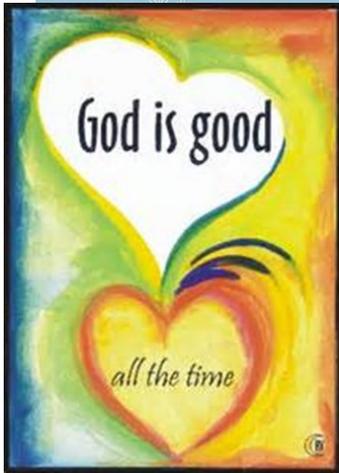
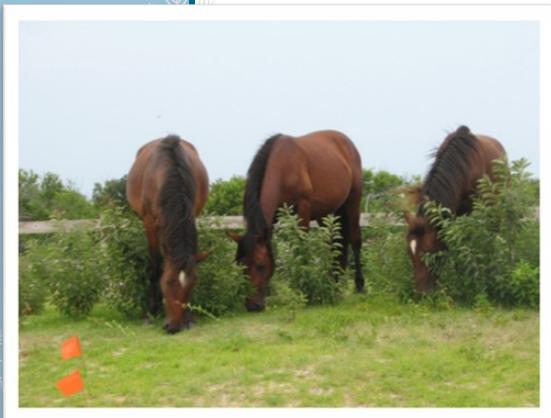


# Corolla Chapel 2015 Winter Newsletter



## Inside this issue:

No Gospel At All 2



## COROLLA TIDBIT

### Corolla wild horses are North Carolina's official State horse?

Wild horses have roamed the Outer Banks for nearly 500 years. Information from old Spanish ship logs dating back to the early 1500's show that Spanish Mustangs escaped and roamed wild. Speculations persist as to how horses escaped included; battles with Indians, shipwrecks, etc.. The origins of the wild horses is certainly unclear. But the ancestry of the Wild Horses is part of the intrigue of their story.

The horses were still roaming free in Corolla as late as 1980's when Pastor Strauss and his wife Ruth restored the chapel.

The development of Highway 12 through Corolla in late 80's increased traffic in the area. The increased traffic naturally

resulted in accidents involving the horses causing injury and in some cases death to the wild horses. Several groups sharing an interest in protecting the horses collaborated to create a safe haven for the horses. 7,000 plus acres of the county's beaches north of Corolla to the Virginia border were fenced off to corral them. This

land now serves as a protected area for the horses to roam free. However, this area is a mix of private and public (1/3 - /23) property.

No one knows for certain exactly how many wild horses were roaming wild prior to being corralled in the north beach area. Around 140 horses live on the north beach now.

I don't recommend driving up to see the horses yourself. You have to drive on the beach, which during the season is full of deep fluffy sand. It isn't worth the risk of getting stuck or losing or damaging something on the under-



carriage of your car. Plus you won't know where to find them.

If you would like to see the horses I recommend booking one of the several horse tours available here. They know where the horses generally hang out will take you there without risk to your vehicle.



## No Gospel At All by Barb Benfante *(based on ideas from "Galatians for You" by Timothy Keller)*

Reading Chapter 3 of the Book of Galatians, I am struck by Paul's emphatic tone in writing to the Christians living in this province of Asia Minor (modern day Turkey). It says "O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified. <sup>2</sup>Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? <sup>3</sup>Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?" (ESV)

If you read that same passage in The Message version of the Bible, you will really see what I mean:

"You crazy Galatians! Did someone put a hex on you? Have you taken leave of your senses? Something crazy has happened, for it's obvious that you no longer have the crucified Jesus in clear focus in your lives. His sacrifice on the cross was certainly set before you clearly enough. Let me put this question to you: How did your new life begin? Was it by working your heads off to please God? Or was it by responding to God's Message to you? Are you going to continue this craziness? For only crazy people would think they could complete by their own efforts what was begun by God. If you weren't smart enough or strong enough to begin it, how do you suppose you could perfect it?"

