

# **LET THE BIBLE SPEAK SERIES**

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## **I Am Ashamed**

Ezra 9:5-7 & 15

1. In 597-586 B.C. Neb. completed his 2nd and 3rd invasions of Israel. Carrying the Jews back captive with him. In 536 B.C. Cyrus of Persia captured Babylon and gave a decree allowing the Jews to return home and rebuild the temple. Under Zerubbabel 50,000 Jews returned to Palestine and began to lay the foundation of the Temple which Neb. had destroyed. Eagerness and Enthusiasm characterized this group as they cleared away the debris and started the work. The excitement soon cooled, however, when the Samaritans began their opposition to the work. (Ezra 4:2-5) A decree forbidding the work was obtained from Artaxerxes (ahr tuh ZURK seez) and for the next sixteen years the work ceased and the house of God continued to lay in waste. Back in Babylon and other parts of the Persian Empire there were many Jews who still remembered Jerusalem, the city of the King. Such a man was Ezra, the son of Seriah, a dedicated Levite, who had devoted his life to a study of God's Word. He was distinguished for his knowledge of the scriptures "a ready scribe in the law of Moses." Of him it is recorded "For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of Jehovah, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments." Ezra 7:10 His steps were ordered of the Lord "according to the good hand of his God upon him." Ezra 6:6 Ezra wanted to return to Palestine and petitioned the King for permission. It was granted and about 1800 men and their families, made the long journey back. Soon after their arrival, problems arose. The people were not very enthusiastic about the measures that were so close to the heart of this man of God. The people were prosperous, but not very spiritually minded. Ezra discovered the sin of mixed marriages, to be a major problem. Ezra 9:3. He knew this was in violation of God's Word Deut. 7:3 "You shall not make marriages with them, giving your daughters to their sons or taking their daughters for your sons." The enormity of their sin caused Ezra to be ashamed. Shame is "a painful feeling of guilt for improper behavior."

### **I. The Lack of Shame in the World Today.**

Is there no shame anymore? One would so conclude if it were to be determined by what people reveal about themselves on TV talk shows. Every kind of behavior imaginable to the mind is paraded across the screen as acceptable. In a recent poll published by Newsweek: Only 27% said that having a child out of wedlock would cause shame. Only 16% said that divorce was shameful. Today in America one out of every three children are born to parents who are not married to each other. National Political figures as well as Entertainment celebrities openly talk of their loose moral living and use and or abuse of drugs. There seems to be no shame.

### **II. Things for Which We Should All Be Ashamed**

1. I am ashamed of the way people deal with the truth.

Lying is commonplace. Even public figures from the President on down. It has reached the point that we actually expect our leaders to lie to us. Some had rather believe a lie than the truth. The scriptures teach us that lying is wrong. Col.3:9 "do not lie one to another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds." Psa.119:163 "I hate and abhor lying, But I love your law." Prov. 12:22 "Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord."

2. I am ashamed because we excuse sin.

We say "everybody does it." Many were doing it in Judah and Israel, but God still held them accountable. Ex.23:2 "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil." The most outrageous and ungodly behavior is excused. Sin is no longer sin, shame no longer shame. Rom. 6:23 "the wages of sin is death."

Even in the church, some excuse the way people dress. Modesty is a forgotten virtue. 1Tim.2:9 "In like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works. What a shame when women inadequately clothe themselves. Exposing their bodies for others to view.

3. I am ashamed because we accept homosexuality, adultery, and fornication as acceptable behavior in our society today. It used to be that a divorced man had no political future in our country. Not so now. We have professed homosexuals in congress, and political machines that play specifically to those who profess that ungodly lifestyle. Roughly half of the preceding generation just decided to live together, without marriage. Gal.5:19 "Now the works of the flesh are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness lasciviousness, etc." 1Cor.6:9-10 "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God."

4. I am ashamed because we are not outraged as a nation about the killing of unborn babies. We have been told that a woman has a right to choose. The fetus has no rights. We can somehow see life in a rock from Mars, but cannot see a life in the womb.

