanation of verse 15. This is really the reason that he's ready, willing, and eager. For a great truth, in verse 16, will overcome your fears, overcome your sense of, "I don't know enough to do enough to do anything." It'll get rid of that. It will cause you to see that the gospel is **not about you**. It's not about the way you say it. It's not about the illustrations you use. It's about the gospel itself.

Look how precise it is in verse 16. Paul says, "I'm not ashamed." That word means—bear with me—a feeling of fear that prevents a person from doing something. Do you ever think, "I should witness, I should hand out a tract, I should say something"? And then you analyze the situation and a feeling of fear that you would be numbered with the transgressors—should I say—that you would be misunderstood, that they wouldn't appreciate it, that it's just not the right time. "I don't know what to do, so I'm not going to do anything." Paul said, "I'm not like that." Because Paul says, "I realize. I realize it's not about me." He says, the reason that I'm not ashamed of the gospel is because it is the **gospel itself**, the message of Christ Himself, that has the power, not me. Not how I say it, not how I do it, but just faith comes by hearing.

Don't be afraid. Don't let a feeling of fear from the enemy intimidate you to the point that you're not willing to share the gospel. Always lean back. Always depend on the Holy Spirit and realizing that it is the gospel that is the **power of God** unto salvation. And it's to anybody that hears it. Every gospel sign out on that road preaches the message to every person that reads it. Every gospel message that's shared over a cup of coffee or over a cart in the grocery store, along a walk with a friend or in a hospital or at school or work—wherever you are. That gospel message, when given out by anyone, any child of God, is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes it, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

I think I told you this story before, but let me tell it again to you in closing. I'm sitting on a plane. Two people are sitting to my right. And I engage them in a conversation and find out they are Greeks; they're from Greece. And I said, "Oh, you're from Greece." "Yeah." I said, "You're in the Bible. Did you know that?" And he said, "No, I didn't know that." So I turned to this verse:

[Romans 1:16 NKJV] - 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.

He took that New Testament right out of my hand and held it in front of his wife and said, "We're in the Bible!" He said—well, I don't know what God's Holy Spirit did with that witness that day, but I know that they heard about the Lord Jesus. They heard the gospel of Christ that day.

Separated out to the gospel! Wonderful. Wonderful. New creation. Separated from the world; separated to the Lord. Serving in the gospel! Wonderful opportunities! Multiple gifts and areas to serve. Sharing the gospel? Are you sharing the gospel? It's your privilege, your responsibility, and you can do that and not be ashamed to do that because the power of God is in the gospel, not in us. Be encouraged, dear soul, and pray that the gospel is an intricate part of your life.

Let's pray.

Father, You have encouraged us this morning. Thank you that You took us out of a sin-sick world. You took us out:

[Zechariah 3:2 NKJV] - And the LORD said to Satan, "The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?"

You delivered us from a horrible pit:

[Psalm 40:2 NKJV]
He also brought me up out of a horrible pit,
Out of the miry clay,
And set my feet upon a rock,
And established my steps.

And then just to think You'd give us the privilege of being ambassadors for heaven for You and send us into a world to serve You and to share the gospel with others. Lord, may we never be ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes. Lord, send us away encouraged and zealous and ready to do these things for Christ's sake. Amen.