

"I Am Not Ashamed"

We're living at a time when people say they respect Jesus except when they disagree with Him. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." Today we're talking about the need to stand up for Jesus.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. We can only be as confident of the Lord Jesus as we are confident of the truth that He has taught. If we don't believe His words, then we don't believe Him. And if we're ashamed of the teaching of Jesus, we're revealing we are ashamed of Him and of His Father who gave Him His words. No, we should be unashamed of our Savior and Lord and unashamed of the truth that He teaches. We can put as much trust in the Scriptures as Jesus did, and He put total trust in the word of God. Thanks for taking time with us today. We'd love to hear from you and want to be a part of your life each week.

A person who is ashamed feels inferior or unworthy of respect over a belief, or an action, or a characteristic. Many are ashamed of themselves because of these things. When people become embarrassed or ashamed of the Lord Jesus and His word because of how they may appear to others, they have ceased to trust in the Lord as worthy of their love and loyalty.

The suffering, crucified Messiah endured shame while on the cross; and Hebrews 12: 2 says He despised being shamed and humiliated. Though condemned by men, He was innocent and righteous. Though He was despised and rejected, the day will come when He returns in indescribable glory!

We must not be ashamed of any disgrace or reproach that we may undergo from our devotion to Jesus or His words. 1 Peter 4:15 to 16 says, "But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler. Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name."

Now this is an important study today, on not being ashamed; and we offer it free! If you'd like a printed copy and live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also have free materials on our website at www.searchtv.org. And also on YouTube.

We'll now worship in song, read from 2 Timothy 1:8 to 13, and we'll explore what it means to live for Christ unashamed.

Our reading today comes from Paul's second letter to Timothy chapter 1 verses 8 to 13.

Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher. For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day. Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

That's a reading of God's holy word. Let us pray. Father help us to never be ashamed of all the things You have taught and all the things that You have given to us. We know that You are a great God and a beloved God and we can always trust in You. This is our prayer in the name of Jesus, Amen.

You don't have to be ashamed of anything Jesus ever said or did. He lived a compassionate, holy life, free from sin. Hebrews 4:15 says Jesus was tempted in every respect as we are, "yet without sin." Jesus healed the sick, fed the hungry, taught the truth, died for our sins, fulfilled His promise to rise from the dead, forgave sinners, and gave people hope of eternal life. No, you don't have to be ashamed of Jesus.

The world offers nothing that compares with the Lord Jesus. The world offers the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life; but 1 John 2:15 to 17 says that "the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever." When people love this world and its desires, their love for God vanishes. Recently Dr. George Barna of the Cultural Research Center said that 82 percent of American adults fall into the category of "World Citizen", where people embrace a few biblical principles but generally believe and behave in ways that are distinct from biblical teaching. When they disagree with the Lord's teaching, they actually fight against it.

Now our culture and time is very much like the days of Jeremiah when the people of Judah had embraced idols and were turning away from God. They became callous about their sins. In the context, even the prophets and priests were dealing falsely with others. God said in Jeremiah 6:15, "Were they ashamed when they committed abomination? No, they were not at all ashamed; they did not know how to blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; at the time that I punish them, they shall be overthrown," says the LORD.

Likewise, the Jewish leaders living in the days of Christ's earthly ministry despised and rejected Jesus. John 9:22 notes that the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue. John 12:42 to 43 tells of some people who secretly believed but were ashamed to let anyone else know. "Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God."

Even people close to Jesus faced weakness, giving in to peer pressure and the culture around them. When Jesus was taken prisoner and condemned, His disciples scattered, and Peter denied Him. Luke 22:54 to 62 tells the story. Having arrested Him, (that is Jesus) they led Him away and brought Him to the house of the high priest; but Peter was following at a distance. After they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter was sitting among them. And a servant-girl, seeing him as he sat in the firelight and looking intently at him, said, "This man was with Him too." But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know Him."

A little later, another saw him and said, "You are one of them too!" But Peter said, "Man, I am not!" After about an hour had passed, another man began to insist, saying, "Certainly this man also was with Him, for he is a Galilean too." But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are talking about." Immediately, while he was still speaking, a rooster crowed. The Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had told him, "Before a rooster crows today, you will deny Me three times." And he went out and (he) wept bitterly.

Peter, an apostle and a friend of Jesus, fell to the temptation of hiding his relationship to Jesus Christ. We can all face the temptation to deny what we are or what we believe. The Lord forgave Peter, and He can forgive us too, if we turn back to Him. What will we do? The Lord Jesus challenges us to take our devotion to Him seriously, even when the people that we love most don't agree with our commitment to Christ.

The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 10:34 to 37, "Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and

a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a person's enemies will be those of his own household. Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me." Christ must come first in our lives.

Jesus loves sincere believers who follow Him, people for whom He tasted death. Hebrews 2:9 to 11 says, "But we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone. For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings. For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren."

Our task is to be bold enough to stand up for Jesus Christ against sin and the devil. Acts tells of the stoning of Stephen and the death of the apostle James. Paul and Peter suffered for their faith and they died in Rome. Christians through the centuries have died for their faith in Jesus and for translating the Bible in their own language. William Tyndale became convinced that the Bible alone should determine the practices and doctrines of the church and that all believers should be able to read the Bible in their own language. Well, his enemies falsely condemned him for heresy; they strangled him and burned him at the stake in 1536. 2 Timothy 3 and verse 12 reminds us, "Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted."

Paul told Timothy, "Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God." There are times when we must speak out what God says, even if the world hates it. Paul reminded Timothy in 2 Timothy 1 verse 7, "For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline." We must preach the truth and do what is right, even when it is difficult. People need the good news of grace and love.

