

# THE GREENWOOD BULLETIN

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## **Ashamed of the Gospel**

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There are many things for which a man ought to be ashamed, especially sin. There are some who glory in their shame, but not those who love the Lord (Phil. 3:18-19). However, there are some things of which we should never be ashamed.

Paul said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ" (Rom. 1:16). He was not ashamed of it because it is God's power unto salvation. It enlightens men with spiritual truth, the riches of the knowledge of Christ (Col. 2:2-3). It sets them free from sin and Satan (Jn. 8:32). It comes from God almighty, through the Holy Spirit (Jn. 16:7-15). Why would anyone be ashamed of the gospel?

Though I cannot personally claim to have never been ashamed of the gospel, I do pray that I will never be again. Thus, my articles in these pages will reflect my efforts to boldly proclaim the truth (Acts 4:29). They will include rebuke and exhortation (2 Tim. 4:2). A variety of subjects will be addressed including denominationalism, problems among brethren, and general issues about sin and worldliness. The blessings found in Christ, including eternal salvation, will be examined (Eph. 1:3). I ask for your prayers that I will not be ashamed, but readily declare "the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:26-27).

Further, Paul told Timothy not to be "ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner" (2 Tim. 1:8). There is no need to be ashamed of those who carry the gospel to a lost and dying world. These are ones who are sanctified with the blood of Christ and call upon the same Father (Heb. 2:11). They share a

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common salvation and like precious faith (Jude 3; 2 Pet. 1:1). Why should anyone be ashamed of them?

I am not ashamed to work with this congregation, though some may wish me to be. It is a solid church, sound in the faith and spiritually minded (1 Thes. 1:6-10). The elders are serious, active, and faithful in their duties to shepherd the flock, including watching for wolves within and without (Acts 20:28-32). For this, they are maligned. Still, they carry out the charge given them by God. Her preachers, in times past and at present, are loyal to the Lord and His word (cf. Mk. 8:38). Yet, like Paul, they are the subject of much ridicule and a focal point of attack (2 Cor. 10:7-11; 11:23-29). Instead of being ashamed of this church, and her elders, I count it a privilege to labor with it.

Are you ashamed of the Lord or His word? Are you ashamed of those who faithfully serve the Savior? If yes, then repent of your sin. If not, then know that your love and loyalty are noted by God.

## **God Is Victorious**

**Hebron Herald – June 2004**

It is easy to be negative about the world. As in the days of Noah, it is filled with wickedness (Gen. 6:5, 11). Abortion, rape, theft, and drunkenness are all too common. Sexual immorality is on the rise, including adultery and homosexuality. All these are an abomination to God and His people (Rom. 1:18-32). Thus, when a righteous man looks at the world, sadness and sorrow can overwhelm him. Still, the Word of God encourages us.

The world does lie under the sway of the wicked one (1 Jn. 5:19). He is described as the "prince of the power of the air" and the "god of this world" (Eph. 2:2; 2 Cor. 4:4). Many more men follow Satan than the Savior (Matt. 7:13-14). Still, God remains in control (Rev. 4). He is in heaven, upholding all things by the word of His power (Heb. 1:3; Col. 1:17). His eye sees all that takes place among men, both the just and unjust (Heb. 4:13). He is aware of the trials of His children, their heart aches, temptations, and

persecution. The Christian can take comfort in knowing that God cares and hears his prayer (cf. Lk. 18:1-8).

We also know that in the end God is victorious (Rev. 17:14). All enemies will be put under the feet of Christ, the last enemy being death (1 Cor. 15:24-26). Satan will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, along with all other wicked beings (Rev. 20:10; Matt. 25:41). We have this assurance from the Lord, guaranteed by the resurrection of Christ (1 Cor. 15). **Therefore, do not lose heart.**

## ***You Almost Persuade Me***

### **A Selected Article**

“Then Agrippa said to Paul, ‘You almost persuade me to become a Christian’” (Acts 26:28). Agrippa’s choice that day was the worst he ever made. He chose to forego heaven, embrace hell, and to remain in the misery of sin. Men and women who turn down the gospel invitation continue to make the same choice as Agrippa.

“You almost persuade me to become a Christian” is the same as saying, “You almost persuade me to go to heaven.” Heaven is where the saved will be free from sorrow, sickness, and death (Rev. 21:1-4). It is the eternal home of the redeemed, where all is joy and peace and love. Why would one turn down an offer to go there?

“You almost persuade me to become a Christian” is the same as saying, “You almost persuade me to avoid hell.” Hell is where the unsaved will spend a never-ending night in torment; where the worm does not die and the fire is not quenched (Mk. 9:44-48). In hell there will be ceaseless weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt. 25:30). Why would one turn down an offer to avoid it?

“You almost persuade me to become a Christian” is the same as saying, “You almost persuade me to give up sin.” Sin brings countless sorrows and immeasurable pain (1 Tim. 6:9-10). “The way of the unfaithful is hard” (Prov. 13:15). Why would one turn down an offer to escape such misery?

The reason people turn down an offer to go to heaven, avoid hell, and to remain in the mire and muck of sin is because the devil has deluded them. He is the god of this world that blinds the

minds of men (2 Cor. 4:1-4). They, therefore, love darkness rather than light, unrighteousness rather than truth (Jn. 3:19-21; 2 Thes. 2:9-12).

What about you? Are you almost persuaded to give up sin, avoid hell, and embrace heaven? If so, why are you “almost persuaded”?

**Almost is to be lost!**