

*Paraphrase of the Book of Romans***CHAPTER ONE****Prologue**

To my dear fellow Christians in Rome:

1 My name is Paul, and I consider myself a slave of Jesus Christ who chose me to be an apostle and especially set me aside to proclaim God's good news of salvation. **2** This good news was promised by God long ago through His prophets who recorded it in the Holy Bible, what we now call the Old Testament. **3** It has to do with the gift of His beloved Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who in order to save us, assumed our corporate fallen humanity that needed redeeming and actually came as a descendant of David; but in character and performance demonstrated, in spirit, love, and holiness, that He was the Son of God. **4** God proved this by resurrecting Him from the dead, something He could not legally do had Christ, even by a thought, sinned.

5 It is through Christ that all humanity has been reconciled to God and I have been commissioned, as an apostle, to proclaim this good news to all the Gentile world, urging them to accept this salvation by faith, through obedience to the truth as it is in Christ. **6** just as you in Rome have done and now belong to Jesus Christ. **7** This letter is addressed to all of you beloved Christians in Rome, you who are now God's special people and are called saints by Him. May this letter find you enjoying the peace that comes from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Admiration and Concern for the Roman Christians

8 I would like, first and foremost, to thank God in the name of Jesus Christ for your tremendous witness which is being talked about throughout the Roman Empire! How your faith in Christ is unshaken, in spite of fierce persecution! **9** I want you also to know that I constantly mention you in my prayers; this is the honest truth, and God, whom I serve in proclaiming the good news of His Son, is my witness. **10** Besides this, my sincere plea with God is that at last it may be His will that I should come personally to you **11** to share with you some of the wonderful spiritual truths revealed to me, so that it may further strengthen your faith. **12** In other words, I want us to mutually encourage each other's faith, you mine and I yours.

13 Furthermore, I want you to know, brethren, that I had planned several times to visit you in Rome so that I could join you in your evangelistic outreach and win some souls for Christ, as I have done elsewhere. But, unfortunately, pressure of work has always come in the way [Rom. 15:20-22]. **14** You see, I am obligated to all classes of men, educated or uneducated, rich or poor, to proclaim this wonderful gospel. **15** Therefore, as far as it is within my ability, I am most anxious to preach this good news about Christ to all who are in Rome. **16** Even though many ridicule this gospel, there is nothing more I glory in than this good news of salvation *in Christ*; for it is God's very power to save everyone who will appreciate and receive this gift which was first offered to the Jews and now is to be proclaimed to the rest of mankind.

17 It is through this gospel alone, God's righteousness *in Christ*, that God is able to give mankind a right standing with Himself; our part from start to finish is to receive it by faith, motivated by a deeper and deeper heartfelt appreciation of what it cost God to save us in His Son. This is how Habakkuk in the Old Testament put it. "Only he who is righteous through faith shall have everlasting life."

Universal Sinfulness of Mankind

18 As you know, God's displeasure or wrath is clearly revealed from heaven against all who think they can live without Him, enjoy sin, and deliberately suppress the truth. **19** It is sad that even though their conscience convinces them that God does exist and that He is deeply concerned about their welfare, they do not want to acknowledge Him. **20** Ever since God created this wonderful world of ours, which clearly demonstrates His existence and creative power, mankind in his sinful state does not want to submit to His rulership, even though it is for his own benefit. Clearly then, anyone who rejects God is inexcusable since this rejection is not out of ignorance but deliberate.

21 The sinful heart is so desperately wicked that instead of acknowledging God as God, men are ungrateful and unwilling to glorify or appreciate Him; instead, in their foolishness they prefer senseless speculations and the result is that their ungrateful hearts become engulfed in darkness. **22** In this condition, while they claim to be smart, they are in actual fact behaving foolishly **23** by substituting for the true eternal God their own creation resembling mortal man, birds, mammals, reptiles, or their humanistic ideas of salvation, such as Marxism, etc.

God-Abandonment Increases Sin

24 So God has abandoned them to their own choices, to indulge in perverted sex and the evil clamors of their sinful nature, thus demonstrating the degrading results of permissiveness. **25** This is the condition you see today; men have so twisted the truth that they would rather worship themselves and their ideas than the God of heaven, who sustains them and from whom all blessings flow.

26 Since they do not want God to be part of their lives, this is why He has given them up, to indulge in their degrading passions: **27** women preferring to be lesbians and men gay, each consumed by their perverted lusts for each other, practicing all kinds of shameful vice and as a result are suffering the inevitable consequences of their improper conduct. **28** And because they insist on pushing God away, He who is *agape* love does not impose Himself on them but leaves them to their own devices. **29** The result is an increase in all sorts of crime and shameful behavior such as: malice, greed, envy, murder, quarreling, deceit, etc.

30 Men and women have become traitors, open slanderers, God-haters, insolent, proud, boastful, designers of new forms of evil, disrespectful to parents, **31** conscienceless, treacherous, and void of love or pity. **32** All this in spite of the fact that they know it will result in divine retribution, the sentence of eternal death, yet they not only practice these terrible things but even encourage others to do them.

What is the Gospel of Christ?

Below are some study notes from the Spirit-Filled Life Bible:

Mark 1:1:

"**The Gospel** literally means 'good news' and is concerned with Jesus, who is identified by name and title.

"**Gospel** -- Greek word, *euangelion*. In ancient Greece *euangelion* designated the reward given for bringing good news. Later it came to mean the good news itself. In the New Testament the word includes both the promise of salvation and its fulfillment by the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ. *Euangelion* also designates the written narratives of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John."

Romans 1:16:

"The theme of this epistle is that Paul was **not ashamed** to speak about **the gospel** because he knew it had **power** to bring people to **salvation**. This happened when people trusted, or put their faith, in Christ to save them.

Mark 1:15:

"Jesus announced the inauguration of a new era of salvation, of which repentance and belief in the gospel were prerequisites."

"The **gospel** concerns the rule of God evidenced in the person and proclamation of Jesus (see 1:1).

In *Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary* the definition of "Gospel" is:

"The joyous good news of salvation in Jesus Christ. The Greek word translated as gospel means 'a reward for bringing good news' or simply 'good news.' In Isaiah 40:9, the prophet proclaimed the 'good tidings' that God would rescue His people from captivity. In His first sermon in Nazareth, Jesus used a passage from the Old Testament (Isaiah 61:1) to characterize the spirit of His ministry: *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor"* (Luke 4:18).

"The gospel is not a new plan of salvation; it is the fulfillment of God's plan of salvation which was begun in Israel, was completed in Jesus Christ, and is made known by the church.

"The gospel is the saving work of God in His Son Jesus Christ and a call to faith in Him (Romans 1:16, 17). Jesus is more than a messenger of the gospel, He *is* the gospel. The good news of God was present in His life, teaching, and atoning death. Therefore, the gospel is both a historical event and a personal relationship.

"Faith is more than an intellectual agreement to a theoretical truth. Faith is trust placed in a living person, Jesus Christ. When the apostle Paul warned Christians of the dangers of following 'another gospel' (II Corinthians 11:4), he was reminding them that any gospel different than the one he preached was no gospel at all.

"In the second century, the word gospel came to be used for certain writings in which the 'good news' or story of Jesus Christ was told. These writings were written in the first century, but they became known as 'gospels' much later. Mark was the first to write such a story (Mark 1:1), and in so doing he invented a literary form that we call a 'gospel.' The New Testament has four versions of the one gospel: the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

"A gospel is more than a biography intended to provide information about a historical character. It is the presentation of the life of Jesus to show His saving significance for all people and to call them to faith in Him."

Resources:

- 1.) "More Than A Savior" mts
- 2.) "The Uniqueness of Christ" uoc
- 3.) The Spirit-Filled Life Bible

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 by a new and living way, which He consecrated for us..."**
 Hebrews 10:19-20

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John Gill's Exposition of the Bible

Romans 1:16

For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ...

