

Never Be Ashamed of the Gospel

September 29, 2024

Welcome to the Beamsville Church of Christ online ministry. This week's message is titled, Never be ashamed of the gospel. The scripture reading is 2 Timothy 2, 7 to 18. Thank you to Paul, Temi, and Don for being part of the video.

Welcome, Announcements, Prayer

Good morning, everybody. I'm happy you're here today. I'm glad to see each of you. As we begin our time together this morning, I have a few announcements and things to mention. I wish Happy Birthday to Kathleen this week and Happy Anniversary to Lorena and Rafael. I have opportunities to be involved up here at the front or at the back. If you want to lead singing or lead prayers, do a communion talk, share a scripture reading, be involved cleaning up the gardens or involved in the tech ministry at the back, please talk to me and we'll get you into the schedule for that. We have a few upcoming events. This week, our Wednesday evening Bible study at 7.30 in the Church Library will focus on Psalm 110 and Mark chapter 12. So that's something that I'm looking forward to.

We have a few folks who are missing from us this morning who are under the weather. We think particularly of David Lynn and Jeff and his mom, Alice, who are all feeling poorly with some respiratory issues. So we pray for their swift healing and that they'll return to us soon. We also are aware of a number of people who are mourning right now, the Graham family for Len and the Kirklands for Phyllis, the Cooks for Madeline and the Ellis and Whitfield and Smith families continue to be mourning Kendra's passing. And we continue to be aware of them in our prayers. I would invite you to stand this morning as we pray together.

Lord, it is good to be here in your presence with your people. We thank you for this great opportunity that we have to join with other people who love you here in our building and in different parts of town and all around the world. God, we are aware of this great cloud of people who are coming into your presence together today. Thank you for their hearts turned to you, their eyes lifted up to you, hands raised to you in prayer and song. That we have so many sisters and brothers everywhere in the world in different circumstances, in different levels of public availability. We are so grateful, God, that we are not alone. We know that you are always with us, but we also thank you for our church family who is gathered.

Lord, as we turn our time to praise and worship of you this morning, we ask for minds that are trained on you, eyes turned to you, ears open to listen to what you have to say. And hearts available, God, to you and to each other for encouragement and for learning, for just being in your presence, God. We thank you for the way that you have made for us and your son. It is in his name that we pray now. Amen.

Communion

John 13 verse 1. It was just before the Passover meal, fast festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. The evening meal was in progress and the devil had already prompted

Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot to betray Jesus. Jesus knew the Father had put all things under his power and they had come from God and was returning to God. So he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing and wrapped towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

He came to Simon Peter who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand." "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me." Then Lord Peter replied, "Not just my feet, but my hands and my head as well." Jesus answered, "Those who have had a bath only to wash their feet, their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you, for he knew that there was going to, there was going, there was one who was going to betray him. And that is why he said not every one of you is clean.

When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I've done for you?" he asked. "You call me teacher and Lord and rightly so, for that is what I am. But now that I, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you should also wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you no servant is greater than his master nor a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you'll be blessed if you do them."

Jesus and his disciples are sitting down for dinner. They've arrived in the upper room in someone's home. And this being old times, they aren't walking around with nice shoes. They're sitting down and in that time period they didn't have a high table with chairs. You had a low table and you kind of lounged. And your head was over here and you kind of laid with your feet out the back. And the next person next to you kind of wedged in beside of you and you're kind of like wedges all across. Which meant the unfortunate effect of the next person down somewhere, your feet were close to someone's head somewhere down the chain. And because you weren't walking around with nice shoes on in a desert sandy place with no nice air conditioning, stinky feet was a thing that had to be dealt with. And it was a custom of that era when you came in to someone's home, the lowest servant would wash the feet of the guests or the people that were coming in. Obviously it's the lowest servants job because it's not a desirable job.

In this case, it's Jesus, his disciples in the upper room sitting down for the Passover dinner. It's custom to wash the feet. Who washes feet? Well it's the lowest servants job. It's not Jesus job. Jesus as he says in the passage is their Lord and Master. If there's no lowest servant, it's one of the disciples. It's somebody else. Certainly not him and yet he does it. And he does it explicitly to show them that in Jesus' kingdom the servant, the master is the servant and we need to serve each other. And so a perfect passage for those who like to interpret text because he actually says the reason I'm doing this is blank. So you don't have to guess, which is wonderful.

