



The ENJOY THE BIBLE

Quarterly

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“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ:”

Being “ambassadors for Christ” with “the gospel of Christ” is one of the operations of God in this present dispensation in which we are privileged to labor together with God as His “sons.” As “ambassadors” we have the distinct privilege to represent God in connection with the proclamation of His gospel. He has put us in trust with His gospel, with the result that when we proclaim it to others and deal with them about what it says, we truly ‘labor with God’ in its effectual working. In accordance with this Paul says to the Corinthians,...

²⁰ Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.

²¹ For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. (II Corinthians 5:20–21)

Hence being “ambassadors for Christ” we indeed do represent God. As Paul says, when we faithfully preach “the gospel of Christ” it is “as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.” So then as the “sons” that we are, (who should be eager to be laboring together with our Father in His business), we should deeply appreciate the opportunity we have to labor with God in evangelism as “ambassadors for Christ.” We should neither ignore nor neglect this “grace.” Instead we should be zealous to so labor together with God, not only because of the “grace” that it is, but also because of gratitude. Wherefore Paul also goes on to say to the Corinthians,...

¹ We then, as workers together *with him*, beseech *you* also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.

² (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation.) (II Corinthians 6:1–2)

However as it was with many of the Corinthians, so is it with many of us today. We actually do receive this

Table of Contents

Article:

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ”..... 1

From EBM To You..... 2

Bible Study Resources.....8

Contact Information..... 8

“grace of God in vain.” We do not labor together with God as “ambassadors for Christ.” We either ignore this “grace,” or we neglect it, or at best we are not very zealous for it.

Now there can be more than one reason for this. However there is one particular reason that often accounts for more cases of ‘reluctant ambassadorship,’ or ‘non-existent ambassadorship,’ than any other. And that reason is shame — being ashamed to talk to others about “the gospel of Christ” and hence being ashamed to be an ambassador for Christ. This was the case with a number of the Corinthian saints, and sadly it is also the case with many of us today.

When we are ones who are ashamed to fulfill our ambassadorship, we know deep down inside that this is exactly what we are. We may try to convince ourselves otherwise, or assign the cause for our reluctance to something else. However no amount of denial ever succeeds. We know that whatever reasons we may come up with for not witnessing, the bottom line remains unchanged — we are ashamed to talk to other people about “the gospel of Christ.” We are embarrassed to do so, not wanting them to think ill of us, or to make fun of us, or to respond in any way that does not reflect well on us. Shame and embarrassment hold sway over us, and we know it.

Howbeit there is a remedy to such shame and its accompanying reluctance or apprehension. Not through the use of some psychological gimmick of man’s wisdom, but rather through the effectual working of God’s word within us. Specifically through the effectual working of what God teaches us about “the gospel of Christ” and

From EBM To You


Dear Friends of EBM,

When we think about the Adversary's policy of evil against "the gospel of Christ," and especially when we think of encountering it, the first thing that often comes to our mind is the issue of confronting some perversion of the gospel. Such as the preaching of lordship salvation, or some other 'faith plus works' teaching.

However there is more to the policy of evil against the gospel than the issue of perverting it. There is also the issue of having Christians aid and abet it, or cooperate with it. This, of course, we would be doing if we ourselves pervert the gospel. But it is also something we do when we simply do not function as the "ambassadors for Christ" that we are. In fact being reluctant or silent "ambassadors for Christ" is probably the most common way in which we aid and abet the policy of evil.

Yet more than this, when we are reluctant or silent we also fail to participate in one of our sonship graces. A grace that is not only an operation of God in which we labor together as "sons" with our Father, but also one that is part of our training and preparation for our vocation to come.

Now though there can be more than one reason why we might be reluctant or silent "ambassadors," this edition's article addresses one that plagues many of us, yet we do not like to admit it.

 The reprinting of our booklet *The Gospel of God's Grace: Make It Clear! Make It Plain!* is now complete and it is back in stock.

**Our thanks to those
who faithfully help in
supporting this
ministry!**

how it operates, and also through the effectual working of the specific method that God has for producing confidence and boldness in us.

Now before looking at God's remedy, it will be beneficial for us to take note of some fundamental issues about shame in general, and particularly about its power.

