
DEAR CHURCH & MINISTRY LEADERS

4.14 **JESUS** NOT ASHAMED OF DAY

If you are passionate about reaching the lost and making a difference in the culture around you, then you already know that *you can't do it alone*. The Lord is calling each and every Christian to get mobilized and activated to share Jesus with those they encounter on a daily basis—lost people that we leaders and pastors may otherwise never meet.

In other words, the church body is to be equipped for the work of the ministry—to shine!

IT IS COMMON FOR BELIEVERS TODAY TO FEEL LIKE THEY ARE ALL ALONE AT THEIR SCHOOL, OR WORKPLACE, OR NEIGHBORHOOD.

Elijah once felt that he was the only one left serving God, but God exhorted him that there were another 7,000 who had not bowed to this world (1 Kings 19). He had been discouraged, because he hadn't seen it. The same may be true of us today. The fact is that there are tens of millions of followers of Jesus in the United States *alone!*

What encouragement might your church-members find in realizing that they aren't the only Christian employees at their job, the bank, in class, at the gym, on the commute, and beyond? What evangelistic unity, solidarity, accountability, and synergy could result?

THE NATIONAL NOT ASHAMED OF JESUS DAY, EVERY APRIL 14TH, IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR BELIEVERS AROUND THE COUNTRY TO DECLARE THAT THEY BELONG TO JESUS.

We recognize that for many people, reaching out to the those around them can be difficult. Some are more naturally reserved and find potential confrontation difficult. Others have a desire to make an impact, but do not feel like they know what to do.

We believe the *National Not Ashamed of Jesus Day* can be a great first step for many, and it is a step that virtually everyone in your congregation can take.

LET'S DO THIS TOGETHER!

April 14th was chosen because of Esther 4:14 (hence 4/14), when Mordecai encouraged Esther that she could not be silent in the face of the devastation about to be inflicted on her people, and that perhaps she had come to her position for such a time.

I want to encourage you to read the factsheet below with more information about the *Not Ashamed of Jesus Day*, and to consider incorporating this day in your ministry outreach.

The more the world tries to silence us, the more we will shout His message – not with hatred or anger or malice but with grace and truth, with love and in the power of the Spirit.

In Him,



Dr. Michael L. Brown

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WHAT IS THIS DAY ALL ABOUT?

Finding mutual strength with other believers.

Telling the world, *“We are here, we love the Lord, and we refuse to be silenced or shamed.”*

Showing the world, *“As followers of Jesus, we are here for you, and want to be a blessing in your life.”*

DESPITE THE LARGE NUMBER OF JESUS-FOLLOWERS IN AMERICA, IT CAN OFTEN FEEL AS IF WE ARE A SMALL, INSIGNIFICANT MINORITY. BUT WE ARE NOT:

There are millions of us - perhaps as many as 90-100 million! We are represented in every area of society, from government to the business world to media and schools.

Yet many of us have floated ‘under the radar’ for years. Our coworkers, friends, or our neighbors may be unaware that we are believers.

We may be sincere, but we are stealth. And this approach isn’t helping anybody. It’s time to shine.

ONCE WE MAKE OUR FAITH IN JESUS KNOWN, THE CAT IS OUT OF THE BAG. WE WILL NO LONGER FLOAT UNDER THE RADAR.

We may be approached with questions. We may be watched. We may even be targeted.

But this is why we are here: to be witnesses, to testify, to share our faith, to point people to Jesus, to serve this lost generation, to stand for what is right and just and true.

WHY SPECIFICALLY APRIL 14TH?

ESTHER 4:14 (4/14, AS IN APRIL 14TH)

The famous words of Mordechai to Queen Esther when their Jewish people were facing annihilation are from Esther 4:14. Mordechai said to her, *“For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father’s family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?”*

If we are alive today, we are alive by God’s will, and that means He put us here in this generation at this very hour, for such a time as this.

