

The Gospel Message

The good news of Jesus Christ and what it means for us

The Nature of the Gospel

1 Corinthians 15:1-4

[1] Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; [2] By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. [3] For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; [4] And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

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.

Galatians 1:6-9

[6] I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: [7] Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. [8] 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. [9] 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.

2 Timothy 1:10

But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:

The gospel is the 'good news' of God's redemptive work through Jesus Christ—the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes. Paul delivered this gospel as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, was buried, and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.

This message is not man's invention but divine revelation, not one gospel among many but the only gospel. The Apostle pronounced a solemn anathema upon anyone preaching a different gospel, even an angel from heaven.

The gospel brings life and immortality to light, revealing God's remedy for humanity's desperate condition and His provision for eternal reconciliation.

God's Holiness and Man's Sin

Isaiah 6:3

And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

Habakkuk 1:13

Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?

Romans 3:23

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

Isaiah 59:2

But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.

The gospel begins with the character of God—He is perfectly holy, His throne established in righteousness, His eyes too pure to look upon evil. The seraphim cry continually, 'Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts.' This holiness forms the immovable standard against which all human conduct is measured.

Yet 'all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.' Sin has created a chasm between humanity and the Creator, for our iniquities have separated us from our God. We were born in sin, shaped in iniquity, spiritually dead in trespasses and sins.

This diagnosis, though devastating, is essential—only those who know they are sick will seek the Physician, only those who understand their condemnation will flee to the Savior.

The Just Penalty and Divine Wrath

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ezekiel 18:4

Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.

John 3:36

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.

Revelation 20:15

And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

God's holiness demands that sin be punished—'the wages of sin is death.' This encompasses physical death, spiritual separation from God, and eternal condemnation in the lake of fire. 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die,' declares divine justice.

He that believes not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him. This wrath is not capricious anger but righteous indignation against wickedness, the settled opposition of God's holiness to all evil.

The gospel reveals both the righteousness of God and the wrath of God—His wrath against sin makes His provision of salvation infinitely precious. Apart from Christ, every soul stands under condemnation, awaiting the judgment of the great white throne.

Christ's Perfect Life and Substitutionary Death

2 Corinthians 5:21

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.

Isaiah 53:5-6

[5] But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

[6] All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

1 Peter 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.

Hebrews 9:26

For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

The heart of the gospel is Christ's substitutionary atonement. God made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Jesus lived a perfectly sinless life, fulfilling all righteousness and obeying the law completely. Yet He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities—the chastisement of our peace was upon Him.

All we like sheep have gone astray, and the LORD laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He bore our sins in His own body on the tree, suffering the just for the unjust.

At the cross, divine justice and divine mercy met—justice was satisfied as Christ bore the penalty we deserved; mercy triumphed as God provided the sacrifice He required. Christ appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

The Resurrection and Christ's Victory

1 Corinthians 15:4

And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

Romans 1:4

And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:

1 Corinthians 15:17

And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.

Colossians 2:15

And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

The resurrection constitutes essential gospel truth—Christ was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures. This resurrection declared Him to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness.

Without the resurrection, our faith would be vain and we would yet be in our sins. But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, become the firstfruits of them that slept.

Through His resurrection, He disarmed principalities and powers, making a public spectacle of them and triumphing over them in the cross. Death could not hold the Author of Life—He conquered the grave, defeated Satan, and secured eternal redemption.

The empty tomb validates Christ's claims, confirms His finished work, and guarantees our future resurrection.

Repentance and Faith—The Gospel Response

Acts 20:21

Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

Mark 1:15

And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

Acts 17:30

And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:

Ephesians 2:8-9

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

The gospel demands a response—repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus proclaimed, 'Repent ye, and believe the gospel.' Repentance is not mere sorrow for sin's consequences but a change of mind resulting in a change of direction—turning from sin to God, from self-righteousness to Christ's righteousness.

God now commands all men everywhere to repent. Faith is wholehearted trust in Christ's person and finished work, casting oneself entirely upon Him for salvation.

It is by grace through faith that we are saved, not of works lest any man should boast. This faith involves believing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, confessing Him as Lord, and trusting that God raised Him from the dead.

Faith and repentance are inseparable—two sides of the same coin of conversion.

Justification, Adoption, and New Life

Romans 5:1

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

Galatians 3:26

For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Titus 3:5

Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

The gospel produces immediate and eternal results. Believers are justified by faith—declared righteous before God, their sins forgiven, Christ's righteousness imputed to their account.

Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. We are also adopted into God's family—no longer slaves but sons, no longer enemies but beloved children.

For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. Furthermore, believers become new creations in Christ—old things pass away, all things become new.

This is not mere moral improvement but supernatural regeneration, accomplished by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. The gospel transforms rebels into sons, condemned sinners into justified saints, spiritually dead souls into new creatures alive unto God.

The Commission to Proclaim the Gospel

Mark 16:15

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

Romans 10:14-15

[14] 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? [15] 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!

2 Corinthians 5:18-20

[18] And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; [19] To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. [20] Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

Acts 1:8

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Having received the gospel, believers bear responsibility to proclaim it. Christ commanded, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.' How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?

And how shall they hear without a preacher? Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

God has committed to us the ministry of reconciliation, making us ambassadors for Christ, beseeching men to be reconciled to God. We are witnesses unto Him, empowered by the Holy Ghost to testify of His death and resurrection.

This commission extends to all believers—we must give an answer to every man that asks us a reason of the hope that is in us with meekness and fear. The gospel is too precious to hoard, too powerful to hide, too urgent to delay proclaiming.

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