



# THE EXHORTER

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***“And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.” Acts 2:40***

The Palmer Road church of Christ, Westland, Mi. ([prchurchofchrist.org](http://prchurchofchrist.org))

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## JUMP START #541

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**Rom. 1:16- “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.”**

Paul defines the powerful gospel message of Jesus Christ. This message defined his life. He preached it everywhere. He believed it, lived it, taught it and shared it with the world. That message, that gospel, was the chosen avenue of God to connect a dark and broken world to Jesus Christ, and through Jesus Christ, to God. It's through that message, the gospel, that we know God, come to salvation and have the hope of Heaven. Without the message, without the gospel, there is no avenue to Jesus or to God.

Notice a few interesting thoughts from our passage today:

First, the gospel is the power of God for salvation. The word “power” is from the same root word that our word dynamite comes from. Explosive. Powerful. Mighty is the gospel. It can do what nothing else can. It can lead a person to change their bad behavior. It can turn a stubborn man into a generous man. It can lead a sinful person into being a righteous person. It can turn sorry attitudes into godly thinking. It's powerful. Don't give up on it. It doesn't do this work on its own, against a person's will, or without their knowledge of it. No, it doesn't do that. But working through a person it can. As a person reads the gospel, is taught the gospel, and begins to obey the gospel, things change. Outlooks, priorities, attitudes all take on a different look once they have been shaped by the Gospel.

The greatest thing that happens is that they learn about Jesus. They become a believer and follower of Jesus. They see that their sinful ways have destroyed their relationship with God. They see that God hasn't given up on them, but wants to save them. Forgiveness, grace and hope are the gifts of God through Jesus Christ. It's a powerful message. It's a living message. It's a message for all ages. Jesus died and lives, so we can live. His way is the only way. Thousands have bowed their knees to Jesus and have journeyed with the Savior. Their lives became meaningful as they united with other believers to encourage, learn and share the rich message of the Gospel. God has conquered more people through this preached message than all the armies of the world. God's message has crisscrossed the ocean, found its way behind closed doors and brought goodness and light to this dark planet.

The other thought here is Paul's feelings about the Gospel. He was not ashamed of it. He was not ashamed to live it, share it, nor follow it. When people are ashamed they tend to lower their heads, find

a place to hide, and slip out of sight. Years ago, teachers put a dunce hat on students who misbehaved and made them sit in a corner with that hat on. The intention was to shame them. I had to sit in the corner a time or two, never with “the hat” on my head, but the experience alone was embarrassing.

Paul was not embarrassed by the Gospel. This means, he is not ashamed of what it says. He doesn't have to apologize for what it says. He is not ashamed of Christ. He is not embarrassed by the righteous life that the Gospel calls us to. Quit apologizing to a wicked world that doesn't care about Jesus!

- Not ashamed of the Gospel means, not ashamed to read it, anywhere—at the office, on airplanes, on a park bench, in a doctor's office, or at home. Not ashamed to carry it. Not ashamed at all.
- Not ashamed of the Gospel means not ashamed to talk about it. We tend to talk about things we are excited about or proud about. Sport fanatics will talk about the game anywhere. Grandmas will show pictures of her grandkids to just about anyone. Those not ashamed of the Gospel, will share the message to anyone who will listen. Discussing the Gospel is not a chore that has to be done, talking about it, writing about it, and sharing it.
- Not ashamed of the Gospel means not ashamed to defend it, to defend what it says, to defend the Savior who gave it, nor to defend what it's about.
- Not ashamed of the Gospel means not ashamed to live the message. Praying in public, keeping you language, attitude and behavior in check, engaging in good deeds are simple ways to living the message.
- Not ashamed of the Gospel means a person makes no apologies for going to church services, for following the Bible or for doing things the Bible way. Not ashamed to be a part of a church that strives to be Biblical and to follow that Biblical pattern. The worship pattern comes straight from the Bible. The method of raising money for the church—straight from the Bible. I have found that many churches talk the message but they don't follow the message. They are doing things not found in the Bible. The message they preach is more pop culture than the Gospel. Not ashamed means you are not ashamed to be conservative, primitive, fundamental—which ought to mean nothing more than Biblical.

I am not ashamed---that's what Paul said. How about you? Do you hide your faith or only bring it out when it is safe and around other believers? Do you go along with co-workers and friends that say and do things that are not what God wants? Is it natural for you to be Biblical?

Not ashamed---not at all. Not of the message, not of the church, and especially, not of Jesus. There's an old hymn that goes, “Stand up, stand up for Jesus....” That song is hard to sing while sitting in a pew. It's harder to sing, knowing that I downplay my faith around others because I am embarrassed for them to know. Maybe it's time once again to “Stand up, stand up” for Jesus. If we don't stand up for Jesus, who will?

I am not ashamed....also means, “Let your light shine.....”

Roger Shouse