The reason why he was so ready and willing to preach it, even where he ran the greatest risk of his character and life, was, because it was "the Gospel of Christ" he preached, and he was not ashamed of it. This supposes that some were, though the apostle was not, ashamed of the Gospel; as all such are who hide and conceal it, who have abilities to preach it, and do not: or who preach, but not the Gospel; or who preach the Gospel only in part, who own that in private, they will not preach in public, and use ambiguous words, of doubtful signification, to cover themselves; who blend the Gospel with their own inventions, seek to please men, and live upon popular applause, regard their own interest, and not Christ's, and cannot bear the reproach of his Gospel. It expresses, that the apostle was not ashamed of it; that is, to preach it, which he did fully and faithfully, plainly and consistently, openly and publicly, and boldly, in the face of all opposition: and it designs more than is expressed, as that he had the utmost value for it, and esteemed it his highest honour that he was employed in preaching it: his reasons for this were, because it was "the Gospel of Christ"; which Christ himself preached, which he had learnt by revelation from him, and of which he was the sum and substance: and because

it is the power of God;

not essentially, but declaratively; as the power of God is seen in making men ministers of it, in the doctrines held forth in it, in the manner in which it was spread in the world, in the opposition it met with, in the continuance and increase of it notwithstanding the power and cunning of men, and in the shortness of time, in which so much good was done by it in the several parts of the world: it is the power of God organically or instrumentally; as it is a means made use of by God in quickening dead sinners, enlightening blind eyes, unstopping deaf ears, softening hard hearts, and making of enemies friends; to which add, the manner in which all this is done, suddenly, secretly, effectually, and by love, and not force: the extent of this power is,

unto salvation;

the Gospel is a declaration and revelation of salvation by Christ, and is a means of directing and encouraging souls to lay hold upon it. The persons to whom it is so, are in general,



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everyone that believeth:

this does not suppose that faith gives the Gospel its virtue and efficacy; but is only descriptive of the persons to whom the Gospel, attended with the power and grace of God, is eventually efficacious: and particularly it was so,

details and :
our new

to the Jew first,

who as they had formerly the advantage of the Gentiles, much every way, through the peculiar privileges which were conferred on them; so the Gospel was first preached to them by Christ and his disciples; and even when it was ordered to be carried into the Gentile world, it was to begin with them, and became effectual for the salvation of many of them:

and also to the Greek,

to the Gentile; for after the Jews had rejected it, as many being called by it as Jehovah thought fit, at that time, it was preached to the Gentiles with great success; which was the mystery hid from ages and generations past, but now made manifest.

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What Is The Gospel?

Romans 1:16-17

In 1710, Queen Anne went to visit a cathedral designed and built by Sir Christopher Wren. She described it as "awful, amusing and artificial." Upon hearing her words, the architect sighed with relief. Surprised? Well, in 1710 the word "awful" meant "awe-inspiring"; the word "amusing" meant "amazing" and the word "artificial" meant "artistic". What, to our ears, sounds like a devastating criticism were actually a very high compliment and words of praise. Sometimes we don't really know the meanings of the words we use.

The word "gospel" is one of those words. What is the gospel? To some people that word means "something that is absolutely and unquestionably true." They might say, "It's the gospel truth." The dictionary defines "the gospel" as the teachings of Jesus. But that definition is rather broad and vague. After all, Jesus taught on many subjects.

In his letter to the Romans, Paul uses the word "gospel" thirteen times and four times in the first 16 verses of chapter 1 and referred to it more than that. He said, "*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith*" (Romans 1:16-17). In fact, we have called the Book of Romans, The Gospel According To Paul.

But what we really need to do at this point, is simply to define the gospel. We say that our great commission is to "*go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature*" (Mark 16:15). But what is the gospel we preach? In fact, Paul does just that in the two verses that I just quoted from *Romans 1*.

The Gospel Is About A Person

"The Gospel of Christ"

To understand the gospel, you must know who Jesus Christ is and what He did.

Who He Is. (See *Matthew 16:13-16*). Who do men say that I am? Who do you say that I am? Peter spoke for the whole group when he said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." (See *John 20:30-31*). John wrote his account of the gospel so that the reader would know that Jesus is the Son of God. (See *John 5:17-18*). When Christ claims to be the Son of God, He is claiming to be equal with God, to be God. Jesus Christ is Lord. He is God who took upon himself the form of a man. *Philippians 2:5ff*. *John 1* says that the Word was God and that the Word was made flesh. *1 Timothy 3:16* *Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh...*

What He Did. (See *1 Corinthians 15:1-5a*). These verses explain concisely the three elements of the gospel. It is (1) the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ - (2) for our sins - (3) according to the scriptures. The proof that Jesus died was that He was buried. And the proof that He arose from the dead was that He was seen alive on numerous occasions by multitudes of people. Paul explains that Christ's death was "for our sins" and that it was according to the scriptures.

The Gospel is about a person. It is the gospel of Christ.

The Gospel Has The Power To Save

"It is the power of God unto salvation"

The Greek word for "power" used here is the word "dunamis" from which we get our English word "dynamite." Strong's Concordance defines it as "miraculous power; abundant, mighty, wonderful work." And that's what the gospel is! It is the miraculous, abundant, mighty, wonderful power of God unto salvation.

The facts of the gospel have to do with Jesus, His death and resurrection. But here, Paul describes the impact of gospel. It is not just about what Jesus did, it is that what Jesus did has the power to save you!

The gospel is about a person - Christ. The gospel has the power to save.

The Gospel Is For Everyone

"To every one"

After all, every one is a sinner. *"For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. There is none righteous, no, not one." I Kings 8:46 - "There is no man that sinneth not." Ecclesiastes 7:20 - "For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not."*

There is a universal problem. It is the problem of sin. There is a universal solution. It is the gospel. The gospel is for everyone. There is no limitation to the atonement purchased by Christ or Calvary. *"He tasted death for every man" (Hebrews 2:9). He is "the propitiation for sins of the whole world" (I John 2:2). God's will is for "all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (I Timothy 2:4). He is "not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (I Peter 3:9). The last invitation of the Bible comes from the Spirit and the bride and it is for "whosoever will" to come and take the water of life freely.*

The gospel does not have favorites. Red and yellow, black, brown and white, all are precious in God's sight. Not everyone can go to college, drive a new car or live in a mansion. But everyone can be saved. The gospel is something that is for everyone.

Well, then, what does this statement *"to the Jew first and also to the Greek"* mean? Does it mean that God cares more about some than others. That is not what the Bible is saying. "First" here means first in order. In God's plan for preaching the gospel to the whole world, He intended the church to start with the Jews. (See *Luke 24:46-47*). You have to start somewhere, and God chose to start with the nation of Israel. We have a Jewish Saviour. We have a Jewish Bible. We have a Jewish history. God's plan was for the preaching of the gospel to be first to the Jews and then to the Greeks. That was the pattern of Paul's ministry. Even when he traveled into Gentile country preaching the gospel, Paul first went to the Jewish synagogue and afterward to the Gentile people. And in the letter to the Romans, Paul is going to speak first about the Hebrews and then about the rest of humanity.

The gospel is about a person - Christ. The gospel has the power to save. The gospel is for everyone one.

The Gospel Requires Only Faith

"To every one that believeth"

"From faith to faith"

"The just shall live by faith"

We are saved by faith. Everyone can be saved, but only those who trust in Jesus Christ will be saved. *"For by grace are you saved through faith" (Ephesians 2:8).* Listen to *Ephesians 1:13 - In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.* The gospel of Christ becomes your gospel by faith, by trusting in Christ. *Romans 5:1* tells us that we are justified (made to be just or in right standing with God) by faith. Here, Paul quotes from the Old Testament (*Habakkuk 2:4*) and says, *"The just shall live by faith."* We are saved by faith.

We are saved by faith alone. That's what Paul means when he writes in *verse 17* that *"the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith."* To put it simply, faith is the beginning of salvation, it is the first thing you must do to be saved. And it is the end of salvation; it is the last thing you must do to be saved. Salvation begins and ends with faith. Thus, we are saved by faith alone. Salvation isn't by faith plus baptism, communion, church membership, good works. It is by faith alone.

There you have a definition and explanation of the gospel. It is about a person - Jesus Christ who is God in human flesh, who died for our sins and rose for our justification. It has the power to save. It is available to everyone. It is received by faith alone.

Jesus said, *"Repent and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:15).* That is what I invite you to do today. Trust Christ and what He did on the cross for your personal salvation.

If you have more questions feel free to write or E-mail us with them. If in your heart you have trusted Christ as a result of reading this, it is important that you tell someone as soon as possible. We would like to know about your decision. We have resources in print and audio form to make available to you. I'm praying that God will use this message to bring a harvest into the Kingdom of God.

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What is the Gospel?

by Michael Bremmer

"I said before, I so say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:9).

The apostle Paul reserved his most piercing words of criticism for the Christians at Galatia. After his unusually brief greeting, (Galatians 1:1-5), Paul then writes: "I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you, and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As I said before, I so say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:6-9).

In view of Paul's chilling condemnation of those who would preach a different gospel, we need to ask, "What is the gospel Paul preached?" This is the question this brief article will seek to answer.

We need not search long to find an answer. Paul explains what gospel he preached. In his letter to the Christians at Corinth, Paul tells us what he considered to be of "first importance" in his preaching of the gospel: "Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). The gospel

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Paul preached was Jesus Christ: That (1) Christ died for our sins (2) He was buried (3) He was raised from the dead on the third day. This was the gospel Paul preached, the gospel that the Corinthians heard and received, and the gospel by which they were saved.

