

REMNANT CHURCH SERMON NOTES – ROMANS 1: 16
PREACHED ON OCTOBER 5, 2025 BY REV. B.B. ANUM-HIGHER

14 I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish. 15 That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are in Rome. **16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.** Romans 1:14-16

➤ **INTRODUCTION**

- Last week, Paul challenged us to take the gospel seriously by sharing it with our friends, family, neighbors, classmates, coworkers, and others. He told us that he was eager to preach the gospel because he was a debtor of the gospel of Jesus Christ. He understood that he had been given the gospel, not to keep for himself, but to share it with others. He wrote: “14 I am a debtor both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish. 15 That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are in Rome.” Romans 1:14-15
- Paul gave two main reasons why he was eager to preach the gospel of Christ in verses 16 and 17 of chapter 1. We will examine the first reason today, and, Lord willing, the second the following week. This is Paul’s reason number 1 for being eager to preach the gospel: Romans 1: 16

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.

- If you were to ask, Apostle Paul why are you so eager to preach the gospel of Christ, this would be his response: I am eager to preach the gospel for I am not ashamed of this gospel and the reason I am not ashamed of this gospel is that “it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.”
- We will consider this verse under 4 headings.

➤ **FIRST - FOR I AM NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL**

- This is not the first time Paul has used this word. He wrote to his spiritual son Timothy, telling him not to be ashamed of the gospel.

8 So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me His prisoner. Rather, join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God. 2 Timothy 1:8

- **Was Paul concerned that some believers, even a pastor like Timothy, might be ashamed of the gospel?**

- Paul knew from experience that the gospel is a stumbling block to the religious people, the Jews. The gospel caused the Jews to sin. However, to the Greeks, the educated people, it is foolishness to believe such a message.

“but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles” 1 Corinthians 1:23

- At the time Paul wrote this letter, the Christians were despised because they claimed that Jesus, the crucified Messiah, is Lord and not Caesar. Julius Caesar, the leader of the Roman Empire, was a political and military genius who was seen as a god. People declared, Caesar is Lord. The gospel was highly controversial at this time, as it challenged the supreme authority of Caesar.
- The believers daily faced the temptation to shy away from the gospel and any association with Jesus. The gospel had caused riots in communities Paul was aware of. It has divided families, and others were in prison because of the gospel. Stephen had died because of the gospel.
- The Christians were faced with the temptation to tamper with the content of the gospel by removing the parts that offended others, the parts that brought controversy, to make it more attractive. Paul said he was not ashamed of it.
- **Why was Paul eager to preach this offensive and controversial gospel?**
- Paul, regardless of the offense the gospel brought, the controversies it generated, said he was not ashamed of the gospel because it is God’s appointed means to save sinners; it is God’s power.
- Telling people that God created the first man, Adam, without sin, but he disobeyed God and sinned. Through Adam, everyone has sinned and possesses a sinful nature that continually desires to sin. Telling them that everyone was on their way to hell but God, in His own mercy, love, and grace for mankind has offered His son to come down from heaven, took on a human body but lived a sinless life, took upon Himself our sins, and died on the cross to save us from the wrath of God, offends many people. Telling them that He resurrected on the third day, ascended to heaven, and will come back again to judge all mankind is a foolish message to many people.
- Everything about the gospel could easily offend, embarrass, and bring shame to many people, but Paul was thrilled by it, and he said, whenever I get the chance, I will preach it to others.
- Paul tells us why he wasn’t ashamed of the gospel.