Shame and Its Power

Shame is sometimes spoken of as one of the social emotions of our inner man. That is, it involves the issue of how we look upon ourselves and perceive or evaluate ourselves in our relationships and interactions with others. Simply put, it is a component of our concern for what another person, or other people, might think of us and the value that we attach to this concern.

Consequently we are prone to 'feel' shame or embarrassment when we are concerned that something about us, (whatever that may be), will cause another to respond negatively or unfavorably to us, or will just respond to us in a way that we do not like. Likewise we can be ashamed or embarrassed when we think that we will appear weak or incompetent to others, or when we are convinced (or made to think) that we have made a fool out of ourselves, or have done something we should not have done, and this reflects bad on us.

Hence we can have a number of different reasons for feeling shame or embarrassment. And as such we can have a number of different shame-rooted excuses for being reluctant and/or reticent about doing something that we should, instead of being confident and undaunted.

Shame, however, is not always an inconsistent, or bad, thing for us to have. Nor is it always counter-productive to us. There is 'good shame,' so to speak. Hence there are issues about which we should be ashamed. For example,...

²⁰ For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

²¹ What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things *is* death. (Romans 6:20-21)

¹¹ And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*.

¹² For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. (Ephesians 5:11-12)

⁹ In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;

¹⁰ But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. (I Timothy 2:9-10)

Shame, or being ashamed, in each of these contexts is proper and correct. It is consistent and godly for us, and its power is productive to us. These then are examples of 'good shame' for us.

Likewise there are times when we ought to be made to 'feel' ashamed. This would be the case when we do something that is out of character with who God has made us to be "in Christ"; when we do something for which we deserve to be told, "Shame on you." For example,...

³³ Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

³⁴ Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak *this* to your shame. (I Corinthians 15:33-34)

Though we might not necessarily call this 'good shame,' it is nonetheless appropriate that we feel it. And being appropriate, its power to motivate us is productive.

However being ashamed of "the gospel of Christ," and/or being ashamed to be an ambassador for Christ, is not 'good shame' for us. Nor is it appropriate for us to feel it at all. Instead it is a hindrance to our ambassadorship. It is counter-productive to us, to say the least. To be perfectly frank, it is completely unbecoming to us, being the ungodly thing that it is for us as God's "sons." Nonetheless such is still the case with many of us.

Moreover shame or embarrassment truly is a powerful thing. In fact it can be extremely powerful. Its ability to fully restrain us from doing something that we know we should do, (and even in our heart-

of-hearts really want to do), is almost unrivaled by any of the other debilitating emotions. Only fear is its equal, and this is because the two are so closely related; with shame often being the root from which fear sprouts and then grows.

Furthermore shame is a virulent thing, which when it is allowed to continue will actually increase, develop, and worsen. It can then work in conjunction with the fear that it often spawns and even become a paralyzing thing. For this reason producing or fostering shame, (or taking advantage of it when it already exists), is a goal of Satan's policy of evil against us. Consequently God has the apostle Paul deal with us about shame on several occasions, and in more than one context, in our epistles. Moreover in view of shame's power and its role in the policy of evil against us, even Paul himself and Timothy were not immune to it and its effects. For example,...

¹⁹ For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

²⁰ According to my earnest expectation and *my* hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but *that* with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether *it be* by life, or by death. (Philippians 1:19–20)

⁷ For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

⁸ Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; (II Timothy 1:7–8)

Indeed, therefore, shame is a powerful thing. It is capable not only of making one reticent and reluctant, but even of crippling and paralyzing. As such, in the Adversary's quiver of

“fiery darts” it is reached for more times than not. And though it is always grievous whenever it is successfully produced, it is most grievous when one is ashamed of “the gospel of Christ”; ashamed to be an ambassador for Christ.

The Remedy

Though it is indeed a powerful thing, shame does not have to dominate us. Even when it is successfully produced and established by the workings of the policy of evil against us, we do not have to be held under its tyranny, or cower under its influence. Again, there is a remedy.

Simply put, there are two main components to God's remedy against us being ashamed as “ambassadors for Christ.” Both are set forth in Romans 1–5, where we are not only educated in the doctrine of our justification unto eternal life when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as our all-sufficient Savior, but where we are also educated in how to be faithful and effectual “ambassadors for Christ.”

