

## THE LIFE-CHANGING GOSPEL

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### 1 Corinthians 15:1-6

1. The Apostle Paul declared, "I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes." Romans 1:16
2. He also stated that the gospel makes a profound difference in the lives of those who embrace it. 2 Cor 5:17
  - 17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.
3. My question is why isn't the gospel we are preaching today having the impact on people it is supposed to?
4. Could it be that essential elements of the gospel are not being emphasized to the degree that they should be?
5. Paul summarized the gospel that he received and preached in verses 3-4 of the passage we just read.
  - a. Christ died for (because of) our sins according to the Scriptures.
  - b. He was buried.
  - c. He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.
6. Preaching the gospel involves proclaiming Christ's sacrificial death, the reason for that death, and what that death accomplished or made possible.
7. However, we have not fully preached the gospel until we deal with the reality of our Lord's resurrection from the dead and the results of that resurrection.

### I. Our lost estate.

- A. Before we can understand what the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ were meant to accomplish we need to go back to man's initial relationship with God.
- B. God created us as moral beings because we are created in His image and He is a moral being.
- C. The Creator placed Adam and Eve in an environment specifically created for them.
- D. He created them with appetites and attributes that would allow them to fully appreciate all aspects of the Garden of Eden.
- E. They could appreciate its beauty, enjoy its delights, relate to each other, and live in partnership and fellowship with God.
- F. Their existence was characterized by boundless freedom with one exception.
- G. For their benefit and protection God told Adam and Eve that they were not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
- H. Rather, they were to look to God as their moral authority and He would instruct them in the areas of good and evil.
- I. They chose to disobey God because ultimately they wanted to be their own moral authority; to choose for themselves what was good and what was evil.
- J. We have inherited the same spirit of willful rebellion against God that manifested itself in the lives of Adam and Eve and has led to this sin-cursed existence in which we find ourselves.

**NOTE: This reality explains the wide disparity of thought related to what constitutes good and evil.**

## II. Our Redeemer.

- A. Christ died and rose again to restore our lost estate and reestablish our moral relationship to God.
- B. Until God again becomes the moral authority over our lives we cannot live life as He intended us to live it.
- C. For that to happen we must embrace Jesus Christ as both Savior and Lord (the one who determines good and evil).
- D. The gospel proclaimed by the Apostles emphasized Christ's atoning death and His resurrection which included His ascension, glorification, and investment with all power and all authority.

NOTE: Until Jesus Christ has become the moral authority in your life the gospel has not accomplished what God intended for it to accomplish.

E. Two examples will prove my point.

1. This truth was central in the preaching and teaching of Peter. Acts 2:22-36.

a. Acts 2:22-24

"Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know — 23 this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. 24 "But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power."

b. Acts 2:32-36

"This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. 33 "Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear. 34 "For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: 'THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, 35 UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET.'"36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ — this Jesus whom you crucified."

2. This truth was also emphasized in Paul's preaching, teaching and writing. Philippians 2:5-11.

a. Phil 2:5-8

Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. 8 **Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.**

b. Phil 2:9-11

For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

### III. Our lost estate restored.

A. The weakness of modern day evangelistic preaching is its focus; it's man centered rather than God centered.

NOTE: Christ died and rose again to restore our lost estate; to bring us back into a right relationship with God.

B. Our emphasis should be to preach both the implications of Christ's death and the reality and results of His victorious resurrection and ascension.

C. The fact is that God has made Jesus both Savior and Lord and you can't have one without the other.

D. Note Paul's clear declaration in Rom 10:5-13

5 For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness. 6 But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows: "DO NOT SAY IN YOUR HEART, 'WHO WILL ASCEND INTO HEAVEN?' (that is, to bring Christ down), 7 or 'WHO WILL DESCEND INTO THE ABYSS?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead)." 8 But what does it say? "THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART" — that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, 9 **that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord**, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; 10 for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. 11 For the Scripture says, "WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED." 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for **the same Lord is Lord** of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; 13 for **"WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED."**

NOTE: Jesus has the authority to be our Savior because He is Lord.

1. Paul did not say, "that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Savior you will be saved."

2. He did not say, "Whoever will call upon Jesus to be their savior will be saved."

### APPLICATION

1. In speaking of marriage Jesus said, "What God has joined together let not man separate."

NOTE: For the record God joined together a man and a woman. Governing authorities may legalize same sex marriages, but those marriages have no standing in God's sight.

2. The principle applies to other things God has joined together.

- a. Mercy and grace.
- b. Repentance and faith.
- c. Love and obedience.
- d. Savior and Lord.

3. The same grace that saves restores our lost estate, and God again, through our Lord Jesus Christ, becomes the determiner of good and evil in our lives.

4. God's promise recorded in Ezekiel 36:25-27 becomes a reality in our lives.

25 "Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. 26 "Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 "I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances."