

The Gospel According To Paul
Romans 1:1-17 Part 2
Rick Edwards

1. PAUL - THE MAN -- Romans 1:1

Paul describes himself three ways

- Servant
- Called to be an Apostle
- Set apart to be an Apostle

2. PAUL'S MESSAGE -- Romans 1:2-6

What can we say about the "Gospel"?

The gospel means good news

- **It is promised in scripture V 2**
- **It is centered in the person of Jesus V 3**

Jesus is His personal name. Jesus is the Greek word for Joshua. Jesus' real name in Hebrew was Joshua. Joshua, in Greek, is Jesus. Joshua means "Jehovah is salvation". Jesus' name meant "God is salvation". Christ is His official name. It's the Greek word for Messiah. It means "anointed". Lord is His title. That's the word "curios" or Lord.

- It is a gospel of Grace V4

God doesn't give us what we deserve. God gives us what we need! Grace!!

- It is the gospel for the whole world. V 5-6

3. PAUL'S MINISTRY -- Romans 1:7-13

If you want to have a ministry then you need to do the four things that Paul did in these verses.

- 1. Encourage people**
- 2. Pray for people.**
- 3. Do whatever you can to spend time with Christians building relationships**
- 4. Use your spiritual gift.**

When spiritual gifts are shared two things happen.

- *"...it will make you strong... V 11-12*
- *"you will be encouraged..."*

4. PAUL'S MOTIVATION -- Romans 1:14-17

What was Paul's attitude toward telling others about Christ?

- **I am obligated V 14**

Who do you think is responsible to share Jesus with the people around you?

- **I am eager** to preach the gospel and to share the good news of how Christ saved me V 15
- **I am not ashamed**
Why? V 16-17
 1. "because it is the power of God for salvation"
 2. "because it is for everyone who believes, first for the Jew and then for the Gentile"
 3. "because it is so simple "It is the power of God to everyone who believes"

How to become an effective witness to people around you

We can learn a lot from Paul's example. How can you make an impact? Nobody made an impact greater than Paul. How can you make an impact on your world? How can you make an impact on your family?

1. Clarify your relationship to Christ.

Paul says, "I'm a servant of Christ." Are you? "I'm called to serve Him." This is not a volunteer army. If you're not serving the Lord, you're AWOL. "I'm set apart" -- God takes priority in my life.

2. He understood the gospel.

The gospel is the good news of Jesus Christ's death on the cross for our sins; His resurrection from the grave on the third day. We accept Christ forgiveness by grace. That's the gospel. And it's for everybody.

3. Recognize the importance of other people.

You can't make it in the Christian life by yourself. You need other Christians. Paul says, we need to get together so we can encourage each other and strengthen each other.

4. Right motive for sharing the gospel.

The things Paul said about himself every Christian can say about him/herself. You are called to say these three things:

- **I'm obligated.**

If I'm a Christian I've got the greatest news in the world; I have to share it. Otherwise I'm robbing somebody else.

- **I'm eager. I want to share it.**

I know what it will do; it will change lives. It's the best thing I can do with somebody, to share Christ with them. I'm enthusiastic about it.

- **I'm confident.**

You don't have to apologize for the gospel. You don't have to be afraid or ashamed that you're a Christian. These Christians were undergoing much worse things than we are. It's difficult being a Christian where you work but is it worse than Rome? They were having to hide in catacombs. They were thrown to lions.

Romans 1:1-17 Part 2

Rick Edwards

Next to Jesus Christ there was no man that made a greater impact on the world besides the apostle Paul. He wrote most of the New Testament, he established the first churches in the Roman Empire. He was a great man of God. Tonight we're going to get an insight into this man's life, what it takes to make an impact on people, on the world.

The first seventeen verses in the book of Romans are really an autobiography. Paul talks about himself. He speaks in the first person, he shares his heart, he exposes his life.

Tonight we're going to look at Paul: the man, his message, his ministry, his motivation (because he serves as a model for us).

I've chosen a title for tonight's study, "**The Gospel According to Paul.**" He did write a gospel and this is it. v. 1 "*I was set apart for the gospel of God.*" The word "Gospel" is used four times in these first 17 verses.

In the New Testament times, letters were fairly short. Paper was hard to get. Either way it meant paper was so expensive you didn't write long letters.

