

February 16,2019

I Am Not Ashamed of The Gospel

Those of you have read my vents and blogs are aware that I didn't come to Christ until I was 41 years old. That was January 1977, and I had my 83rd birthday on June 18, 2018. If my math is correct - after 14 brain surgeries- that is a little more than half my life.

In the 1950's, when I came of age, it seemed to me that nursing and the airlines were attracting more pretty girls than any other profession. The "glass ceiling" hadn't been penetrated yet, and there weren't as many opportunities for women as today. It's well known that I had led a wild life before Christ came into my life. I've often wondered whether if it was the love of flying, or the love of stewardesses that attracted me to airline flying.

After I bowed my knee and surrendered to Christ, friends couldn't believe what had happened to me (especially my airline friends), and one guy said I would "get back to normal soon." I walked into flight operations soon after, and there was a group of pilots standing there. One asked me, "is true what I heard happened to you," and I answered "yes," and quickly walked on by. I didn't want to talk about it. I was a "baby Christian," and I didn't realize it then, but I was "ashamed of the gospel."

I believe most of us went through a teenage period when we would rather our friends not see our parents. One friend told a story of dropping her age 14 daughter off at Westminster School in Atlanta, and she said "give Momma a kiss." Her daughter had already seen that there were a lot of her friends right outside the car, and she quickly said, "I will shake your hand."

Matthew 10:32 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. 10:33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

I am told that most teens grow out of being ashamed of their parents, but many Christians don't grow out of being ashamed of the Gospel. When we're ashamed of the Gospel, we are denying Christ.

During the first 10 years of being a Christian, I served on several nonprofit boards, and in 1986, Michael Youssef shared his vision for a new church in Buckhead/Vinings with me. It grew into the Church of the Apostles, a mega-church which on Mother's Day will celebrate its 32nd anniversary. I like to have "spiritual pride," and say that the Church started in my house, but we never worshiped there. We did, however, plan the first

service there. Michael had rented the Lovett School Chapel for a fall start. In May, Gil Meredith, the late Andy Huber, Michael and I, were going to lunch, and we met in my house. The 4 of us had a pre-luncheon prayer meeting, and it turned into a planning meeting for the first service on Mother's Day, instead of the Fall. We rented a room in the Waverley Hotel and started with about 38 people in attendance. Ensuing events proved that if we didn't start immediately, we never would have started.

The Church has 3,000 seats now, and Dr. Youssef, unlike many "so called" evangelical churches, is still being true to the Gospel. John 14:6 "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." Many churches are teaching that Jesus is a way, but not the only way.

We started as an Episcopal Church, but most of the Founders suspected that we would have to eventually withdraw from the Denomination. There were Episcopal Churches already fighting about their property, and the national church was winning. In 2010 the National Church refused to sell to a local congregation, and accepted a lower bid from a mosque.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052970203476804576614932308302042>

More recently, a North Carolina Church has been converted, and that's just the "tip of the iceberg." Hundreds of Churches in Post Christian Europe are being converted.

On December 21, 1995 - Joan and my 32nd anniversary - my late business partner and I were on I-185, going to Columbus, Georgia. He was driving, and I was napping. He had the speed command set on 72 MPH, when he took a nap. We hit a parked car. The EMT's took us to a Columbus hospital. A friend called my Pastor, Michael. Michael was ready to go to Columbus, but when my friend told him that the most serious injury was, "that he almost bit his tongue in two," Michael said, "I don't have to come, that will be advantageous to him and all of us."

I check Cancer free, but I've had so much radiation that I have Radiation Necrosis. I've got a speech impediment, and an advantage to those who I come in contact with daily. My right hand is lame, and I have to type with one finger. That's an advantage to y'all.