

Leverage Your Life Part 3

Not Ashamed

Romans 1:16-18

Memory Verses: *Romans 1:16*

MANUSCRIPT

Introduction (Me, We, & the Struggle)

What you show off reveals what you value. What you hide reveals what you are ashamed or want to keep secret. For example. I am not ashamed of my phone. I don't know anyone who is. Even if you have one of them boomer flip phones from the time when dinosaurs roamed the earth, you still flip it out like a rockstar. No one is ashamed of their phone. It doesn't matter if the screen is cracked or if has scratches all over it. We pull out our phone, and show it off like its a new born winning a beauty pageant.

There are many things in life we are not embarrassed of. If your kid makes the honor roll, you don't whisper it, you post about it on facebook or insta. If your team wins, you don't hold that in. Let me tell you. As far as I know there are only two die hard college basketball fans in this church. You know who I pull for. Liberty. You know who Don pulls for. NC State. And guess what. They played each other in basketball about a month ago. And let's just say it didn't go my way. The Wolf Pack beat the socks off the Flames to the tune of 40 points. Suffice to say, I wasn't feeling very good about it. But guess who was... and guess who texted me gloating. So I texted him back this... "I just thank God for the blood Jesus shed for me on the cross." You know.. saying, "its not about basketball... that isn't important." Trying to stay in the right head space. Jesus blood covers everything, even a big Liberty loss. And you know what Don writes back... I kid you not. He says, "speaking of a bloodbath." This guy has no chill. Diabolical. Why? Cause when your team wins you don't keep that to yourself... you brag about it.

Cause here's the truth: What you are proud of, you naturally put on display. You leverage dignity, pride, obnoxiousness, and cruelty... to elevate your team who just beat your friends team. **You will naturally leverage things in your life to display what you are proud of.** We leverage our lives everyday for things we believe matter; our time, our money, our social standing, our families.

But there is one thing that stands above them all; one thing worth leveraging everything for... the Gospel. The good news that Jesus Christ is God, came to earth, lived a perfect life, died a sinless death, and rose from the grave, paying the price for sin that we deserved to pay on our behalf. And that is why Paul says in **Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel for it is the power of God for salvation to**

everyone who believes..." We don't leverage our resources, our abilities, our talents, our treasures, for things we are ashamed of. We lay down our lives for things that are the most valueable most displayed things in our lives.

So what does it mean to live a Christian life according to Romans so far? It means leveraging who you are and what you've been given, for the sake of the Gospel, wherever you are or wherever God takes you! It means being Set Apart for the Kingdom of God. It means being Under Obligation to Christ our Savior. And today it means being Unashamed of His Gospel! Identity in Christ, leads to an obligation for Christ, which leads to boldness for Christ. Today's sermon is going to show us what it actually looks like to put Christ, his Kingdom, and his Gospel on display through a leveraged life.

And why do we need to hear this message today? Because if we we're honest, none of us would say we are ashamed of Jesus in theory... but are ashamed of him in practice. We say we believe the Gospel... but we hesitate to talk about it in public. We don't mind being Christian as long as we don't have to talk about Christian things. We don't want to be "one of those Christians." The ones who talk about the Gospel frequently, who ask spiritual questions, who risk awkwardness and rejection to display the Kingdom of God.

And I can say all of this... because I've been ashamed. When it comes to displaying Christ as the pinnacle of my life, I have fallen very short. There have been many times where I have felt the nudge to bring the eternal into the mundane and I've settled for keeping the status quo. Comfort over courage.

One time is crystal clear to me. We were newly married in our first home and I was a very young minister with a day off. On this day off we had scheduled Lowes to deliver and install our brand new storm door on the front of our house. The guy came in and I sat on the couch and watched him start to install the door, and the Spirit spoke to me as clear as I can hear you speak now; "share the Gospel with Him." "Let him know about me." And instead of being obedient to minister I fell back into shame and fear. That man walked out of my house, and as far as I know, into eternity without having heard the Gospel. Why? Because I got nervous and scared and ashamed!

And that moment has stayed with me my entire adult life. And I swore that day, that I will never let that happen again. Everytime there is an opening to begin a relationship or share a spiritual conversation with someone... I am set apart, and under obligation, to share the Gospel. I must not, we must not... be ashamed! The main point this morning is simple... **If the Gospel is powerful enough to save you, it's important enough to be shared by you!** Today I want to quickly give you three reasons why you should boldly proclaim the Gospel no matter what.

Teaching (Expand on the Problem, God)

First, We Boldly Proclaim the Gospel Because This World Is Broken.

Let's look at **vs17**. The Gospel reveals the righteousness of God. Righteousness simply means right-ness. What is right, good, and true. There is a right way and a wrong way. There is a good and perfect way and there is an evil and depraved way. There is truth and there is deceit.

When I was little and I was asked to do a chore by my mother I would often do as poor of a job as possible. So my mother began to give me a little caveat with my chores. She would say, "you can do it your way... or you can do it the right way... do it the right way." And here's the truth... humanity has taken the perfect world that God has created and instead of doing things the right way...we did it our way.

Now everything we see, hear, taste, touch, and experience... is in a state of unrighteousness. Our world is not right... it's turned upside down. We are very east of Eden. We are as far from the Garden as we can possibly be. This world is not God's design... its a corrupted, damaged, and broken version of it. You feel this. Everytime you turn on the television, or look up social media on your phone, or talk with your friends. You see the brokenness all around you. Divorce, homelessness, addiction, racism, political division, rampant sexual perversions, murders, gang violence, domestic violence, wars, terrorism... You get it... we live in a broken world.