Paul is obviously very concerned at what is happening with these Gentile believers! What was so important that Paul used such strong, emphatic language to tell these brothers and sisters in Christ that they were in error? What is so important is the truth of the Gospel. The truth is there is only one Gospel and there is only one Savior. Anything that adds to

or takes away from that is no longer truth. The book of Galatians brings us face to face with the Gospel, which is the only thing that saves and also, the only thing that allows us to live life securely as Christians. So Paul is challenging the Galatians to live solely by the truth of the Gospel. This letter is to professing Christians who have been led astray by those teaching a gospel that is no gospel at all.

Paul starts out the letter by reminding them of his credentials as an apostle; his testimony if you will. He tells us who he is that he can speak to these Christian believers this way? Paul claims his apostolic authority because he received his calling directly from the risen Jesus himself (Act 9:1-19). In Galatians 1:9, Paul boldly claims that anyone teaching someone different from his teachings should be condemned or accursed! Only someone with a direct commission from God can say that. He is an apostle who has absolute authority concerning truth---these are the apostles who wrote the Scriptures.

So what was happening that leads Paul to seem so surprised and angry? Young Christians are accepting a gospel that is not really Gospel. He is furious with those who are "trying to pervert the gospel" (verse 7) and he speaks directly to the Galatians who are not clinging to the truth that Paul delivered to them himself. There is a group of teachers confusing the Galatians by expecting them to adhere to Jewish law and custom, and teaching that will allow them to be truly pleasing to God. Certainly we as Christians want to lead lives that are pleasing to God, so perhaps to the Galatians this seemed just fine. But Paul is clear that they are rejecting his teaching and desert-

ing the God who called them. It seems harsh, but the question for us is: do we believe about the Gospel what Paul believed about the Gospel? Paul is seeing his spiritual children in danger and like a loving parent begins to discipline and teach them.

He begins by reminding them of what the Gospel actually is as he reiterates the divine message he received personally from Jesus. First we are all helpless and lost and we need to be rescued. Nothing in who we are as people or how we live our lives can ever save us, we are completely spiritually unable. So to rescue us, Jesus gave his own life to take our place. He doesn't give us a second chance to get it right with God, Instead he did absolutely everything we needed to make us right with God---when He becomes our Savior, then we are completely freed from any penalty or condemnation. God accepted Christ's work on the cross and then raised Him from the dead and gave us grace and peace. We have grace and peace not because we did something or can ever do anything, but because Christ got it for us. Why did God do this? Because he wanted to---the Bible calls it His will. We don't deserve it, He just wanted to give it to us ---and that is what we call "grace"! The free gift God gives us, just because he wants to and with no contribution or even desire for it on our part. We are helpless, hopeless and lost, as low as any creature can be and Jesus provides the rescue because God willed it.

The Gospel of grace is a precious and glorious gift. Paul is angry with the false teachers because they are perverting the perfect truth of the gift and shocked that the Galatian believers are deserting it. Paul is crystal clear---any changes or

additions to *the* gospel makes it *no* gospel at all. Many religions teach that we follow God and do something for him and then he accepts us. But the gospel is not that at all. The gospel is that God accepts us (and makes us acceptable) and then we follow him. The false teachers are insisting that following the Law of Moses will make them really acceptable. This is a perversion because it is a complete reversal of the actual gospel. The grace of Christ plus anything reverses the order and makes is false. A different gospel is not gospel at all. Gospel is sometimes translated as “good news”. It is good news for us because the work is done, the price is paid, the reward (grace and peace) is awaiting us, before we even think we need it. To change this good news even a tiny bit is to lose all the goodness completely.

Martin Luther wrote: “There is no middle ground between Christian righteousness and works-righteousness. There is no alternative to Christian righteousness but works righteousness; if you do not build your confidence on the work of Christ you must build your confidence on your own work.”

