

I am not ASHAMED

Small Group Bible Study

This study is on the same theme as the sermon outline (pages 12-13) and looks at some of the same verses mentioned in it. It can be used before or after hearing the sermon. If it is used without the sermon, it may be helpful for the group leader to read through the sermon outline beforehand. You may also like to read the SCAW 2017 eight-day devotional booklet, which is enclosed with this magazine or can be ordered from barnabasfund.org/scaw or your nearest Barnabas office (contact details inside front cover).

The section at the end, entitled "Digging Deeper", is intended for those who would like to explore the theme in more depth.

1. What does the word "ashamed" mean? How is it different from "embarrassed", "guilty", "humiliated" or "afraid"? What is the opposite of shame?
2. Different cultures take different views about shame and honour. How important are shame and honour in your culture? From the Bible we learn "Christian culture" i.e. how to think and live Christianly. How important do you think shame and honour are in the Bible?
3. Are there any things that the Bible considers shameful but which are honoured by the society in which you live?
4. Are there any things which your culture considers shameful but are honoured in the Bible?



READ 2 TIMOTHY 1:1-14

5. Have you ever missed an opportunity to witness for Christ because you felt ashamed?
6. Have you ever overcome a feeling of shame to speak out about your Christian faith? What was the result (for you and for the person you spoke to)?
7. Paul is writing to a beloved young co-worker, Timothy, and urges him not to be ashamed of testifying about the Lord (verse 8). Looking at the earlier verses, what can we learn about the strengths and weaknesses of Timothy, to help us understand why Paul wrote like this to him?
8. Paul is writing from a notorious prison dungeon in Rome. He is awaiting trial and seems to expect to be found guilty and then executed. He asks Timothy not to be ashamed of his association with Paul the prisoner (verse 8). From the world's perspective, Paul was a prisoner of the Roman authorities, but how does Paul himself see it? What effect do you think this has on Timothy's attitude to Paul the prisoner and his willingness to identify with him?
9. Do you know of any Christians in prison for proclaiming the Gospel or persecuted in other ways because of their faithfulness to Christ? (You can find examples from around the world in *Barnabas Prayer*, enclosed with this magazine, or by visiting barnabasfund.org) What is your attitude to them?
10. What does Paul say that Timothy should do instead of feeling ashamed of his mentor's imprisonment?

11. Two brothers and a sister, all in their twenties, insisted on staying with their elderly parents on the 17th floor of Grenfell Tower, as it was engulfed in flames on 14 June. Their 82-year-old father could barely walk and would not have been able to escape. As they waited for death, the family phoned their relatives. "I'm going. Forgive me if I've been offensive to anyone," said the father. His 26-year-old son asked people not to mourn for them but to be happy because they would be in a better place. All five perished in the deadly fire that killed more than 80 residents of the west London apartment block. "They stayed with their mum and dad. Family was so important to them. They lived together and they died together," said their cousin. This family, who set us such a wonderful example, were Muslims. How can we as Christians share with other Christians in suffering for the Gospel?
12. Paul writes of the power of God, which is available to help us (verse 8). Reading on in verses 9 and 10, list what the power of God has accomplished. Take a moment to pray and thank God for the spirit of power, which He has given to us (verse 7).
13. In verse 12, Paul says that he will not be ashamed on the Day (i.e. the Day of Judgment). What reasons does he give for that confidence?
14. Are you ready to stand before Christ our Judge? We are saved by faith but our work on earth will be judged, as Paul writes elsewhere (1 Corinthians 3:12-15).

Digging deeper

15. Paul wrote that he was suffering for the Gospel because he had been appointed a herald (or preacher), apostle and teacher (verse 11). The Holy Spirit gives each of us different gifts. Encourage one another in your small group by recognising each other's callings and gifts, whether natural or supernatural.
16. A single Greek word *synkakopatheson* is used for the concept of suffering hardship in company with someone else (verse 8). What do you think the existence of this word suggests about the importance of this concept in first century culture? How important is the concept in your culture?
17. The Word of God is rich in meaning. Verse 12 is translated in some Bible versions as "what I have entrusted to him" and in other versions as "what has been entrusted to me" (compare with 1:14; 2:2 and 1 Timothy 6:20). Explore the depths contained in these few words.