

The Gospel According To Romans

By Pastor Arthur L. Watkins

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

The gospel is the *power of God unto salvation*. The word for power is "dunamis" from which we get our English word dynamite. The gospel is like dynamite because it has explosive power. When you preach the gospel you are setting off spiritual dynamite. It is an explosive message. It is the most powerful message on earth today. Nothing comes close to the power of the gospel.

What is the gospel? The gospel declares two things to all sinners; one is bad and the other is good news. The gospel declares without hesitation that we are all sinners because we have broken all of God's laws and commandments. It declares the penalty for breaking God's law is hell and the lake of fire. That's the bad news, but the good news of the gospel declares that Christ's death paid the penalty for our sins and if we would put our full and complete faith and trust in Christ God will count Christ's death as ours and give us eternal life. He will count Christ's death as the full payment for our sins if we believe the gospel.

The gospel is not good news unless the sinner hears the bad news first, just like a pardon is not good news to a man who does not think he needs one. But, if he is convinced that he is a sinner and will be cast into hell for his sins, a pardon is the most wonderful news in the world to him. That is why when Paul and the other Apostles preached the gospel, they used the Law to first condemn the sinner and then they preached the gospel of grace to him. Grace does not make sense without the Law. The Law condemns the sinner, but the gospel saves the sinner, but he must be condemned first. The law is a schoolmaster to bring men to Christ that they might be justified by faith in the gospel. The law exposes the disease and the gospel cures it.

The book of Romans defines the gospel and explains the mechanics of the gospel. It takes the gospel apart and shows us all of its parts and how they all work together to save sinners. It explains why it was absolutely necessary for Christ to die and shed his blood for our sins. It also shows us the blessed results of believing the gospel. Romans is the first Pauline epistle to appear in the canon of scripture and the main theme of Romans is the cross of Christ which explains why the word gospel appears 13 times in Romans.

The Prophecy of the Gospel

Romans 1:2-3 says: ***Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures.)***

1Corinthians 15:3-4 says: ***I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was***

buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: See also Romans 10:15.

The gospel is like many doctrines we preach today. It is an Old Testament doctrine found in the scriptures of the prophets. Paul said the gospel; ***was promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures.*** He preached Christ died and was resurrected ***according to the scriptures.*** This shows us again Church doctrine can be found in the Old Testament. The gospel by which the Church is saved is found throughout the Old Testament scriptures and when you preach the gospel you are preaching an Old Testament doctrine. And I think it is significant to note that a reference to the Old Testament appears in the first two verses of Romans which is the first Pauline Epistle to appear in the canon of scripture. Throughout his ministry when Paul preached the gospel he did so out of the Old Testament scriptures. Take the time to read these verses: Acts 17:1-3, Acts 26:22-23.

It is impossible to preach the gospel of Christ without preaching the Old Testament scriptures. I am emphasizing this fact because there are many dispensationalists who do not believe Church doctrine can be found in the Old Testament scriptures. In his Bible C.I. Scofield states in a note at the bottom of Ephesians 3: ***In Paul's writings alone we find the doctrine, position, walk, and destiny of the church.*** This is one of the most misleading notes in the Scofield Bible, but many people believe this is true. But the facts are Paul quotes the Old Testament about ***fifty times*** in the book of Romans alone. The expression ***"as it is written"*** referring to the Old Testament, is found thirty three (33) times in Paul's epistles. There are between 150-200 quotes from the Old Testament in Paul's epistles and at least 55 **major Church doctrines** based on the Old Testament scriptures and one of the most important is the gospel by which we are saved. Remember that every time you preach the gospel you are preaching an Old Testament doctrine.

The Paradox of the Gospel

Romans 16:25-26 says: ***Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:***

A paradox is two statements about one issue that seem to contradict each other. The paradox of the gospel is this; the gospel is called a mystery in verse 25, but it is manifest by the scriptures of the prophets in verse 26. (See Rom. 1:2, 1 Cor. 15:3-4) How can it be a mystery which is something hidden and yet be written down in the scriptures of the prophets at the same time? This seems like a contradiction. Many dispensationalists have a problem with mystery and prophecy. Many do not understand how a doctrine can be a mystery and yet be written down in the prophets at the same time. To them a doctrine is a mystery because it was not written down prior to its revelation. But that is a false theory, for ***a mystery is not a mystery because it is not committed to writing before its revelation.*** Many truths and doctrines were written down

in the Old Testament, but remained a secret until God chose the right time, place and man to reveal them unto and one of them is the gospel.

There were two major mysteries or secrets about the gospel.

(1) The message was a mystery

Luke 18:31-34 says: ***Then he (Christ) took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished.***

For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: And they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again. And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.

In Luke 18 Jesus Christ told the apostles point blank he would be put to death and rise again, but yet what he said to them was a mystery. It was not a mystery because it was not written down in the Old Testament. Christ's death, burial, and resurrection were all prophesied and written down in the Old Testament as he said in verse 31. Why was it a mystery? **Because it was hid from them.** It was in the Old Testament, but they could not see it nor understand it because God kept it hidden from their understanding. This shows us a doctrine can be a mystery even though it is written down in the Old Testament. It is a mystery because God for his own reasons chooses to keep it hidden from the understanding of men. It stays a mystery until he chooses the right time, place and man to reveal it.

Later in Luke 24:44-46 it says that Christ; ***opened their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures. And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day.***

When he opened their understanding they were able to see in Luke 24 what was hidden from them and a mystery to them in Luke 18. The fact of his death and resurrection was foretold in the scriptures of the Prophets, but remained a mystery until God opened their understanding to see it. It was even a mystery to the prophets who wrote it down in the scriptures. See 1 Peter 1:11.

The message of the gospel was a mystery to the prophets and even the apostles who lived and preached with Christ for over 3 years until he revealed it to them before he ascended back into heaven.

The second mystery of the gospel is the salvation of uncircumcised gentiles who were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel.

