

## "Not Ashamed"

Do you believe in Jesus Christ but are ashamed to be called a Christian? Hello, I'm Phil Sanders. And this is a Bible study, "In SEARCH of the Lord's Way." And today we're going to examine what it means to be unashamed of Jesus. Stay with us.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way. We love God and we want to please Him in all that we do or say. We're not ashamed of the gospel, because we know it's the good news about Jesus Christ. The gospel has the power of God to bring our salvation. And God wants us to be saved and to know the truth. The gospel is the great message of hope and love that has helped people to have a nobler and better life. Biblical Christianity is the Lord's way. Thanks for taking time with us today. We want to hear from you and be part of your life each week.

Many who hear the word "Christian" think of evil things like the Crusades, the Inquisition, or the Salem witch trials. History tells of Christians fighting Christians. But these things happened centuries after the Lord Jesus Christ, and the church He built, and His teaching. We must not confuse the Christianity of the New Testament with the abuses of later religion. Nor should we confuse what began in the minds of men with the teaching from Jesus Christ. Jesus was a Savior filled with love and never taught His disciples to convert people with a sword. When Peter drew a sword to protect Jesus, Jesus told Peter in Matthew 26:52, "Put your sword back into its place. For all (those) who take up the sword shall perish by the sword."

Many people equate all religion with Christianity. They assume if someone does something evil for religious reasons, and a Christian does something evil for religious reasons, then Christianity must be evil. But, is everything that calls itself Christianity alike? Could it be that true Christianity is altogether different from corrupted forms? To label all Christianity as evil because of corrupted forms is really both unkind and unfair.

Now if you want to study more about this topic, Not Ashamed, we offer the information on this program free. If you'd like a printed copy of our study, 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](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org). Or, you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also stream this program on our website at [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org). You can also find us on YouTube.

The Edmond church will now worship in song, we'll read from Mark 8:34 to 38, and we'll examine why we are not ashamed of Jesus Christ.

Our reading today comes from the gospel according to Mark chapter 8 verses 34 to 38. There Jesus is discussing what He's expecting of His disciples.

And He summoned the crowd with His disciples, and said to them, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? For what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father (and) with the holy angels."

That is a reading from God's holy word and it should touch each of us. Let's pray together. Heavenly Father we pray that we may never be ashamed of You or of the gospel. We pray that we may always love You and devote our selves to You in service. And to do Your will always. In Jesus name, Amen.

Jesus in Matthew 16:13 asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." What these people said about Jesus wasn't true. Jesus wasn't John the Baptizer or Elijah or Jeremiah, or one of the prophets, no. Just because people think something doesn't make it true. Jesus then asks His disciples in Matthew 16:15 to 17, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven." You see Peter learned this from the Father in heaven.

Jesus is indeed the Christ, the Son of the living God. And the identity of Jesus matters. Now if we think He's simply another prophet or even another religious teacher, we don't know Him. But if He is the Christ or Messiah, if He is the Son of God, then He is the One God has promised all through the ages. He's not merely a man; He is Divine. We can't be ashamed of Jesus and still please God. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 10 verses 32 and 33, "Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven."

Now if you confess Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God, then you must also realize that He is the Lord. Jesus was the Messiah and was willing to humble himself and obey the Father by dying on the cross. And the Bible says in Philippians 2:9 to 11, "For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

To say "Jesus is Lord" means you're willing to obey His will. 1 Peter 3:15 reminds us to "sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts." Calling Jesus "Lord" is not merely a confession; it means we set apart Christ in our hearts as our one and only Lord and Master. We recognize Him as God's Son who has all authority in heaven and on earth. It means we recognize that He owns us, body, soul and spirit. We have chosen in our hearts to serve Him and no one else. Ephesians 4 and verse 5 says there is "one Lord." Now many are confused morally and spiritually because they are enslaved to sin. They aren't willing to have Jesus as their Lord. You can't call Jesus "Lord" and live any way you please. Jesus asked in Luke 6:46, "Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?" Our lives must match our confession. If we call Jesus "Lord," we must live up to our confession.

However, confessing our faith has challenges. We must live among people who don't share our faith. The Jews of the first century had a lengthy debate about Jesus. No one denied His ability to work miracles. Why, even His enemies recognized His miraculous power. When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, some people ran to tell the high priest. And the high priest and the Pharisees wanted to kill Jesus. John 11:47 to 48 says, "Therefore the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a council, and were saying, 'What are we doing? For this man is performing many signs. If we let Him go on like this, all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.'"

Well some rulers of the first century faced the decision whether to admit publicly their faith or to hide it out of fear. John explained in John 12:42 and 3, "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." Now these rulers chose their social status over God. They believed but were afraid and ashamed to let anybody know. Now they decided the cost of discipleship was too high. They enjoyed their place in the

community for a time but lost the approval of God. You can't be ashamed of our Lord Jesus and still enjoy the grace of God.

The Lord Jesus said in Luke 9:26, "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His glory, and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels." Jesus included His words; did you notice that? The Lord Jesus realized that while some people might value Him, they don't respect His words. Some people, frankly, are ashamed of what Jesus teaches. They don't agree with Him, because they don't want to believe what He teaches. They call Him 'Lord,' while they disrespect His teaching. They love Jesus but don't want to give in to His teaching. In front of the Father and all the angels, Jesus will one day be ashamed of them.

To scoff means to treat people or ideas with contempt or ridicule. Well, many scoff at what the Lord Jesus says these days. They don't like His definition of marriage; or they don't like the way He values life before birth or when people are old; and they don't like what He says about sex, so they scoff at God and the Bible. Our Lord is patient, but we must understand: when we harden our hearts to the point that we scoff at God's word, the Lord has a limit to His patience.