Essential to the gospel is "Christ died for our sins." On the cross, Christ bears the penalty for the sins of His people. In other words, his death was a substitution, or vicarious death for us. Christ took our place, "the just for the unjust", bearing all the punishment we deserved.

Jesus clearly saw His coming death as the substitutionary sacrifice for sinners. In Matthew's gospel, for example, Jesus says, "Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and give His life a ransom for many." The word "for" in the Greek is anti and most often means "in place of," or "instead of." According to Jesus, He came to give his life a "ransom" in place of the many.

In the Old Testament book of Isaiah we read: "But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him" (Isaiah 53:5-6), and, "But the Lord was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief; If He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, and the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper His hand. As the result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities. Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself in death, And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, and interceded for the transgressors" (Isaiah 53:10-12).

Most understand that Isaiah 53 pertains to Christ, and what He accomplished on the cross. We need not have any doubt that this passage refers to Him because Jesus, speaking of Himself, quotes from it. Speaking to His disciples, Jesus says: "For I tell you, that this which is written must be fulfilled in Me, AND HE WAS NUMBERED WITH THE TRANSGRESSORS; for that which refers to

Me has its fulfillment" (Luke 22:37). Jesus quoted from Isaiah 53:12.

Christ understood his death to be a substitutionary sacrifice for sinners. Christ death on the cross was no accident. His death was the fulfillment of God's eternal plan to redeem lost sinners (Acts 2:23) by taking our place, and suffering the punishment we owed.

The apostle Peter likewise says, "And He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds we are healed" (1 Peter 2:24). And, again, "For Christ also died for sins, once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit" (1 Peter 3:18). And the apostle Paul, in another place, writes: "He made Him who new no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. 5:21), and, "But we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Gentiles foolishness" (1 Corinthians 1:23).

Therefore, when Paul tells the Corinthians that "of first importance" Christ died for our sins, he simply means that Christ took our place, and paid in our place the penalty for our sin. That, says Paul, is the gospel he preached.

*Upon the cross of Jesus, mine eye at times can see
The very dying form of the one who suffered there for me.
And from my stricken heart with tears two wonders I confess,—
The Wonders of redeeming love, and my own worthlessness.*
Elizabeth C. Clephane

In reminding the Corinthian Christians of the gospel he preached, Paul next mentions that Christ was buried. Christ, in other words, died a real physical death; and His death and burial are the prelude to Paul's final element of the gospel he preached—Christ's resurrection.

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is essential part of the gospel that Paul preached. Paul explains the importance of the resurrection to the gospel and our salvation: "and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain, your faith is also vain" (1 Corinthians 15:14) and, "And if Christ has not been

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raised, you faith is worthless, you are still in you sins" (1 Corinthians 15:17). The resurrection is the proof that Christ did pay the price for our sin, and that His substitutionary death on the cross for us satisfied all of God's demands against us. Christ, having paid the price, God raised Him from the dead. By Christ's resurrection, we know that His work in redeeming His people is complete. When we, therefore, admonish sinners to trust in Christ, we mean nothing less than Christ died for our sins, was buried, and on the third day God raised Him from the dead. This does not mean we trust merely in certain facts. We trust in Christ alone, as He is revealed to us in the gospels. Nevertheless, how he is revealed is the gospel, and of first importance is His death for sin, burial, and resurrection. Those who claim to be Christian, yet deny His substitutionary death for sin, deny his real physical death, or deny his physical bodily resurrection—their faith is in vain.

Yet, far more exist who claim to affirm the gospel, but add to it. From the earliest part of church history there have been those who distort the simple gospel message, saying faith in Christ alone is not enough. In the book of Acts chapter 15 some of these preachers of a false gospel came to Paul telling him that the Gospel he was preaching was not enough. "Unless you are circumcised," they claimed, "you cannot be saved." Because of these false teachers, the first council was held. There the apostle Peter proclaimed: "But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same was as they also are" (Acts 15:11).

As in the days of the early church, there are many today distorting the simplicity of the gospel message. No longer is "of first importance" the death of Christ for sin, His burial, and resurrection, but His death for sin, His burial, resurrection, and baptism; Or, His death for sin, His burial, resurrection and good works. But all that is required is faith in Christ. All who add something else we must do to be saved are preaching a different gospel, and anyone preaching a different gospel is accursed. Those of you who may be troubled by these false teachers of a different gospel, I admonish you to read carefully the words of Scripture. Paul tells the Corinthian believers that the gospel he received and preached, the gospel that they received, and the gospel by which they are saved, is "that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures." This, according to Paul, is the gospel.

Baptism is important, but is not vital for salvation. That is why Paul does not mention it in 1 Corinthians when he reminds the Corinthians of those things that are "of first importance." Likewise, good works are important, but they are not the cause of salvation. We do good works not as a requirement for salvation, but as a necessary result of salvation.

While the gospel message is simple—simply enough for a child to understand—and adequate for salvation for all those who trust in Christ alone, we must grow in the knowledge and faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. We should try to understand as much as Scripture reveals concerning the doctrines of salvation, particular justification and the atonement.

Scriptures for Meditation:

Romans 3:20-26

Romans 4:1-16

Romans 11:2-6

Ephesians 2:8-10

Philippians 3:3-9

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LET'S PREACH THE GOSPEL Part 2

An Exhortation To Every Believer And Bible-Teaching Pastor

by Pastor-teacher Dennis Rokser

In our last article we began a study of 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 in an effort to derive a biblically-balanced teaching ministry relative to the Gospel.

PRINCIPLE #1: Pastors need to KEEP PREACHING and believers need to KEEP HEARING THE GOSPEL. (1 Corinthians 15:1a)

"Moreover, brethren, I declare (present tense) unto you the gospel..."

While a teacher of the Word of God needs to teach the whole counsel of God and to address the various problems within the church as they arise, the focus of his preaching needs to be ON JESUS CHRIST and the GOSPEL.

PRINCIPLE #2: The Gospel, by its very nature, is GOOD NEWS FROM GOD TO MAN. (1 Cor. 15:1b)

The word "gospel" (euangelion) literally means "good message or good news." Paul employs this term to refer to...

- the Gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:24)
- the Gospel of God (Rom. 1:1)
- the Gospel of His Son (Rom. 1:9)
- the Gospel of Christ (Rom. 1:16)
- the Gospel of peace (Rom. 10:15)
- the Gospel of your salvation (Eph. 1:13)

The Gospel is the greatest message of good news that anyone could ever hear and that any believer could ever preach. This is why Paul wrote to the Romans saying...

"I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the

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gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." (Romans 1:14-17)

If the Gospel is the greatest message we could ever preach, doesn't it stand to reason that we should proclaim it often?

PRINCIPLE #3: The Gospel is the message which BELIEVERS ARE TO PROCLAIM TO THE LOST. (1 Cor. 15:1c)

..."I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you..."

The word "preached" (euangelizo) is the verb form of our noun "euangelion" (gospel). What did Paul preach when he visited Corinth on his missionary journeys? Literally, he gossiped the gospel. He preached the good news of the Good News.

This is very noteworthy, for Corinth was a morally vile city. Yet when Paul came into town, he did not start the Moral Majority, or picket the local abortion clinics, or placard the gay bars in town. Paul did not get on Christian radio and bemoan the corruption of the present political administration. Furthermore, he did not join hands with apostate religion in an effort to clean up the town. So what DID he do?

"And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." (1 Corinthians 2:1-5)

He preached **Christ crucified!** And what did God do? He used the message of the Gospel to save for eternity those who believed in Christ. WOW! And God then began to transform their lives, first having changed their destinies.

Evangelicalism is so mis-focused today as believers are entrapped in "good cause" syndromes ad infinitum, ad nauseum, at the expense of the Gospel. Dr. J. Vernon McGee said it well years ago on his "Through The Bible" radio ministry: "God did **not** call believers to clean up the fish bowl. **He called us to catch fish.**" I wonder how much time, energy, and money is being spent by believers to clean up the fish bowl? If the same resources were utilized by the church to catch fish through preaching the Gospel, don't you think the results would be far better? And what eternal value is there anyway in a drunk going to hell sober?

Christian talk shows beautifully illustrate this modern day misfocus. Listen for one week and count the times the name "Clinton" comes up, versus how many times the name "Jesus Christ" is mentioned. And this is a CHRISTIAN talk show? I assure you that there is more focus on President Bill Clinton than on Jesus Christ. What a tragedy! And while I am deeply concerned about the moral decay of our society, and while I love the U.S.A., we must remember the clear mandate of God!