In Ephesians 3:6 God revealed a mystery to Paul and the apostles and prophets concerning the salvation of uncircumcised gentiles. It says: ***That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.***

According to the mystery of Ephesians 3:6:

Gentiles are now fellowheirs.

Fellowheirs are fellows who have the same inheritance. Who are we fellowheirs with and what is the inheritance? We are fellowheirs with the Jews that we were afar off from in time past. (Eph. 2:12-13) The inheritance is in the Kingdom of God. See Eph. 5:5

Gentiles are now members of the same body

Same body with whom? The Jews we are fellowheirs with. Not only do we share the same inheritance with them, but we are members of the same body or church together with them. There is one body or church and all believers Jew and gentile are members of it. This idea of two or more churches is totally false.

Gentiles now partake of his promise

In the verse and context in which it appears, the personal pronoun “his” refers to the Jews we are fellowheirs and members of the same body with. In the book of Ephesians, there are three major promises and all three were originally promised to the Jews. (a) The Holy Spirit of promise in Eph. 1:13. (b) The New Covenant of promise in Eph. 2:12. (c) The Kingdom of God of Eph. 5:5. We now partake of all three. Their promise also includes their “spiritual things” in Romans 15:27. It also includes the promise of eternal life of Titus 1:2.

But, how did we become fellowheirs with the Jews? How did we become members of the same body with them? How did we become partakers of their promise and promises? The answer is: ***In Christ by the gospel.*** That is; by faith alone in the gospel without becoming Jewish proselytes or keeping the law or works of any kind.

If you ask most people today; what is the mystery, they will say the church. The church is not the mystery. The mystery of Ephesians 3:6 is God is now saving uncircumcised gentiles by faith alone in the gospel. The mystery is gentiles are now fellowheirs with the Jews to an inheritance in the Kingdom of God and they are members of the same body with them and partake of their promises ***by faith alone in the gospel*** without circumcision, keeping the Law or becoming Jewish proselytes.

This is why Paul called the mystery of Ephesians 3:6 ***the mystery of the gospel in Ephesians 6:19.*** This is what God dispensed to Paul to preach to the gentiles in Ephesians 3:1-2. This is what Paul received by revelation and this is the mystery of Ephesians 3:6.

God took the gospel he promised Israel in the Old Testament and sent Paul and others to preach it to uncircumcised gentiles who had no claim to the promises. When they believed the gospel, they were not only saved, but they became fellowheirs with the Jews, members of the same body or church with them and became partakers of their promises by faith alone in the gospel without circumcision or the Law.

The Promises of the Gospel

Romans 15:27 says: ***It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.***

When a person believes the gospel of Christ they “get rich”. They become partakers of Israel’s spiritual things. Their spiritual things are the spiritual promises he made to them throughout the Old Testament. They are called the blessings of the gospel of Christ in Romans 15:29. The following is a partial list of them.

Their promises

Christ living in us and we in him
Hope of resurrection
God our Father
Inheritance in the Kingdom of God
The indwelling Spirit of God
Justification by faith
Righteousness by faith
Citizenship in the heavenly city New Jerusalem
Freedom from the law
A New nature
A New Birth
A divine Great High Priest
All sufficient, once for all sacrifice for sin
A divine heavenly mediator
An eternal heavenly intercessor
A heavenly hope
A heavenly temple
A divine mercy seat and propitiation
A divine spiritual altar
Divine spiritual understanding
Eternal salvation
Eternal redemption
A heavenly calling
A throne of mercy and grace
Reconciliation for sin
Spiritual blessings
Heavenly citizenship
Peace of God
The grace of God
Adoption as children
Habitation of God
Light and salvation
Spiritual circumcision

All of these promises have two things in common. (1) They are all church blessings we now enjoy. (2) They were all originally promised to Israel in the Old Testament. Many saints are not aware of this but it is true. This is why Paul said all scripture is profitable for doctrine in 2 Timothy 3:16.

According to Romans 15:8 Jesus Christ confirmed and preached these promises while on earth to the Jews to whom they were originally promised.

According to Hebrews 2:1-4 the 12 apostles confirmed the same promises mainly to the Jews who first believed on Christ who lived around Judea and Jerusalem.

Paul also confirmed these promises, but Paul confirmed and preached these promises to uncircumcised gentiles in all the world.

The great mystery Paul revealed about these promises is gentiles can receive them by faith alone without circumcision, keeping the law or works of any kind. Gentiles like us receive these promises by grace, whereas the Jews by covenant. This is the reason the Jews hated Paul. He took their promises and offered them to the gentiles and did not require them to become Jewish proselytes or keep the law to receive them. He confirmed and preached the promises God originally made with the Jews; to the gentiles who had no claim to them being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel.

I thank God, he made us gentiles partakers of Israel's spiritual things, for if it were not for their promises we would have none of our own. Think about this the next time you preach the gospel of Christ, justification by faith, righteousness by faith, the indwelling Spirit of God and our inheritance in the kingdom of God.

The Preachers of the Gospel

We know Paul preached Christ died for our sins and was buried and raised again for our justification, but what about the 12 Apostles? Some folks do not believe they even knew or preached Christ died for their sins. Some say, Paul alone knew this and only Paul preached it. But what saith the scriptures?

In Luke 24:36-48 it says: **And he (Christ) said unto them, (Apostles) *These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.***

In Luke 18 the cross was a mystery to the apostles, but what was hidden from them in Luke 18 was revealed to them in Luke 24. What they did not understand in Luke 18 they understood in Luke 24. Jesus opened their understanding with Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms. From these books he revealed to them why it was necessary for him to die. His death and resurrection for sins is clearly found in all these books in the Old Testament especially Isaiah 53. Also during his time with them Jesus also told them his blood would be shed for remission of sins in Matthew 26:27-28. He also said he would give his life a ransom for all men in Matthew 20:28. So the sacrificial death of Christ was no longer a mystery to the apostles in Luke 24 as it was in Luke 18. After the Lord opened their understanding in Luke 24 they were given a commission to; *preach repentance and remission of sins in Christ's name among all nations* according to verse 47. When they preached remission of sins they preached remission of sins through the death and shed blood of Christ according to Matthew 26:27-28.

