

Meaning of the Word “Gospel”

November 14, 2022

In this, the next lesson on the book of Romans, I would like to digress a bit before bringing the lesson.

We have said the word “gospel” means good news, it also means unmerited favor with God and that it sure does, however we must not negate the fact that the Apostle Paul actually gives the definition of the gospel.

Look again with me at 1st Corinthians 15 starting in verse one Paul states “Moreover brethren, I declare to you the **gospel** which I preached to you, which also you received and in which now you stand – as you hold fast to that word that I preached to you, then he explains the meaning of the word gospel. Verse 3 states: *that Christ died for our sins according to the scripture, that He was buried and that He rose again the third day according to scriptures.*

Beloved, you cannot yea should not and would not add anything to this statement.

Paul preached it, they received it and now stand in the power of it.

Now it is of interest to me that in Romans 1 = Paul mentions the word “gospel” 5 times. In verse 16 he states that he is not ashamed of the *gospel for* (which is translated – “because) it is God’s answer to everything.+

We tend to trivialize the word to mean something it is not. The word gospel does not mean reformation or education or development.

The purpose of the gospel is to make dead men alive. It is not to improve me, in fact the gospel is for the lost man and no other.

Maybe it will change the way we view this important word..

The theme of this letter is: “the righteousness from God is revealed”

According to our faith in what the gospel means (as listed above) depends upon our righteousness before Him.

The term in Romans 1:17 “for therein is the righteousness **of God** revealed actually means the righteousness that God provides for people in response to faith in the gospel, the term Of God actually means “out of” or “from”.

We should note that it is not our faith, but by the blood of Jesus Christ that purchased for us this right standing before Him. The reliance upon His word being true and our belief in that that creates our standing before Him.

Not sure I explained this properly, but I hope you get the point.

In response to our believing His word, His righteousness is imputed into our lives

Now here-in is where the rubber reaches the road.

Paul starts off with the **pagan man**. He is suppressing God's truth (18)- ignoring God's revelation (19&20) and perverting God's glory (21-23)

Much could be said of this, but let me take you to Psalm 19 vs 1-6- Please read for your own edification.

One of the main problems with the education system today is the teaching that things just happen "randomly". Beloved, nothing could be further from the truth. Everything has been created "by design:"

Paul's natural conclusion is that man is without excuse -period.

Folks are not sinning against things they have not heard or seen. Everything speaks about God. No, rather they are sinning against the light that they now have. Look with me at 2nd Corinthians 8;12 "*for if first there is a willing mind, it is accepted according to what one has, and not according to what he does not have.*"

What is first required is to have "a willing mind."

The pagan man is perverting God's glory Notice verse 21 begins with the word "because"

Verse 22 says "professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.

What is the true source of wisdom? Ps 111:10 says "the fear of the Lord" is the beginning of wisdom.

When the knowledge of the true God is rejected by man it leads to moral decline in a downward spiral. First worthless thinking, next moral insensitivity and then religious stupidity as seen in idol worship. False gods will eventually fill the gap.

If you and I choose to worship Jesus Christ, we will become "like Him"

Psalm 115: starting in verse 4 through 8 points to the obvious truth of "becoming what we most worship". "For those who make them, become like them" So sad.

Romans 1:24 speaks of being abandoned by God. This is never more true than in the "sexual revolution" we now find ourselves. God gave them up to uncleanness because of the life style they choose.

Romans 1:26 – "for this reason God gave them up to **vile passions**. How very sad this is.

Romans 1:28 - "because they did not retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a **debased** mind." (Lower the value of something)

Paul is talking about folks who “knew God” You would think that someone who knew God would glorify Him as God or honor Him as God, but instead they moved from the very position God gave them in the first place.

Paul says that their thinking (Eph 4:17) becomes worthless or purposeless.

When truth is rejected in time the ability to recognize and to receive truth is *impaired* – (John 3:19&20)

When the true source of wisdom is rejected (psalm 111:10) peoples claim to be wise is an idle boast and progressively they move downward and become fools or (stupid)

Unfortunately, the spiral is downward. – first worthless thinking, then moral insensitivity and then religious stupidity which is demonstrated in idol worship. Folks become like the idol they worship.

Notice how Paul ends verse 25 – He ends it with **amen**. Or “so let it be” This places approval on what has just been said.

Verse 26 is self-explanatory. It is God’s way of dealing with homosexuality.

Verse 27- The word “lust” refers totally to sexual lust.

The only natural sexual relationship the Bible recognizes is a heterosexual one (Genesis 2-21-24 and Matt 19 4-6) and is within the marriage – period. All homosexual relations constitute sexual perversion and are subject to God’s judgment.