The more the world tries to silence us, the more we will shout His message—not with hatred or anger or malice but with grace and truth—with love and in the power of the Spirit.

WHY ‘NOT ASHAMED’?

WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT, WASN'T IT ODD FOR THE APOSTLE PAUL TO HAVE SAID THAT HE WAS “NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL” IN ROMANS 1:16?

Who would even think of being *ashamed* of the most wonderful message in the world?!

Would a loving husband introduce his wife and say, “*This is my wife—and I’m not ashamed of her!*”?

Perish the thought! It would be ridiculous... and worse.

Remember—Jesus did say that if we were ashamed of Him, He would be ashamed of us (Mark 8:38). Paul’s words to Timothy, written from jail, give us courage: “*So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner. Rather, join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God*” (2 Timothy 1:8).

EMBRACING JESUS = EMBRACING REPROACH?

In the first century Roman world, Jesus was *not* viewed as a hero. He died a shameful, criminal’s death. A death reserved for the lowest and worst of transgressors.

To be associated with Jesus was to be associated with reproach. Even Paul the apostle was considered a troublemaker and was imprisoned. Thus if you were one of Paul’s supporters, then “there must have been something wrong with you, too.”

So it’s not surprising, unusual, or new: Faithful followers of Jesus in every age have *and will* experience the reproach associated with Jesus. But our love and gratitude for Him lifts us above it.

HOW CAN I PARTICIPATE?

THERE ARE NUMEROUS WAYS!

First—*ahead of time*—let your Christian friends/colleagues know about the day too. If you will be at the same location, consider doing something together.

- ✓ Wear a gospel-themed t-shirt, hat, etc.
- ✓ Bring a Bible with you and put it on your desk or someplace visible.
- ✓ Share the good news with someone new.
- ✓ Make a clear proclamation of your faith on social media.
- ✓ Ask a neighbor if you can pray for them.
- ✓ Be creative! Whatever isn’t prohibited and whatever is good and right—*let’s got for it*—full of love and grace.

WHAT IF I HAVE NEVER DONE ANYTHING LIKE THIS BEFORE?

FEEL NERVOUS? INTIMIDATED? KNOW THAT YOU ARE NOT ALONE.

In some cases, we have never done anything like this before because, sadly, we have been ashamed of our faith, worried about experiencing rejection or mockery or reproach for the sake of His Name.

In other cases, it's simply because we didn't think we'd found the 'perfect time' or the 'right setting' to share our testimony. Perhaps we hadn't yet felt forced to stand for our convictions.

In either case, the time has now come! In humility, let us look to the Lord for forgiveness, wisdom, courage, and boldness for this 4/14!

NOW IS THE TIME

Now is the time to arise and shine. Now is the time to come out of our hiding.

Now is the time to follow Jesus "outside the camp" as Hebrews 13 states. When we are rejected for Him, that is our honor. The world is treating us the same way it treated our Savior. As Paul wrote to the Philippians, "*For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him*" (Philippians 1:29).

TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE HISTORY.

TOGETHER, WE CAN HELP TURN THE TIDE.

**TOGETHER, WE CAN OVERCOME CANCEL CULTURE AND PUSH BACK AGAINST
DEMONIC INTIMIDATION AND THE SILENCING OF THE LAMBS.**

So, while we pray for and reach out to those who do not follow the Lord, while we bless those who curse us, we also stand up in the power of the Spirit and proclaim to the world:

WE ARE NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL. WE ARE NOT ASHAMED OF JESUS.

WE ARE NOT ASHAMED OF GOD'S WORD. AND WE WILL NOT BE SILENCED.

Whatever opposition we face, never forget this: The Lamb who has overcome has gone before us.

And just as He can never be silenced, neither will we.

Adapted from Michael L. Brown, *The Silencing of the Lambs: The Ominous Rise of Cancel Culture and How We Can Overcome It* (Lake Mary, FL: Frontline, 2022).

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