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"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15)

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Corinthians 5:17-21)

Do not misunderstand me, I am greatly saddened and concerned about how many precious babies have died via abortion since Roe vs. Wade in 1973. Yet, I am even more concerned about how many precious adults have died without Christ and have gone to hell during the same time.

Dear believer, I exhort you to consider this challenge. If you would go to a caucus to promote pro-life or write your congressperson to oppose government legislation while never going with the Gospel to your neighbor, workmate, friends of family, etc. - you are not only not catching fish; you have totally missed the entire boat!

May the mandate of God, the love of Christ, and the destiny of the lost compel us to go and preach the Gospel to those who are perishing. This encouragement is also needed for churches where believers are taught sound doctrine but lack evangelistic vision. Too often, believers get spiritually "fat", inverted, and may have little vision or burden to win the lost to Christ. Let's not be Arctic-River Christians - frozen at the mouth. Who knows, the fish might be biting!

Years ago the late Dr. C.I. Scofield answered this question in his book...*The Question Box*:

"Is it not part of the mission of the church to correct the social evils of our day?" His answer: "The church has but one mission, defined in Luke 24:47, 48; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; and the church works most powerfully toward the solution of social problems not by turning reformer, but by preaching the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit. When Christ was on earth all the social problems — slavery, intemperance, prostitution, unequal distribution of wealth, oppression of the weak by the strong — were at their worst. To cure them He put into the world one message — the gospel, one means — regeneration, one agency — the Holy Spirit in the church. The best help a pastor can bring to the social problems of his community is to humble himself before God, forsake his sins, receive the filling with the Holy Spirit, and preach a pure gospel in tender love." Amen!

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PRINCIPLE #4: Hearing the Gospel is not enough as PEOPLE NEED TO PERSONALLY RECEIVE IT. (1 Cor. 15:1d)

"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you... which also ye have received..."

These Corinthians did not merely hear the Gospel of salvation via Paul, THEY RECEIVED IT. The verb "received" is in the aorist tense referring to a completed past event. The Gospel is received when one believes it (15:2). The active voice of this verb indicates that the Corinthians chose to receive it. The indicative mood shows that their reception was actual, not superficial.

Dear reader, while the Gospel is good news from God about His gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ, it is of no personal value to you until you receive it or accept it by faith. Have you placed your faith in Jesus Christ alone and His finished work on the cross for you? Christ believed is the Gospel received. Then you could personally go to others and proclaim the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

PRINCIPLE #5: BELIEVERS need to STAND for THE GOSPEL. (1 Cor. 15:1e)

...and wherein ye stand..."

"Wherein" refers back to "the gospel which I preached unto you." The perfect tense of "stand" is employed to indicate a past event with abiding results in the present. Paul not only preached the gospel to the Corinthians resulting in their salvation upon receiving it, but they chose in the past and continued in the present to take a definite stand for the Gospel message. How this is needed in our day!

Due to the intense desire for human approval and ecumenical unity, coupled with a sappy sentimentality disguised as "love", it has become unpopular to take a stand for the Gospel. Instead, the world's spirit of "toleration" and "compromise" has beaten down ministries which once stood for the Gospel of grace. We fear being labeled as "unloving," "judgmental," "critical," and "narrow-minded," even by other so-called believers. The pragmatic practice of the "end-justifies-the-means" has dominated evangelicalism for the last forty years resulting in the line of demarcation between truth and error being seriously blurred. May God raise up a generation of believers who will "hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in the faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." (2 Timothy 1:13) Have we forgotten that,

"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." (Philippians 1:29)

"And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased." (Gal. 5:11)

"But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness." (1 Corinthians 1:23)

"For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." (Galatians 1:10)

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PRINCIPLE #6: The Gospel offers the good news of SALVATION to us. (1 Cor. 15:2a)

..."by which also ye are saved...."

"By which" refers back again to the Gospel which Paul preached and which they had received and stood for.

"Ye are saved" is a present, passive, indicative verb. The passive voice clearly indicates that no sinner can save himself/herself; it is God alone who saves us. The indicative mood is the mood of fact or assumed reality. This means one's salvation by God's grace is not a "hope-so" one, but a "know-so" one.

"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." (1 John 5:13)

The present tense of "saved" may be viewed in two possible ways. First, Paul may be communicating that these Corinthians via the gospel were being presently saved from the POWER OF SIN in their Christian lives as long as they remained steadfast to the Gospel, just like they had been saved from the PENALTY OF SIN (hell) when they had trusted Christ. In other words, the Gospel they had received would continue to have saving effects from spiritual damage upon their lives.

In the second view, the apostle may be indicating that the gospel continues to bear fruit in Corinth by sinners continuing to receive it, and as a result being "saved."

In either case, what is obvious is that more than anything else, the Gospel offers God's SALVATION to unworthy sinners. This is the very reason why Jesus Christ came to earth the first time.

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 19:10)

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (John 3:16-18)

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Galatians 4:4-5)

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"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." 1 (Timothy 1:15)

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." (Romans 1:16)

Man's real problem is not low self-esteem; by nature we are born alienated from God as hopeless, helpless, and hellbound sinners. All of our good works are as filthy rags before a thrice holy God (Isa. 64:6). We are desperately in utter need of what only God can provide and offer to us, namely salvation through Jesus Christ alone.

When is the last time you listened to a Christian psychologist on the radio who said to a listener, "Dear friend, your real bottom-line problem is not a bad marriage, or that you came from a dysfunctional family or an alcoholic home, nor is it a failure to bond with your dad, or the need to rid yourself of your inner child. Your real problem is that you are LOST and you need to be SAVED by the amazing grace of God!" Reader, please do something for me. Listen to your favorite "Christian psychologist" on the radio for the next month. Please write down every time you hear the word "sin." Please record every Scripture verse mentioned. Please note every time the Gospel is given. Then ask yourself, "Is this person addressing the real needs of people via the Gospel?" Like the song says, "people need the Lord," and Jesus Christ is Who the Gospel of salvation is all about. Unfortunately, few people are hearing the real solution to their eternal destiny and life's problems — which is Jesus Christ, Who loved us and gave Himself for us.

If you could talk to someone about salvation, abortion, or homosexuality - which would it be? I was reminded of this a number of years ago when I came face to face with an abortion clinic picketer. He happened to be a believer who had been previously apart of D.B.C. some years ago.

Me: "Hi Mike! How are you doing?"

Mike: "Fine. Just out picketing."

Me: "Do you do this very often?"

Mike: "About once a week."

Me: "Why do you do it?"

Mike: "Well, we just want to let the public know that babies are being aborted at this clinic."

Me: "Oh, that's terrible. Do you get much response?"

Mike: "Not really. Occasionally someone will sneer at us. While sometimes someone applauds us."

Me: "That's interesting, Mike. But, do you ever tell people passing by the **good news**?"

Mike: "What do you mean?"

Me: "Certainly it is bad news to hear of babies being aborted at this clinic, as I too am totally against abortion. But do you ever tell all these needy people the good news of how God loves them; how Christ died for them and their sins and rose again, and how through faith alone in Christ alone they can be eternally saved by God's grace?"

Mike: "No. I guess I've never told them 'the good news'."

Me: "You know Mike, when the apostle Paul came into Corinth it was laden with every sexual sin imaginable including abortion. But instead of trying to clean up the symptoms of their problems, he presented to them the gospel of grace. As a result, people trusted in Christ and were saved. Then God began to change their lives. The people on this street need to hear the good news of salvation."

Mike: "I never looked at it this way before."

Do not forget that the gospel offers God's solution to man's greatest need, which is SALVATION. By regularly emphasizing the Gospel, believers are reminded of this and can actually learn HOW to present it. ■

Part 3 will be in the May/June issue.

What is The Gospel?

by Zacharias Ursinus (1534-1583)



Zacharias Ursinus was the primary author of the Heidelberg Catechism. The following text can be found in Ursinus' exposition of question and answer 19 in Ursinus' "Commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism," pp. 101-106 (english translation by G.W. Williard, Columbus OH, 1852; reprinted by P & R). The electronic edition of this text was scanned and edited by Shane Rosenthal for *Reformation Ink*. It is in the public domain and may be freely copied and distributed. Pagination has been retained for purposes of reference.

I. What Is The Gospel?

The term *gospel* signifies, 1. A joyful message, or good news. 2. The sacrifice which is offered to God for this good news. 3. The reward which is given to him who announces these joyful tidings. Here it signifies the doctrine, or joyful news of Christ manifested in the flesh; as "behold, I bring unto you good tidings of great joy, for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2: 10, 11.)