In case someone still doubts the other apostles preached the death and shed blood of Christ for salvation, read the following verses.

1 Peter 1:18-19: ***Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:***

1Peter 2:24: ***Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.***

1Peter 3:18: ***For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:***

1John 1:7: ***But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.***

Revelation 1:5: ***And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.***

The Perversion of the Gospel

In Galatians 1:6-9 Paul wrote: ***I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.***

But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

How did men pervert the gospel in Paul's day? The same way they do it today; adding works to it. One of the first heresies in the New Testament church was commanding gentile believers to keep the law and become Jewish proselytes along with believing to be saved. In Acts 13-14 after God opened the door of faith unto the gentiles and after many of them were saved it says in Acts 15:1; ***And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.***

These are the men who perverted the gospel in Paul's day. They did not believe that faith alone in Christ was sufficient to save them and keep them saved. They added works to faith. They preached salvation by faith and works. In Acts 15, a meeting was held between the apostles and elders about this issue and it says in Acts 15:5: ***But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, (gentiles) and to command them (gentiles) to keep the law of Moses.***

These Pharisees did not believe in salvation by faith alone in Christ. They tried to persuade the gentiles they had to become Jewish proselytes and keep the Law of

Moses along with believing to be saved. But in this meeting of the apostles, they were exposed as liars and false brethren.

In Galatians 1:8-9, Paul said that men like these Pharisees who pervert the gospel by adding works to it are accursed. It is a very serious matter to add works to the gospel. Why? Because of what it does to the grace of God and the cross of Christ.

In Galatians 2:21 Paul said: ***I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.***

Adding works to salvation does two bad things: It frustrates the grace of God and even worse, it makes the cross of Christ of none effect.

First, if you and I could be saved by works of any kind, Christ's death on the cross was vain and useless. Why did Christ die, if we could gain salvation and eternal life by our good works? God would have never sent his Son into the world to suffer the awful pain and death of the cross if we could be saved by our works. His death would be unnecessary if salvation and eternal life could be gained by our works. Adding works to the gospel negates the cross for it makes Christ death in vain.

Second, Galatians 2:21 not only says works make the cross of none effect, but works ***frustrates the grace of God***. The word frustrate means to disannul, bring to naught, set aside, neutralize and violate. This is what works does to the grace of God when it is preached for salvation. Therefore, no one can preach works and grace for salvation at the same time. Works disannuls grace and grace cancels out works.

Romans 11:5-6 says: ***Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.***

In these verses, works and grace are diametrically opposed to one another. When it comes to salvation, you cannot preach both at the same time. If you preach the gospel you must preach salvation by grace for if you preach works you not only make Christ's death in vain, but you disannul the grace of God. Therefore, those who preach the gospel Paul preached must preach salvation by grace through faith without works.

In salvation by grace, salvation is not based upon the works or performance of the sinner, either ***before or after*** he believes the gospel.

If God saved you because you did certain religious works and performed certain good deeds *along with believing*, your salvation could never be attributed to grace. If God saved you in view of your good works and good deeds *after you believed* the gospel, your salvation could not be attributed to grace. ***If works play a part in receiving or keeping salvation, it is not by grace.***

In true salvation by grace, God took the works out of salvation and made faith the only requirement to be saved. When Paul said "*not of works*" that means you don't work to gain it, or keep it. Those who God saves by grace through faith without works, are kept saved the same way. If you have to work to gain or keep salvation, it is not by grace. Adding works to the gospel perverts the gospel and those who do are cursed of God according to Galatians 1:6-9.

The Permanence of the Gospel

Galatians 1:8-9 says: ***But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.***

Notice carefully that it says, God will curse any man who preaches a gospel different from the one Paul preached. And when he said **any man** that includes **every man**. These verses are a giant warning sign to all men that God will curse them if they preach a gospel that contradicts Paul's. This warning is proof positive the other apostles preached the same gospel as Paul, for if they didn't God would have cursed them just like the Pharisees who added works to the gospel. When Paul said any man, he meant every man, including the other apostles and even himself.

It is also a warning to anyone in the future who preaches a gospel different from Paul's. This curse not only applies to the time of the apostles, but to the future also. From now till the second coming of Christ and beyond there is only one saving gospel. Some folks would have us to believe God will change the gospel in the tribulation and men will preach salvation by faith and works. **They would have us to believe God will send men in the future to preach a gospel they would have been cursed for preaching in Paul's day!** Be not deceived, any man in the future who preaches a gospel different from the one God gave to Paul will be cursed just like anybody today. ***Both the gospel and the curse of Galatians 1:8-9 are permanent.*** It applies to the future as well as the past. Paul's gospel is the one and only gospel God sends men to preach now and in the future. He will also curse any man now or in the future who preaches another gospel.

The Punishment of the Gospel

2 Thessalonians 1:7-10 says: ***And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.***

According to these verses when Christ comes in fire and wrath he will take vengeance on those who believe not the gospel. And notice what gospel it is; ***The gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ*** which is the same gospel Paul and we preach today. Some dispensationalists tell us that in the tribulation the gospel will change and God will send men to preach a gospel of works. But, God says the gospel he will damn men for not believing when Christ comes again is the *gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ* which is the gospel of Christ Paul said is the power of God unto salvation today in Romans 1:16.

This again shows us the gospel preached by the apostles in the Acts period is permanent and will never change. It will damn you now if you don't believe it and it will damn a man in the tribulation who does not believe it.

The gospel is like a coin that has two sides. One side of the gospel declares the love and grace of God, the other side declares the wrath and judgment of God. Those who believe the gospel enjoy the love and grace of God. Those who refuse to believe it will suffer the wrath of God. The gospel that saves also damns.