The average letter in the Roman Empire during this time was probably about 150 words. Cicero wrote a letter that was actually a treatise and it had 4,500 words in it.

Paul, when he writes to the Romans, uses 7,100 words. He's got a lot to say.

We're going to take our time through this great letter. It's an important letter. A great Swiss commentator said, "**Every great revival in history that ever started can somehow be related to this book.**"

1:1 "*Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God.*"

I. PAUL - THE MAN. Paul says three things about himself.

1. **Servant. He says, I'm "a servant of Christ Jesus".** He was born a free man. But the fact is everybody is a servant. Who are you a servant to? Everybody has a master. It may be something or someone. But Paul changed masters. As we get into the letter we see he had been a slave to sin and legalism. Now he says, "I'm gladly a slave to Jesus Christ." John 8:34 Jesus says, "*Whoever sins is a slave to sin.*" In Romans 6:16, Paul talks about being a servant to sin. Paul talks about being a servant of Jesus Christ.

2. "**Called to be an apostle". God's army is not volunteer.** You are commissioned. You don't volunteer to serve the Lord or use your ministry or use your gift. The fact is if you're not serving the Lord, you're AWOL because we're called into service, called to be part of the gospel. You may not be called to be an apostle, but you're called to do something else based on your gifts and your talents.

3. **"Set apart for the gospel of God"**. "Set apart" is the Greek word from which we get our word "horizon". It literally means streamlined or purposely narrowed down. Paul is saying "I'm set apart for the gospel. This is my one thing. I do one thing. I'm a jack of all trades, I'm a specialist in the gospel." This was the great theme of his life.

Remember *Have Gun, Will Travel*, the TV show? I think Paul would say, "Have Gospel, will travel" because that was the theme to his life. He said, "The good news is my life, this is the one thing I do."

II. PAUL'S MESSAGE

Paul's message is the gospel. *"That was promised beforehand though all the prophets in the holy scripture regarding His son who, as to His human nature, was a descendent of David and through the spirit of holiness, was declared with power to be the Son of God."* Paul's message is the gospel.

"Gospel" means good news.

The word Gospel was not a word that was particularly religious in any sense. It just meant I've got good news.

Paul says several things about the gospel. Paul defines it here.

1. **First he says it's promised in the Bible.**

vs. 2 ***"The gospel was promised beforehand through the prophets in the Holy Scripture."*** He's talking about the Old Testament.

In Hebrew 1:1-2 the author there says, *"God, in times past, spoke to us by his prophets many different ways but now He's spoken to us through His son, Jesus Christ."* Luke 24:27 Jesus is taking to a couple of men.

It's after He had resurrected from the dead, comeback to life, *"And beginning with Moses and all the prophets He explained to them what was said in all the scriptures concerning Himself."* Jesus took the entire Old Testament and taught about Himself.

The Gospel didn't start in the New Testament. Moses preached the Gospel. David preached the Gospel. Abraham preached the Gospel. All through the Old Testament we see this good news. We see it through signs, sacrifice, symbols, promises of God, predictions.

The Old Testament says one thing, "He's coming...he's coming... he's coming..." First, back in Genesis, it's kind of veiled and vague but then you start seeing symbols and types and illustrations.

As it gets closer and closer to the time of the Messiah, it gets more and more specific. Paul says that the first thing we can say about the gospel is it's promised in the Bible.

2. **The Gospel is the gospel is a person.** V 3 *"Regarding His Son, who as to His human nature, was a descendant of David."*

Jesus Christ. "Regarding" means "about". The Phillips translation says, *"The Gospel is centered in God's son."*

- If you take Buddha out of Buddhism you still have a great philosophy.
- If you take Mohammed out of Islam you still have a bunch of rules and regulations and a system by which people can live by.

But if you take Jesus Christ out of Christianity, it falls apart.

It's all based on His Son. Christianity is not a religion, it is a relationship. A relationship to God through Jesus Christ.

What can we say about Jesus Christ?

1. He's an actual human being. It said he had a human nature.

The encyclopedia in Russia says that Jesus Christ was a myth, that He never existed, He wasn't a real person.

It says here He was a descendent of David. Who was David? David was the king and it was promised all through the Old Testament that Jesus Christ would come through the genealogy of David.