➤ **SECOND – BECAUSE OF WHAT THE GOSPEL IS: THE POWER OF GOD**

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. Romans 1:16

- So, what is so special about this gospel that makes Paul so eager to preach it and not ashamed of it? Paul tells us that he is not ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of God.
- The original Greek word translated as “power” in Romans 1:16 is “dynamis.” From this word, we derive English words such as dynamite and dynamic.
- At the time Paul wrote this letter, Rome was considered the center of power in the world. Under Caesar’s rule, Rome used their incredible power to initiate numerous public works projects during his time as dictator. He implemented various economic reforms aimed at improving Rome’s financial stability and supporting its economy. However, he used his power to bring destruction to several territories and brought them under Rome. Like the people under the Roman rule, the believers were also faced with the challenge of whether to declare Caesar as Lord.
- However, Paul tells us that there is another power source in this world, and that is the gospel. What is unique about the gospel is that its power does not lead to the destruction of people who believe, but to salvation. **16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. Romans 1:16**
- Some churches that were once sound in their doctrines have now become liberal. The root cause of liberalism in the church is believers being ashamed of the gospel and they are determined to make it attractive by removing the offensive and controversial contents from it. There is a desire to please people to fit into the world, the culture of the day. However, the church of God is not a democracy, where men and women are at the center of everything. It is a theocracy, God is at the center, and He rules. God directs our worship, including the songs we sing, the selection of leaders, the content of sermons, and other aspects. The gospel is what the true church must preach because in it is the power of God.
- **How is the power of the gospel demonstrated?**
- The Bible does not describe sinners as sick people who need help to recover, but rather as dead people. Paul wrote to the Ephesian Church saying, **“As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins” Ephesians 2:1.**
- He made the same point to the Colossian believers in **Colossians 2:13: “When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins”.**
- Sinners are spiritually dead in the eyes of God. Can a dead person get up without any help? No, the dead must be assisted to resurrect. The dead person needs power from outside themselves to resurrect. The power required by dead men and women to resurrect from their spiritual death is in the gospel.
- From his own experience, Paul knew that when sinners were dead in their sins and were unable to believe, God acted through the gospel to bring the dead alive. Paul knew that only the power of the gospel resurrected him from his spiritual death. He knew that the gospel is power, so he wrote to the Corinthians saying, **“For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” 1 Corinthians 1:18**

- It is common nowadays to hear pastors give good advice from the pulpit, but there is no power in good advice. Only the gospel releases power. They tell their members: try harder, put yourself together, and get moving, and you can make it. However, when we understand the main problem of mankind, we will immediately conclude that sinners who are dead in their sins, men and women who are on their way to hell, people who are going to be judged by God and are already guilty, do not need good advice. What is good in good advice when you are in trouble, when you are in danger? In such situations, good advice is only a bunch of empty words. You need to be delivered when in trouble, not an advice.
- James illustrates perfectly the emptiness of good advice when someone is in trouble in James 2:15-16.

15 Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. 16 If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it?

- To that poor man who needed food and clothes, what good was the good advice to him: "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed"
- So, if all the church can offer hell bound sinners is good advice, then we should be ashamed of such a gospel. If all we can provide perishing people is messages on how to be wealthy and healthy, then we should be ashamed of such a gospel.
- Thanks to God, Paul tells us that the gospel as presented in the Holy Bible is not good advice to sinners who are perishing, it is not good advice to sinners who are dead and dying, it is not good advice to sinners who are hell bound.
- It is a power, a mighty power of God. It is a dynamic power that produces results. It is a power that changes lives. It is a power that transforms lives. It has the power to transform a Saul into a Paul.
- Consider this: the same God who spoke in the beginning and brought everything we see and cannot see into being, tells us that His power is in the gospel, which is Jesus Christ. In other words, the gospel is God acting in His world.
- Whenever we hear the gospel preached, whenever we read the gospel in books or the Bible, we are in the presence of a mighty power.

➤ **THIRD – BECAUSE OF WHAT THE GOSPEL DOES: IT SAVES**

- Paul was not ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of God. He now tells us that he was not ashamed of the gospel because of what the gospel does.

"16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. Romans 1:16"

- The gospel saves. It brings salvation to sinners. Two Greek words are translated as salvation in the English Bible. The first is "rhysai," which means being delivered from a temporary danger, such as a burning house. The second word is what Paul used here. "Soteria", which refers to a deliverance from the wrath of God to come. In other words, Paul says the gospel is the power of God that delivers everyone who believes from the wrath of God to come on the day of His final judgment. He explained it further in Romans 8:9 - "9 Since we have now

been justified by His blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through Him!"

