

## What is the Gospel and How to Share it?

### What is the Gospel?

Now that we know what salvation is from a biblical standpoint, we are commanded by Jesus himself to go and preach the gospel **Mark 16:15** The Bible connects Salvation with the Gospel that Jesus tells us to preach. We want to know what that gospel is so that we can obey what Jesus has commanded us to do.

Greg Laurie gives an analogy regarding one who does not know the gospel and yet tries to go out and witness. He says, "What would you think of a surgeon who just started "cutting away at a patient without really knowing what he was doing? You would probably wonder how that doctor even came to practice surgery. If he were to make one mistake, his patient could be disabled for life, or even killed. Yet, when it comes to sharing "the gospel," many people are as inept as an incompetent surgeon even though people's eternal destinies hang in the balance."

The word gospel means good news and is used in a verity of places within the bible. Lets look at a few of these within the Bible:

- **Matthew 4:23** – It is the gospel of the kingdom.
- **Mark 1:1** – It is the gospel of Jesus Christ
- **Romans 1:1** – It is the gospel of God.
- **Romans 1:9** – It is the gospel of His Son.
- **1 Corinthians 9:12** – It is the gospel of Christ.
- **2 Corinthians 4:4** – It is the gospel of the glory of Christ.
- **Ephesians 1:13** – It is the gospel of your salvation.
- **Ephesians 6:15** – It is the gospel of peace.

Also the Bible tells us the nature of that gospel.

- **Revelation 14:6** – It is an eternal gospel
- **Romans 1:16** – It is the power of God unto salvation
- **Colossians 1:23** – It is a gospel of hope

All of these references are to the true gospel. We will look at what that true gospel really is or the elements that make up the gospel. First I want to also point out that the Bible warns us about a false gospel that is in the world. **Galatians 1:6-9** gives us a warning about the false or different gospel and its consequences. This gospel is set at contrast with the grace of Christ and its purpose is to bring disturbance in the community of believers and distort the gospel of Christ.

These false gospels fall into one of two categories:

- The watered down gospel: presents Christianity without Christ. It offers forgiveness without repentance. Just like in Galatians, Jesus is presented as something additive to make life better. This gospel wants to present heaven without hell.
- The rule-laden gospel: the most common gospel of the cults. It strips the gospel of its simplicity and power and fills it with rules and regulations that must be done in order to find forgiveness.

Paul says that this different gospel is to be accursed and anyone who preaches it to be accursed as well. The bible is very serious about having the correct gospel and thus we must also be serious about having the correct gospel as well when we go share our faith.

In order for us to stay away from this false gospel that leads to a curse, we need to know what the true gospel really is. What does the gospel that Jesus tells us to preach consist of?

## **The Essential Elements of the True Gospel**

Now that we have identified the key elements of false gospels, let's look at the essential elements of the true gospel.

### **We all stand as Sinners before a Holy God.**

A technical definition of the word gospel is good news. Yet, just as a jeweler displays a beautiful ring or necklace against a dark velvet background to accentuate its beauty, so God first tells us the bad news to show just how good the good news of the gospel really is. The bad news is that we have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God **Romans 3:23**. Because we are all sinners before a Holy God, our Destiny is death. **Romans 6:23**.

The good news is that God saw our complete weakness in sin, and our inability to do anything about it and did the ultimate for us. **Romans 5:6-8**. God, in his great love, sent His own Son to come down from heaven and to die on the cross in our very place.

### **Jesus Christ is the Only Way to the Father.**

God was in Christ alone bringing Salvation to us. The gospel is not about what you or I did to please or reach God. The Gospel is about how God reconciled Himself to us through Jesus Christ. Jesus said in **John 14:6**- "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one can get to the Father but through me." **Acts 4:12** tells us that there is salvation in no one else. There is no name under heaven that man can call on to be saved but Jesus. Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved **Romans 10:13**

### **It is by Grace and not works**

The blessing of this gospel is that salvation comes by grace and not by works. **Ephesians 2:8-9**. If we say that God can be reached through any other means, whether it be works without Christ, or Christ and works or someone else, we would be guilty of misrepresenting the gospel and would fall in Paul's rejection.

### **The cornerstone of the gospel is the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.**

**1 Corinthians 15** is very clear that if Christ had not risen from the dead then we would still be in sins and thus recipients of death. So his resurrection stands as the cornerstone for salvation. His death is also important because that is where he paid the penalty for our sins. He became sin for us and took on death so that we may have life. **Romans 10:9** tells us if we confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

## **Summary of the gospel**

The gospel is the message that we are all separated from God because of our sin. The result of this sin is an emptiness, an ever present guilt and fear of death. The result of this sin is the judgment of God which leads to death. Yet because God loved us, while we were his enemies in sin, He sent His own Son to die in our place and set us free from sin and bring us to Himself. If we would receive this by faith, call upon his name alone, repent of our sins, and believe that he alone has done this for us, then we can receive the forgiveness of sins and salvation.

Evangelists have discovered these principles within the pages of Romans. They have called this the Romans Road to salvation.

- All have sinned – **Romans 3:23**
- Sin results in death – **Romans 6:23**
- Christ took that death – **Romans 5:8**
- Receive Christ – **Romans 10:13**
- Through faith – **Romans 10:9**

## **Sharing the gospel**

There are two main ways that we share our faith and the gospel. Through our life and through our words.

- **Matthew 5:16** says let your light shine before men. That is a witness through our lives as we live the Christian life and walk the Christian walk.
  - **1 Thessalonians 2:8**: Through Relationships
- **Matthew 10:32** also says to confess Christ before men.
  - **Acts 22**: Paul gives his Testimony.
    - To not exaggerate or glorify the past
    - To not put too much emphasis on the self.
    - Put the focus on God and what He has done.

## **Principles on Sharing Faith from Acts 8**

I think we can gain some principles about sharing our faith from Acts 8

- **Acts 8:26-27** – Be Available: Philip was available for what God wanted to do next even when he had a thriving ministry where he was already at.
- **Acts 8:29-30** – Eager to Obey: Philip ran to the chariot when the Spirit of God told him to.
- **Acts 8:30** – Ready to listen: Philip listened to where the person was at and ministered to him at that point. Share the gospel in their context. This might be the time to share your testimony and show them that perhaps God brought you through the same things.
  - Do they feel empty inside? Christ is the only one that can fill that void.
  - Do they feel lonely? Christ sticks closer than a brother.
  - Do they have a sense of guilt in their life? Christ can remove that guilt.
  - Do they fear death? Christ has destroyed the power of death.
- **Acts 8:35** – Holy Spirit gives the power. Philip opened his mouth and the Spirit of God spoke through him.
  - **Acts 1:8** – The Spirit makes you a witness.
  - What about the tough questions? I want to encourage you that because the gospel is the truth, there is an answer to every tough question. Do you have to know all the answers before you go out? No. If a question arises be willing to say, I do not know but I can find the answer for you. It is God's message brothers and sisters, and he will answer the critic.