

Don't be Ashamed of the Gospel

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Date: 13 March 2022

Preacher: Rev Kenneth I Macleod

[0 : 00] We're going to begin our service singing to God's praise from Psalm number 89, Psalm 89 and at verse 13. This is in the Scottish Psalter, Psalm 89, verse 13.

Thou hast an arm that's full of power, thy hand is great in might, and thy right hand exceedingly exalted is in height. Justice and judgment of thy throne are made the dwelling place.

Mercy accompanied with truth shall go before thy face. O greatly blessed to the people are the joyful sound that know. In brightness of thy face, O Lord, they ever on shall go.

They in thy name shall all the day rejoice exceedingly, and in thy righteousness shall they exalted be on high. Because the glory of their strength doth only stand in thee, and in thy favour shall their horn and power exalted be.

These verses, Psalm 89, verse 13 to 17. Thou hast an arm that's full of power. Thou hast an arm that's full of power, thy hand is great in might, And thy right hand exceedingly exalted be.

[1 : 33] And thy right hand exceedingly exalted is in height. Justice and judgment of thy throne are made the dwelling place.

Mercy, O Lord, they ever on shall go before thy face.

O greatly blessed to the people are, the joyful sound that know.

In brightness of thy face. In brightness of thy face, O Lord, they ever on shall go.

O Lord, they ever on shall go. In brightness of thy name shall all worthy rejoice exceedingly, And in thy righteousness shall they exalted be.

[3 : 11] Righteousness shall they exult in the arm high, because the glory of their strength doth only stand in thee.

And in thy favor shall our Lord, and thou exult in thee.

Let us pray. O Lord, we give thanks that today we come to a God that we sung about there, who has an arm that's full of power.

Thy hand is great in might. And we give thanks, O Lord, that when our faith is strong, we fully accept, believe, and rest upon these truths.

The fact that sometimes our faith isn't strong doesn't in any way alter who you are and the way you are able to work. But it alters our perception of who you are, and it affects the way that we live.

[4 : 44] So we pray, Lord, that you will give us that faith that really sees you for who you are, that is able to lay hold upon your greatness and your power. Because we live in a world that is full of other powers, and a world that is so often ruled by the demonic power.

As the God of this world exercises his evil muscles, so to speak, and where he brings chaos because he is the order of chaos.

He is the one who is at the very heart of all chaos. And he is the one who disturbs and the one who accuses. And we are very often aware of the darkness of this world.

Not just an obvious darkness, but there are times we're so aware of the spiritual darkness that prevails. Help us, Lord, not to be crippled by these things.

And help us always to remember that there is one who is far greater, and that you are the God who art over all things. Help us to remember that you are the one who even created Satan and the fallen angels, and that they fell from the state that they were created in, and have from that moment continued to rebel against you and oppose everything that you are.

[6 : 06] And so we pray that we may indeed focus upon you, and that we may indeed be blessed by you, as we wait upon you in worship today. Give us, Lord, that faith to see you and to believe in you.

And help us, Lord, to seek to worship you with all our heart. We give thanks at the beginning of another week, that we can come here and that we're able with freedom to seek to praise and to

magnify the King of Heaven and the King of this Earth.

O Lord, our God, may we unashamedly follow you and be known to be followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. Help us, Lord, to nail our colours to the mast, and that we might be known as those who love the Lord Jesus Christ.

Because we know that there are so many people in this world, and they don't know about Jesus. They're running away from Jesus. They're opposing Jesus. They don't like Jesus. And so we pray, Lord, that we might be willing witnesses in this world, in whatever way we can, by our life and by our word, that we may seek to win people for Jesus, and that they may be able to show to them the wonder, the transforming power that is in Jesus Christ.

O Lord, our God, we pray then that you will bless every single one of us here today. Bless our homes, our families, and all whom we love. We ask, Lord, that your protecting hand will be upon each one.

[7 : 35] And we ask, Lord, that you will be with every home according to its own particular needs. Because we know that today some homes, there'll be pain and sadness and sorrow.

In other homes, there will be joy. And that is so much of how life is, that we are up and down. And so often our circumstances dictate on how we feel and how we are.

