

***The Great Sayings in the Gospels***  
***Message 81***  
***Ashamed of Jesus?***

Mark 8:38

38 Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. KJV

Luke 9:26

26 For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels. KJV

In our previous two messages “Who Is Jesus?” we discussed the identity of Jesus, His instructions to the disciples concerning that issue, and His call for a complete commitment of one’s self to Him. These are the words with which he concluded that discussion.

**The meaning of the word:**

The first obvious thing about the word is that it is obviously contrasted with the idea of taking up one’s cross and following Him.

Apparently, the word that Jesus used for ‘ashamed’ meant essentially the same thing as the English word used to translate the idea. It is to be embarrassed (or ashamed) of something or someone. Actually, the root of this word Jesus used is the root for our word “scandal.” It has to do with a thing being shameful, disgraceful, or dishonorable.

When we are ashamed of something we avoid it, decline to discuss it, refuse to acknowledge it, or attempt to hide it from other people. We do so because the ‘thing’ is distasteful, repulsive, irritating, displeasing, or in some other way disrespected or hated by the people of our immediate company.

For example, most people who understand the game of Baseball would not go to a Yankees game, and sit with the Yankee fans while wearing a Boston Red Sox jersey. Nor would one do the reverse in Boston. There is a long and intense rivalry between the two teams and with some it is very intense. One would be “ashamed” of a Yankees jersey in Boston because it would be repulsive to the Red Sox fans.

There was a time when being seen without one’s clothing was considered embarrassing and shameful but there is almost nothing that is considered so in our day.

Some of us have issues concerning our appearance of which we are embarrassed and we try to keep those hidden from others because we are ashamed of them.

But Jesus is obviously speaking of something far more serious, something with eternal consequences. This being ashamed that He is talking about will result in, apparently, everlasting and eternal rejection by Him at the Great Judgment of God. If He is not talking about that He is obviously referencing something that will be brought up at the Great Judgment and made public in a way humiliating to us. Personally, I think that He is going to eternally reject all those who were ashamed of Him in this life.

## **I. So, let us consider the ways in which a person might be “ashamed” of Jesus Christ.**

One of the ways comes quickly to mind because it was lived out in the lives of these men and recorded for us on the pages of God’s Word.

When the Jews came to arrest Jesus on the night before His crucifixion, all of the disciples ran away in fear even though they had, just the day before, sworn that they would die before they would abandon Him. They said this as they made their way from the Passover and Lord’s Supper to Gethsemane.

Mark 14:29-31

29 But Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet will not I.

30 And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.

31 But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all. KJV

Peter went further and publicly denied Him three times, swearing with an oath that he did not know Jesus.

### **Parenthesis:**

Some might have the question here: “If these were ashamed of Jesus and He had said that anyone ashamed of Him would be rejected by Him, what happened to them?”

There are two parts to the answer to this. First, the word that Jesus used for “be ashamed” is what is in the construction of a thing being final. It means that in the final analysis, when the tale of one’s life is told, he/she was “ashamed” to identify with, speak up for, carry the message of, the Lord Jesus Christ. Though they were ashamed of Him in a moment, this was not the final report on their lives.

The second part is that all these men repented of their sin and so re-dedicated themselves to the Lord Jesus that all of them but one died a martyr’s death except for John and the Romans tried very hard to kill him.

Jesus literally said “whosoever is being ashamed of me,” meaning whoever lives in the state of refusing to publicly identify with Him and is found to have been so at the Judgment.

### **End of Parenthesis.**

So, one way to be ashamed of Jesus is to publicly forsake Him and deny Him.

But, there are other ways to deny Jesus that are not as overt and public.

Titus 1:10-11

10 For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision:

11 Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake. KJV

Titus 1:16

16 They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate. KJV

Those who falsely represent themselves to be servants of God who live contrary to His Word and His Law are also ashamed of Jesus. They deny Him by their works.

Some of these people can represent themselves really well. They can speak and teach in an impressive fashion. But they do what they do for the sake of money. They are “ashamed” of the difficult service to which Jesus calls those who serve Him. They are “ashamed” to suffer difficulty and live in want. They are “ashamed” to seem poor and needy. They are “ashamed” of Jesus.

Then, there are those who show themselves “ashamed” of Jesus because they never speak up, never say a word on His behalf. People can blaspheme His name, invoke the name of God in profanity, and people who would call themselves Christian never utter a peep. They are embarrassed to speak up for the One they call “Lord,” the One, they say, bore their sins in His Own body on the cross.

And there are those for whom this passage was directly intended, those who will not take up the cross, deny themselves, present themselves, even their own bodies, as living sacrifices to God. Oh, they will come to church, sometimes faithfully. They will contribute to the church, sometimes very generously. They will participate in all kinds of activities with enthusiasm. ***(And, God's people should attend church, contribute generously, and support the activities.)*** But they will not surrender up their lives to be whole-hearted followers of Christ as He called each one to be.