When Jerusalem had forsaken the Lord and run to idols, the people began scoffing at the prophets. 2 Chronicles 36:15 to 16 says: "The LORD, the God of their fathers, sent word to them again and again by His messengers, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place; but they continually mocked the messengers of God, despised His words and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, until there was no remedy." Do we think we can make fun of God and His word, and God won't notice? God punished the Jews for their sins, and God will punish us for ours. Galatians 6:7 to 8 says, "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life."

Our world can be intimidating for a Christian. Christianity has always been at odds with the world. And the world will persecute us for the name of Jesus Christ, but loving and faithful Christians won't ever deny or shame the name of the Lord. You might recall the example of the apostles in Acts 5. You'll remember the High Priest and the Council called the apostles in for preaching Jesus. They wanted to put a stop to it. They had the apostles flogged and ordered them not to preach any more in the name of Jesus. But Acts 5:41 to 42 says, the apostles "went on their way from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for *His* name. And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus *as* the Christ." They weren't ashamed! They rejoiced that God counted them worthy to suffer!

A disciple named Polycarp was martyred for his faith early in the second century. He was bound and he was to be burned at the stake. According to the Martyrdom of Polycarp, they stabbed him when the fire failed to touch him. He had to decide whether he would embrace Christ or embrace Caesar, whether he would keep his faith or keep his life. Polycarp held his ground and kept his faith. The Martyrdom of Polycarp records these words:

And as he was brought forward, the tumult became great when they heard that Polycarp was taken. And when he came near, the proconsul asked him whether he was Polycarp. On his confessing that he was, the proconsul sought to persuade him to deny Christ, saying, "Have respect to thy old age," and other similar things, according to their custom, such as, "Swear by the fortune of Caesar; repent, and say, Away with the Atheists." But Polycarp, gazing with a stern countenance on all the multitude of the wicked heathen then in the stadium, and waving his hand towards them, while with groans he looked up to heaven, said, "Away with the Atheists." Then, the proconsul urging him, and

saying, "Swear, and I will set thee at liberty, reproach Christ;" Polycarp declared, "Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He never did me any injury: how then can I blaspheme my King and my Savior?"

Polycarp died that day for the name of Jesus Christ. He died because he was a faithful Christian. He wasn't ashamed to call Jesus "Lord" or to follow His teaching. Are you? 1 Peter 4:14 to 16 says, "If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. By no means let any of you suffer as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; but if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not feel ashamed, but in that name let him glorify God." People have said and done many things for which they should be ashamed of themselves. I too have sinned against God and man; but we can never be ashamed of the name of the Lord Jesus or His words. We must glorify the name of the Lord and wear the name Christian with dignity.

Why do we follow Jesus unashamed? We follow because the Lord Jesus lived a sinless life. 1 Peter 2:21 to 22 reminds us, "For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth." He brought peace, hope, love, righteousness, and forgiveness. He's the source of life, He is newness of life, abundant life, and eternal life. And we must go to Him. He's the Great Physician who heals bodies and souls. The life of Jesus defines the word "love." In all history, no one was so pure, so sacrificial, so loving, and so true as the Lord Jesus Christ!

Our love and loyalty to God find their foundation in Christ's character. The Lord Jesus is completely trustworthy. His actions are pure and good, and He always keeps His promises. Numbers 23:19 says, "God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?" God is faithful, and we can put our lives into His hands. Paul said in 2 Timothy 1 and verse 12, "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." Do you know whom you believe? Have you entrusted yourself completely to the Lord? Have you made Him Lord of your life?

Let's pray together. Heavenly Father help us always to put You first and to never be ashamed of You or anything that You've taught. And help us to love You and to love others. In Jesus name, Amen.

Jesus asked His disciples, "But who do you say that I am?" Now I'm asking you, "Who do you say Jesus is?" Now be careful; your answer will determine where you spend eternity. Do you believe in Jesus or do you doubt? Do you think Jesus is awesome but are ashamed to be called a Christian? Do you believe in Jesus but afraid to confess Him? Do you confess faith in Christ but are ashamed of what He teaches? Do you confess Christ as Lord but not do what He says? Do you belong to Jesus? I'm deeply sorry when I see hypocritical and disobedient Christians who shame the name of the Lord. I'm not asking you to follow the disobedient or the hypocrites; I'm asking you to follow Jesus.

Now to come to Jesus means denying yourself, taking up your cross daily, and following Him from now on. You can be unashamed of Him or His words, because you love and trust Him for who He is. If you love and trust Him, put sin away from your life and confess Him before others. With that confession, gladly obey Him by being baptized into Christ. Galatians 3:26 to 27 says, "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ."

Baptism is an act of faith in His name. Colossians 2:12 to 13 explains, "having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions." When you're

baptized, God forgives your sins and makes you His child. You're born again to a new life in Christ filled with hope and love. Won't you be baptized today?

We hope that you'll live for Christ unashamed. If you 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](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org). Or, you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now there's a schedule of our programs and there's a map of churches in your area at [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org). Now SEARCH is also on YouTube! We ask that you Subscribe to our channel, "SearchTVMinistry" and like the programs. The algorithm spreads it to more people. We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses. Now don't worry, we're not asking for money. We're here to help you draw close to God.

We do ask that you show God your love by worshiping at church. You need a church family. Everyone does. And if you can attend, don't neglect worshiping at church. There's probably a church of Christ near you. And if you're looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll be happy to help you find one. We'll be back next week, Lord willing. Keep searching God's Word with us and tell a friend about the program. God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.