

ROMANS 1:16–17

FOCUS

1. Think of something you love enough to recommend to anyone — a restaurant, a show, a team. What makes you willing to bring it up?
2. Why do you think people find it hard to talk about their faith?

BIBLICAL CONTEXT

- **Romans** is a New Testament letter written by the apostle Paul to Christians living in Rome — the most powerful city in the world at the time.
- **The Roman government** is who executed Jesus, and they did it on a cross — a humiliating death reserved for slaves and criminals.
- **“Caesar is Lord”** was the loyalty oath of the empire. Saying “Jesus is Lord” instead meant claiming a man Rome had executed outranked the emperor. That was treason.
- **Some of the believers Paul wrote to** had already been forced out of the city once because of their faith.
- **“Jew and Greek”** was Paul’s way of saying everyone — Jewish people, and everyone who wasn’t.

STUDY

READ ROMANS 1:16–17

1. Why do you think people are ashamed of the gospel — then or now? Paul says he is not ashamed. What reason does he give? (v. 16)
2. Paul calls the gospel “the power of God for salvation.” Whose power is it? What does that tell you about where the message gets its strength? (v. 16)
3. Paul says this power is for “everyone who believes.” According to this verse, what does a person have to do to receive salvation? (v. 16)
4. Paul says salvation is “to the Jew first and also to the Greek.” According to this verse, who can be saved? Why is that good news? (v. 16)
5. Verse 17 calls it “the righteousness of God” — being made right with God. Whose righteousness is it? What does that tell you about who can make a person right with God? (v. 17)

6. The verse ends by quoting the prophet Habakkuk: “The righteous shall live by faith.” Look closely at the word live. What does that suggest about how long faith is meant to last? (v. 17)

APPLY

- 1. Look back at the gospel visual. Verse 16 calls the gospel the power of God for salvation — which part of the visual shows that power at work?**
- 2. At the beginning we asked why people find it hard to talk about their faith. When do you feel that hesitation most?**
- 3. What is one step you can take to live unashamed of the gospel this week?**

REFLECT & CONNECT

Paul wrote this to people who had every reason to keep quiet. Their government had executed Jesus. Some of them had already been driven out of the city once. And into that, Paul says he is not ashamed — because the gospel is not advice about being a better person. It is the power of God to save. That is why it is worth saying out loud. You are not responsible for making the message powerful; it already is. You are only responsible for not hiding it. This week, say it to at least one person — and trust that the power was never yours to supply.