### You Decide

The father has syphilis and the mother has tuberculosis. They have had four children. The first one was blind, the second one died, the third one was deaf and dumb and the fourth one had tuberculosis. The mother is pregnant with their fifth child but is willing to have an abortion if YOU determine that she should. What would you decide for her? If you choose abortion, You've just murdered Beethoven. Abortion is murder and murder is sin.

5. I am ashamed at the way some church members treat the services of the church. Refusing to attend Sunday Night or Wednesday Night. Doing whatever they please and then declaring that "we are not commanded to assemble at any other time other than Sunday morning.

6. I am ashamed at the divided state of the church. Clearly a violation of the Lord's prayer in Jno. 17 and the teaching of Paul in 1Cor. 1:10 "no divisions among you."

I, often, cannot explain why brethren are worshipping in different locations not far from each other simply because they have chosen not to get along.

7. I am ashamed of the clamoring that often goes on in the church. The backbiting, talebearing, gossiping, and spiteful attitudes that result in hurt feelings and wounded brethren.

### III. Things For Which We Will Never Need Be Ashamed.

#### 1. The Gospel of Christ.

Paul was contemplating a trip to Rome. The Imperial City. He had already preached at some of the great political, philosophical and religious centers of the world. He was now ready to preach at Rome, and was not ashamed to declare its requirements and promises in the mightiest city on earth. Romans 1:16 "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation..." There is a crying need for this today. The gospel is the last thing that many want to hear. Some churches don't want it preached. They are afraid it will be offensive or upset someone. But it is the only thing that will save the lost.

#### 2. The Basis of the Gospel.

"For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, let the cross should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God." 1Cor. 1:17-19 Multitudes are looking for something besides the cross. The cross is a stumbling block to some and foolishness to others, but it is the very foundation of the Gospel. To leave the cross out of the Gospel is to destroy its very heart. Jesus died for the sins of the world, shed his blood. We should never be ashamed of that.

#### 3. The Wisdom of the Gospel.

The gospel does not operate according to the thinking and wisdom of men. Nearly every basic principle of the Gospel is contrary to human wisdom and thinking. The wisdom of Gospel says "Whosoever exalts self will be abased, whoever humbles will be exalted.

Lk. 14:11

The wisdom of the world says: when you are invited to something, try to get at the head before anyone beats you to it. The wisdom of the Gospel says go in quietly and take the lowest seat and then exaltation will follow. The wisdom of world says: find the easy way; take short cuts. The wisdom of the gospel says there are no easy ways or short cuts. Pay the price which involves hating evil wherever it is found. Lk. 14:26-33 The wisdom of world says: pay back in the same coin you receive. The wisdom of the Gospel says, "do good for evil." The wisdom of the world says: save your life by keeping it, but the wisdom of the Gospel says, "Give your life in order to preserve it." Lk. 17:33

#### 4. The Product of the Gospel.

Luke 8:11 states that the seed of the kingdom is the word of God. The product of the Gospel is the Church of Christ. It is undenominational, and anti-denominational, and unsectarian in all of its aspects. The church is just as universal as the Gospel. It is impossible to take a universal Gospel and produce a denominational church. The Gospel offers the same to all. The conditions of the gospel are the same to all. The avenues of worship are the same to all. The responsibilities of the Gospel are the same to all.

#### V. The Supernatural In The Gospel.

I am not ashamed of the Virgin Birth, the Miracles, the resurrection, the ascension, and the promise of the second coming of Christ. I am not ashamed of the inspiration of the gospel. It is not the product of human imagination, nor wishful thinking on the part of its writers. It came by inspiration--2Tim. 3:16-17; Gal. 1:11,12, 1Cor. 2:10.

I am not ashamed of the verbal inspiration of the gospel 1Cor. 2:13 "These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual." Because the gospel is inspired, I am not ashamed of its completeness and finality. Jude 3 The Gospel has said all that can be said, or needs to be said. When one says what the Gospel says and all that it says, that leaves nothing else that needs to be said.