In Matthew 1 and Luke 3 we find two genealogies. If you compare those two you'll find they don't match. Why? One of them is the genealogy of Joseph.

The other is the genealogy of Mary. Joseph was supposed to be the father; we know he was the step father to Jesus because Mary was a virgin. **But through either Joseph or Mary you see that Jesus was the Son of David.**

He was a real human being, not part man and part God. He was 100% God and He was 100% man.

Some people think Jesus was kind of a schizophrenic -- half human and half God. But He was 100% man. When you pricked Him, He bled, He hurt.

Why is that important? Hebrews 4:15. If Jesus Christ were not a human being we couldn't have this verse. *"For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way just as we are without sin."*

If Jesus Christ had not been a whole human being He couldn't be an example for us. He couldn't die for us because He took a man's place.

He couldn't experience the suffering we experience. He couldn't comfort us because he wouldn't know what it was like.

But because He was 100% human, He went through what we went through and we can come to Him and say, "God, I'm struggling today" and He understands. He was 100% human. He had real hurts and actually died.

2. He was not only human but He was also 100% God.

1 v. 4 *"Who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by His resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ, our Lord."*

Jesus Christ was not only 100% man, He was also 100% God. What is it that proves that Jesus Christ was God?

The resurrection proves that Jesus Christ was God. He came back to life on His own. I Cor. 15:14 *"If Jesus Christ had not raised from the dead then our faith is in vain."*

Notice in v. 4 He was Jesus Christ, our Lord. That is His full name, Jesus Christ, our Lord. This is the difference between these three terms:

- **Jesus is His personal name.**
- **Jesus is the Greek word for Joshua.**
- Jesus' real name in Hebrew was Joshua.
- Joshua, in Greek, is Jesus.
- Joshua means "Jehovah is salvation". God is salvation. Jesus' name meant "God is salvation".

Christ is His official name. It's the Greek word for Messiah. It means "anointed".
Lord is His title. That's the word "curios" or Lord.

So what do we say about this gospel?

1. It's promised in Scripture.

2. It's centered in a person -- Jesus Christ. And Jesus Christ was 100% God and 100% man.

3. It is a gospel of grace! in v. 5. *"Through Him and for His name's sake we receive grace."*
It is a gospel of grace. We'll cover this in succeeding weeks.

What does grace mean? God's Riches At Christ's Expense. I like this term: **Everything that God does for us because of Jesus is Grace!**

Grace is when you give somebody what they need, not what they deserve.

The Bible says that God doesn't give you what you deserve. If you got what you deserved, would anybody be alive today? No.

God doesn't give us what we deserve. God gives us what we need!

So, the Gospel, the good news, is good news through the Bible, good news about Jesus Christ, good news of grace.

4. It's a gospel for the whole world. v. 5-6 *"Through Him and for His name sake we receive grace and apostleship to call people from among all the Gentiles [circle this] and to the obedience that comes from faith. And you also are among those who are called and belong to Jesus Christ."*

In the Jewish mind there are only two types of people -- Jews and non Jews. They didn't recognize any other race.

The non Jews were grouped into one group and they were called Gentiles.

Paul said the gospel is for all Gentiles-- it's a global gospel -- for Jews and non-Jews. That's why we support world missions; it's a universal message.

Review: Paul is the man, a servant, called and set apart to preach the gospel. What is the gospel? It's the gospel that's been in the Bible for hundreds and thousands of years, the gospel **about a man Jesus Christ, who is 100% God and 100% man, the gospel about God's grace, that God does what we need not what we deserve, and it's a gospel for everybody. That's the message.**

III. PAUL'S MINISTRY

In the next few verses, verses 7 and following, we see Paul's relationship to the Romans. The Bible says that not one word is in the Scripture by accident and that it's all profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness.

So we can learn from Paul's model here a lot about his relationship to the Romans about how we are to have a ministry. If you want to know how to have a ministry, key into these next few verses.

v. 7 *"To all who are in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints, grace and peace to you from God and from the Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ."*

First he says the people in Rome are saints. A saint is somebody who belongs to Jesus Christ. If you are a Christian, you are a saint.