He disarms Peter because Peter objects and says no I don't want to do this. This is wrong. He says nope you have to let me. And the application we knew is usually often derived from this passage is that we need to serve each other, which is good and true but to what extent? The rest of the dinner tells us what is often not brought up in the context but is relevant here. Verses 18 through 30 Jesus predicts his betrayal by Judas. Betrayal for what? Being handed over which leads to Jesus on the cross. Verse 31, 38 Jesus predicts his betrayal by Peter. Betrayal for what? While going to the cross Peter denies knowing Jesus. And it's the same meal that we know from the other gospels that this

is where Jesus shows us the Lord's Supper. A set of actions which we remember which we remember what he will do on the cross for us.

Broken bread broken like his body. A red liquid that kind of looks like blood that reminds us of his blood that was spilled for us. The actual topic of this meal where Jesus washes their feet is Jesus death burial and resurrection. But back to stinky feet central Jesus death bearing resurrection is servanthood. Jesus servanthood to us. Jesus servanthood to God. But also ours to each other. To what extent? Well he tells us by what he did. As we remember Jesus today his body broken his blood spilled for us to save us in that servanthood to God. The sacrifice he became for us. We also remember and perhaps commit to following Jesus is doing same for each other.

Jesus died for my sins for our sins. May we today accept this and live this in our lives in our personal faith journeys and be saved from our sins but also in the grace and the mercy of the gospel of Christ may we don't stop there. By remembering the cross let us also remember that we commit to serve each other to the same extent that he did at the cross. Let us live and act like a people who have committed to this and remembered well. In Jesus name let's pray.

Lord thank you for all you've given us and all you've blessed us with as we partake of these emblems that remind us of your of your son's death on that cross. That sacrifice that was made helped us to remember to be a people who have remembered well to remember the example that he gave for us and to attempt to live that example in our lives through your grace and mercy. In Jesus name, Amen.

Reading

2 Timothy 2:7-18

Reflect on what I am saying, for the Lord will give you insight into all this.

Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my gospel, for which I am suffering even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But God's word is not chained. Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.

Here is a trustworthy saying:

If we died with him,
we will also live with him;
if we endure,
we will also reign with him.
If we disown him,
he will also disown us;
if we are faithless,
he remains faithful,
for he cannot disown himself.

Keep reminding God's people of these things. Warn them before God against quarreling about words; it is of no value, and only ruins those who listen. Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of

truth. Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly. Their teaching will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, who have departed from the truth. They say that the resurrection has already taken place, and they destroy the faith of some.

Amen.

Sermon

Never Be Ashamed of the Gospel

From the book of Nehemiah. "And all the people gathered as one at the square which was in front of the Watergate. And they asked Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had given to Israel. Then Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly of men and women, and all who could understand was on the first day of that month. And he read from it before the square, which was in front of the Watergate from early morning until midday. In the presence of men and women, those who could understand, and all the people were attentive to the book of the law. And Ezra opened the book in the sight of the people, for he was standing all above the people, and he opened it. And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people answered, "Amen, Amen," while lifting up their hands. And then they bowed down low and worshipped the Lord with their faces on the ground.

Then Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, in the Levites who taught the people, said to the people, "This day is holy to the Lord your God. Do not mourn and do not weep, for all the people were weeping when they heard the words of the Lord." And then he said to them, "Go eat of the fat, drink of the sweet, and send portions to him who has not prepared anything for this day of holy is to the Lord. Do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength." So the Levites calmed the people, saying, "Be still, for the day is holy. Do not be grieved." And there was great rejoicing. And he read from the book of the law of God daily. They were not ashamed of the Lord. Have you ever been ashamed of the Gospel?

The book of Timothy, 2 Timothy as well, talks about do not be ashamed. As a Christian, as a follower of Jesus, be grateful that God gives us the invitation to come to him, living with him every moment of our day. And so today I want to just center on this one thought. Don't be ashamed of the Gospel. Maybe some of you have had conversations with people, and they asked if you're religious, and you said yes, that stuff is all stuff. That's not stuff I'm really interested in. I don't really care about that. Who really wrote that stuff anyway? Well, I want to just share some of these scriptures today. And I was amazed at how often the word "ashamed" is used in the scripture, and the encouragement not to be ashamed, but to be proud of the Lord Jesus Christ living in us. So here we go.

In Mark chapter 8 it says, "Jesus called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life for me in the Gospel will also save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? Or what can a person give in exchange for his soul? If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the Holy Angels." You don't have

to answer out loud, but the question is, have you ever been ashamed of being a Christian? It's a good question to ask. Maybe it chuckle here and there to avoid it, but have you ever been ashamed of being a Christian?

Luke chapter 9, "If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, says Jesus, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the Holy Angels." I tell you the truth. Some of you standing here will not taste death before you see the kingdom of God. See his life, his death, his resurrection, his ascension, his glory into heaven, and his return and our glory with him will one day come. Have you ever imagined it? Have you ever imagined the end of the world and the glory of God? Have you ever thought about, he's coming in the clouds, he's coming in, I'm not sure what all of that means, but he's coming. He's coming into our life even right now, but one day all these things will come together as one.