The words *epaggelia* and *euaggelia* are of a somewhat different signification. The former denotes the promise of a mediator that was to come; the latter is the announcement of a mediator already come. This distinction, however, is not always observed; and is rather in the words than in the thing itself; for both denote the same benefits of the Messiah, so that the distinction is only in the circumstance of time, and in the manner of his appearance, as is evident from the following declarations of Scripture: "Abraham saw my day, and was glad." "No man cometh to the Father but by me." "I am the door,

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by me if any," etc. "God hath appointed him head over all things to the church." "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever." (John 8: 56; 14: 6; 10: 7. Eph. 1: 22. Heb. 13: 8.)

The gospel is, therefore, the doctrine which the Son of God, our Mediator, revealed from heaven in Paradise, immediately after the fall, and which he brought from the bosom of the Eternal Father; which promises, and announces, in view of the free grace and mercy of God, to all those that repent and believe, deliverance from sin, death, condemnation, and the wrath of God; which is the same thing as to say that it promises and proclaims the remission of sin, salvation, and eternal life, by and for the

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sake of the Son of God, the Mediator; and is that through which the Holy Spirit works effectually in the hearts of the faithful, kindling and exciting in them, faith, repentance, and the beginning of eternal life. Or, we may, in accordance with the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth questions of the Catechism, define the gospel to be the doctrine which God revealed first in Paradise, and afterwards published by the Patriarchs and Prophets, which he was pleased to represent by the shadows of sacrifices, and the other ceremonies of the law, and which he has accomplished by his only begotten Son; teaching that the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; which is to say that he is a perfect Mediator, satisfying for the sins of the human race, restoring righteousness and eternal life to all those who by a true faith are ingrafted into him, and embrace his benefits.

The following passages of Scripture confirm this definition which we have given of the gospel: I This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day." "And that repentance and remission of sin should be preached in his name, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." (John 6: 41. Luke 24: 47. John 1: 17.)

II. Has The Gospel Always Been Known in the Church, or is it a New Doctrine?

The gospel sometimes signifies the doctrine concerning the promise of grace, and the remission of sins to be granted freely, on account of the sacrifice of the Messiah, who had not as yet come in the flesh; and then, again, it signifies the doctrine of the Messiah as already come. In the latter sense, it has not always been, but commenced with the New Testament. In the

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former sense, however, it has always been in the Church; for immediately after the fall it was revealed in Paradise to our first parents -- afterwards it was published by the Patriarchs, and Prophets, and was at length fully accomplished, and revealed by Christ himself. The proofs of this are the following:

1. The testimony of the Apostles. Peter says, "To him gave all the prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired, and searched diligently." (Acts 10: 43. 1 Pet. 1: 10.) Paul says of the gospel, "Which he had promised afore by his prophets." (Rom. 1: 2.) Christ himself says, "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me." (John 5: 46.)

2. The promises and prophecies which relate to the Messiah, establish the same thing.

This must, therefore, be carefully noticed, because God will have us know that there was, and is from the beginning to the end of the world, only one doctrine, and way of salvation through Christ, according to what is said, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and for ever." "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh to the Father but by me." "Moses wrote of me." (Heb. 13: 8. John 14: 6; 5: 46.) Does any one ask, How Moses wrote of Christ? We answer, 1. By enumerating the promises which had respect to the Messiah. "In thy

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seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." "God shall raise up a prophet," etc. "A star shall rise out of Jacob." "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah until Shiloh come." (Gen. 12: 3. Deut. 10: 15. Num. 24: 17. Gen. 49: 10.) 2. He restricted these promises to a certain family from which the Messiah was to be born; and to which the promise was afterwards more frequently referred, and spoken of. 3. The whole Levitical priesthood, and ceremonial worship, as sacrifices, oblations, the altar, the temple, and other things which Moses described, all looked forward to Christ. The kings and kingdom of the Jewish nation were types of Christ, and of his kingdom. Hence Moses wrote many things of Christ.

Objection 1. Paul declares the gospel was promised through the prophets; and Peter says that the prophets prophesied of the grace that should come unto us. Therefore the gospel has not always been. Answer: We grant that the gospel has not always been, if we understand by it the doctrine of the promise of grace as fulfilled through the manifestation of Christ in the flesh, and as it respects the clearness and evidence of this doctrine; for in ancient times the gospel was not, but was only promised by the prophets: 1. As concerning the fulfillment of those things which, in the Old Testament, were predicted of the Messiah.

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2. In regard to the clearer knowledge of the promise of grace. 3. In respect to the more copious outpouring of the gifts of the Holy Spirit; that is, the gospel then was not the announcement of Christ already come, dead, risen again, and seated at the right hand of the Father, as it now is; but it was a preaching of Christ, who would at some future time come, and accomplish all these things. Nevertheless, there was a gospel, that is, there was a joyful announcement of the benefits of the Messiah that was to come, sufficient for the salvation of the ancient fathers, as it is said, "Abraham saw my day, and rejoiced." "To him gave all the prophets witness." "Christ is the end of the law." (John 8: 56. Acts 10: 43. Rom. 10: 4.)

Objection 2. The apostle Paul says, the gospel was the mystery which was kept secret since the world began, and that in other ages it was not made known to the sons of men. (Rom. 16: 25. Eph. 3: 5.) Answer: This objection contains an incorrect division, inasmuch as it disjoins things which ought not to be separated. For the apostle adds, in connection with the above, as it is now; which ought not to be omitted, because it shows that in former times the gospel was also known, although less clearly, and to fewer persons, than it now is. The objection is also weak, in affirming that to be strictly so, which was only declared such in a certain respect: for it does not follow, that it was then altogether unknown, because it is now more clearly perceived, and that by many more persons. It was known to the fathers, although not so clearly as to us. Hence the importance of the distinction between the words *epaggelia* and *euaggelia* as above expressed.

Objection 3. The law came by Moses, grace and truth by Jesus Christ. Therefore the gospel has not always been known. Answer: Grace and truth did indeed come through Christ, viz, in respect to the fulfillment of types, and the full exhibition and copious application of those things which were formerly promised in the Old Testament. But it does not follow from this, that the ancient fathers were entirely destitute of this grace: for unto them also the same grace was applied by, and on account of Christ, who would subsequently appear in the flesh, although it was given in smaller measures

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to them than to us. For, whatever grace and true knowledge of God has ever come to men, has come through Christ, as it is said, "The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." "No man cometh to the Father, but by me." "Without me ye can do nothing." (John 1: 18; 14: 6; 15: 5.)

But it is said, the law was by Moses; therefore the gospel was not by him. Answer: This is so declared, because it was the principal part of his office to publish the law; yet he also taught the gospel, because he wrote and spoke of Christ, although more obscurely, as has been shown. But it was the peculiar office of Christ to publish the gospel, although he at the same

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time taught the law, but not principally, as did Moses: for he took away from the moral law the corruptions and glosses of false teachers -he fulfilled the ceremonial law, and abrogated it, together with the judicial law.

III. In What Does The Gospel Differ From The Law?

The gospel and the law agree in this, that they are both from God, and that there is something revealed in each concerning the nature, will, and works of God. There is, however, a very great difference between them:

1. In the revelations which they contain; or, as it respects the manner in which the revelation peculiar to each is made known. The law was engraven upon the heart of man in his creation, and is therefore known to all naturally, although no other revelation were given. "The Gentiles have the work of the law written in their hearts." (Rom. 2: 15.) The gospel is not known naturally, but is divinely revealed to the Church alone through Christ, the Mediator. For no creature could have seen or hoped for that mitigation of the law concerning satisfaction for our sins through another, if the Son of God had not revealed it. "No man knoweth the Father, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him." "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee." "The Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." (Matt. 11: 27; 16: 17.)

2. In the kind of doctrine, or subject peculiar to each. The law teaches us what we ought to be, and what God requires of us, but it does not give us the ability to perform it, nor does it point out the way by which we may avoid what is forbidden. But the gospel teaches us in what manner we may be made such as the law requires: for it offers unto us the promise of grace, by having the righteousness of Christ imputed to us through faith, and that in such a way as if it were properly ours, teaching us that we are just before God, through the imputation of Christ's righteousness. The law says, "Pay what thou owest." "Do this, and live." (Matt. 18: 28. Luke 10: 28.) The gospel says, "Only believe." (Mark 5: 36.)

3. A the promises. The law promises life to those who are righteous in themselves, or on the condition of righteousness, and perfect obedience. "He that doeth them, shall live in them." "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." (Lev. 18: 5. Matt. 19: 17.) The gospel, on the other hand, promises life to those who are justified by faith in Christ, or on the condition of the righteousness of Christ, applied unto us by faith. The law and gospel are, however, not opposed to each other in these respects: for although the law requires us to keep the commandments if we would enter into life, yet it does not exclude us from life if another perform these things for us. It does indeed propose a way of satisfaction,

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What is The Gospel, by Zacharias Ursinus

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which is through ourselves, but it does not forbid the other, as has been shown.