The first of the two components is set forth by Paul right at the outset, in Romans 1:16–17; while the second is set forth near the end, in Romans 5:3–5ff. Hence by their placement they frame in the doctrine that teaches us how to be faithful and effectual “ambassadors for Christ.” And by so doing they provide for us to be confident and bold ambassadors as well. Let's take a brief and simple look at them.

The First Component

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.

¹⁷ For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith. (Romans 1:16–17)

As the apostle Paul declares, he was “not ashamed of the gospel of Christ.” But he does not attribute his lack of being ashamed to a natural personality trait, as if he was just bold, self-confident, and outgoing by nature. Nor is it that he was one who was not very self-conscious, which made it so that any attempts to make him ashamed just ‘rolled off him like water off a duck's back.’ Nor does Paul attribute his lack of being ashamed to assertiveness training, or anything like that. Instead, Paul was not ashamed for a godly reason. As he states, he was “not ashamed of the gospel of Christ” because he knew some things about it.

Specifically Paul clearly understood and appreciated that “the gospel of Christ” is “the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.” Along with this he also understood and appreciated that in it “is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.” To put it very simply, Paul clearly understood and appreciated exactly what “the gospel of Christ” is to God; what God has designed it to do; and exactly how God has designed it to go about doing its job. Understanding this, therefore, Paul knew all about “the power of God” that is vested in “the gospel of Christ,” and he knew all about its effectual working, and he knew just how to wield its power and provide for its effectual working with anyone to whom he proclaimed it. Knowing these things, Paul was “not ashamed of the gospel of Christ,” nor ashamed to proclaim it to others in order to deploy its power and its effectual working with them.

This is the first component to God's own designed remedy against us being “ashamed of the gospel of Christ.” And though it sounds simple, (even too simple), it is effectual and

mighty in achieving its end with us nonetheless.

So then if we ourselves also clearly understand and appreciate the same things Paul did; i.e. if we too know “the power of God” vested in the gospel; if we too know all about its effectual working; if we too know how it is that in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; and if we too know how to intelligently wield its power and provide for its effectual working with anyone to whom we witness; then we also can have the effectual working of this knowledge displace our shame and/or embarrassment, and replace it with confidence.

Ah, but there’s the rub, as the saying goes. For all too often when we are ashamed to witness it is because we lack these very things. And more times than not we lack these very things because *we never learned them*. For whatever reason, we have never allowed Paul’s ‘preaching of the gospel’ in Romans 1:16ff to effectually work within us when it comes to training us to be “ambassadors for Christ.” Yet this is one of the very things that God has designed it to do. Or to put it more bluntly, in Romans 1:16–5:21 God has put together His own ‘Evangelism Training Program’ for us, which He expects us to go through. He Himself has designed it, and as such it is perfect. It deals with everything necessary to fully train and equip us to be faithful and effectual “ambassadors for Christ.” Yet many Christians do not even know that it exists. As such they have never had God Himself teach them how to preach the gospel to others and train them to labor with Him in evangelism as His ambassadors. This in itself is a shame.

However when God’s ‘Evangelism Training Program’ effectually works within us, it displaces the common shame-rooted excuses that we

come up with for not witnessing. Moreover in their place it builds within us the confidence to function as the “ambassadors for Christ” that God has privileged us to be. And needless to say we can certainly cook up a number of shame-rooted excuses.

For example, if we do not know the fact that all unjustified people are ones “who hold the truth in unrighteousness”; and if we do not understand exactly what this means along with the advantage that this is to us; then we may not have the confidence that we know how to begin witnessing to someone. Hence we may say to ourselves, *‘I really don’t*

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know how to begin witnessing to people. I don’t know what I should say. I don’t know the best way to bring up a person’s need for salvation.’ And so we will talk ourselves out of witnessing to someone because we do not know how to broach the subject.

However if we understood and appreciated from Romans 1:18–32 the fact that the advantage is all ours; that the light of God-consciousness has already been at work in everyone we meet; that God, therefore, has already set the stage for us and that He has provided us with a ‘trigger to the gospel,’ so to speak; then we would not be ones who trouble ourselves over the issue of not knowing how to begin. Rather we would know just how to begin. We would know how to ‘pull the trigger to the gospel.’ We,

therefore, would realize that the issue is not one of us having to come up with some snappy opening line, or some catchy introduction, by which we can somehow steer the conversation into the direction of ‘spiritual things’ and then eventually on to the gospel. Instead we would realize that the issue for us is one of directly addressing with the unsaved a particular issue and truth that they have already thought about, is already resident in their hearts and minds, and is something to which they have already responded in one of two ways.

