



## Key Truths OF THE BIBLE

### Power of the Gospel

**I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes.**

Romans 1:16

Crucifixion was a most shameful way to die. The condemned individual was stripped of both clothing and dignity, nailed to a wooden cross, and left there to die slowly over the course of hours or days. It was an execution reserved for only the very worst of criminals.

With all this in mind, you might expect the early Christians to have been ashamed or even embarrassed about what had happened to Jesus. Instead, from the very beginning, the message of Jesus' suffering and death on the cross has been at the heart and core of Christianity.

As he addresses a group of Christians in Rome, the apostle Paul even calls Jesus' suffering and death "the gospel," which means "good news!" He writes, "I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes."

How could Paul and other Christians be so positive about the shameful death of Jesus? The answer is that by Jesus' death, God was accomplishing something wonderful for all people.

The prophet Isaiah put it like this: "He was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed." The reason Jesus died that shameful death on the cross was to take away all our sins—our lust, pride, selfishness and greed...every cruel word we have said to hurt other people...every wicked action for which we are ashamed and wish we could take back. All these sins, for which we deserve to be punished, were placed on Jesus and he took the punishment in our place.

Jesus' suffering and death on the cross means that we are saved from God's punishment for our sins. It means that relying on Jesus as our Savior we can look forward to eternal life in heaven that our Savior has prepared for us.

Thank God for the message of the gospel, "the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes." Powerful enough to wash away our sins. Powerful enough to bring us home to heaven one day. Powerful enough, and important enough, for us to rely on Jesus alone for salvation.