But help us, Lord, to have that inbuilt joy in yourself and that inbuilt peace that is given by you alone, the peace of God that passes all understanding.

As Jesus said when he was leaving this world, he said to his followers, My peace I give you, not as the world gives, give I unto you. And, O Lord, we pray that all of us today may know that peace, that we may enjoy that peace, even when there is sorrow and difficulty and trouble within our life. May we still be able to know that peace that is fixed within us. Help us to remember, Lord, the importance of fixing our eyes upon you.

[8 : 47] Because we're told that those who stay, in other words, that they keep their focus upon the Lord, will enjoy perfect peace. So we ask, Lord, that you will be with us and we pray that you will bless all those, maybe who, within our families and within our homes, who don't know you yet.

And we ask that you will bless them. We remember the Sunday school. Lord, we give thanks for, for our teachers and for all the children that go and for the parents who bring them up in the way of the Lord.

And help us to remember that your word says, train up a child in the way that you'll go. And when he's old, he will not depart from it. Help us, Lord, to take that word of yours to heart.

And may we seek to do just that with our children. Bring them up in these impressionable days. Days that, where that teaching seeks to remain with them all their days.

And we pray for their Sunday school and ask that you will bless them. We give thanks for it and the great encouragement that the Sunday school is to the congregation. Bless the tweenies and bless the creche and all who help there.

[9 : 54] We commit them to you. Remember all our young people as they grow up in this very difficult, challenging world that they're in. We pray for Colin tonight who will come to speak to the YF.

And we know that he has a wonderful testimony to share. And we pray, Lord, that you will bless him and bless all who will hear. We pray to bless us as a congregation in light of the meeting on Wednesday.

We pray, Lord, that your hand will be known upon us for good, that you will guide us in the right way, that we will know your peaceful guidance, and that we know the truth that you speak.

I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you will go. I will guide you with mine eye. And we give thanks, O Lord, for how good you have been to us as a congregation. We have received so many blessings from you.

Help us never to take the blessings for granted, but help us always to have a prayerful love for one another and seek your good upon us day by day.

[10 : 55] We pray to bless us as a world, and we remember in particular Ukraine. The devastation there is so hard for us to understand. We see so much in the news, but we're so used to seeing war and images of war.

It is impossible for us to understand just the carnage, the chaos, the bloodshed, the fear, the terror that is going on in people's hearts.

Lord, we give thanks for the amazing courage and resilience shown by the Ukrainian people, and particularly the president. We ask, Lord, that you will watch over him and his wife and family. We give thanks, Lord, for his great statements of faith, and we give thanks, Lord, for the urgency of prayer that the Ukraine church is asking for the whole world to engage in, because this is not just a military campaign, but the very forces of darkness are involved.

And so, Lord, we pray, just as you have turned back invading forces in the past, we read about it in the Bible. We ask again that you will do so. There are those who hate the democracy that we enjoy. [12:11] We give thanks for it, and we ask, Lord, that you will free Ukraine from the tyranny that seeks to oppose themselves upon them. Oh, Lord, we pray for all the refugees, and we ask, Lord, that you will hear the prayers of your people.

We ask, Lord, that you will guide us and keep us, bless those who are sorrowing, those whose hearts are broken. We pray for healing and for help. Watch over us, and we pray, and do us good, and grant us your grace as we wait upon you and take away our every sin in Jesus' name.

Amen. We're going to read now from God's Word in Romans, in Romans chapter 1. Romans chapter 1.

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets and the Holy Scriptures concerning his son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be the son of God in power according to the spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ, our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.

To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints, grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

[13:56] First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world. For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing, I mention you always in my prayers, asking that somehow by God's will I may now at last succeed in coming to you.

For I long to see you that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you, that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine.

I want you to know, brothers, that I have often intended to come to you, but thus far have been prevented, in order that I may reap some harvest among you, as well as among the rest of the Gentiles.

I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

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.

[15:16] For in it, the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith. As it is written, the righteous shall live by faith. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

For what can be known about God is plain to them because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived ever since the creation of the world in the things that have been made.

So they are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Claiming to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for the images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their heart to impurity, to dishonoring of their bodies among themselves because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the creator who is blessed forever.

[16:44] Amen. For this reason, God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature.

and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another. Men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice.

They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless.

Though they know God's decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them, but give approval to those who practice them.

[18:01] Amen. And may God bless to us this reading of his own holy word. We're going to sing again this time in sing-sams from Psalm number 25. Psalm number 25.

We're going to sing verses 1 to 7. Sing Psalms. Psalm 25. It's on page 29. To you, O Lord, I lift my soul.

I trust in you continually. Do not let me be put to shame, nor let my foes gloat over me. No one who sets his hope in you will ever suffer such disgrace.

But those who act with treachery, humiliating shame, will face. O Lord, reveal to me your ways, and all your paths help me to know.

Direct and guide me in your truth. Instruct me in the way to go. You are my Savior and my God all day, I hope in you alone. Remember, Lord, your love and grace, which from past ages you have shown.

[19:07] Do not recall my sins of youth or my rebellious, evil ways. Remember me in your great love, for you, O Lord, are good always.

Psalm 25, verses 1 to 7, sing psalms, To you, O Lord, I lift my soul. To you, O Lord, I lift my soul.

I trust in you continually. Do not let me be put to shame, nor let my foes gloat over me.

No one who sets this hope in you will ever suffer such disgrace, but close to God with thresh journey, humility.

Humiliating shame will face. O Lord, reveal to me your grace, and all your paths help me to know direct and guide me in your truth, and strap me in the way to go.

[21:20] You are my Savior and my God. All day I hope in you alone.

Remember, Lord, your love and grace, which from past ages you have shown.

Do not recall my sins of you, or my repentance or my repentance evil ways.

Remember me in your great love for you, O Lord, your love and good always.

Lord, your love and good always. Let's turn again to the chapter we read in Romans, Romans chapter 1, and reading again at verse 16, these well-known words.

[23:06] Verse 16, He was an extraordinary individual, but one of the things that really stood out in his life was his quite remarkable courage.

You can't read the life of Paul, and you can't read his epistles without realizing that this is a man who doesn't understand the word no as far as the world is concerned.

Of how there seemed to be even a work amongst those in the prison.

But when he was in prison, he wrote. And often we wonder, why does God, for instance, I'm sure the church, the early church in all the different parts in Philippi and Ephesus and so on, would be saying, Why does God allow Paul to end up being put in prison?

But we're thankful that God allowed Paul to be put in prison because when he wasn't out able to preach from prison, he wrote. And of course, that's where we have these wonderful Pauline epistles.

[25:08] Some of these prison epistles are just absolutely wonderful. So God is always wise, even though to us at times we cannot understand just what it is that God is doing.

So Paul, as we read here, there's one thing that Paul was not ashamed of. He was not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And it's a question we have to ask ourselves.

Are we ashamed of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ? Because it's very obvious that people are ashamed of the gospel. It's one of the reasons why people don't come to church.

They're ashamed to be seen going to church. It's a reason why people will not carry a Bible or pick up a Bible because they're ashamed to be seen with God's word.

It's also the reason why sometimes people will hold back from confessing and professing Jesus Christ. Because there's an element of shame.

[26 : 17] They want to be able just maybe to follow the Lord in privacy so that nobody will know. Because they're not ready to, as it were, nail their colors to the mast.

Because there's an element of shame. And so we often have to challenge ourselves because I'm sure at some times within our lives, if we're really honest with ourselves, as we look back over our lives, I'm sure there have been periods or times or moments when we've had to confess that we too have been ashamed of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Well, just as there are people ashamed of the gospel today, so there were people ashamed of the gospel in Paul's day as well. Now, Paul here, we see, is desperate to preach the gospel in Rome. And, of course, when you think about the apostle Paul, again, we said we marvel at his amazing zeal and courage and just his never-say-die attitude.

Because when you think about it, when you look at Paul, when you hear his testimonies, this is, think about it. For the gospel's sake, Paul was put in prison in Philippi.

[27 : 35] He was thrown out. He was chased out of Thessalonica. Remember, he was mocked in Athens. He was called a fool in Corinth.

He was stoned in Galatia. And, you know, sometimes when you put yourself in that situation and you say to yourself, you know something? I think it's time I stopped.