So he says, the Apostle Paul writes these amazing words, "I thank God whom I serve as my forefathers did with a clear conscience. As night and day I constantly remember all of you in my prayers. Recalling your tears, I long to see you so that I may be filled with joy. I have been reminded of your sincere faith which first lived in your grandmother, Lois, and in your mother, Eunice. Maybe many of us are Christians because of fathers, mothers, aunts, uncles, friends. They didn't really know that they were evangelizing, they just lived their life in such a way that we would look at them and say, "That's what I want. I want this love and joy and peace and patience and kindness and goodness and faithfulness and self-control. I want that so that I can be an example in living in this world."

Paul says, "God did not give us a spirit of timidity." We're not ashamed of the gospel, but rather listen to what God gives us. Here's what he says, "But God gives us a spirit of power, of love, and of self-discipline. Because of that, we do not need to be ashamed to testify about our Lord or ashamed of me," Paul says, "or anyone else." Then Paul says, "But join with me in the suffering of the gospel by the power of us who has saved us and called us to a holy life, not because of anything we've done, but because of God's own purpose and grace." I think we take it for granted sometimes. I think we take it for granted. We come to the church and we sing the songs and say the prayers and we have our communion and we have a few words being said and encouragement. All that is wonderful and amazing and great. But have you ever shied away from it? Has church just become, well, that's what you do on Sunday. What's all of this about? Never be ashamed of the gospel.

Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you. Guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in you. We must remember who lives in us. God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, and all those people, and I think particularly in this church, who have passed away years ago and maybe not so many years ago. And we still remember them and we still love them. And many of us remember some of the communions that they shared. The stories they told, the sermons they preached, the classes they taught, it stays in our mind over and over and over again. So never be ashamed of them. Never be ashamed of Jesus. Never be ashamed of Paul. Never be ashamed of anyone who's wanting to share with you the wonderful love. Remember that God knew us before we were born and he knows us now and let's never be ashamed of ourselves. So guard the good deposit that's been entrusted to us. The Holy Spirit will help us with this.

And then in 2 Timothy, Paul writes these words, "May the Lord show mercy to Onesiphorus because he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of me even though I was in prison. He was in prison not because he stole anything. He was in prison not because he robbed anything. He was in prison because simply he was a Christian. He refused to say, "Caesar is Lord." No. Jesus is Lord. Then they would say to them, "Well, if you keep saying that, we're going to put you in prison." "Okay, I'll be a Christian in prison." And that's the story of faith. It's wonderful. It's glorious. Sometimes it's not so easy.

So he says, especially with a group of Christians, let's not argue about these things. We may have a thought on this scripture that someone disagreed. Let's not argue about these things. So he says, "But as for you, continue what you've learned and have been convinced of because you know those people who taught you." For those of you who are Christians, can you remember people who taught you? A wonderful preacher by the name of Foy Anderson taught me when I was in Bible college. My father was a minister and he taught me. And many other wonderful people, a lot of our elders in our church, they continue to serve us and teach us and help us. We keep learning and learning, never being ashamed. And the one thing about the gospel is there's never a period at the end of it. There's always more to learn. There's always more joy that we can grasp. It's useful. Our faith is useful for teaching, for correcting, for training in righteousness so that we are thoroughly prepared for good work.

So the Apostle Paul, who writes the majority of the New Testament, is coming to the end of his life. And he says this, he reminds his fellow Christians by saying these words. And they're precious. "I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith." And there's a promise for Paul and for us. "Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will reward me on that day. But not only me, but to all who long for God's appearing when Jesus comes." There is no reason for us to be ashamed of God, of Jesus, or the apostles, or the prophets, or mothers and fathers and aunts and uncles, those who left behind their faith for us.

So in this brief message, may I just conclude with these words. Here's what Jerry Rushford would say at the end of every lecture at Pepperdine University. "Now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you always." May we never be ashamed. Amen.

Closing Prayer

Lord, it has been good to be in your presence this morning. Thank you for everyone who has made the time to get together here this morning, who has put this gathering into their busy lives. Thank you for the voices raised to you all over the world, for the great gift of communion and community that you've given us. Lord, as we move into our week, we ask that you would go ahead of us, make our way clear to us, put us on your footing, God. Don't let our feet slip. We know that we can trust you and that we never, ever need to be ashamed of you. In Jesus' name we pray this morning. Everyone together said amen.

All right, have a good week. There's a potluck, so don't forget.

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