Hence we do not need to feel as if we first must somehow get a person into a ‘spiritual frame of mind’ before witnessing to him, and then struggle in our own minds with just how we are going to do this. For the truth of the matter is that God has already done this for us. The essential “truth” that is the ‘trigger to the gospel’ has already been set by God in every man’s mind. Granted it is being ‘held in unrighteousness’ as God says, but it is there nonetheless. Consequently all it needs from us as “ambassadors for Christ” is to have a person’s attention directed to it. When we do this, we ‘pull the trigger to the gospel’ and the opportunity to witness is underway.

Therefore what God teaches us to understand and appreciate about men ‘holding the truth in unrighteousness,’ along with what He says that they already “know,” gives us the advantage as ambassadors. It teaches us exactly how to broach the subject of their need for salvation. In so doing it displaces our excuse of not knowing how to begin witnessing and replaces it with the competence that comes from knowing exactly what needs to be done and how to do it.

In like manner we may concoct another excuse. We may, for example, worry that we will not ‘say the right

thing,' or know how best to respond, when objections are raised or arguments are produced. We may fear that we will get entangled in some objection, or that someone will 'trip us up,' and that we will not know how to handle it. Hence we may say to ourselves, 'What if someone brings up some issue that I am unprepared for? What if they ask me a question that I cannot answer? I'd be so embarrassed.' And with this we talk ourselves out of witnessing.

Yet if we understood and appreciated that in Romans 1:16-4:25 God educates us in every possible objection and argument that an unjustified man can raise, as well as educating us in how He wants us to respond to any or all of them, then we would have no reason to fear being unprepared or being tripped up. In contrast we would know that we are well prepared.

And indeed God does educate us in every possible objection, argument, and type of response that unjustified men can produce. In fact as Romans 1:16-4:25 makes evident, there are only a limited number of predictable and easily identifiable responses that the unsaved can give. Likewise God has an equal number of corresponding clear and plain replies that He wants us to give as His ambassadors. Hence the issue is not one of us needing to match wits with the unsaved. Nor is it the issue of us needing to learn and/or memorize a lengthy catechism of potential questions and answers in order to be prepared. Instead all we need is to be taught of God what to expect and how He wants us to deal with it.

Therefore the excuse of not knowing how to handle objections and the like is also readily remedied and overcome by God's own 'Evangelism Training Program.'

There are a number of other similar shame-rooted excuses that we can easily concoct and offer in order to attempt to justify ourselves being reluctant or silent "ambassadors for Christ." However none of them are valid. For once again the truth of the matter is that in God's 'Evangelism Training Program' He effectually prepares us for every possible response and/or contingency that we can encounter. Nothing is overlooked, nor does His training fall short of addressing any of our concerns or apprehensions.

If, therefore, we are ashamed and/or are reluctant to witness to people, then first and foremost we

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need to let God Himself address and remedy our excuses and concerns by the effectual working of Romans 1:16-5:21. This is where He thoroughly equips us and trains us for the good work of being faithful and confident "ambassadors for Christ."

The Second Component

³ And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

⁴ And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

⁵ And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. (Romans 5:3-5)

The second component for dealing with shame and/or reluctance

comes into play when we actually start witnessing to others. For when we do, we will not always get a positive response. We will not always be well received. And when this happens it can beget its own brand of reluctance and/or shame.

Now as we witness, often we will meet with the simple negative responses of disinterest or rebuffing put-downs. And though such responses are sad and disappointing, they are usually not troubling in the sense that they are daunting to us. They do not tend to sow the seeds of intimidation in us, or begin to shake our confidence, or challenge our 'rejoicing in hope of the glory of God' and so serve to produce doubts or uncertainty in us. Generally such simple and mild forms of negative response serve only to disappoint us that the person will not give "the gospel of Christ" an honest hearing.

However not all negative responses are this mild. Some can be of an unsettling and alarming nature. For example, we can be turned upon and opposed. Our testifying to the truth of what "the gospel of Christ" says can be challenged and fought against. Likewise our own rejoicing in the justification and salvation that we say we possess having believed the gospel can be challenged and opposed. In other words we can, (and indeed will), encounter "tribulations" of opposition to the gospel as we function as "ambassadors for Christ." Especially "tribulations" in the form of strong and persistent arguments that oppose and denounce what the gospel says, from ones who adhere to and promote perversions of "the gospel of Christ." For example, we may encounter fervent and forceful denials of the truth that justification in God's sight is by faith alone, or denials that we can have full assurance of being saved.