If I put myself in the apostle Paul's shoes, there might be a strong temptation to say, you know something? I think I'm going to call it a day. Because this is all that's happening to me.

But Paul, he always just picked himself up from wherever he was. And whether people mocked at him or called him a fool or put him in prison or chased him out of town or stoned him, he just came back again and again and again to preach this gospel.

Because he knew that this gospel was like nothing else in the whole wide world. He himself had been a recipient of its tremendous transforming power.

[28 : 38] And Paul knew that nothing could change a person's life like the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. And because of what had happened with him, he wanted that everybody else would come to know what the potential and the power that could take place.

Now, when you think about it, Paul here is going to Rome. And he's going to the very center of the most powerful empire in the world at the time, the Roman Empire.

Probably Nero, I'm not 100% sure. But there's a strong chance that at this particular time, Nero might well have been emperor. And as we know, this was a really wicked, perverse individual.

And that at this time, Rome was a city that was given over to every kind of corruption and every kind of evil. And anything that you wanted to do, really, you could do in Rome.

And here is Paul, and he's coming with a message into this, you've got to remember, into this situation. Into this city that is vibrantly full of ungodliness and opposition to anything to do with God.

[29 : 47] And Paul is coming with a message that demands repentance to God, faith in Jesus Christ, and a holy living, living in a holy way.

It couldn't be more different to the lifestyle that was being lived in Rome at that time. Everything that Rome was, was absolutely opposed to this gospel.

Now you have to add to that, that Paul himself was a Jew. So the odds were all stacked against Paul because the Jews were despised.

So Paul is bringing this message of faith and repentance and holy living into a city that was absolutely a cesspool of iniquity.

It was the last message they ever wanted to hear. And here's this Jew. Imagine this Jew coming to tell us this. But more than that, the message that he is proclaiming is about a man, Jesus, who was also a Jew.

[30 : 57] And who was nailed to the cross, which was the ultimate shameful way to die reserved only for slaves and for criminals. So from a human point of view, you would say that Paul was at an absolutely no chance to begin with.

Everything possible was stacked against him. And of course we know that as Paul came preaching this gospel, he's telling that Jesus had proclaimed to be, had come from heaven and proclaimed to be the son of God.

And so Paul would go and he was telling people of how Jesus Christ is the son of God, was put to death on the third day. And you know, as Paul preached, so many people thought he was mad.

They told him that. Paul, you're mad. You can almost imagine some people coming and even well-meaning people putting their arm around Paul and say, hey Paul, hey, get a grip.

But, you see, do you really believe this? This doesn't make sense. Because that's what people were actually saying.

[32 : 10] Tells us in Corinthians. This is what it says. The word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing. Now that's quite a solemn statement, isn't it?

To those who are perishing. Who are perishing? All those who do not receive Jesus. Remember what it tells us in the great gospel, verse John 3, 16.

God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish. Without Christ, people perish.

That's an awful word. When you think about it, when you look at anything that's perishing, you say, whoa, that's horrible. Well, that's what happens outside Christ. That's why God loves us.

He doesn't want us to perish. That's why Jesus came. He doesn't want us to perish. But all those who are perishing think that that's what it says, that the cross is foolishness.

[33 : 10] Again, we read in the Bible it says this. Paul says, we preach Christ crucified. A stumbling block to the Jews and folly to the Gentiles.

They think it's foolish. And you know, it's still the same today. Because a lot of people think that we're stupid. We're mad. A lot of people genuinely think that when you go to church that you're daft. What are you going to church for? A God you can't see, they say. I've heard people say, people have said it to me. How can you really believe this stuff? In this scientific age that we're living in, do you really believe?

I believe it with all my heart. Because I know it's to be true. And Paul knew absolutely the reality of what he was preaching.

Even although the odds were all stacked against him. Because he had been transformed and he had been changed. And so Paul is eager to get to Rome. Don't know how the gospel got to Rome in the first place.

[34 : 12] It might have been, some might have been there at the day of Pentecost. Who heard the preaching of Peter and were converted and brought the gospel back. We know that through the fires of persecution that had begun.