When Jesus comes again those who believe the gospel of Christ will be glorified according to 2 Thess. 1:10, but those who don't will suffer everlasting destruction according to verse 9. Everyone must do something with the gospel and what you do with it will determine where and how you will spend eternity.

The Power of the Gospel

Romans 1:16; ***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.***

According to this verse the gospel of Christ is the ***power of God unto salvation***. How powerful is the gospel? It has power to deliver us and save us from our worst enemies.

It has power over death and the grave

The gospel message is the only power in the world today that can abolish the fear and stranglehold death has upon men. Death is a huge enemy and a fearful foe. People spend millions and billions of dollars just to stay alive and keep from dying for a few more days, weeks or months because of the fear and dread of death. Dear reader, is this true of you? Do you live under the constant fear and dread of death? I have good news for you; the gospel has more power than death. The gospel can save you from the fear and dread of death for in the gospel we learn how Christ abolished the power of death. In 2 Timothy 1:10 it says: ***Our Saviour Jesus Christ, hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.***

The word abolished means annulled, repealed, abrogated, or destroyed. In the gospel we learn how Christ abolished, repealed, abrogated and destroyed the power of death. The gospel not only declares Christ died for our sins, but he was also raised from the dead to defeat death and the grave. Being raised from the dead he abolished the power and strangle hold death had over all men prior to his resurrection. Romans 6:9 says: ***Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.*** Neither does death have dominion over those who are in Christ, for by his resurrection Christ defeated death and the grave for us. ***He died for our sins and he was raised again to abolish and defeat and destroy the power and stranglehold that death has on all men.***

Prior to Christ, no one was raised from the dead never to die again. Others were raised, but they all died again. He is the first to be raised from the dead never to die again. He died and was resurrected to break the power of death over all men. When you believe the gospel, death loses its power over you. We who are saved by the gospel look at death and the grave and say with Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:55-57:

O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

A lost man looks at death and the grave with dread and fear and trembling. Why? There is no hope for him after death. But, a saved man can look at death with hope and confidence, for he knows death has no power over him. He may die, but death to a

believer means he will depart and be with Christ in heavenly places and what is there to fear about that? (See Philippians 1:23) Only the gospel can give you this hope and confidence. Before I was saved, I was like a lot of lost people today, I lived under the constant fear and dread of death. But, the very moment I believed the gospel in November 1966 that fear disappeared.

The gospel has power over sin

The gospel is the only message that effectively deals with the problem of sin. The law could never effectively deal with sin. It could expose sin and condemn the sinner, but it could not do anything about sin itself. But, the gospel has the power to save us from sin's penalty, sin's power and sin's presence.

*The gospel is the only message that offers sinners like us salvation from the penalty of sin in hell and the lake of fire. We read about this in Romans chapter 5.

Romans 5:8-10 says: **But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.**

For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

When we believe the gospel we are justified by the blood of Christ. Justification is a judicial act by which God clears the sinner from the guilt of his sins by the death and shed blood of Christ. Christ's death is counted as our death thus releasing us from sin's penalty and future punishment for our sins in hell. If you are justified by the blood of Christ, you are saved from wrath now and in the future. The penalty of our sins was paid for in full by Christ and when we believe the gospel his payment is applied to our account.

*The gospel is the only message that can save sinners from the power of sin and give them victory over sin in their lives after they are saved. This is what Romans chapter 6 is all about. Read the following verses slowly and carefully.

Romans 6

Vs. 1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

Vs. 6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

Vs. 7 For he that is dead is freed from sin.

Vs. 12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

Vs. 13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

These verses teach liberation from the power, bondage and influence of sin in our lives after we are justified. In Romans 5 justification frees us from sins penalty, but not its power. But, those who are justified have something else to change their lives and conduct after they are justified. These verses in Romans 6 tell us Christ not only died for us, but we have *died with Christ* and having died with him we become dead to sin and being dead to sin we are free from sin's power.

Now that we are free from sin's power, we do not have to serve sin any longer and sin no longer has dominion over us. This means we can overcome every sin in our life and we don't have to obey sin and live like a slave to sin any longer. In justification the sinner is freed from sins penalty, but he is still the same sinner. But the gospel provides freedom from sins power, so that those who are justified can live victorious lives over the sins that once ruled over them. This power is so real that a Christian cannot name one sin they have to commit.

*The gospel is the only message that guarantees sinners a new body totally free from any trace of sin.

This is found in Romans chapter 8.

Romans 8:11 says: **But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.**

We have a body, soul and spirit, but they are all corrupt because of sin. The gospel has a positive impact on all three. The gospel quickens our dead spirit; we call it the new birth or regeneration. It renews our soul; we call it the renewing of the Holy Ghost. It promises us a new body; we call it glorification.

What good is salvation, if it does not change our vile body? Our body is corrupt and dying because of sin and it must be changed and transformed before we can enter in the kingdom of God. No one can enter into the kingdom of God with a mortal, corrupt body. Therefore, the moment a sinner believes the gospel he is automatically given a guarantee of a new body that is immortal, sinless and eternal. Without this promise no one can enter into the coming kingdom of God. Read the following verses and see how the gospel provides physical salvation as it does spirit and soul salvation.

1 Corinthians 15:50-53 says: ***Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.***

Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

For this corruptible (body) must put on incorruption, and this mortal (body) must put on immortality.

Philippians 3:20-21: ***For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may***

be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

The gospel has power over Satan

When God saved Paul he sent him to the Jews and gentiles according to Acts 26:18: ***To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.***

The gospel delivers men from the power of Satan unto God. What does this mean?

*The gospel translates you out of Satan's kingdom into God's kingdom according to Col. 1:13.

*The gospel expels the spirit of Satan for all lost people are possessed by the spirit of Satan according to Eph.2:2.

*The gospel delivers you from the fear and power of death Satan held over you according to Heb. 2:14. That fear and bondage leaves you the moment you believe the gospel.