4. They differ in their effects. The law, without the gospel, is the letter which killeth, and is the ministration of death: "For by the law is the knowledge of sin." "The law worketh wrath; and the letter killeth." (Rom. 3: 20; 4: 15. 2 Cor. 3: 6.) The outward preaching, and simple knowledge of what ought to be done, is known through the letter: for it declares our duty, and that righteousness which God requires; and, whilst it neither gives us the ability to perform it, nor points out the way through which it may be attained, it finds fault with, and condemns our righteousness. But the gospel is the ministration of life, and of the Spirit, that is, it has the operations of the Spirit united with it, and quickens those that are dead in sin, because it is through the gospel that the Holy Spirit works faith and life in the elect. "The gospel is the power of God unto salvation," etc. (Rom. 1: 16.)

Objection: There is no precept, or commandment belonging to the gospel, but to the law. The preaching of repentance is a precept. Therefore the preaching of repentance does not belong to the gospel, but to the law. Answer: We deny the major, if it is taken generally; for this precept is peculiar to the gospel, which commands us to believe, to embrace the benefits of Christ, and to commence new obedience, or that righteousness which the law requires. If it be objected that the law also commands us to believe in God, we reply that it does this only in general, by requiring us to give credit to all the divine promises, precepts and denunciations, and that with a threatening of punishment, unless we do it. But the gospel commands us expressly and particularly to embrace, by faith, the promise of grace; and also exhorts us by the Holy Spirit, and by the Word, to walk worthy of our heavenly calling. This however it does only in general, not specifying any duty in particular, saying thou shalt do this, or that, but it leaves this to the law; as, on the contrary, it does not say in general, believe all the promises of God, leaving this to the law; but it says in particular, Believe this promise; fly to Christ, and thy sins shall be forgiven thee.

IV. What Are The Proper Effects of the Gospel?

The proper effects of the gospel are:

1. Faith: because "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." "The gospel is the ministration of the Spirit." "The power of God unto salvation." (Rom. 10: 17. 2 Cor. 3: 8. Rom. 1: 16.)

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2. Through faith, our entire conversion to God, justification, regeneration and salvation; for through faith we receive Christ, with all his benefits.

V. From What Does The Truth of the Gospel Appear?

The truth of the gospel appears:

1. From the testimony of the Holy Ghost.
2. From the prophecies which were uttered by the prophets.
3. From the fulfillment of these prophecies, which took place under the New Testament dispensation.
4. From the miracles by which the doctrine of the gospel was confirmed.

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5. By the testimony of the gospel itself; because it alone shows the way of escape from sin, and ministers solid comfort to the wounded conscience.

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Grace Points

By grace you have been saved.

(7)

"Paul's Gospel"

Author Subject: "Paul's Gospel"

Posted At 13:25:54 12/03/2001

Paul's Gospel! **Faith Alone in Christ Alone**

There are two great revelations, or unfolders of Divine Truth in the Bible – Moses in the Old Testament, and Paul in the New.

Someone may say, "Is not Christ the Great Teacher?" In a sense this is true; but in a real sense Christ is the Person taught about, rather than teaching, in the Gospels. The law an the prophets pointed forward to Christ; the Epistles point back to Him; ant the Book of Revelation points to His second coming, and those things connected with it. The Four Gospels tell the story how He was revealed to man, and rejected by them. Christ, Himself, therefore is the theme of the Bible. Moses in the Law reveals God's holiness, and thus by means of the Law reveals human sin, and the utter hopelessness and helplessness of man. Paul in his great Epistles reveals Christ as our Righteousness, Sanctification, Redemption, and All in All.

The twelve Apostles (Matthias by Divine appointment taking the place of Judas) were to be the "witnesses" (Acts 1:22) of Christ's resurrection – that is of the fact of it. They

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were not to unfold fully the doctrine of it, as Paul was. The twelve were with Jesus personally, and knew Him as a man; and when He died they saw it. When He was buried, they knew it personally, as eye-witnesses. And when He was raised, they found it out experimentally, visiting His actual tomb, and seeing that it was empty. They were also to see and handle the physical, risen body of our Lord. And it was with them that our Lord abode on earth forty days after His resurrection, "showing Himself alive (physically, in a body) by many infallible proofs" (Acts 1:3).

*Christ, when on earth, did not "start" anything. He said, in Matt. 16:18: "I will build My Church;" but He had not yet built it. He was a "Minister of the circumcision," (Rom. 15:8; Matt. 15:24); and though He taught, it was to discover to men their helplessness, and lead them to rely on Him. Finally, all failed in Gethsemane. Then came the Cross and the end of all things human. Then the resurrection, and a new beginning.

This great fact--that is, that the Person that the Jews themselves well knew they had crucified and buried, was risen from the dead and ascended to heaven--this tremendous fact the twelve Apostles witnessed to Israel at Jerusalem, and everywhere else. Thus we find the opening chapters of the Book of Acts filled with the single testimony that Jesus of Nazareth had risen from the dead; and that remission of sins was through Him.

But unto none of these twelve Apostles did God reveal the great body of doctrine for this age. Just as God chose Moses to be the revelator to Israel of the Ten Commandments, and all connected with the Law dispensation; so God chose Saul of Tarsus to be the revelator and unfold of those mighty truths connected with our Lord's burial, and resurrection, and His ascended Person. And all the "mysteries" or "secrets" revealed to God's people in this dispensation by the Holy Ghost are revealed by Paul. Finally, Paul is the unfold of that great company of God's elect, called the Church, the Body of Christ, the individuals of which body are called members of the Body of Christ-members of Christ Himself.

No other Apostle speaks of these things. Peter himself had to learn them from Paul (II Peter 3: 15-16). When Paul finishes his thirteen great Epistles (Romans to Philemon) those which belong to the Church, God indeed permits him to give a message to the Hebrews. This is not part of the Church's doctrine, but is simply explaining to Hebrew Christians the character, the real application, the typical meaning, of their Levitical system-that is, how it pointed forward to Christ.

James addresses his Epistle to "the twelve tribes"-that is, his Epistle has special reference to the Jewish Christians in the early days, and to such throughout the dispensation, for that matter. Peter writes to "the strangers who are sojourners of the Dispersion," that is, to the dispersed Jews who acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah.

In Galatians the second chapter we are distinctly told by Paul, that James, Cephas and John were to go to the circumcision, while Paul tells us that his message was to the Gentiles. Since then the testimony by the Jewish Apostles to the Jews was duly given, there is now no distinction between Jews and Gentiles; and Paul's message holds good for the world, both Jews and Gentiles. So that we find Paul finally sets the Jewish nation aside in the last chapter of the Book of Acts, and opens his great Epistle to the Gentile center of the world with the statement that "there is no difference" between men; for "all have sinned;" and that there is again "no difference," for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved;" since the same Lord is "Lord of all" (Rom. 3:22-23 and Rom. 10:12)

God does as He pleases, and it pleased Him to choose-first to save people in this dispensation through "the foolishness of preaching," or the "preached thing"-that is, through the message about the Cross, and what was done there (See I Cor. 1:21). And second, it pleased Him to choose Paul to be the great proclaimer and revealer of just what the Gospel is for this dispensation

You can judge any man's preaching or teaching by this rule-Is he Pauline? Does his doctrine start and finish according to those statements of Christian doctrine uttered by the Apostle Paul?

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No matter how wonderful a man may seem in his gifts and apparent consecration-if his Gospel is not Pauline, it is not the Gospel; and we might as well get our minds settled at once as to that. Paul calls down the anathema-that is the curse of God Himself-upon anyone who preaches any other Gospel than that which he declared (Gal. 1).

Not for one moment are we to believe that James, Peter and John were at variance with Paul-not in the least. They were given certain things by the Spirit, to say to certain classes of people. They do not conflict with Paul. And their words are included in the statement that "All Scripture is profitable" (II Timothy 3:16).

The Berean

But, nevertheless, Paul is the declarer and revealer of the Gospel to us. Take Romans to Philemon out of the Bible and you are bereft of Christian doctrine. For instance, if you were to take Paul's Epistles out of the Bible, you cannot find anything about the Church, the Body of Christ, for no other Apostle mentions the Body of Christ. You cannot find one of the great mysteries, such as the Rapture of the Church (I Thes. 4, I Cor. 15) or the mystery of the present hardening of Israel (Romans 11). No other Apostle speaks of any of those mysteries. Paul alone reveals them-the great doctrines such as Justification, Redemption, Sanctification. And what is perhaps the most tremendous fact of every real Christian life, that of his personal union to the Lord in glory. Paul is the great divinely chosen opener to us of truth for this age.