Now when we do encounter such “tribulations,” they can have a negative impact upon us. Such opposition may not only be unpleasant, but also troubling and disturbing to us; even daunting. Strong arguments and opposition can actually begin to intimidate us, shaking our confidence as to whether we really can deal with such responses. Also they are very capable of begetting serious doubts and misgivings in our minds. In fact, this is what these kind of “tribulations” are designed to do.

This is because such “tribulations” are not merely part of the normal or natural class of negative responses we can expect to receive. Rather they belong to the class of negative responses that are sponsored by the Adversary’s policy of evil against us, as he opposes both our establishment in the assurance of our justification and our ambassadorship for Christ. As such these kinds of opposition are specifically designed to be “tribulation” to us. They are designed to be disturbing and troubling opposition to us; even daunting opposition. So when we do meet with these “tribulations” associated with being “ambassadors for Christ,” it is possible for us to have our confidence shaken or be made to be ashamed on account of them. For once again this is what the Adversary and his policy of evil against us is desirous of producing.

Nevertheless we need not be daunted or made to be ashamed by such “tribulations.” For God has provided for this as well. He has His effectual remedy for the policy of evil’s attempts to trouble us, or cow us, or make us ashamed. This is what Romans 5:3–5ff addresses and what its effectual working within us is designed to remedy.

Now as is evident from what the passage teaches, there is more than one part to God’s provision for deal-

ing with these daunting and shame-producing type “tribulations.” The first part is set forth in verses 3–4. It particularly addresses the issue of the “tribulations” being intimidating or daunting to us. By its effectual working within us it counters their daunting effect by both re-establishing and strengthening our confidence. The second part is set forth in verse 5 and following. It particularly addresses the issue of the “tribulations” trying to ‘make us ashamed’ of the hope that we say we possess having believed the gospel. However by the effectual working of the doctrine of verse 5 and following this too is negated, and in its place God fully establishes within us the confidence and assurance of our hope.

Hence if we have a tendency to be daunted by the “tribulations” instead of glorying in them, the remedy for us is to operate upon what verse 3 and 4 say:

³ And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

⁴ And patience, experience; and experience, hope: (Romans 5:3–4)

The truth of the matter is that God has designed for us to gain confidence as His ambassadors and to become skillful in dealing with opposition *by facing it*. He has designed it so that the very opposition that has a tendency to intimidate us actually works to make us skillful and bold. The “experience” we derive from facing the tribulation and with “patience” dealing with it, works to affirm our “hope,” or confident expectation, both in the truth of what the gospel says and in our ability to deal with any and all opposition to it.

So then “knowing” this, instead of being daunted by any such “tribulations,” we should face them for the sake of them making us effectual “ambassadors for Christ.” We should

face them so that they work “patience,” “experience,” and “hope.” In so doing we overcome the tendency to be intimidated in the face of opposition by becoming skillful and confident in dealing with it.

Indeed we acquire the practical confidence and boldness that we can handle a situation, (especially that we can deal with opposition), from the experience of doing it. There is no short cut to possessing it; no passive way for it to develop within us. Hence there is no other way to overcome the daunting effects of the “tribulations” associated with our ambassadorship than by the effectual working of what Romans 5:3–4 says.

This is much the same for us as when Paul says regarding deacons,...

¹³ For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. (1 Timothy 3:13)

Just as a deacon ‘purchases to himself’ “great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus” by ‘using the office of a deacon,’ so also is it with us as “ambassadors for Christ.” We too purchase to ourselves boldness when it comes to the intimidating “tribulations” of opposition to our witnessing by first of all “knowing that tribulation worketh patience,” and then by facing the “tribulations” on the basis of this knowledge and letting “patience” work “experience,” and “experience, hope.”

Such, therefore, is God’s remedy when our witnessing encounters the daunting effects belonging to these “tribulations” of opposition.