*The gospel rescues you out of Satan's family and places you into the household of God according to Eph. 1:5. Satan is no longer your father. You move into a new house with a new Father. Only the gospel has this power over Satan.

The gospel has power over the Law

The gospel has the power to do what the law could not do with sin and sinners. The law has power to expose sin and condemn sinners, but the law is powerless when it comes to justifying sinners. But, what the law cannot do, Christ does in the gospel. The gospel has the power to forgive all sins and to justify all sinners including those the law could not justify or forgive.

In Acts 13:38 Paul said: ***Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.***

The word *all* appears twice in this verse. It says Christ can forgive all that believe, even those who could not be forgiven by the Law of Moses. It also tells us Christ can forgive all sins that could not be forgiven by the Law of Moses. Under the Law of Moses there were many sins that could not be forgiven and the ones who committed them could not be justified. There were many unpardonable sins and sinners under the Law. But according to the gospel Christ can forgive all sins, including those the law could not forgive and Christ can justify all sinners even those who could not be justified under the Law of Moses. Under the gospel of grace there are no unpardonable sins or sinners.

The gospel is the most powerful message in the world today. It has the power to save and deliver us from our worst enemies such as sin, Satan, death, and the curse of the law. No other message even comes close to the power of the gospel, so why should we be ashamed to preach it?

The Perfection of the Gospel

Romans 1:16-17 says: ***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.

The righteousness of God in verse 17 is revealed in the gospel of Christ of verse 16. According to the gospel of Christ, sinners like us can become perfectly righteous. This is important, for our greatest need is righteousness. Why? There are two major reasons and the first is we are destitute of righteousness.

Romans 3:9-12 says: ***What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.***

This is a blanket indictment against all Jews and Gentiles. There is not a single Jew or Gentile who has ever lived, who is righteous or good by nature. By nature, we are not righteous, we are unrighteous. By nature, we are not good, we are bad. By nature, we are not godly, we are ungodly. By nature, we are not holy, we are unholy. By nature, we are not just, we are unjust.

The fact we are not righteous brings up a second problem that is even greater. Once you see this problem you will understand how important righteousness is.

1 Corinthians 6:9 says; ***Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?***

To enter into God's kingdom you must be righteous. Unrighteous people will not be allowed to enter into the kingdom of God. We are not righteous, therefore we cannot enter into God's kingdom and the only other alternative is hell and the lake of fire. We are in serious trouble so what are we going to do? Because it is impossible for unrighteous people like us to become righteous, God had to provide a way for us to be made righteous otherwise we will all end up in hell. In the gospel he has provided a way for sinners to become righteous.

Romans 3:21-22 says: ***But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:***

In the same chapter where God says there is none righteous, he shows us how we can obtain righteousness. Not just any righteousness, but the righteousness of God which is perfect righteousness. How do we obtain it? By faith. Paul said; ***Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all that believe.*** The righteousness of God is imputed to men by faith when they believe what God says to them about his Son.

In Romans 4 Paul shows us two men who were counted righteous by faith. Both men believed and responded positively to what God said to them and were counted righteous for doing so. Those two men were Abraham and David.

It says in Romans 4:3; ***Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.***

Romans 4:6 says: ***Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works.***

Both David and Abraham were declared or counted righteous because they believed what God said to them. The man who stands out in this chapter is Abraham for God holds him up as the example of how sinners today can be made righteous. In Romans 4:3, Paul reminds us of an event that took place in the life of Abraham. In Genesis 15 God took Abraham aside and showed unto him all the stars in heaven and made a promise to him. He told him one day his seed or children would become as the stars of heaven in number. At the time God made the promise to Abraham, he had no children, but in spite of that he believed what God said and it was counted unto him for righteousness. He was declared righteous by faith alone, without works. God made a promise to him and all he did was believe what God said he was going to do and he was counted righteous on the spot. He did nothing in the way of good works. He put his full trust and faith in the promises God made to him and God in turn counted him righteous. Unrighteous, uncircumcised Abraham became righteous Abraham by a single act of faith.

In this same chapter God says we can be made righteous the same way as Abraham. He said to us in verses 23-25: ***Now it was not written for his (Abraham) sake alone, that it (righteousness) was imputed to him; But for us also, to whom it (righteousness) shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.***

What Paul wrote about Abraham not only applies to him, but to us also. We can be made righteous just like Abraham. As Abraham was given something to believe, we are given something to believe. God tells us that Jesus Christ was delivered for our sins and offences and raised again for our justification. This is the message from God to us today. And the moment we believe and put our full faith and trust in Christ and in his death for our sins God counts us righteous. As a matter of fact he imputes his very own righteousness to our account thus making us as righteous as he is and his righteousness is perfect.

2 Corinthians 5:21 says: ***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.***

When we believe the gospel we exchange our sins for the righteousness of God. God takes our sins and blots them out and then imputes his own righteousness to us in their place thus making us righteous and his righteousness is perfect.

In the gospel there is perfection. In the gospel sinners like us are offered the perfect righteousness of God thus making it possible for us to live forever with God in the kingdom of God.

The Peace of the Gospel

Romans 10:14-15 says: ***How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and***

how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

The gospel is called the gospel of peace because peace with God is the result of believing the gospel. In fact, the only way we can have peace with God is through the gospel. The opposite of peace is war and wrath. You may not want to hear this, but if you are not saved you are an enemy of God, at war with God, and under the wrath of God. In Colossians 1:21 it says: ***And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works.*** This was written to saints to remind them of what they were before they were saved. What he said about them is true of you now, if you are not saved. You are alienated from God and an enemy of God, because of your wicked works. But that is not all;

John 3:36 says: ***He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.***

This verse says the wrath of God abides upon unbelievers. God's wrath hangs over their heads and he will unleash his wrath against them either at death or at the second coming of Christ. In Luke 16 we read the story of a lost man who died and the moment he died he began to experience the never ending wrath of God. It says when he died and was buried: ***In hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.***

This man is like a lot of men who lived under the wrath of God all of his life, but paid no attention to it and the moment he died he went to hell and began to suffer torment in a fire that will never end. This is what awaits you at death if you are not saved.

