

"Power"

21.4 Sept
1456
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Scripture Lesson: - Romans 1:9-17.

Text: - Romans 1: 16. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth: to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

Introduction: - A Cardinal and a Pope were watching a mule team bringing treasures to the Church at Rome. The Cardinal gleefully remarked that no longer could mother Church say, "Silver and gold have I none", to which the Pope replied: Can she say, "Rise take up the bed and walk". In this reply is a great truth stated in our text. Material wealth and human authority cannot heal and strengthen the sin-sick and the spiritually lame. Only the gospel can do it.

The apostle must have been ashamed of his part in the death of Stephen, of his persecution of the Christians, and of his entire reliance on human authority. But the power that lifted and transformed gave pardon and a new outlook on life.

I.

He Was Not Ashamed of the Gospel.

1. Because it had a transforming power for all men. "Every one that believeth". It is the gospel of "whosoever"; for barbarian, bond or free"; for Corinth as for Ephesus, for Antioch as for Rome. The gospel is free from all narrow nationalisms and limited to no geographical boundaries. It recognizes no limits. It is the power that has the elements for world peace and cooperation. The world lays down artificial barriers but the gospel ignores them and levels up all in the sight of God. It also antedates and endergirds and surpasses all our concepts of democracy.

2. The nature of the gospel is power. We are aghast at man's power because it is abused, misused, destructive. Moral and spiritual power is lagging. The Power from on high is needed to control the high power below.

The gospel's power is different in origin and quality from man's power.

1. It partakes of the nature of God so must be good, just, holy. It is eternal not temporal, loving in purpose, spiritual not mechanical. It is always beneficent, not selfish, dynamic nor mechanical; it goes to the root of life not the fringes. It gives new life, a new life and power from on high. It originates and promotes all agencies that are good and true and of good report, like schools, hospitals and churches, and all missionary endeavor.

II.

The Gospel's Power Cannot Be Bought. Simon, the Sorcerer, tried to do it but was rebuked. Acts 8:20. Man can purchase human skill, eloquence, knowledge, but nothing can bring divine power into human life but complete surrender and obedience and a changed warm heart toward the Lord Jesus Christ. Divine power is a gift, "to every one that believeth

The purpose of power is salvation. It is a terrible reality that there are forces which of ourselves we cannot master. No one is the "Captain of his fate and master of his soul." The psalmist truly said, "My sins are stronger than I am," and St. Paul wrote, "O wretched man that I am!" But he could say "Thanks be to God who hath given us the victory through Christ." That is the language of salvation.

1. This power in our need. When all human devices fail, love lifts us up. He "came to seek and to save." He rescues the perishing. He gives strength to countless thousands in their need. George Matheson in his blindness at an early age could write, "O love that will not let me go!" The gospel is good news of a Savior who helps and saves to the uttermost.

2. Salvation is not merely progress or prosperity. The poor and the weak and the foolish things of the world are included. Salvation is forgiveness, freedom, assurance of eternal life, witness of the Spirit in the heart, and joy and peace and hope and enabling power to handle life under all situations.

Conclusion:- With such a gospel dare we live on a low level? Do we dare to keep silent? No! We have a glorious gospel, one of which we need not be ashamed.