Christians were being dispersed here and there. And we also know that maybe some of the Roman soldiers. Because we know of, for instance, the centurion. Jesus talks about the centurion's great faith.

And we also remember the centurion in charge of Jesus' execution. Said, truly this is the son of God. So there might have been a combination of all these things.

But whatever it is, the gospel had arrived in Rome. And it was indeed thriving there. And Paul wanted to get there because he tells us of three things he wanted to do.

He wanted to strengthen the Christians. He was seeking spiritual fruit. And he in turn hoped to be strengthened by them. And you know something? That's how it should be with you and with me as well.

[35 : 13] When we meet together, we should be seeking to strengthen one another. You know, it's never a good thing if Christians meet together. If you meet another Christian and that Christian goes away feeling down after meeting you.

That's not good. We should be seeking to encourage one another and build one another up. We live in a world that's so full of discouragement. Let us make sure that we seek to be encouraging one another in the faith.

Well, that's what Paul was great at doing. And his sidekick who was with him so often, Barnabas, he was the master of encouragement. Well, we should be in the business of seeking to encourage one another.

And that's what Paul was wanting to do. And he in turn to be encouraged by the Christians in Rome. So when Paul says, I'm not ashamed, we would again ask the question, why should we be ashamed?

Why should we be ashamed of the gospel? Why today should we be ashamed of the gospel? Well, if we could pick out a couple of things, I suppose one of the things is, we could say, because of the hostility of the world.

[36 : 28] No creed or philosophy or religion or way of life or anything has been so hated and so persecuted from the very beginning as a Christian faith.

And it's mad when you think about it logically. Because God made us. And God gave us every good thing. You think about our senses, our sight, our hearing, sense of smell, our taste, our touch, feel, everything.

Imagine what this world would be like if we didn't have anything of that. God is, these are the simple things. They're not simple, they're wonderful things. But God has given us the capacity to enjoy the wonderful things that he has made in this world.

Everything. Every good and perfect gift is from above. But you know, when God made Adam and Eve and they fell, what happened in the fall?

They began to run. Run away from God. What did God do? God came in his mercy and called Adam. Adam, where are you? If God hadn't done that, Adam would have kept running.

[37 : 39] God called him back. But you know what happened? Because of Adam's sin in us, there is an inbuilt running away from God. We're born with it.

We're on the run. Every single one of us, as we're born into this world by nature, we are on the run from God. You know this, everybody in this world is running in one direction or the other.

There's only two directions. You're either running to God or you're running away from God. There's no in between. And when we are without Christ, that's what we're doing.

We're running away from God. We're pushing Jesus away. We don't want him. Don't want him too close. So there's this inbuilt running away all the time.

And so this is what the Lord Jesus Christ has come to do. He has come to call us in his word. And you know, to be on the side of Christ, to be called one of his people, goes against the flow.

[38 : 43] You go against the tide. You go against popular opinion. You go against the thinking of this world. You're looked upon as being different. To be a follower of Christ means that you have to say at the end of the day, I don't care what people think.

It's like Joshua said, as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord or we will follow the Lord. And I hope that that's what we're saying today. As for me, whatever anybody else is going to do, I'll tell you, this is what I'm going to do.

I'm going to follow the Lord. And as I say, it goes against all the popular opinion of the day. Because you look at how often the Christian is portrayed.

Portrayed in the world. Portrayed by the media. It's never in a favor, very rarely in a favorable light. So that's one way or one of the reasons why so often people are ashamed.

And another area of maybe where we tend to be a wee bit ashamed is of how unimpressive the gospel is. When you put it against all the impressiveness of this world.

[39 : 54] When you look at all the glitz and the glamour and all the great things. Supposing you look at the inauguration of a president in America. Or you look at the trooping of the color.

Or you see like all that happens at the opening of the Olympics. Or all these things. And don't get me wrong, I'm not criticizing these things. But when you see the display that the world puts on and its grandeur and its power and glitz and all that.

And then you look at the Christian. What's probably the high point of the Christian calendar with ourselves? Be the communion. And if people look in. And they see us sitting there.

With a cup with a wee, just a little wine. And a wee bit of bread. And they say that's the high point of their life. Now you and I know that it is a high point.

