Romans

Lesson 1: Unashamed

**Lessons in this series:** **1**[2](http://www.teensundayschool.com/338/lesson/free-to-live.php) [3](http://www.teensundayschool.com/340/lesson/action.php)

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Goals

1. To outline Romans 1-5 in a simple, understandable way  
2. To challenge students to allow the Gospel to change them  
3. To help students apply the truths about faith and peace to their lives each day

Topics

Faith, Gospel, Peace

Scripture Memorization

Romans 1:16-17

OPENING PRAYER (5 to 10 minutes)

GROUP BUILDING (5 minutes)

**General Discussion:**• What’s one of the most embarrassing things you’ve ever done?  
• How did it affect you after it happened?

(Make sure, as the leader, that you have an embarrassing moment ready to share. Students love to hear how we are imperfect and goofy, too!)

GETTING STARTED (10 minutes)

We’re talking about being unashamed today.

**General Discussion:**• What do you think it means to be “ashamed"?  
• What is something, someone, etc. of which you are ashamed?  
• How are being ashamed and embarrassed alike? How are they different?

The Biblical word for ashamed is similar to embarrassed. Therefore, what Paul says in Romans, as we’ll see, is that he is not embarrassed to stand for Jesus. As we dig in, think about times when maybe you shied away from standing for Christ because—deep down—you were ashamed.

DIGGING IN / MAKING IT REAL (40 minutes)

*The deeper Bible study has been combined with the application in this section. You can find application points under each following subheading: The Gospel, Faith, and Peace.*  
Let’s start by reading a very important verse in the book of Romans. This is the thesis statement of the whole letter.

**Read Romans 1:16-17**

**Discussion Questions:**1. Of what does Paul state he is unashamed? *(The Gospel.)*2. According to this verse, what is the Gospel? *(The power of God for salvation.)*3. Who can enjoy salvation? *(Everyone who believes—Jews and Gentiles alike.)*4. What does the Gospel reveal, according to verse 17? *(A righteousness from God.)*5. That righteousness is enjoyed by those who do what? *(Live by faith.)*

What we’ve just read is a summary of the entire book of Romans. If you could compress all the theology of this profound letter into a few sentences, this would be it. With that in mind, I want to talk through these ideas a little more deeply with you and see how they transfer to our lives in modern times.

**The Gospel**First we want to talk about the Gospel.  
  
**General Discussion:**• Whether you’ve grown up in a church or not, you probably know that God is a powerful being. What makes Him powerful? *(Remind students that there isn’t necessarily a right/wrong to every question. Encourage honest sharing of opinion.)*• In what ways does God show His power in this world? *(i.e. hurricanes, tsunamis, volcanoes, miracles, childbirth, etc.)*• Why do you think God chooses the Gospel, instead of another form of power, to bring salvation to people?  
• If you had to summarize the Gospel into a sentence, could you do it? What would that sentence be?

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| Workbook Activity (5 minutes)  Give students an index card or a small scrap of paper and a pen or pencil. There is also a place for students to complete this activity in the lesson workbooks. Tell the class they have 90 seconds to try to explain the gospel in just a sentence or two. When the 90 seconds are up, have students share. You may be surprised by how insightful they are!  **General Discussion:** • How has the Gospel changed your life? • How have you seen the Gospel change the lives of others? • How can not being ashamed of the Gospel transform our group? How can we invite that more in our midst? • How could an unashamed version of you and this simple statement of the Gospel you have in front of you effect change around you? |

Let’s do word association here. I’m going to say a phrase, and you say the first word that pops into your head. Ready? Here we go: Sharing the Gospel with a friend. *(Take their answers.)*

Recognizing that the Gospel is the power of God and His chosen instrument for changing the world is one thing. However, allowing the Gospel to change us and to share it with those around us is quite another. If we’re going to be unashamed, that’s exactly what we’ve got to do.  
  
Sometime this week I’m going to contact you and ask if you are living unashamed of the Gospel. Look for ways to allow God’s power to make a difference around you.

Optional Activity (5 minutes)

Pair up with someone right now and pray for one another. It can be as simple as “God, please help \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ be unashamed. Amen.” (Give students time to do this in pairs or groups of three.)

**Faith**Next we will talk about faith.  
  
**General Discussion:**• Obviously, faith is kind of a big deal. How many times do you think Paul mentions faith in the book of Romans? *(44* *times in all.)*• How many of those occasions do you think are in Romans 1-5, the chapters we’re studying now? *(30 times.)*

Faith is a key them of the book, and particularly these verses.