At the second coming of Christ those who are lost and alive will suffer the wrath of God. It says that; ***The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;***

When Christ comes again it will be a day of salvation for believers, but a horrible day of wrath for unbelievers. This can be seen in Luke 17. According to Luke 17:28-30 the second coming of Christ will be like the days of Lot. In the same day God saved Lot out of Sodom his wrath was poured out upon the Sodomites left in the city. It was a day of salvation for Lot, but a day of wrath to the Sodomites. In the same day that Christ comes again he will send his angels to gather out of this world those who are saved, as they gathered Lot out of Sodom and then he will pour out his wrath and fire on those left behind, as he did the Sodomites. Christ's coming will be a day of salvation to the saints, but a day of never ending wrath to the lost. They will be punished with everlasting destruction.

Lost people abide and live under the constant threat of the wrath of God. If they die they will suffer God's never ending wrath in hell and if they are alive when Jesus comes, they will suffer God's wrath. Why? Because they are enemies of God and are at war with God.

But, there is a way sinners can escape the wrath of God and it's revealed in the gospel. The gospel declares the wrath we deserve was suffered by Christ on the cross. All of God's wrath against our sins was poured out on Jesus Christ on the cross. And when God raised him from the dead he declared that he was satisfied with the payment his Son made for our sins. The gospel declares if you will put your full trust in Christ alone to save you, God will count Christ's death as yours. Once God counts Christ's death as yours, God will declare the war between you and him to be over. He will remove the wrath hanging over your head and declare peace between you and him. This is why the gospel is called the gospel of peace. The way God fights and destroys his enemies today is with peace; the gospel of peace because once a man believes the gospel of peace he becomes friends with God. The war is over, but the war is won by the gospel of peace. By the way, if you want to destroy your enemies preach the gospel of peace to them and if they believe it they will no longer be your enemy; they will become your friends.

The Persecution of the Gospel

In 2 Timothy 1:8 Paul writing to Timothy said: ***Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God.*** In chapter 2:8-9 he wrote: ***Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel: Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.***

Paul knew from firsthand experience about the persecution and affliction of the gospel. He was whipped and beaten and put in prison for preaching the gospel of grace. But, if the gospel is good news, why was he persecuted for preaching good news? Why was he treated as an evil doer? That sounds absurd and it is. It would be like a millionaire offering a crowd of people a million dollars, but instead of them being happy about his offer and running to get it, they take up rocks and stone him. The gospel is the most wonderful news in all the world. It's the most valuable treasure a man could possess. It tells sinners God will give them his own righteousness so they can live with him forever in the kingdom of God and it's free. But instead of men being happy about the offer, they take a man like Paul and stone him and put him in jail for preaching it. Why? Because the gospel is not good news to everyone who hears it. Even though the gospel may be good news to some, it is bad news to others. Why?

(a) The gospel destroys the religious systems of men

Gal.2:18-19 says: ***For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.*** What Paul destroyed in these verses was the greatest religious system this world has ever seen; the Law of Moses. He didn't destroy it with armies and violence. He destroyed it by preaching the gospel of grace. Paul destroyed the Law of Moses as the means of salvation by preaching the gospel of grace. That is why the Jews hated Paul. His gospel destroyed their whole religious system. It destroyed all the things they loved and gloried in, such as their priesthood, their temple, their sacrifices and ordinances.

The gospel of grace eliminated the Old Covenant Law and replaced it with a New Covenant of Grace.

The gospel of grace declared that Christ's one sacrifice for sin took the place of all the Old Testament sacrifices. That put an end to the animal sacrifices.

The gospel of grace ordained Jesus Christ to be the believers High Priest and not the sons of Aaron or Levi anymore.

The gospel of grace declared the earthly sanctuary the Jews admired and bragged so much about has been replaced with a heavenly sanctuary far more glorious.

The gospel put the Levitical priesthood out of work. They became unemployed by the gospel of grace.

The gospel nailed the 1000's of Laws and ordinances of Moses to the cross.

The gospel of grace made the Jews religion obsolete. That is why they hated him so much.

It is also the reason the "works preachers" of today hate the gospel of grace. The gospel of grace condemns their self sacrifices, their long robed priesthood, their church laws, ordinances and canons, their baptismal salvation, their extra mediators, their confessionals, masses, penance, and repetitious prayers.

(b) The gospel disannuls the works of men

In Romans 11:6 the gospel declares that men are saved by grace and if they are saved by grace they are not and cannot be saved by works. The grace of God eliminates works as the means of salvation. No one can be saved by grace and works at the same time. This is not good news to a man who has spent his life time practicing good works to be saved, for if the gospel is true, this means his works are vain and useless. This is another reason the gospel of grace is despised by men who preach salvation by works today. If the gospel is true, then all the so called good works lost men do today to gain salvation are dead works, useless works and vain works. Tell that to a man who has spent years working to gain salvation and see if he thinks it is good news.

When Martin Luther the German reformer started preaching justification by faith alone without works, look at what Rome did to him and millions like him. By preaching justification by faith alone without works, you are also condemning any man or church that preaches justification by works. And people do not like to be told that all their religious works are vain. This is not good news to them and they will rise up and fight it. Look at what they did to Paul and the apostles.

(c) The Gospel deflates the ego of men

Ephesians 2:8-9 says: ***For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.***

In the gospel of grace, God took the works completely out of salvation and gave men nothing to do to be saved, but to believe what has already been done for them. One reason he did this is; ***"lest any man should boast"***. The gospel of grace leaves no room for boasting, for it gives you nothing to do to be saved, but believe what God did for you.