- So, while the wrath of God that will be poured out on the day of judgment must be feared by unbelievers, Paul tells us that believers will be delivered from it.
- The word "Soteria," meaning salvation, is used in three tenses throughout the New Testament.
 1. In the past tense. Paul indicated in Romans 8:24 that we are saved, our salvation is secured by virtue of the finished work of Jesus on our behalf on the cross. In other words, we have been justified, even though we still struggle with sin.
 2. In the present tense. In 1 Corinthians 15:2, Paul indicated that we are being saved since we are in Christ. He is keeping and preserving us while we wait for His second coming. We are being sanctified to become more like Jesus.
 3. In the future tense. Our salvation is directly tied to our future glorification, where God will transform us from dust to glory, giving us a new imperishable body, just as Jesus' resurrected body. The glory, the righteousness we lost through Adam's fall, will be restored. "20 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body to be like His glorious body, by the power that enables Him even to subject all things to Himself." Philippians 3:20-21
- Paul was not ashamed of the gospel because the power that is in the gospel doesn't destroy us who believe, but saves us. Many things are powerful, but they can destroy us:
 - a. The coronavirus that causes COVID-19 is powerful, but it has killed over seven million people worldwide.
 - b. The German Nazi party, the totalitarian movement led by Adolf Hitler, was powerful, and it killed over six million Jews.
 - c. A missile is powerful, but it can cause significant destruction to life and property when fired.
 - The unique thing about the gospel is this: even though it is the power of God, it doesn't destroy us, but rescues us from sin. It delivers sinners from God's judgment. It brings eternal joy, hope, and security to hopeless and condemned sinners when we believe.

➤ **FOURTH – BECAUSE OF THE PEOPLE THE GOSPEL IS SENT TO**

- Paul was not ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of God. He was not ashamed of the gospel because it is the message that saves. Now, Paul tells us that he was not ashamed of the gospel because of the people to whom the gospel was sent.

"16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. Romans 1:16"

- Maricel and I scrutinize the information our children learn at school and in other groups. Recently, we opted them out of a school program because we believe that not every good message or training is appropriate for everyone.
- Securing a job as a nurse may be good news for someone with the necessary experience and training, but it may not be the case for others without a nursing degree.
- That is not the same as the gospel. Paul tells us that the gospel applies to all. **“for it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes”.**
- By God’s design, the gospel will first be shared with the Jews and then with everyone else. So, no matter your age – young or old, the gospel is good to save you. No matter your educational background – highly educated or with no formal education, the gospel is good for you. No matter your financial power – rich or poor, the gospel is good for you. No matter your religious background – biblically sound, can quote Scriptures, or an atheist with no knowledge of Scripture, the gospel is good for you. No matter your health – healthy or frequently ill, the gospel is good for you. No matter your racial background – white, black, or others- the gospel is good for you. It has a universal appeal.
- The gospel perfectly meets the needs of everyone. This means I can proclaim the gospel at work and at school, because everyone there, regardless of our diversity, will benefit from the gospel. I can share the gospel with my neighbors because it addresses the needs of every one of them. It doesn’t exclude anyone. Paul was so excited about this gospel as he wrote: **“16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. Romans 1:16”**
- Paul was such a great teacher. He wanted to make this point very clear to us, so he wrote, **“for it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.”**
- **Who were the Jews of Paul’s days?** These were the Israelites who boasted of their religious heritage, including their possession of the Ten Commandments, the Old Testament, traditions, and religious privileges, among other things. Paul tells us that the gospel also meets their needs. Religious people need the gospel just as much as everyone else.
- **Who were the Gentiles of Paul’s days?** These were non-Israelites, mostly the Greeks. The Greeks were among the most cultured, sophisticated, and highly educated people. Paul said the gospel also meets the needs of the educated. Having a PhD degree does not exempt you from God's judgment; all mankind is guilty before God, and only the gospel has the power to save.

➤ APPLICATIONS

1. Where can you find real power in the world today? Paul tells us that real power is not in the White House, it is not with President Trump, Putin, or any other world leaders. It is in the gospel of Jesus Christ. When the gospel touches your life, it brings the power of God to bear in your life.

Recently, there has been a shutdown of the government, which can render the White House helpless, a sign that real power doesn't lie with any individual in a position of power. Paul had witnessed the power of God through the gospel in his life, and he was not ashamed to make it known to us and all believers in all generations.