And you try to fix it in broken ways. Drugs and alcohol to take away the pain. Sex and relationships to fill the longing in our hearts. Money to give us status. Entertainment to remove responsibility. But the more we try to fix it the more broken we make it. Everything this world does to make itself feel better... only leads to more pain and destruction.

So what does the world need? The righteousness of God. The Gospel gives us the **righteousness** to fix the **wrongness** of this world. The original design to fix this distored and damaged world. And so the Gospel is the repair. For in the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the righteousness of God through faith. Think of it like this. You can't expect someone who has never been trained in car repair to be able to repair a car. If you ask them to repair your car they will be out there for days and weeks and when you get the car back it will be worse than it was before. But what if you gave them a supernatural ability to download an entire car mechanic manual and all the skills to do the job? We don't have the ability to be righteous. But when we accept the Gospel... that ability, the Holy Spirit, is downloaded into our soul and we can now replace the brokeness with the righteousness of Christ.

Look at **2 Corinthians 5:21** and **Philippians 3:9**. We can't expect the world to heal itself without the ability to do so. They need the righteousness that can only come through the Gospel. **If the Gospel is**

powerful enough to save you, it's important enough to be shared by you!

Secondly, **We Boldly Proclaim the Gospel Because God's Wrath Is Real and Time Is Short.** Let's look at **vs18**. Why is righteousness so important? Because God's wrath is poured out on all unrighteousness. It's not just that our world is broken... its also scheduled for obliteration. Every single person on earth is scheduled for eternal destruction because of their ungodliness. We are doomed and time is running out.

You say, "well that's not fair. Why is God such a rageaholic?" And this is something that we will probably never really understand. God is not full of rage because we messed up his world or because we don't do everything he wants. It's not like a husband who beats his wife cause she burned the dinner. No, God's wrath and judgment are holy. God's wrath is in direct correlation to the injustice of our sin. God loves us... but he can't allow us to oppose him. He is a holy God. He demands a holy righteousness.

Let me try to make it make sense. If I let my kids disobey me then what happens? They grow up broken don't they. They grow up spoiled and unready for the world. They may even fall into extreme danger and be unprepared. I must discipline them and give them consequences so they learn to live correctly. God has to give us discipline and consequences or we would never live correctly. But again, you say... isn't eternal destruction a bit too much. We can't learn to live correctly if we are damned and condemned forever. Well the consequences are always bigger depending on the circumstances of the crime. Wreckless driving might get you a suspended license. Dealing drugs might get you parole or some time in jail. Murder equals life in prison or the death penalty. Rejecting Christ equals hell. Why? Cause God is the highest, Christ is the greatest, and sin is the worst! I often use this illustration to make this point. In the middle ages if you didn't bow before a squire or knight... nothing happened. You were just considered rude. But if you didn't bow before the Queen or King... you got your head chopped off. You can't simply choose to not bow before God and get a slap on the wrist.

The bottom line is this... **We must boldly preach the Gospel because our silence has eternal consequences.** Look at **John 3:36**. Without the Gospel, the wrath of God remains on humanity. The Gospel matters because eternity is at stake! **If the Gospel is powerful enough to save you, it's important enough to be shared by you!**

Lastly, **We Boldly Proclaim the Gospel Because It's Our Only Hope.** Let's look again at **vs16**. The Gospel of Christ is the Power for salvation for everyone who believes. There is power here! Power for what... for righteousness, power to escape God's wrath, power to have faith, power

for salvation! And the power is not just in the words. There is supernatural power working in the heart of the hearer. You aren't doing this on your own. The Holy Spirit is working as hard or harder than you are. **The Gospel, given by Christ, spoken by men, and nurtured by the spirit, is impossible to ignore.** It either must be accepted or rejected... it cannot be neglected.

And so you have a responsibility... an obligation. You can't idly stand by and watch people slip into hell and casually shrug. If you can do that I dare say the Spirit of God is not in you and the Gospel has not saved you. Rather, those who have been saved by the Gospel recognize their need to share it! If it saved you... it can save them!

Think of it like this... Zombie movies have been a big thing for like two decades now. It's like living in a world where everyone has been infected with a zombie disease that has altered their brains, closed their minds off to their humanity and replaced it with animal instincts... this is what verse 18 says has happened by the way. And in time they will all perish from it. But you have the cure. You were a zombie but you found the cure, took it, and are free.

Are you simply going to hold onto the cure? Or are you going to do everything you can to save as many as you can? **This is the purpose of your life. Do everything you can to save as many as you can. If the Gospel is powerful enough to save you, it's important enough to be shared by you!**

Application

So here's the question; have you been quiet when God has called you to speak? What conversations have you avoided? What name and face has God put in your mind that you have failed to share the Gospel with? Are you willing to say no more! I will no longer be ashamed of the Gospel. I will share it with whoever I can whenever I can for as long as I can! Will you leverage your life to get the cure to the world? This week just take one bold step of faith. Say the name of Jesus boldly. Share your story clearly. Invite someone who is broken to meet the one who can put them back together again.

Conclusion

Let me share one last thing to make the final point... Fire Alarms are annoying. You've been in classrooms for fire drills or in buildings where someone was doing a prank and set off the fire alarm. Or in your house when the smoke alarm goes off when you are cooking bacon. Its loud and annoying and you will do almost anything to turn it off. But... have you ever been in a building where the alarm is going off and there actually is a fire? No one gives a rip about that alarm in that instance do they? When there are flames, no one cares about the alarm, and no one

is trying to turn it off. They are actually thankful for the alarm because the alarm will alert people and save lives. Friends, the world is burning. When they realize they are in danger and the Gospel will save them... they won't care how often you raise the alarm... they will simply be thankful that you did. Sound the alarm. I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ because it is the power of salvation for everyone who believes!!!!**If the Gospel is powerful enough to save you, it's important enough to be shared by you!**