A proud man who loves to boast in his works and accomplishments has a hard time with the gospel of grace. For him to get saved, he will have to swallow his ego and admit he

is not worthy to be saved and he is unable to gain salvation by his works. That is not good news to a proud self righteous man. He does not like this message and in most cases he will persecute the messenger.

(d) The Gospel disturbs the conscience of men

When the Lord saved Paul he said to him; *"It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks"*. Something was pricking Paul's conscience and he tried to kick back at it. That's what the gospel is supposed to do to you when it is preached right. The gospel will disturb you. It will make life uneasy for you. It will shake you up and scare you. It will make you fear and tremble. And sometimes it will make you miserable.

The night I was saved I experienced two of the strongest emotions a man can experience; Fear and peace. In the gospel, I saw the wrath of God hanging over my head and I knew if I died I would go straight to hell and burn forever for my sins. That's a horrible feeling. But the moment I believed and was saved that dread and fear left me and the peace of God that passes all understanding flooded my soul. But until I believed the gospel, I was the most miserable man on this earth.

(e) The Gospel disrupts the personal lives of men

Sometimes the gospel is like an uninvited guest. Did you ever have someone to knock on your door you didn't want to see? Did you ever have someone call you on the phone you didn't want to talk to? The gospel is like that to some people. They don't want to face it or hear it because it disrupts their personal lives. It makes them feel uneasy and nervous.

But, I would rather disrupt a person's life with the gospel now, than to see them lose their soul in hell later. If they believe the gospel you will have done them the biggest favor of their life by disrupting their life with the gospel.

For these reasons the gospel is not so easy to preach to lost people. The world, flesh and the devil will oppose you when you preach it the right way. The right way is the way Paul and the apostles preached it. In many cases the gospel is offensive, especially to self righteous religious people. (See Gal. 5:11) This is why some Christians never witness. But, it's worth it when you see lost people believe and get saved by the gospel. They will be eternally grateful you loved them enough to preach it to them.

The Proclamation of the Gospel

In Romans 15:19 Paul said: ***Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation: But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.***

These verses show us where the gospel should be proclaimed; that is **where** we should preach the gospel and **to whom** we should preach the Gospel. The Gospel should be preached and proclaimed:

(a) Where Christ is not named.

(b) To whom he has not been spoken of.

(c) To those who have not heard .

But, where is the gospel preached and to whom is it preached most of the time? The gospel is preached to those who have heard of Christ many times. It is preached to those whom Christ has been spoken of many times and to those who have heard the gospel many times and years.

How many times have you heard the gospel? I was brought up in a Bible believing church and I heard it at least 1000 times or more before I was saved. Southern folks have heard it so many times they have become gospel hardened.

But yet most of the world today has never heard the gospel once. In fact, more people than ever before have yet to see a copy of the Word of God or hear of Christ. We are told that of our world's 6,809 known languages, only 405 have the complete Bible translated and printed. Another 1,034 have only the New Testament, leaving nearly 5,370 languages with less than the New Testament in written form. Consider also the many nations in the world today dominated by Communism and the Muslims where preaching the gospel and Bibles are illegal. If you took a magic marker and painted the Communist and Muslims nations of the world in black it is almost half of the globe. Then consider all the other nations where the cults dominate both politics and religion. In those nations, it's rare to hear the gospel or see a Bible.

What should we do? Do as Paul and all of the Apostles were instructed to do in Acts 1:8. The Lord said; **ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.**

The gospel has been preached in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, but it has not been preached in the uttermost parts of the earth. As Christians we still have unfinished business to take care of for there are still parts of the earth where Christ is not named. There are still nations Christ has not been spoken of and there are still people who have not heard of Christ or the gospel once.

We can't all go to these nations; in fact we can't get into many of them anymore because of all the wars we get ourselves into. But, we can send and support those who can get in and are willing to go like the church in Antioch. In Acts 13 the church in Antioch was the first church to really send men to the uttermost parts of the earth when it sent Paul and Barnabus to the gentile nations and cities who had never heard of Christ. This is why we should support foreign missionaries in our church. They go where we can't go and reach those we can't reach.

There is a phenomenon happening in our own country today and if we are wise we can use it to preach the gospel to people who have never heard it, right in our own back yard. We are seeing a flood of immigrants, some legal and some illegal, come into our country. Here in south Alabama and Mississippi we now see immigrants from Viet Nam, Mexico, Cambodia and many other nations. 99% of these people have never heard the true gospel or know who Jesus Christ is. So instead of us going to them, they have

come to us. What should we do about these people? The same thing the apostles did when they went to other nations and nationalities; preach the gospel to them. When Paul said God will have all men to be saved, he meant them as well as us.

The Persuasion of the Gospel

Romans 8:30 says: ***Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.***

This verse says those who are justified are called. But how does God call men to be justified? By the gospel. When the gospel is preached the right way God calls and persuades sinners to be saved.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 says: ***But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.***

This verse says God calls men to be saved by the gospel. This means every time the gospel is preached God gives sinners an invitation to be saved.

By the gospel, God beseeches his enemies to be reconciled to him.

By the gospel, God calls sinners out of a life of sin into a life of holiness.

By the gospel, God extends his hand of compassion to lost men to flee from the wrath to come.

By the gospel, God pleads with rebellious sinners to put down their weapons of war and to be at peace with him.

By the gospel God says to sinners; ***Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. (Isa. 1:18)***

God calls and invites sinners to come to him and he will wash their sins away and make them white as snow. How does he do it? Through the gospel. It is by believing the gospel that our sins that are scarlet can be made white as snow. When we witness and preach the gospel we are giving sinners an invitation to be saved from their sins.

The gospel invites sinners to exchange their sins for the righteousness of God.

The gospel invites sinners to leave Satan's kingdom and enter God's kingdom.

The gospel invites sinners to flee from the wrath to come to the safety of Christ.

The gospel invites sinners to forsake their sins and to dedicate themselves totally to the Lord.