Have you experienced this mighty power of God in your life? Have you benefited from the power the gospel brings? As I present the gospel to you this morning, it is the power I am proclaiming to you. It is a power that won't destroy you, but bring salvation to you regardless of your background. The Bible describes hell as a place of eternal regrets, so why not believe this message now and save yourself from hell, which is described in Matthew 25 as "the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

This is the message that is so powerful that it could take guilty men and women, acquit them of their sins before God so that they can say without fear that "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" – Romans 8:1

2. The Bible presents three groups of people in the world.

a. There are those who have no connection to Jesus Christ (unbelievers).

b. The second group is those who have a formal or denominational or ecclesiastical relationship to Jesus Christ. They may be faithful in their attendance at church, have made a profession of faith, and hold leadership positions in the church, but they are described as false believers in the Bible. They profess their faith, but do not possess the faith they have professed. Some of them become false teachers and often lead their congregations down the path of liberalism, as their desire is to please men. They often lack assurance of salvation or have a false sense of assurance.

Both the first group of people who have no connection to Jesus Christ and the second group who only have a formal connection to Jesus Christ are in danger of hell. The gospel has the power to save you if you find yourself in these two groups. It is not too late to believe the gospel, but it will be too late when He returns or your die.

c. The third group has a vital connection to Jesus Christ. They have believed this gospel; they have Jesus as their Lord and Savior. They have a genuine heart of repentance and a genuine saving faith. If you are in this group, praise God, you have experienced the mighty power of the gospel. You now have to share it with others.

3. The gospel, even though it is for everyone, has a limitation. It is limited, effectual, beneficial only to those who believe."16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes".

You can be in the church all your life, until you truly believe, you won't benefit from this powerful gospel. The only way of salvation is by faith through Jesus Christ; by believing

in Jesus; by trusting in Him. So, while the gospel is for all people, it is limited to only those who believe in Jesus Christ's Person and His work for sinners. You are not outside the scope of the gospel, but you have to believe to enjoy this great salvation.

For several years after I became a Christian, I was in the second group I have described above. I served as a Christian group leader on a college campus, as a deacon, and as an elder. I planted and led a church in South Korea, despite being only formally or denominationally connected to Jesus Christ. However, a day came when God, in His mercy, led me to study the book of Romans, and all my fear of death vanished; all the good works I was counting on to save me appeared to me as filthy rags. The power of God in the gospel met my needs, and I became a born-again believer. I became vitally connected to Jesus Christ.

I recently served as a pulpit supply in a reformed church here in Pella, and before the evening service, a man came to me and expressed how the gospel had come to him almost for the first time when I preached it during the morning service. He had been in a reformed church all his life, but God's power in the gospel reached out to him on that day. I have interacted with so many pastors and Christians who are only engaged in the rituals of Christianity, but have not truly believed this gospel. They welcome Jesus as a savior but only to save them from poverty, chronic illness, loneliness, and unemployment, among other things. This biblical gospel promises to save dying men and women from sin and its consequences. Have you believed this gospel?

Caesar, despite his great power, was limited to certain parts of the world in the ancient world. President Trump's powers are limited, but the power of the gospel is international. It affects every part of the world. It saves sinners in Asia, Africa, Europe, Australia, North and South America from eternal death, sin, and hell. What a mighty power!

Julius Caesar lost his power when he was assassinated, and so will many other world leaders someday lose their power. However, the gospel's power is dynamic. It keeps working, always active. For anyone who has believed, the power of the gospel has already saved you from the penalty of sin; you are justified. It doesn't end there.

The same power is working in you now to save you from the power of sin. You are being sanctified.

Also, the same power will save you from the presence of sin in the future; you will be glorified. The believer will never lose. All his or her needs have been catered for by the power in the gospel. Why should we be ashamed to proclaim such a gospel?

Let us hear again from Jesus as we conclude: **26 Whoever is ashamed of Me and My Words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when He comes in His glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. Luke 9:26**

Being ashamed of the gospel is literally being ashamed of Jesus Christ and His power. What a fatal thing to do - to be ashamed of the owner, savior, and judge of the universe!