The great doctrines that Paul reveals may be outlined as follows-

1. The unrighteousness before God of all men.
2. The impossibility of justification by works before God-that is, of any man's attaining a standing of righteousness before God, by anything done by him. Do what a man may, he is a condemned sinner still.
3. The fact and the scripturalness of righteousness on the free gift principle-that is, of a Divine righteousness, separate from all man's doings, conferred upon man as a free

gift from God.

4. Propitiation: That satisfaction of God's Holy nature and law for man's sins rendered by Christ's blood.

5. Reconciliation: The removal, by Christ's death for man of that obstacle to righteousness which man's sin had set up between God and man.

6. The plan of the actual conferring of the gift of righteousness upon all who believe, without any distinction. This change of a sinner's standing before God, from one of condemnation to one of righteousness, is called Justification, Negatively, it is deliverance from guilt on account of Christ's shed blood, and deliverance out of the old creation, by identification in death with Christ on the Cross. Positively, it is a new standing in the risen Christ before God.

7. Redemption-the buying back of the soul through the blood of Christ from sin; from the curse of the law- even death, involving, exclusion from God, under penalty; from the "power of death," which involves the hand of the enemy; and from all iniquity.

8. Forgiveness-the going forth of Divine tenderness in remitting penalty for sin, in view of the blood of Christ trusted in; and in complacency and fellowship, to creatures who before were necessarily under Divine judgment.

9. Remission of sins-that is, the actual removing of transgressions or trespasses from the sinner, so that for all time and eternity his sins shall not again be upon him.

10. Identification-(see above, Justification) the great fact that those who are in Christ were united with Him at the Cross, by God's sovereign inscrutable act; were crucified with Christ and buried with Him; so that their history is now ended before God; and when Christ was raised up as the First-born of the new creation, they also were raised up with Him, and their history began as new creatures in God's sight, in Christ, the last Adam.

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Of course, in the experience of the Christian, there comes a time when he is actually made partaker of this new life-that point of time when he is, as we say, saved, or converted, or born again, ect. Nevertheless, the life that is in every Christian came up out of the tomb, and it is in Christ Jesus that a man is created anew.

11. Incorporation. This tremendous doctrine Paul alone mentions, and he makes it practically the foundation of all his exhortations to the saints with regard to their conduct and life. By "incorporation" we mean the fact that all those who are really saved and are new creatures in Christ Jesus become members of one organism, which is more real than the very earth we tread upon called "the Body of Christ,"-Christ Himself in heaven being the Head of this Body, and every real Christian a member of it. So that believers are thus members of Christ in heaven, and also members one of another here on earth. No wonder Paul is able to exhort the saints to love one another when they are members one of another! (Rom. 12, I Cor. 12 and Eph. 4).

12. Inhabitation. The wonderful fact that the Body of Christ and each member of it individually is inhabited, indwelt, by the Holy Ghost Himself, and not only so, but that the Church is being "built together" as a great temple of God so that in the future God's actual eternal dwelling place will be this wonderful, mysterious company built into a building called "a holy habitation of God in the Spirit."

This mystery is a great and marvelous one, the fact that we are saved, are partakers now of the life of the Lord in glory, that the Holy Spirit indwells us.

13. Divine Exhibition-that is, that through the Church, in the ages to come, is to be made known that which God counts His "riches," even His Grace (Eph. 2:7; 3:10).

The failure or refusal to discern the Pauline Gospel as a separate and new revelation and not a "development from Judaism," accounts for two-thirds of the confusion in many people's minds today as regards just what the Gospel is. Paul's Gospel will suffer no admixture with works on the one hand or religious pretensions and performances on the other. It is as simple and clear as the sunlight from heaven. The end of man is where God begins in Romans 3, at what might be called the opening of

the Pauline Revelation. Most unsaved people today believe in their hearts that the reason they are not saved is because of something they have not yet done, some step that remains for them to take before God will accept them. But this is absolutely untrue. When Christ said, "It is finished," He meant that had, then and there, paid the debt for the whole human race. "He gave Himself a ransom for all" (1 Tim. 2:6).

Now Paul in his wonderful revelation declares that God hath reconciled the world to Himself; that God was in Christ (at the Cross) reconciling the world unto Himself (II Cor. 5:19). Men do not know this, but they conceive that something stands between them and God, before God will accept or forgive them. If you tell a man that God is demanding no good works of him whatsoever, no religious observances or church ordinances, that God is not asking him to undertake any duties at all, but that God invites him to believe a glad message that his sins have already been dealt with at the Cross, and that God expects him to believe this good news and be exceedingly happy about it-if you tell an unsaved man such a story as this, he is astonished and overwhelmed-yet this is the Gospel!

Would that we had grace just as vigorously to defend his great message today, whether from its enemies or its real friends who do not see it clearly as yet; or who, like Peter (Gal. 2), through fear of others, are ready to compromise and tone down the Gospel of God.

REMEMBER: ACCORDING TO THE WORD OF GOD, THOSE WHO FOLLOW PAUL ARE FOLLOWING CHRIST!

You are cordially invited to visit:

**"Paul's Grace Message"
<http://www.PaulsGraceMessage.Org>**

http://gracepoints.com/forums/View_Points/posts/743.html

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- Proclaiming**
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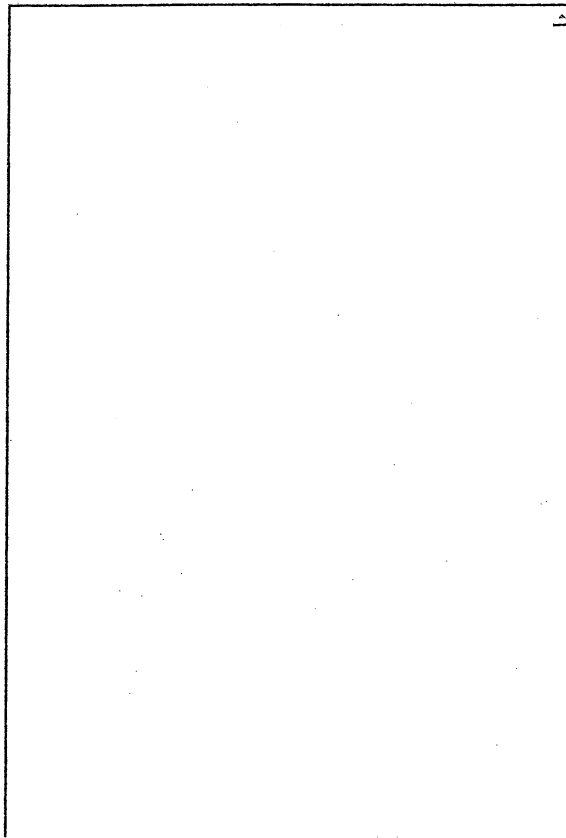
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"Paul's Gospel"

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September 8, 2002

#1

Greek word gospel – Evangelion – good news/ gospel

Angelions in Greek – word for messengers

What is the gospel – Power of God unto salvation

Living, active

Redeemer

Not on our merit but actions of Jesus Christ

Enactive by Holy Spirit – brings conviction

Gospel in a nutshell – death, burial and resurrection in Christ

Gospel not relevant if he didn't rise

Gospel is spirit of truth

We have to proclaim it/ herald it

Righteousness of Christ is revealed in the gospel

It is a gift of God

2 fold confession --died and raised on 3rd day

do not sway to false gospels

1-

Evangelian – the word for message still _____ which is the gospel – Good news.

Salvation the finished work of Christ on Christ cross

The power of God – Paul not ashamed. Its living its active _____ relation with God

Its good new on the merit of Jesus

Its Power by the Holy Spirit. It brings full conviction

The gospel in a nutshell, death burial, resurrection

It would not have any power the gospel if Jesus did not rise. It would not be relevant

The spirit of truth the way the life

If we don't proclaim it no one else will know/ say it loud

It's a message of victory Christ said it's finish

Can't earn it / not can be brought

2 fold confession/ christ died raised on 3rd day

its Gods word its his revelation

many components but 1 gospel

we can be swayed by false gospel

#2

What is the gospel

Totality- mankind, creation

Jesus qualified to be our saviour – didn't have the sin seed of man in him

Mary – was obedient to God

We have a hope because Jesus Christ born as 2nd Adam

Word of gospel is our hope

The mystery end when he gave Paul this revelation. It was no longer a mystery to Paul. He couldn't come up with this on his own. It's about the Holy Spirit and the Power to show us.

Preface:

#4

Revival in your own hearts.

-4

Paul said to bring revival the gospel and preaching to all the world to seek the Lord

#3

Paul had different/ more difficult job

People no knowledge/ wrote letter of Roman

-3

Paul letter the full everlasting gospel

Paul had a different and difficult job to people who had no law

#2

gospel equals master key. Opens up everything for unbelievers. Pass keys out.