Paul said in Romans 1:16 to 17, "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. For in it (that is the gospel) the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, 'The righteous shall live by faith.'" People need the gospel to be saved; and nothing else will save. The gospel teaches how to be right with the living God and to how to live with Him forever. Nothing in the world can replace the gospel. This is why we must hold fast to our faith!

Some preachers try to placate the culture, but Paul said in Galatians 1 and verse 10, "For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ." Our relationship with the Lord Jesus demands that we please Him. When we fail and fall to peer pressure and cultural demands of our time, we fall away from the Lord. Proverbs 29:25 says, that "The fear of man brings a snare, But he who trusts in the LORD will be exalted."

The Council of the Jews in Jerusalem arrested the apostles after they had been preaching Jesus. They banned them they from preaching the name of the Lord. In Acts 5:29 to 31 says, "But Peter and the apostles answered, 'We must obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.'" Well the Council decided to beat the apostles and charge them again not to speak in the name of Jesus. Acts 5:41 says, "So they went on their way from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name."

You see when you love the Lord, you love the gospel, you want to hear the truth that Jesus teaches, and you take His promises seriously. And when you take the Lord Jesus seriously, you take His commandments seriously. The Lord Jesus simply said, “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments” (John 14 verse 15). It’s that simple and that clear. Love for Jesus means listening and obeying Him. It also means caring more about what the Lord Jesus thinks than what people think.

Worldly glory doesn’t last. And we must prefer the eternal salvation of our souls before any secular concern. People who serve the Lord, and they only, that are willing to deny themselves and take up a cross will live with Him eternally; but those fall to the temptation of being ashamed of Christ will certainly have no share in its triumphs. The Lord Jesus is coming again one day in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. He will bless those who hold firmly to Him. People who aren’t willing to confess Jesus aren’t willing to deny themselves or take up a cross to follow Him.

Now we’re tempted at times to remain silent about our faith. It could be that when we’re confronted with our sins that we want to be silent. Our culture has rejected the morals taught by Jesus in reference to their sexuality, their honesty, and their attitudes. Some people stop worshipping at church because they don’t want to hear that sin is wrong; they don’t want to hear anything that asks them to repent of their sins. Some preachers in our culture refuse to speak about sin, repentance, or hell. They fear telling the whole truth to people, but would rather tickle their ears.

The Lord Jesus said in Luke 9:26, that “For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.” If you intentionally hide your convictions about Jesus and about what He said, then Jesus will intentionally hide God’s glory from you. Is that the price you’re willing to pay? To have worldly glory you must give up Heavenly glory. Well, which matters most to you—the world’s ways or God’s ways? And which are you following—the world’s wealth or Christ’s reward? Now which will you receive? You can’t remain happy with sin if your soul is miserable and hopeless, but the soul may be happy though life is difficult in this world. Your conscience will remind you that if you’ve sinned, that failed to hold fast to your faith.

Now you may want to save face with your ungodly friends and keep your faith a secret to please them, but what will you do when you face Christ? The price today for denying the Lord is a guilty conscience. Peter denied the Lord and went he out and he wept bitterly. When you give in to the desire to save yourself from persecution by denying the Lord, you aren’t a winner. You’re a loser of the most valuable thing that you own, your soul. The person that values and saves his worldly life will lose it, and he will lose that which is of infinitely more value, his precious soul. Oh, I hope you will stay faithful to the Lord and unashamed.

Let’s pray. Heavenly Father we’re thankful for the truth that You teach us. Help us Heavenly Father to hold fast to You in easy times and in difficult times. And to do Your will always. This is our name in Jesus, Amen.

We must firmly believe in Jesus Christ and in his words and never be ashamed of them. And we must firmly believe that if we lose our life for the sake of holding on to Christ and His teaching, that we will save it to our eternal and infinite blessing. The Lord Jesus will abundantly bless us with eternal life in Heaven. James 1 verses 2 to 4 says, “Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.” Now this world is not the focus. The final judgment is the focus. The world’s judgment does not matter about our eternity. Your

obituary isn't the final word on your life. The final word comes from the Son of Man when He returns to judge the world. He will either say, "Well done!" or "Depart from Me!"

Now what kind of Christian are you? Are you one who acknowledges Him, loves Him, and serves Him to His glory? 1 John 2:28 says, "Now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming."

To get right with the Lord, we must believe in Him and in the gospel. We must turn in our hearts from an old life of sin to a new life in Christ; that's repentance. We must confess Jesus Christ is the Son of God; and we must be baptized, immersed in water, for the forgiveness of our sins (Acts 2 and verse 38). Make the decision today and every day lovingly to put your trust in the Lord and to obey Him. Don't let a day go by lost.

We pray that today's study about not being ashamed of the Lord and His words has stirred your willingness to be loyal to the Lord. If you live in the United States and want a free printed copy of this message, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now there's also a schedule of our programs and a map with the location of churches that are in your area at www.searchtv.org. Now you can watch SEARCH anytime on YouTube! We ask that you subscribe to our channel, YouTube "SearchTVMinistry." That's all one word. And be sure to like the programs that you watch; this helps spread the program to other people. We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses. And if you get ahold of us don't worry, we're not asking for money. We're here to help you draw close to God.

We do ask that you focus your heart on God by worshiping at church. Now everybody, you me and all of us, need a church family. Now I realize some of you for health reasons can't attend worship; and I'm speaking to those who can attend and haven't been. There's probably a church of Christ near you. And if you're looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll gladly help you find one. We'll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God with us and tell a friend about this program that you watch. And encourage them to watch it too. God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.