Just had a communion which has been a social great blessing to the congregation. Because through that it's all by faith and we meet with Jesus. And it is a real high point.

[40 : 59] But the world can't see that or understand that. So as far as the world is concerned, everything is so unimpressive. And then they say, right, well Christian faith.

Okay, let's look to the head of the Christian faith. Who is it? Jesus. Who were his followers? Were they kings? Were they amongst the elite and royalty?

No, they were fishermen, publicans. Okay. How did his time on earth go? Well, at the age of about 33, he was nailed to a cross of wood.

And people look at that and say, that is shame. That is shame personified. The leader of your religion is a man who dies in shame.

And so that's the way so often the world look at it. But Paul knows that's not, you're not seeing the real picture. Jesus went to that cross willingly.

[41 : 58] He went as a sacrifice for our sin. And so Paul knew that this very death of Jesus and his resurrection was a power that opens up a new world for us.

And so it's very important we ask ourselves today. Where do you stand? Where do I stand? Are we ashamed? Are we ashamed of the gospel?

You know, there might be somebody in here today and you're saying to yourself, you know, I hear the gospel and I'm challenged by the gospel. And there are days I say to myself, you know this, I wouldn't mind being a Christian.

But you know, the bottom line is you're ashamed in this sense. You don't want to be, we live in small communities and you say, you know what, I'm not ready for people to talk about me. I've heard other, I've heard when people start following the Lord, I've heard them talk about them. I'm not ready for that. I don't want to be the subject of people's conversations in the pubs and on the streets and storm. I don't want people talking in the workplace. I don't want to be the butt of people's jokes if I start following.

[43 : 04] I'm ashamed to follow. People think like that. I know, I've been there. But let's turn it the other way around.

One day, all of us have to stand before Jesus. We have to stand before the judgment seat of Christ. Jesus is coming in all his glory and all created humanity are going to appear before him.

And you know what the Lord Jesus says, it's this. Whoever shall be ashamed of me and my words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with his holy angels.

Now is that not a sobering thought? That when Jesus returns and everybody is called before him, all who have been ashamed, all who have been ashamed to stand for him, all who have been ashamed to confess him, Jesus is going to say, I'm ashamed of you.

Isn't that an awful thought? And so that's why it is imperative that we say, right, just like Joshua said, as for me and my house, we're going to serve the Lord.

[44 : 22] I'm in this Lord with you. I don't care what people say. I don't care what people think. And can I say to those who worry about what people say and what people think, it's not the way you think it is.

Because, you know, when you begin to follow the Lord, the Lord gives you such a sense of himself and the rightness of what you've done, that you're able to deal with it in a way that you didn't think that you could.

And in fact, you're so thankful to be following the Lord. And these opinions of people, and another thing that will surprise you is that a lot of people that you thought would be so opposed to you that they're not.

You might get a lot of shocks. But anyway, it is imperative that we are not ashamed. That we are not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Because Paul knows that this is the only thing that can change a person's life. And, you know, Paul looks at it in this way because, and you and I must think of it in the same way.

[45 : 29] What does the gospel do? Gospel brings light and brings life into our souls. And who does that God does? Go back to the original creation when there was nothing.

And into the nothingness God spoke. And God said, let there be light. And there was light. And God brought everything into being.

He brought all the different things. The planetary system and everything. By the word of his power. I often, probably you're like me, you try and imagine what that was like. Imagine watching the formation of all these things.

Would it be silent? Would it be loud? You know, when you look at this whole creation being brought into being.

It must be just extraordinary. And God, as he looked on it, he was saying, it's all very good. And it was then. But what we're pointing out here, it's by the word of his power, he brought everything into being.

[46 : 35] And that's what he does in our soul as well. Because, you know, often you can sit under the gospel. And I'm sure you did. Many of you today are following. And I'm sure many of you were brought up in the church.

That probably the vast majority of you. And you heard the gospel. And you heard it week in and you heard it week out. And you learned verses in Sunday school and so on. And you knew some you had memorized by heart.

