

# The Gospel

I looked up the phrase “the Gospel” and found it used numerous times in the New Testament. Looking at the various passages, there are things we can learn about “The Gospel.” It means “Good News”.

It is a New Testament term as no one preached “the Gospel” in the Old Testament. The prophets of old looked forward to the coming of Christ but could not speak of the forgiveness of sins before Christ's blood had been shed. There are various terms used referring to “The Gospel” such as Gospel of Christ (John 1.1), Gospel of the Kingdom (Matthew 4.23), Gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20.24), Gospel of God (1 Corinthians 11.7), etc. One of the last things Jesus did before His ascension was to point His disciples to Jerusalem. “Then He said to them, “Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day,<sup>47</sup> and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” (Luke 24:46-47). On the Day of Pentecost we have the first Gospel sermon recorded in Act 2 as the audience was told how to receive the forgiveness of their sins.

The Gospel was preached in order to convert people to Christ. “But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.” (Acts 8:12). In order for the Samaritans to know about the “kingdom of God” they had to be taught. The Gospel was not spread through violence, entertainment, or bribery, but by preaching about Jesus. While there is no need to know everything in the Law of Christ in order to become a Christian; a person must understand Jesus is the Son of God and what He requires of us.

Man is saved through the Gospel of Christ. “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.” (Romans 1:16). Someone may object and say that we are saved by the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, or we are saved by faith, or we are saved by obedience to the word of God. All of this are included in the Gospel. How do we know about Jesus' life and death without the writings of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John? They tell us of His resurrection. Luke tells of the first Gospel sermon and what man must do to be saved. Paul speaks of our redemption through the book of Christ, Ephesians 1.7, and our baptism is into Christ. Baptism according to the Gospel of Christ is for the purpose of washing away our sins and places us in Christ.

“For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” (Galatians 3:27).

The Gospel is for everyone Jew, Gentile, rich, poor, black, white, left-handed or right-handed, etc. There are no Gospels of our choosing but only one Gospel. Which gets me to my next point.

“I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.” (Galatians 1:6-9). Any addition or subtraction, any substitution or deviation, creates a false “Gospel.” Paul speaks of those who were preaching something similar to what he had preached in Galatia but it was not exactly the same. Context tells us some wanted to bind parts of the Law of Moses with the Law of Christ. Perhaps wanting to bind circumcision on Christians in order to be part of their fellowship. Such was binding where God has not bound and thus was a different Gospel. In which case they were to reject it. To change one part of the Gospel is to contaminate its teaching. It is either all or nothing when it comes to the Gospel of Christ. There are no new versions or appendixes to the doctrine of Christ. The 20<sup>th</sup> century version is the same as the 1<sup>st</sup> century version.

Therefore, the Gospel deserves our undivided attention. We should be diligent in our study of God’s word concerning our salvation. “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15). We should strive to not change or update our teaching so as to please men for such will cause us to be lost. “But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.”<sup>9</sup> As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.” (Galatians 1:8-9). It is powerful as it ensures salvation to those who are obedient to it, Romans 1.16. It is our duty to spread it by teaching and preaching to a lost world. – Dennis Tucker