We all have friends in these relationships and are challenged to address these issues. My only question to us is; “if they don’t hear the truth from the church, where will they go to receive this truth?”

The result is verse 28 God gives them over to a reprobate mind. A reprobate mind is one that is void of judgment. In essence they put God out of their minds.

The results – verses 29-32.

Looking at verse 32 – this whole pattern of evil becomes the lifestyle of people who continue to do (present tense implies continuing or habitual action) the very things in open defiance of God, by fully knowing they deserve death and encouraging others in the same lifestyle.

How Paul deals with the “**moral man**” – Romans 2 – 1-16.

Herein the rubber reaches the road.

Notice that in pervious verses it speaks of “they or them” Here Paul is specific in dealing with “thou or you”

When reading verse 1 – we note that every man is naturally blind to his own state and sins.

As X president Obama would say of Bidon – “never underestimate the ability of Joe Biden to (blank) things up.

All of us have to be careful of the fact that we are naturally blind to our own conditions. We all have to never underestimate our own capacity to rationalize our own behavior. We tend to justify whatever we are doing. God help us here.

If you read verses 2&3 of Romans 2 we would do well to remember that the only barrier to receiving truth is the assumption that we already have it.

Now before we go on, I want to go back to the issue discussed in verses 21-32 of chapter 1.

We are all aware of how God views homosexuality. Further these scriptures lead us back to Sodom and Gomorrah and how God dealt with this town from Genesis 19.

However, I want to look for a moment at the sin of Sodom. Homosexuality for sure was their end result of the problem, but several things had occurred prior to their fall into this sin. We have a description in Ezekiel 16: verse 40 about the sin of Sodom.

The writer explains the progression leading to their downfall. Look with me at verse 49 for the sin of Sodom. “They had pride, they had fullness of food and abundance of idleness, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy, and they were haughty and committed abominations before me, therefore I took them away as I saw fit.”

We understand the issue of pride (somewhat) but the fullness of food speaks of prosperity, and the abundance of idleness.

Now if I may, let me digress a bit further. Paul is writing to the churches in Rome as we so stated. These churches included not just Gentiles, but Jews who have committed to Jesus Christ also.

I believe when we read Paul’s writings, we need to remember how he feels about his brethren – the Jew.

Pau was commissioned by the Lord to go to the Gentiles and preach the gospel. Please note that his first stop most often when he traveled was to the synagogue Here he would encounter his Jewish friends. He had a major desire to minister to them. Above all, he wanted the Jew to hear the good news of Jesus Christ. Much of the problems that Paul encountered came about because he was going to the people that Jesus had told him to set aside and go to the gentiles.

Look again with me at Acts 21: starting in verse 4 – “The disciples that they found here in Tyra, told Paul through the Spirit “do not go to Jerusalem” shortly thereafter he came to Caesarea, entered the house of Phillip where he ran into a man named Agabus who was a prophet with 4 virgin daughters (not sure the significance of this but?) verse 11 says that Agabus took Paul’s belt, bound his hands and feet and said “thus says the

Holy Spirit” so shall the Jews in Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles. “Now (verse 12) when we heard these things both we and those from that place pleaded with Paul not to go up to Jerusalem”

Paul’s reaction – verse 13 “what do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.

So (verse 14) when Paul would not be persuaded we ceased saying: “the will of the Lord be done.”

The stoning beloved, the whipping done to Paul was by the hands of the Jews. The Gentiles did not do this to him.

Something for us to think about when problems hit us. Were we supposed to be there in the first place. Were we cautioned not to go, not to do this thing or that thing? But we did it anyway.

Anyway, God’s will was done as Paul ended up in Rome.

As I go back to Romans chapter 2, I feel it necessary to remember that Paul is talking to Jewish believers as well as Gentile believers.

Who “knew God” yet glorified Him not as God? Who were not thankful? Who was professing to be wise, becoming fools? Who changed the glorious image of God and made it into the image of corruptible man? Who worshipped the creature rather than the creator?

Much of what Paul writes in Chapter 2 was the history of the Jewish nation and how they turned their backs on the Lord Jesus.

This is not to say that the Gentiles were free from these same wrongdoings,

I just do not want to disregard the desire on Paul’s part to correct his brethren – the Jew

Remember he is bringing correction to both classes of peoples.

Paul changes the pace somewhat when in verses 11 and following as he points out those who are under the law (Jew) and those who were not under the law (the Gentile)

I think we must take this separation in mind when viewing these scriptures.

More to follow.

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