These desire to keep their lives compartmentalized. “Here is the box that I place Jesus and here is the other boxes of my life. Don't get them confused.” They remind me a little bit of my sister when she was small. She always was a picky eater and it seems that my folks were always fussing at her about eating. She could not stand if the different items on her plate touched one another. And, she would almost have to empty her plate and start over if the juice from one item happened to run onto another. People often don't want their “Jesus” leaking onto the other boxes of their lives.

Jesus should stay in “His” place and leave the other parts of these people’s lives alone. Why? Because there are things they want to do that Jesus would mess up. It would be just too complicated. These people are, in all reality, ashamed of Jesus concerning some areas of life. It may be family, friends, hunting and fishing buddies, cronies, or gossip partners, but there are areas that these will not bring into subjection to Christ and to His rulership. They are “ashamed.”

You see, when a person takes up the cross to follow Jesus, all of his/her life is given over to Him. There are no “boxes” that are held back, no activities from which He is banned. He is everything and nothing is kept from Him.

## **I. Mark’s account catches the essence of this embarrassment concerning Jesus.**

### **“this adulterous and sinful generation”**

It is the environment that shapes our behavior if we are not careful. It is one thing to speak of the things of God at church or with another believer. It is quite another to speak of Him in the midst of scoffers and reprobates. The real test of one’s embarrassment, or lack thereof, concerning Jesus is how they speak up on His behalf when surrounded by skeptics, mockers, and blasphemers.

I can only imagine how Peter’s behavior would have changed if the crowd around the fire had been faithful disciples bemoaning the way that the Savior was being treated. Can you imagine him cursing and swearing that he did not know Jesus there? But there would have been nothing different about his heart. It was the nature of the people with whom he was keeping company that shaped his behavior.

We do indeed live in an evil day. Immorality and blasphemy surround us on every side. We can do nothing to change that fact. We can only choose the behavior that we will manifest in this environment.

Will we live for Christ?

Will we speak up for Him?

Will we rebuke evil? (Some of the young people need to listen here.)

The world and even our government is trying, more and more, to tell us what we can and cannot say, what we can and cannot write, what we can and cannot think.

How are you going to handle the fact that you are a believer (?) and the world around you is wicked?

Have you already begun to refuse to be limited in what you say? Have you already begun to identify yourself as belonging to Jesus Christ at every opportunity? Have you made permanent decisions concerning how you are going to behave in the face of resistance to all that is godly?

Or..... and let me ask this as kindly and gently as I can.... are you ashamed of Jesus?

## **I. Christ will be “ashamed” of those who are “ashamed” of Him.**

Please understand. Regardless of what you think that your spiritual status is right now, nothing is absolutely certain until it is ruled upon by the Judge of All Things, the Lord Jesus Christ, at the Final Judgment of God.

Many are going to appear on that day who are convinced that they were true believers in this life who will be told, “I never knew you.”

When your name is called and you step forward to be examined before God, angels, demons, and all of humanity, the record of your sins will be there, written in God’s book. You will be guilty of all of the sins that you have ever committed just as if there had never been a cross nor a sacrifice on your behalf.

Your only hope will be that the Great Savior, the One Seated on the Throne, speaks up for you, rules in your favor, and moves to transfer your sins to Himself and consider them as paid by His Work on the Cross.

It is just this picture and idea that Jesus is referencing here in this text. If there is anything that you never want to happen it is just this, that when the record of your crimes is read out He speaks up on your behalf.

His words in our text indicate to me that when those who have been ashamed of Him come to this moment, He will be silent. He will not speak up for them. He will not officially transfer their guilt to His Work. If this happens, then He will certainly move them to His left hand, number them among the goats and the say to them, “depart ye wicked into everlasting torment.”

### **Conclusion:**

Now, let me say here that there is no one who can earn Jesus’ favor by what they do on earth. Salvation, redemption, once given, will never be taken away.

What one can do, however, is demonstrate by his/her behavior that he/she never had any real love for Christ, never had any real faith in Him, never was a genuine believer.

And one of the sure signs of that, apparently, is to be ashamed of Him.

Think seriously concerning the words of Christ here. Think about your life and your relationships. Think about the times when you have had opportunities to say a word on behalf of Christ or to object when someone was denying Him or using His name in a profane way.

What are you doing?

Saving your self embarrassment at the cost of your own soul?

Thinking more of someone who is living in rebellion against Him than you do of Him?

Are you really ashamed to stand up and be identified with the Lord Jesus?

If you shy away from being identified with Him now, what will you do when persecution comes? When it really costs something to stand for Christ? How will you stand then?

I urge you to re-evaluate how you interact with others over this issue of being a Christian. As I have said before, there is no need to shout and scream at those who do wickedly in your presence. A quiet word, a disapproving look, a withdrawal from the conversation, these are things that can be as powerful as any self-righteous tirade.

Speak up for Christ.

Don't be ashamed of Him.

Don't be embarrassed to be identified with Him.

Be as loving and gentle as He was as you boldly stand firm.