



LIFE APPLICATIONS “1 CORINTHIANS”

Chapter 1

ARE YOU EMBARRASSED?

Have you ever been embarrassed to be a Christian?

Are you sometimes - or often - embarrassed to admit that you are a Christian simply because it means your beliefs and values are different than those of people around you, and you do not want to stand out and be ridiculed?

If this is true, you should pay attention to what St. Paul says in Romans 1:16, “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes.” There are several important things you can learn from this.

First, it is important to know that many non-Christians will refuse to believe the truth about Jesus Christ, instead believing that your faith is ridiculous. Some of these people will even mock you for being a Christian. St. Paul warns us of this when he says, “For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness” (1 Corinthians 1:22-23). The Jews had religious objections to the Gospel of Christ, while the Gentiles simply thought the Gospel to be foolish: people raise the same objections today.

Instead of being discouraged, however, notice what St. Paul says in verses 24-25: “But to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.” St. Paul is not ashamed of being a Christian, even when scorn is heaped upon him for his preaching, because he knows that the Gospel is God’s power to save believers. He is not ashamed to be a Christian: he only regrets that some people will not allow themselves to be transformed by God.

Jesus also faced the issue of shame when He was on earth. Hebrews 12:2 tells us, “[Jesus], for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Being crucified was a humiliating way to die: it was reserved for the worst criminals. Despite the way in which non-believers would look at His death and see Him as a failure, Jesus endured the Cross because He paid attention, not to the mockery He endured while being crucified (Matthew 27:40; Mark 15:30; Luke 23:37, 39), but instead to the joy that awaited Him when He sat down at the right hand of the Father.

Thus, when you feel ashamed of your faith because others are mocking you, remember that God is wiser and stronger than whatever opinions are being thrown at you, and He will transform and save you through your relationship with Him and His Church.