

Blasphemed

Scripture Reading — Romans 2:17-24

*As it is written, "God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you."
Romans 2:24 —*

If you have never seen the film *The Mission*, take the time to do so. It's a gripping story about 18th-century Jesuit missionaries bringing the good news of Jesus to tribes in South America. After overcoming great physical and cultural barriers, the missionaries are ultimately defeated when Spain sells the land to Portugal and the native peoples are killed or dragged away into slavery.

Earlier, in 1550, there was a great debate in Spain between Bartholomew de Las Casas, a priest who opposed injustice against native peoples in the Spanish colonies, and Juan Sepulveda, a scholar who believed some peoples were born to be slaves. De Las Casas fought for many years against injustice in the Spanish Empire.

Tragically God's name has often been dishonored because of the sins of individual Christians or of world powers that have claimed to be Christian. Christians are called to participate in God's mission in ways that reflect Christ's own ministry. Christians are called to work with integrity in Jesus' name. When Christ's disciples help bring health, literacy, justice, and above all, the good news of God's grace, God's name is praised among the nations.

How do we conduct ourselves among those who are not believers? Is God's name honored because of our discipleship?

Prayer

Lord, we know that through Christ all nations will enter into blessing. Help our generation to avoid the mistakes of missions or power structures that dishonored your name. Amen.

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