



That's a Shame

"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." (Romans 1:16)

Under some circumstances it is not wrong to be ashamed. Even our Lord and Judge will be ashamed of us when He comes in the glory of His Father and with His holy angels if we are ashamed of Him now (**Mark 8:38**).

Under some circumstances it is wrong not to be ashamed. A gambler attended a service with his wife. When he pulled his handkerchief from his pocket, his dice rolled down the aisle.

Though his wife was mortified, he laughed. There was no shame on his part for the sinful activity in which he was wont to engage, nor did he experience any embarrassment when the evidence of his sinful life manifested itself in a place, and during a period, when people had come together to worship God. Jeremiah tells of the deplorable condition of people of his day: "*Were they ashamed because of the abomination they have done? They were not even ashamed at all; They did not even know how to blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; At the time that I punish them, They shall be cast down,*' says the **LORD**" (**Jeremiah 6:15**).

We Should Be Ashamed

We should be ashamed of sin in our lives. Sin grieves the heart of God (**Genesis 6:6**). We should be ashamed of the works of the flesh, that which closes heaven to those who are guilty: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like (**Galatians 5:19-21**). Yet people, sometimes even members of the church, engage in these sinful, soul-destroying practices without shame, apparently without any compunction of conscience.

We should be ashamed of sin even in our past lives. Paul asked the Roman Christians a question: "*Therefore what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is death*" (**Romans 6:21**). We can be wonderfully thankful that God has provided a way by which we can have the forgiveness of sins and become new creatures in Christ, with the old things passed away and all things become new (**2Corinthians 5:17**). At the same time one can be ashamed of his former rebellion against the will of God, when in his conduct in satisfying the appetites of the flesh, he gave more honor to Satan, the wicked prince of the world, than he did to the righteous God of heaven and earth.

It is told in story that a father was deeply concerned about the continuous misbehavior and disobedience of his child. He told the child that for every act of disobedience he would drive a nail in a post as visible evidence of misconduct. After awhile there were enough nails in the post to cause the child to feel the bitterness of remorse. The father told the child for every act of obedience a nail would be removed, and after a while all nails were removed. But the child was not altogether happy because the nail scars were still evident in the post. In obedience to the

gospel every sin can be removed, but there can still be reminders of disobedience in days gone by. It is for us to be so ashamed of sin that we will try unceasingly to keep the post unscathed.

We should be ashamed of indifference. Jerusalem lay desolate. The heathen had entered into the sanctuary of the Lord. Yet the people seemed not to care, for Jeremiah asked the question: *“Is it nothing to all you who pass this way?”* (**Lamentations 1:12**). At exorbitant cost God provided the gospel, his power to save the lost when by obedience they appropriate that precious, redeeming blood of Christ; but the world, caught up in satisfying the appetites of the flesh, desires the “mess of pottage” for the day rather than the “birthright” that is for all eternity. Even in the church there is enough indifference to render meaningless the great commission of Christ to carry the gospel to every creature throughout the world.

We should be ashamed of ungodliness and division in the church. God’s people are so to conduct themselves that their lives will show forth the excellencies of him who called them out of darkness into his marvelous light (**1Peter 2:9**). Too often those who should have the mind of Christ are the leaders of the pack in worldly indulgences. The carnal mind also shows itself in strife and division within the church. Of the divided Corinthians Paul asked a question: *“For you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?”* (**1Corinthians 3:3**).

We Should Not Be Ashamed

We should not be ashamed of Christ. We cannot be ashamed of the beautiful life that He lived, of the service that He rendered to fellowman, of the death that He died and the sacrifice that He made in making possible our salvation. But He tells us that if we are ashamed of Him and His words, He will be ashamed of us when He comes in judgment (**Mark 8:38**).

We should not be ashamed of the gospel. We cannot be ashamed of one thing that it requires us to do, for everything that it requires of us is for our good. We cannot be ashamed of what it does for us in making possible the salvation of our souls (**Romans 1:16**).

We should not be ashamed of faithful servants of Christ. What attitude would people today have of a man like Stephen, whose hard preaching prompted a great persecution against the church (**Acts 7:8**). What attitude would people today have toward a man like Paul, who spent many years of his life in prison?

We should not be ashamed of being a Christian. Peter tells us that we should glorify God in this name (**1Peter 4:16**). A young man who worked at a place noted for its worldliness was asked, “Since you are a Christian, how do you get along in such a place?” His answer was, “Fine. They haven’t found that out yet.”

May we live as the faithful concerning whom it is said: *“But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them”* (**Hebrews 11:16**).