God calls sinners by the gospel. He calls all men by the gospel. Any man or woman who hears the gospel is given an invitation to be saved. It is the one and only way God invites sinners to be saved.

The Purification of the Gospel

Romans 15:16 Paul wrote: ***That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.***

This verse tells us that by the gospel of God gentiles are now made acceptable unto God who were not acceptable in time past. I will explain it like this; In time past under the Law of Moses all sacrifices were not acceptable unto God unless they were sanctified and purified. They had to be without spot or blemish before God would accept them.

Under the Law gentiles were not acceptable unto God, if they were uncircumcised and did not keep the law. The only gentiles acceptable unto God in time past were gentiles who became Jewish proselytes and kept the law. But, under grace the gentiles who were once unacceptable are now acceptable. The gentiles who were once common and unclean are now cleansed. Why? Because according to the gospel both the law and circumcision have been abolished. Under grace neither the law, nor circumcision has any part in the salvation of gentiles today. Therefore, all gentiles are acceptable unto God today. Any gentile can be saved today because the gospel has purified the gentiles who were once common and unclean. The gospel took the law and circumcision out of the way, thus making a gentile acceptable unto God who has not kept the law or has been circumcised. This is why Paul said in Galatians 5:6; ***For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.***

What Paul said in this verse is true because of the gospel of Christ.

The Pressure of the Gospel

In Romans 1:14-15 Paul wrote: ***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 gospel to you that are at Rome also.***

Paul calls himself a debtor who is someone under obligation to someone else. He is someone who owes something of value to someone else. Paul considered himself a debtor to the Greeks, the Barbarians, the wise and unwise. He felt like he owed them something. What did he owe them? He believed it was his duty and obligation to preach the gospel to them. Why? First, because God ordained him to be the apostle of the gentiles. As the apostle of the gentiles he felt he was obligated to preach the gospel to as many gentiles as possible, even as far as Rome and Spain.

Second, because a dispensation of the gospel was committed to him which obligated him to preach it. In 1 Corinthians 9:16 he said: ***For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel! For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me.***

Once God dispensed the gospel of grace to Paul, he became obligated to preach it. It became a necessity to him and he even said if he didn't preach the gospel: *woe is unto me*. Paul felt pressured to preach the gospel, but it was a pressure he loved and so should we.

What Paul says about himself is equally true of we who are saved. We are debtors to all the people we are surrounded by. We have a divine duty to preach the gospel to them. We owe them a chance to hear the gospel. A dispensation of the gospel has been given to everyone of us and woe is unto us, if we fail to preach it!

It would be a great thing if every Christian felt the pressure Paul felt when it came to preaching the gospel. We would see a lot of people get saved as he did. But, the sad fact is many Christians do not feel any obligation or pressure to preach the gospel or witness. They have close relatives and friends they see every day and feel no burden or necessity to preach the gospel to them. Woe unto them at the Judgment Seat of Christ when God judges them for failing to preach the gospel. What we do with the gospel in our life will be a major issue at the Judgment. God has dispensed the gospel to us just like he did to Paul, and he will judge us according to what we do with it in this life.

The Particulars of the Gospel

- *Because the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, no one can be saved without believing it.
- *No one can enter into the Kingdom of God without righteousness and only those who believe the gospel have it.
- *God calls and invites sinners to be saved when the gospel is preached.
- *The gospel of grace made it possible for gentiles like us to be saved without becoming Jewish proselytes.
- *The gospel is bad news to those who preach and believe in salvation by works.
- *The gospel is good news to sinners who know they cannot save themselves.
- *The enemies of God find peace with God by believing the gospel.
- *Unrighteous sinners can be made righteous and holy by the gospel.
- *Only the gospel has the power to deliver sinners from the penalty of sin, the power of sin and the presence of sin.
- *Only the gospel can save us from the curse of the law.
- *Only the gospel has the power to abolish the power and stranglehold of death over men.
- *The gospel saves those who believe it, but damns those who do not.
- *God will curse a man now and in the future who does not preach the gospel of Christ.
- *The gospel was both a mystery and a prophecy.
- *Those who preach salvation by works pervert the gospel.
- *The blessings and promises of God are received only by those who believe the gospel.
- *Every Christian has a duty and obligation to preach the gospel.
- *Because of its power and magnificence no one should be ashamed of the gospel of Christ.

Finally, the gospel is not about “praying the sinner’s prayer” or “asking Jesus into your heart” or “making a commitment to Christ”. Those terms do not appear in the Bible. The gospel of Christ is all about the crucifixion of Christ on the cross and why he was crucified. Jesus Christ did not die as a hero or martyr on the cross. He died as a sacrifice for our sins. It was because of our sins he died. He was wounded for OUR transgressions and bruised for OUR iniquities. He made his soul an offering for OUR sins. (Isa. 53)

You and I are guilty of every sin the law of God condemns. The penalty of our sins is death and damnation. For us to be saved someone had to pay the penalty for us, otherwise we cannot escape the damnation of hell. The gospel declares the good news

God offered up his only begotten Son on the cross as the one and only sacrifice that could possibly atone for the sins we are guilty of. Jesus Christ took our place on the cross and he willingly allowed God to punish him for our sins. And when God raised him from the dead he declared he was fully satisfied with the payment Christ made for our sins. His death satisfied all the just demands of the law of God against our sins. God now extends his hand of mercy to us and invites us to put our full faith and trust in Christ and his death for our sins. There is no work for us to do, for God has done all the work necessary to save us and keep us saved forever. All God asks us to do is to believe what he has already done for us and then call on him and be saved today.

I took God up on his gracious offer in November, 1966 and I can assure you he keeps his promise. The night I was saved all I knew was two things; I knew I was a guilty sinner who deserved to go to hell for my sins and I also knew Christ died for my sins for I heard a man preach it many times. That night I put my full and complete trust in Christ alone and called on the Lord and asked him to save me and he kept the promise he made in Romans 10. Read this promise carefully.

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

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