And Paul says *"grace and peace to you."* That's a common phrase and you see it in every one of Paul's letters. This is the way Paul says "hello". "Grace and peace" comes from two different cultures. **Grace literally means rejoice. Peace is the Hebrew greeting, Shalom.** When Paul says "grace and peace" he's kind of taking the best of both worlds to say "Hello" to everybody. The two go together. When you have grace you're going to have peace.

v. 8 *"I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you."*

He begins with a compliment and says, I thank God for you. Do you want to influence people? Do you want to help people grow in the Lord? Develop a ministry of encouragement. Be an affirmer.

There's plenty of critics in the world. It doesn't take anything to criticize. But Paul was a master at affirmation.

He knew that the way you build people up is not by putting them down. You build people up by lifting people up with a word of gratitude, a compliment. That's the secret of bringing out the best in other people.

There were Christians in Rome. How did they get there? We're not really sure. Paul did not start the church at Rome.

We know that Peter didn't start it either because there's no mention of it in the Bible and no reputable church history that states it either, although some people believe it.

What probably happened is that some of the converts of Paul moved to Rome. Priscilla and Aquilla got there. We know that others that Paul knew were there from the last chapter of this book. They started a church and it began to grow.

They met in the catacombs but soon there were Christians throughout the great empire city of Rome. There were Christians even in Caesar's palace. Paul said, "I thank God for you."

Notice the reputation of this church, "... because your faith is being reported all over the world."

The Christians in Rome had a world famous faith. They were famous. **He said everywhere I go, all over the world, people talk about your faith.**

What a reputation!

In Rome it wasn't exactly an easy place to be a Christian. Rome was sin city. The Las Vegas of the Mediterranean.

Nero was emperor at this time and there were all kinds of orgies and things going on. **It was a totally corrupt city.**

Yet it's kind of like the statement, "**The darker the night, the brighter the stars**" and the **more corrupt a society is the more Christians stand out.**

The stronger the wind, the stronger the oak tree becomes. Just the very fact that Rome was so decadent and so opposite of what God wanted, the Christians there stood out like stars on a dark night.

What do you think a church ought to be famous for?

- Some churches are famous for their size.
- Some churches are famous for their building -- their architecture is well known.
- Some churches are famous for the teachings of their pastor.
- Some churches are famous for their music.
-

But that's not really what God wants churches to be famous for.

Rome was known for their faith. 2 Thessalonians 1:3.

This is what I think God wants our church to be known for. Faith and Love.

That's what our church ought to be known for. That's what Paul could say about the Roman church. Their faith was world famous.

What do you think the reputation of FBCBF?

What do you think unbelievers think about our church?

The answer is that our church is known for whatever you are.

You are the church. What do people think about you? Their faith is growing. They just radiate love.

The church is not a pastor, a building, a program, music. The church is people. Whatever we are is whatever our reputation will be.

Paul says I thank God for you because your faith is famous.

Why did this church in Rome have such a great reputation? v. 9 *"God whom I serve with my whole heart in preaching the gospel of his Son is my witness how constantly I remember you in my prayers all the time."*

Do you think that our church would be a better church if the Apostle Paul prayed for it every day? You bet!

One of the reasons I think they were so strong is Paul continually prayed for it. He says, God is my witness.

He couldn't prove it. Nobody was there when he prayed.

He was often alone when he prayed. Praying members make a strong church. Paul said he prayed for them constantly.

How often this past week did you remember your church? We might expect Paul to pray for people he led to the Lord.

But Paul's praying for people he's never even seen.

He's never been to Rome. Yet he says, I pray for you every single day. If we would commit ourselves to pray daily for our church what kind of difference would that make? What kind of change could we see? I want us to stop right now and pray.

v. 10. Paul says *"I pray for you at all times and I pray that now at last, by God's will, a way may be open to come to you."*

Paul not only prayed for people, he was willing to be the answer to his prayers. He said, I want you to be strengthened and grow but he says, I'm willing to come and do it.

He said, Lord, let me be the answer of the prayers for this church. How can we be an answered prayer? How can I give back?

v. 11-12 *"I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong. That is that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith."*

Here Paul talks about the mutual ministry of Christians.

I want to help you and you can help me. This is what we are studying in our home Bible studies and on Sunday morning in the "Building Up of One Another" series -- the mutual ministry. Paul says, I want to help you and you can help me.