But it didn't really get anywhere until one day that began to change. Because you began to hear God's word in a way you had never heard before. And this is God at work. What's he doing? It's the gospel coming with power. The word is *dunamai*, where we get our word dynamite. And what does dynamite do? It blows apart. And that's what God does. He comes with the gospel. And he blows apart all the obstacles. And all the resistance. And all the prejudices. And all the unbelief that's in our heart. [47 : 35] And he enables us to do what we couldn't do and didn't want to do. To actually believe. And Paul knows there's no other message for the world but this.

The gospel is the power of God. And when we preach the gospel. We pray that people will hear God's words. Not the minister's voice.

It's not an orator. Or any great. You can have the greatest orator in the world. But unless God's power is present. Then it's not going to affect or change people's lives.

We need God's power. And that's what Paul is saying. No wonder Paul isn't ashamed. Neither should we be ashamed. This is the greatest news the world has ever heard.

And so Paul says he's not ashamed of the gospel. For it is the power of God to salvation to everyone who believes. To everyone. That's the scope. And he says to the Jew.

[48 : 31] That's what he says to the Jew. First and also to the Greek. What he means simply by that is. That the gospel started with the Jews. With Jesus. In Jerusalem.

Being put to death. Of Jesus here. Following. Of course. In the old economy. In the old testament. We know that the believers were believing in the Christ who was to come.

And we now believe in the Christ who has come. But what he means there is. That the gospel began in with the Jews. And then spread out to the Greeks.

To all. To the Gentiles. To everyone. That's to us. It's the most wonderful news. The global spread of the gospel. Let us pray for ourselves.

But let us pray that the gospel will be spread throughout this world. And we live in this. We're seeing in a. We're living in a time of crisis. We're living in a. In a world that is so uncertain.

[49 : 31] We've always talked about an uncertain world. But just now. This world is bubbling. It's a very very uncertain world. And you know there's nothing. For it. But the power of God.

And that's what the Ukrainian. The Ukrainians are praying. They're praying that we will pray for them. Because they're aware. That the powers of darkness. Are behind what's happening.

In their land. Let us pray for their deliverance. But let us pray. Above all. For the spread of the gospel. Throughout the nations of the world. Nothing. Will turn.

The anger. The hatred. We saw there in the end of Romans 1. Just this catalog of all that's wrong. Nothing will sort that. But the gospel.

Of Jesus Christ. Let us pray. Lord our God. We give thanks for this gospel. We give thanks that we know something of it. We give thanks Lord.

[50 : 25] That we know. Whose gospel it is. And we give thanks for the impact. That the gospel has had. Had upon our own lives. And lives of so many that we know.

Help us Lord. Not to hide this gospel. But to be willing to live it. And to share it. And we pray for any in here today. Who so far have not experienced.

The power of God in their lives. We ask that even today. That that may change. That they will hear. In a way that they've never heard before. Lord. Open the deaf ears spiritually.

Open the blind eyes spiritually. So that people may hear. And people may see. And people may believe. Take us to our home safely. We pray. And do us good. Cleansing us from our sin.

In Jesus name. Amen. We're going to conclude singing. In Psalm 71. From the Scottish Psalter. Psalm 71. In the Scottish Psalter.

[51 : 22] And we sing verses 14 to 17. Psalm 71 verses 14 to 17. But I with expectation.

Will hope continually. And yet with praises. More and more. I will thee magnify. Thy justice and salvation. My mouth abroad. Shall show.

Even all the day. For either of the numbers. Do not know. And I will constantly. Go on in strength. Of God the Lord. Thine own righteousness. Even thine alone.

And I will record. For even from my youth. O God. By thee. I have been taught. And hitherto. I have declared. The wonders. Thou hast brought. 14 to 17.

From Psalm 71. But I with expectation. Will hope continually. But I with expectation.

[52 : 20] With hope continually. And yet with praises.

More and more. I will be magnified.

Thy justice and salvation. Thy justice and salvation. My mouth abroad.

Thou broad shall show. Remember all the day. I will, the yaoi, the globally.

2 to 17. And I will constantly. thick. In strength of God the Lord, And thine own righteousness in life,
Alone I will record.

[53 : 58] For even from my youth, O God, By Thee I have been taught, And hither too I have
declared The wondrous power has brought.

Amen. Now may the grace, mercy, and peace of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit Rest and
abide upon each one of you now and forevermore. Amen.