Evangelism/ message can preach gospel

-2

The gospel is the key – the master key- the salvation ___ etc. We need to start passing keys out.

Angels is from the word evengelosn – the spiritual gift but he found out it was about the good word. 3 angels in revelation and how Paul said about a angel preaching to him. How can angel preach a false gospel to the Mormons and etc.

Theres a time when the kingdom means to have a good news.

There is a messenger who could have a message

#1

gospel preached by Paul to romans

Martin Luther delivered re gospel

Gets church impacted

Paul to romans / identified himself/ his crediticials was the revelation of the gospels

-1

The gospel preached by paul and no book hes made _____

A revival broke out. John Wessley ___ and preach the gospel and proclaimed it. It should have total impact on the church to turn us away from sin.

Forefounders

We read the gospel if you never saw these people and you go there like Paul we have to bear what we have. Paul had this revelation of the gospel – good news!!

Don't open a wound thatyou can't correct the gospel is the healing power of the word

Tape transcribed, re 9/8/02

Gospel can't buy it can't work for it you don't deserve it it's something that is a free gift
2 fold confession believe that Christ died and #2 raised on the 3rd day
some people believe in faith alone in Christ alone. The gospel is foolishness to them that
don't believe like --- said but the power to those that do. That he was the living
embodiment of the gospel it is his word.

There is no shame in the gospel. Romans chapter 1-16&17. The gospel of God is his
revelation.

Many components but one gospel. Given to the Jew first and then the Greek.

Because of Christ and his merit you can receive the gospel and be in right standing with
God. There are false gospels but you have to hold on to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

(any questions for group 1) if not – did a good job/ give hand clap

2nd article entitled what is the gospel

Basically we determined that the gospel was the totality of the message – revelation of
the word of God to man. Not only mankind but creation. Encompasses the animal
kingdom, everything. The restoration of all things to a pristine condition. Ideally, we
determined that one of the main reasons that Yahshua was qualified-he unlike the rest of
us didn't have the sin seed of man in him. His father was the Holy Spirit so that was one
of the many qualifications that he had to be our savior.

We have hope because Jesus was born as the 2nd Adam. Hope in Christ – the word.

We can't be ashamed of any part of this gospel. We can't work for any part of this
gospel. We try too hard.

We have to come with a repented heart. When you come to him with a repented heart you
have to turn from your sin. Not only turn from it but turn from it and let other people
know how you were able to get this word. It's through the gospel, his works

Good News. Good news is there that is the way. In this world of hopelessness there is a
way and that way is through the death, the life the death the resurrection, excuse me let
me get it right, the life, the death, the burial, the resurrection of our Lord and Savior. It's
all about him. The gospels are all about him and what he did for us. Creation, his order.

So there is good news in this world. The gospel is glad tidings. It makes your heart merry.
It makes you joyful, it's good news, it's hope, it's hope. That's what it is. Hope, it's all
based on him. What he did for us. What he did for creation. So the wolves and the lamb
can lie down together. So that people can live to be over 100 and if they die @ 100,
they'll be considered a baby. So that everything will be in its proper order, the way it was
suppose to be. That's the gospel. That's the good news. That's the glad tidings. How he
lived, how he suffered, how he died, how he rose again with all power. How he lived in
us. That's the gospel, that's the good news. The O/T, N/T, prophets, judges, It's all good
news. It's all the totality of the message.

(any questions for group 2, don't let them out so easy. They did a beautiful job lets' give
them a hand clap)

3rd article

We're talking about Paul is not ashamed. The 1st thing we want to put forward is the reason why Paul was not ashamed because he knew the gospel was salvation. So he had no reason to be ashamed at all. And we also see how the gospel scriptures, the most poignant act, being Peters preaching after receiving the holy spirit and the thousands who were saved. Just by that short message something you could read in the scriptures in 5 minutes time, thousands were saved by this. So there is power in the gospel. There definitely is power ok. Another aspect of the power of the gospel is because it reveals the righteousness of Elohim. It shows what he does all the good things he's done, of the power of the gospel. We looked at it this way. That the power of the gospel works both ways. It works not only toward the unbeliever but that power is working in the believer while he is preaching to the unbeliever. Power in the believer is what gives him the boldness to speak to the unbeliever.

What we were discussing is Peter went forth and was able to have a lot of people to come to God in a short period of time and one of the reasons for that was Peter was the apostle of the Jews who knew god and understood the word of God. So all he had to do was make them recognize that Jesus was the long awaited son. However, Paul had a different task in front of him. He brought forth to people who did not know God. Who had no conception of the God that we worship and many worshipped false gods.. He had to literally build a gospel from scratch

For those people and in doing this, he became an actor

He became all things to all men

So when the word used for actor was the word Jesus used for hypocrite referring to the Sanhedrin's the religious people as hypocrites. He called them actors, false teachers, you're putting on a show. You're acting a certain way but you're not that way at all Paul went forth. He looked for a nitch to make people understand God and that was his ministry and what we were discussing is

Why was Peter able to go out and 3/4 thousand get saved but Paul had to go through this long process, writing letters, continuing to visit these people because he was building from nothing.

No man will have to tell you who God is in the future. He's going to write his law on all of our hearts and everyman will know God because his law will reside in the person. (any questions. You all mentioned Peter and Paul. Peter's message. Touch briefly on the difference re Paul and Peter message/ to the Jews)

4th article

General definition of gospel derives from old English means good tidings. Just share with some people sometimes about how good the gospel is and how everything in life that we deal with is in that gospel to point them in the right directions. It's just so good.

We talked about the 4 gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The first 3 are called the synoptic gospel which means viewing at a glance. John wrote in much more detail.

Some scholars believe that John looked at the synoptics for some sources to write John- just some skeptics

The synoptic used parables. (parable read by debbie jones) sower and the seed.

September 15, 2002/ Evangelion(2)

Article 7

The Gospel is about Messiah, He is the word.
Yahshua preached the gospel, he was the gospel, the good news.

-Paul was the revelator of the gospel
-0 Paul really explained the gospel

Comparing other teachings to Pauline, then this was not the true Gospel. If it didn't come from Paul, it wasn't gospel.

Paul revealed the mystery of the church.
Question: What was Paul talking about "other gospels"?

Answer: When you come in with other requirements other than Christ living, dying and being resurrected or that you need something else.

There are certain things we do not have to do of ourselves, but we are required to keep Gods Law.

Anything else is not a gospel at all
The gospel should be preached and witnessed

Article 6

What is the Gospel? Joyful message.
Good news.
Distinction between old and new
The gospel has always been known as in the prophecy or promise to come
In the New Testament, it was revealed to Paul.
The law lets us know what sin is but doesn't give us the means to become sinless.

But the gospel gives us the

The effects of the gospel
-Administration of the spirit
-Faith- faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God
It's all in the revelation. In the Old Testament they could not look ahead, only back

Article 5

- let's preach the Gospel/ part 2
1 Corinthians 15:1
Paul said I delivered to you what I have already received

The Gospel is the greatest message of good news

The Gospel transforms lives because it is the power of God to those who believe.

Rom 1: 14, 15, 16. Paul was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ.

Preacher keep preaching the Gospel.

The focus of the church has been altered. It should be to catch the fish not fix the fish bowl.

The Gospel is the power of God

Once you give them the Gospel, they can be changed.

When you receive the message, you can give it out. The Gospel is the greatest news you can have.

How Christian talk shows talk about current events more than they talk about Christ

We have the Gospel in us and we should give it out

We have to go out preach and proclaim what God has given us

The church really has to look at themselves.

Why preach the gospel instead of teach?

Preaching is a proclamation we must herald it with exuberance.

Two forms of preaching. One way is heralding and another is getting deeper into it.

The gospel is not disqualified because the vessel is unclean

Surprises of heaven

-people you thought were going to be there aren't

-the people you thought would not make it are there

-you are there

Article 3

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation of every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek

Our great commission go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

Gospel is faith alone by Christ alone

The gospel is for everyone. Sin is what separates man from God.

God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself

There is no limitation in the atonement of Christ. It is always and will always be.

First he revealed it to the Jew then the Gentile. Just an order not necessarily a preference.

The gospel is for whosoever will

The Greek word for power – dunamis

The gospel the power of salvation

Through the gospel, we can have power, peace, liberty, life, etc.

Focus dunamis is powerful it's dynamite. Don't get dunamis and word power mixed up.

The Gospel is good news period. Good news for salvation. It can forgive sin and give eternal life.

Focus as a principle point

1 Cor 15:1-5

The death burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ

Rom 1:16 I am not ashamed of the Gospel