Paul says and Luther reemphasizes that the gospel is built on two basic facts. First, we are too lost (sinful) and helpless to achieve our own salvation so we need a complete rescue. Second, we are saved by belief in Jesus work, the gift of grace in Christ plus nothing else. Any teaching that adds or subtracts from that is false and rejects the work of God in Christ. We might think we are saved by our strong belief or because we love and trust God or we live our lives committed to him. But you are not saved by your level of faith. You are saved through faith but it is Christ’s performance on the cross that saves us not our perform-

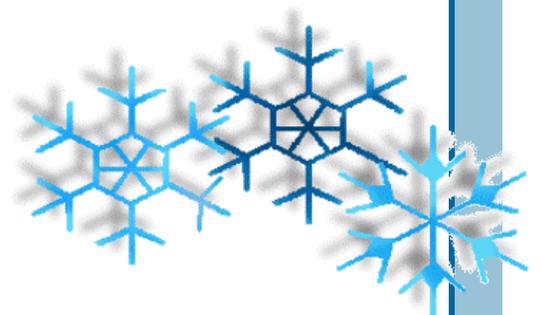
ance of a strong and abiding life of faith. It is the *object* of our faith that saved us.

Others might think as long as we are good and kind people living a good life for God they are saved. This is deceiving because we think we don’t need grace because we have personal goodness. This denies the very radical nature of sin. The gospel holds up a mirror that shows us we are lost and hopeless. It gives us a sense of our own evil and desperate need for complete transformation. Grace given freely by God and paid for by the Savior are the only things that will bring that transformation. Some might even believe, as the Galatians were being taught, that certain rules or customs must be followed to really please God. This is, as Paul states so clearly, a perversion of the Gospel and denies the glorious gift God wants to bestow on us.

So the question we should ask ourselves is: ‘is my gospel the true gospel?’ Don’t we want to believe what is actually true? Are we being bewitched or led astray by teachings as Galatians were? We want to believe truth that can really save eternally! Paul makes it clear that the way to judge all claims and teachings, and even our own feelings, is by the gospel that Jesus and his apostles teach in the Bible. God chose us and wanted to save us. Jesus paid the price because we are wholly unable to do so. So we believe and follow the one who gives the gift. Any other order or any other way or any other feeling is false and a reversal of the truth. Why is it important? Here are a couple of reasons: to abandon the truth of the gospel is to abandon Jesus, and to change the gospel is to play with the eternal destiny of human souls. The gospel and grace are the foundation for every step of Christian life.

God chose Paul and set his loving grace on him when he was persecuting His people. God did it not because Paul was the perfect religious man or had done anything worthy of God’s favor. God simply took delight in loving Paul. It was his pleasure to inspire him and transform him. This is simply how God has always worked. In Deuteronomy 7:7-8, Moses tells the Israelites “7 The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples.<sup>8</sup> But it was because the LORD loved you...” God does not love us because we are good or because we believe so fiercely or because we take care of the poor. God loves us simply because he loves us. This is the best kind of love because it is a love we can never lose. We are saved just because God loves us and gave us a gift, freely and through no work of our own. That is grace and that is the Gospel.

Many of these thoughts and ideas are found in Timothy Keller’s book “Galatians for You”. I recommend it to learn more about living with grace and the gospel. One final thought from it: “The gospel is both a powerful assurance and a powerful motivation to live in radical obedience. We do not live God’s way in order to become His children but out of gratitude that we are already God’s children.”



## COROLLA CHAPEL

---

1136 Corolla Village Road  
P.O. Box 64  
Corolla, NC 27927

Phone: 252.453.4224  
E-mail: [pastor@corollachapel.com](mailto:pastor@corollachapel.com)

**[www.corollachapel.com](http://www.corollachapel.com)**



“No vacation to the Outer Banks is complete without attending a service at the Corolla Chapel”

(Taken from a guest book in a vacation home)



### Want to partner with us in ministry?

Corolla Chapel has a somewhat unique ministry opportunity. Some consider us a bit of a “spiritual lighthouse” or missions outreach here on the Outer Banks. As you probably know, our facilities not only support a small local congregation, but a large number of vacationers who attend Sunday services each year.

So we need help from those who appreciate the ministry at Corolla Chapel. We need folks who are willing to pray for the ministry and lend financial support.

If you aren't already one of our partners, we're hoping that you become one by setting time aside at least once a month to pray for the ministry in Corolla and by sending a donation each month.

---

**Our mission:** encourage as many people as possible to make sure that they have a genuine faith based relationship with God through Jesus Christ, as both Lord and Savior; faithfully obeying and serving Him, so that “...when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.” (1 John 2:28)