Notice he says, "I long to see you so that I can impart to you some spiritual gift."

Chuck Swindoll said, I don't think Paul went around like a spiritual Santa Claus.

The Bible teaches very clearly that no man can give spiritual gifts. They aren't given by man; it's the Holy Spirit that gives the gifts. 1

Cor. 12:11 Paul says in that verse that the Spirit decides who gets what gift not a man.

So what does he mean by, I want to impart a gift. The key is the word "impart".

It simply means share.

The way it can read best is "I want to come and share a spiritual gift."

He wanted to share his gift of teaching. Paul had the gift of teaching.

Paul planned to come to Rome eventually and to introduce himself to the church, he sent this letter. This letter is an outline of what he's going to teach when he gets there.

If this was an outline, imagine what he taught when he got there! When he didn't have to limit it to paper!

When spiritual gifts are shared two things happen.

- *"...it will make you strong..."* -- that's the first thing that will happen when we share our gifts with each other. "
- *you will be encouraged..."* -- we are encouraged. This is a mutual thing. Even though Paul was an apostle he needed encouragement. We need each other. Paul was a spiritual giant but he's humble enough to say, I need to receive as well as give. Christian sharing is a two-way street.

If you want to have a ministry then you need to do the four things that Paul did in these verses.

1. Encourage people. Develop an attitude of affirmation. Compliment people. Thank God for people, praise people, praise what Jesus is doing in people. It's hard to have a ministry when you're critical.

2. Pray for people. Be willing to be the answer to your prayers for them.

3. Do whatever you can to spend time with Christians.

Get with them as often as possible. It is not enough to get together with Christians one day a week. We need each other. Paul says, I long to see you. (v. 11) **In the Greek, he's literally saying, I'm homesick. I can't wait to be with other Christians.**

Is that your attitude? Paul says that's the kind of attitude you've got to have.

I really can't wait to get with other believers.

4. Use your spiritual gift.

Every one of you have a talent, a gift, a special ability that God gave you when you became a Christian. You may be unaware of it. You may not even know what it is. But as you begin to live the Christian life and begin to serve Him in any way it will float to the top and you will discover it. As you use your gift, people are strengthened and people are encouraged.

v. 13 *"I don't want you to be unaware brothers that I've planned many times to come to you but I've been prevented from doing so until now in order that I might have a harvest among you just as I have had among the other Gentiles."*

He'd been to every other major city in the Roman empire and he sure wanted to make it to Rome.

We've seen Paul, the man and Paul's message, which was the gospel, and we've seen his ministry.

IV. PAUL'S MOTIVATION.

1. What was the key to his heart? Three things in v. 14, 15, 16. These are the three great "I am"s of Paul. v. 14 **"I am obligated"** v. 15 **"I am eager (ready)"** v. 16 **"I am not ashamed"**. We see that Paul's motivation is covered in these three verses. I'm obligated to share the gospel, I'm eager to share it, I'm not ashamed to share it.

v. 14. **"I'm obligated (debtor) to both the Greeks and the non Greeks, to both the wise and to the foolish."** Illustration: Let's say I discovered the cure for AIDS this week. I discovered how to wipe it out with a simple injection. If I knew something that powerful and life changing and could change thousands of lives, would I be under obligation to do something with it? Sure. If you discovered the cure for cancer, would you keep it a secret or would you be obligated to share it? Of course you'd pass it on.

If you have Christ in your life then you're obligated to share Him. You're responsible to tell the gospel. **It's too important to keep a secret. The greatest thing you could do for somebody is to share the gospel with them.**

Who do you think is responsible to share Jesus with the people around you? Who's closest to them? Acts 1:8 says, *"You will be witnesses to all the world, first in Jerusalem and Judea and then the uttermost parts of the world."* Where were they when He said that? In Jerusalem and Judea. Jesus said start with the people closest to you then work out. We're obligated to share the gospel.

Who was Paul obligated to? **To both the Greeks and the non Greeks.** He's writing to Romans. Greek had nothing to do with ethnics, race, nationality. Greek simply meant somebody who had culture. **Paul said he was obligated to people who had culture and to people who were savages with no culture.**

He said he was obligated to the wise and the foolish -- **the educated and the uneducated**. The gospel is for everybody he's saying. Regardless of your social status. But it's not just enough to be obligated. You need more. You can have an obligation and have the attitude, "I guess I have to go share the gospel with my friends. I'm obligated."