**Read Romans 1:16-17**(again)

**Discussion Questions:**1. What is the connection between righteousness and faith? *(Righteousness can only be obtained by having faith.)*2. What do you think “the righteous shall live by faith” means?  
  
Do any of you have a study Bible that tells you where Paul quotes, “the righteous shall live by faith"? *(It is from Habakkuk 2:4.)*

**Read Habakkuk 2:4**

**Discussion Questions:**1. In this verse, what is the opposite of someone living righteously by faith? *(Arrogance, wrong desires.)*2. Which is worse: being arrogant and prideful or having evil desires? *(Obviously, no right or wrong here, just an opinion question to get them thinking.)*3. How would Paul’s original listeners have heard this command? What would it have looked like for them to live by faith?  
4. How many of you know someone who is really a great person but is very proud of that fact—who thinks of him or herself as better than everyone else? How does that attitude defy the command, “the righteous shall live by faith”?  
5. How many of you know someone who is just out of control, lives for selfish desires, and is a jerk? How does that lifestyle defy the command “the righteous shall live by faith*"*?

You see, some of us are inclined to think that we can be saved by being good. The Bible clearly states that being good isn’t what saves us. In fact, being good usually leads to the sin of pride—thinking we have it all figured out when we don’t. The truth is, being arrogant and puffed up about your goodness is just as bad as living an immoral life. Churchy or un-churchy, someone who depends on their own power, goodness, and righteousness is ignoring the fact that the power of the Gospel can only truly be experienced by those who place their faith in Jesus, the only truly righteous person ever to live.

**Read Romans 4:18-25***(Have students close their eyes and really concentrate as you read to them Romans 4:18-25. If necessary, read it 2-3 times through and allow them to meditate on it. Then close up this section by asking a few more questions.)*

**Discussion Questions:**1. What sticks out to you about that passage?  
2. How does it make you feel to know that you can be credited with righteousness no matter what you’ve done wrong if you place your faith in Jesus?

We have the same exact promise as Abraham. How cool is that? It’s for all who “believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.” As Romans 4:25 says, “He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.”

**Peace**We will wrap it by talking about peace.  
  
**General Discussion:**• What’s something you were scared of as a kid? *(Have everyone share one thing to re-engage your whole group.)*• What did you do, as a child, when you were scared? *(If you’re scared of a monster under your bed, you run into your parents' room, etc.)*• What do you fear today? *(Challenge them to engage this question on a more mature level.)*• Where do you run when you are scared now?

Peace is a hard word to understand. In a very real sense, we are taking about being safe under the shelter that is Jesus.

**Read Romans 5:1-5**  
This passage starts with the word “therefore.” When you read that in the Bible, always ask, “what’s the ‘therefore’ there for?” It is a connection word. Everything Paul has said so far is directly linked to what follows. That takes us back to the thesis statement of Romans, 1:16-17.

**Read Romans 1:16-17** (again)

**Discussion Questions:**1. What in these two verses should bring us peace? *(It is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes and the gospel reveals the righteousness of God.)*2. When Paul writes in verse 5:1 that we have been justified through faith and thus have peace, what does that mean to you?   
3. How have you experienced peace with God through your life of faith?   
  
*(Note: It is very possible some students have not experienced this peace. If that is true of someone in your group, walk back through the precursors to that—do they have faith in Christ? Have they ever allowed the Good News of Jesus to change them? Have they surrendered to God? This could easily become a jumping off point to some one-on-one evangelism outside your group meeting.)*

If you have experienced the peace of God, you know it is the safest place you can be. As Paul says in this passage, it allows you to rejoice, even in suffering, because nothing can really harm you.   
  
**General Discussion:**  
• Do you think being a Christian means you don’t have any problems?  
• How do Christians continue to face adversity?  
• How have you continued to endure hard times even though you belong to Jesus?  
  
Placing your faith in Christ doesn’t mean that all your problems will go away. Your parents might still get a divorce, your dad might still be an alcoholic, and your best friend might still betray you.  
   
Peace does not mean there won’t be battles; it just means that you won’t have any fear of losing the war.

**Read Romans 15:13 and 16:20**Peace comes from God. He is the God of Peace. If you want to truly experience peace, it comes from being as close to God as possible.

**Discussion Questions:**1. How do the challenges of this section of Romans settle with you?  
2. What’s one thing you are wrestling with as an action point?  
3. What’s one thing we can pray about for you?

CLOSING PRAYER (2 minutes)

Pray for each member of your group for the one thing they mention. Then dismiss.