However as was noted previously, the issue of being intimidated is not the only effect that these “tribulations” are designed to produce. They are also designed to have a negative impact upon our confident ‘rejoicing in hope of the glory of God’

by directly challenging it, and thereby shaking our minds on the issue of whether we really are secure in our justification and salvation. And indeed opposition to “the gospel of Christ” can do this very thing. For it directly challenges our profession that we are justified freely by God’s grace through faith alone in Christ alone, and it works to disprove this to us through its perverting of “the gospel of Christ.” In so doing it not only attacks the truth that faith, and faith alone, is counted for righteousness, but it also vehemently denies the idea that we can really have complete assurance that we are justified in God’s sight and are fully secure in our salvation.

Consequently the “tribulations” of opposition seek to have us question the legitimacy of our ‘rejoicing in hope of the glory of God.’ They work to produce doubts or misgivings about it. Yea, they work to make us ashamed for thinking that we could have such assurance. And thereby they work to dampen our confident rejoicing in our hope.

So then after dealing with the remedy to the daunting effect belonging to these “tribulations” of opposition, God has Paul go on to say,...

⁵ And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us. (Romans 5:5)

“And hope maketh not ashamed,” Paul says. Yet, once again, the exact opposite is what the policy of evil wants when we encounter its “tribulations” of opposition to our witnessing. By the arguments of its opposition it wants us to be ashamed, as if our professed hope was just some ‘pie in the sky in the sweet bye and bye,’ and definitely not something that we should have the confident expectation of receiving.

Howbeit God has His remedy to this issue as well. The ultimate assurance doctrines that He sets forth in verses 5–21 of Romans 5 are designed by their effectual working within us to fully counter and totally dismiss this effect of the opposition.

Briefly and simply stated, in Romans 5:5–21 God provides us with the strongest forms of assurance regarding our justification and salvation that our minds can possess. In fact He provides us with the strongest and the highest forms of assurance *that can exist*. For through the effectual working of what He teaches us to understand, God produces in our own minds the very understanding that He Himself possesses regarding how secure we are. He does this by teaching us to understand and appreciate the very reasons why it is that He Himself knows that we are completely secure and are fully assured of what He has promised us. And on the basis of this God teaches us to realize, understand, and appreciate

just as He does the unquestionable certainty of what He has promised us and the absolute permanence of what He has done with us.

So then through the effectual working of verses 5–10 by which “the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us”; and through the effectual working of the doctrine in verses 11–21 regarding “the at-one-ment” that we now have with God “in Christ”; the unquestionable certainty of what God has promised us, and the absolute permanence of what God has done with us, are firmly established and settled in our minds to the very same degree that they are firmly established and settled in God’s own mind.

When this, therefore, is accomplished in us, no doubts or misgivings can be produced within us; just as there are no doubts or misgivings in God’s mind regarding our justification and salvation. Instead we can confidently “rejoice in hope of the glory of God” unashamedly and without reservation, regardless of any challenges to the contrary from the “tribulations” of opposition.

Wherefore, and without a shadow of a doubt, just as the beginning of verse 5 declares, “...hope maketh not ashamed.”

“That Ye Receive not the Grace of God in Vain”

So even though we may manufacture in our own minds any number of shame-rooted excuses to keep us from being enthusiastic “ambassadors for Christ”; and even though the “tribulations” of opposition to our witnessing may tend to produce their own brand of hesitancy, apprehension, and/or doubts and misgivings; God’s own ‘Evangelism Training Program’ in Romans 1:16–5:21 is capable of rendering ineffective each and every excuse or cause for shame that we might have.

Therefore we do not need to be ones who receive the grace of God in vain. We do not have to be reluctant or reticent “ambassadors for Christ.” Rather we can be the exact opposite. Through the effectual working of God’s word within us, we can say with the same conviction as the apostle Paul, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ.” And we can say it without dissimulation. — K.R. Blades

Note: This has been only a brief and simple consideration of the provision God has made for us to be faithful, effectual, and confident “ambassadors for Christ,” instead of reluctant or apprehensive ones. For a further and more detailed examination of our ambassadorship in general, and of perversions of “the gospel of Christ,” and of being educated in the issue of the effectual working of “the gospel of Christ,” see our video series entitled *Our Ambassadorship*; our booklet *The Gospel of God’s Grace: Make It Clear! Make It Plain!*; and also our *Enjoy The Bible Ministries Gospel Tracts*.

“rightly dividing the word of truth” II Timothy 2:15

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