2. Paul said "*I am eager to preach the gospel to you who are at Rome.*" It wasn't a duty. He was prepared, no hesitation. He's totally committed to the gospel. He's eager and ready. It's the greatest thing in the world to share Christ with somebody. Luke 15:10 says that every time a person becomes a Christian they throw a party in heaven. The angels rejoice! Paul was eager to pay the price!

3. v. 16 "*I am not ashamed.*"

Paul's talking about his confidence. He's obligated, he's ready and he's confident, ready to share the message. "I'm not ashamed" is emphasis by understatement. (Like "She's not a bad singer!" meaning "She's good!") When Paul said "I'm not ashamed" was understatement. He was bold, proud.

The sad thing though, do you know any Christians who are ashamed of the gospel? They're embarrassed to be known as a Christian, they don't share their faith. They're afraid they won't be accepted at work. They might be unpopular.

He knew the greatness of it. He says, I don't apologize for telling other people about Christ. Why was Paul not ashamed?

v. 16 (v. 16 and 17 are the entire theme of the book of Romans) "*I am not ashamed of the Gospel.*" This is the gospel according to Paul.

Why? Three reasons why Paul was not ashamed of the Gospel:

- "*because it is the power of God for salvation*"

This word power is the Greek word from which we get our word dynamite. He says, God's word is dynamite. It's man's only hope. It is the power of God -- the power of God to change lives. He says, I'm proud of the good news because it has the power to change lives.

- "*because it is for everyone who believes, first for the Jew and then for the Gentile*"

Does that mean all the Jews must be saved before Gentiles can be saved? He's talking about chronology not importance or priority. God gave the message first to the Jews, his chosen people, and they were to spread it around. Why were the Jews called "the chosen people"? God chose one nation to be the missionaries to the world. They were chosen to spread the gospel. But the Jews blew it! They took the good news of a relationship to God and they didn't share it. They kept it to themselves. God turned to Plan B -- the church. He sent Jesus Christ to die for us. Now the Gospel belongs to everybody -- Jew and Gentile, Greek and non Greek, wise and unwise.

- because it is so simple *"It is the power of God to everyone who believes"*

You only believe. God made it so simple nobody could say it was too hard to understand. Anybody can share the gospel because you can say you believe.

v. 17 clarifies 16 *"For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written, the righteous shall live by faith."* Circle "gospel", "righteousness", "God", "faith". In those four words you have four of the major themes of the book of Romans. God gives righteousness to us. Righteousness is a fancy word that literally means a right relationship to God. How do we do that? Paul says by faith from first to last. It's completely faith. It's not work for it, earn it, be baptized into a church. It's faith from first to last.

Paul ends this section by quoting Habbakuk 2:4 *"The righteous will live by faith."* If you want to be right with God you live by faith, the very thing he commended in Romans 4.

How can you make an impact on my world?

1. Clarify your relationship to Christ

Paul says, "I'm a servant of Christ." Are you? "I'm called to serve Him." This is not a volunteer army. If you're not serving the Lord, you're AWOL. "I'm set apart" -- God takes priority in my life.

2. He understood the gospel.

What is the gospel? It's in the Bible. It's about a person -- Jesus. He was 100% God and 100% man. God comes and works in our lives by grace. That's the gospel. And it's for everybody.

3. Recognize the importance of other people.

You can't make it in the Christian life by yourself. You need other Christians. Paul says, we need to get together so we can encourage each other and strengthen each other.

4. Right motive for sharing the gospel.

The things Paul said about himself every Christian can say about him/herself. You are called to say these three things:

I'm obligated.

If I'm a Christian I've got the greatest news in the world; I have to share it. Otherwise I'm robbing somebody else.

I'm eager. I want to share it.

I know what it will do; it will change lives. It's the best thing I can do with somebody, to share Christ with them. I'm enthusiastic about it.

I'm confident.

You don't have to apologize for the gospel. You don't have to be afraid or ashamed that you're a Christian. These Christians were undergoing much worse things than we are. It's difficult being a Christian where you work but is it worse than Rome? They were having to hide in catacombs. They were thrown to lions.