

The Power of the Gospel

Colossians 1:5-8

All Stand and Read Scripture

Colossians 1:3-8 (NASB)

³ We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, ⁴ since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints; ⁵ because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, **the gospel** ⁶ which has come to you, just as in all the world also **it is constantly bearing fruit and increasing, even as it has been doing in you also since the day you heard of it** and understood the grace of God in truth; ⁷ just as you learned *it* from Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant, who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf, ⁸ and he also informed us of your love in the Spirit.

Prayer

INTRODUCTION:

In the last couple of weeks, I have been preaching about the gospel. The gospel is the “good news” of Jesus Christ. It is “good news” for a hopelessly lost world.

The good news is that Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again on the third day.

Paul described it this way:

1 Corinthians 15:1-4 (NASB)

15 Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, ² by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.

³ For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,

The scriptures tell us that mankind (through Adam and Eve) ate of the tree of good and evil and brought sin into our lives. This sin separated us from God. Satan deceived Eve by telling her “You surely will not die! ⁵ For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

However, **we did surely die!** It was not a physical death as the serpent led Eve to believe. It was a spiritual death that separated us from God. Satan had successfully separated us from God and there was nothing **WE** could do about it on our own.

But we have GOOD NEWS!

Paul said it this way.

1 Corinthians 15:21-22 (NASB)

*²¹ For since by a man *came* death, by a man also *came* the resurrection of the dead. ²² For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.*

It is the gospel of Jesus Christ who came to earth to save us from our sins. In the two previous messages we learned that:

1. The Gospel is Truth.
2. The Gospel is Hope.
3. The Gospel is Grace.

The Gospel is Truth.

The gospel is the word of truth because it the message of the PERSON of truth. Jesus himself said

John 14:6 (NASB)

“I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

Christ is the Truth and the Gospel is the word of truth and it reveals to us Jesus Christ, the person of truth when we read and study His Word.

The Gospel is Hope.

We have an assured hope that God is faithful and just to keep His promises. He has promised a hope of eternal life with Him in Heaven if we live our lives for Him in faith.

The Gospel is Grace.

Because of God’s **grace** He offered us an opportunity to be reconciled back to Him through His Son, Jesus Christ, and be made righteous.

a) Because it is entirely undeserved.

God’s grace is something we receive that we do not deserve. Grace is a free gift of unmerited or undeserved favor!

But the gospel is grace because it comes to us and tells us that death is what we deserve, **but God loves us and is offering us salvation!**

The “good news” is that the gospel offers us not WHAT we deserve, but a FREE GIFT of rescue.

Our sins have been completely forgiven by the blood of Jesus Christ and we have been declared RIGHTEOUS! The gospel is grace because it is entirely undeserved.

b) Because it is absolutely free.

The gospel message is not a message about what YOU can do to be saved.

It is not a message about how you can EARN salvation.

It is an announcement about a Savior that has saved. It is an announcement about what Christ has done to save you!

We can only accept that salvation by an active faith.

c) Because it is abundantly sufficient.

No matter how great your sin is, Christ's sacrifice is more than sufficient.

It is able once and forever to pay the penalty for that sin. When Christ died upon the cross He made a sacrifice of infinite value. He paid a price of infinite worth. No amount of sin can ever overcome that sacrifice. It can never be a greater debt than He was willing to pay.

All of this leads us into today's message:

The Power of the Gospel.

I would like to share with you **three ways** in which the gospel has **power**.

BODY:

I. The Gospel has the Power to Save.

Romans 1:16 -17 (NASB)

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation **to everyone who believes**, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷ For in it *the* righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "BUT THE RIGHTEOUS *man* SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."

Notice the qualifier that Paul attaches: "**for everyone who believes.**" Simply hearing the gospel will not accomplish anything. Merely reading God's instruction manual for mankind - the Bible - serves no purpose if it is not believed!

As Romans 1:16 says, the gospel is so powerful that it has the authority and the means to bring us to salvation. As soon as we hear or read it, it begins to work - *if we believe.*

John 3:16-17 (NASB)

¹⁶ “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.

God does not want anyone to perish. He was willing to send His Son to Earth to die on the cross as a perfect sacrifice for our sins. Through His Son He offered us a chance of salvation if we would just believe the gospel.

When Peter was asked on the day of Pentecost, “What must we do to be saved?” He replied in...

Acts 2:38 (NASB)

³⁸ Peter *said* to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

When we hear and believe the gospel, we understand that we are sinners and need forgiveness. We are immersed in a water baptism in order to receive forgiveness of our sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Once we have accepted Christ as our Lord and Savior we are told that we will be transformed.

II. The Gospel has the Power to Transform.

Colossians 1:5-6 (NASB)

⁵ because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel ⁶ which has come to you, just as in all the world also **it is constantly bearing fruit and increasing, even as it has been doing in you also since the day you heard of it** and understood the grace of God in truth;

Paul said that ever since the day that they heard and accepted the gospel, they had remained faithful, bearing fruit and continuously growing stronger in their faith.

This is an important concept to understand. There is nothing magical about the water in baptism. Baptism without faith cannot save you. When we are saved, we are in effect transferring our citizenship from this earth and its worldly ways to a new citizenship in the Kingdom of God. We are no longer citizens in this world although we still reside here. The gospel has the power to cause us to want or desire to avoid the ways of the world and start seeking the ways of God and become like His Son.

Romans 6:3-7 (NASB)

³ Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have become united with *Him* in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be *in the likeness* of His resurrection, ⁶ knowing this, that our old self was crucified

with *Him*, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; ⁷ for he who has died is freed from sin.

Those who believe will provide evidence that God is continuing to work in them. The gospel will change you.

You don't clean yourself up to come the gospel. You surrender yourself to Christ, to let the gospel clean you up.

The gospel is a transforming power to those who accept it by faith!

Several transformations took place when we were saved.

1. We received the gift of the Holy Spirit.
2. We were forgiven of our sins.
3. With our sins forgiven, we are considered righteous before God.
4. We start walking in a newness of life. We will give up worldly ways and start living as instructed in God's Word through the help of the Holy Spirit.

1 Thessalonians 2:13 (NASB)

¹³ For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted *it* not *as* the word of men, but *for* what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.

5. Like the Colossians, we will start bearing fruit. We will let God work through us to accomplish His will in our life. It should be a desire within us to want to do God's will.

John 15:1-5 (NASB)

¹⁵ "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. ² Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every *branch* that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. ³ You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither *can* you unless you abide in Me. ⁵ I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.

We allow God to work in our lives. It is only through Him that we can bear good fruit.

6. We become a light to the world.

Matthew 5:14-16 (NASB)

¹⁴ "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; ¹⁵ nor does *anyone* light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. ¹⁶ Let your light shine before men in

such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

If we are serving Christ, people will notice that we are different. They should see Christ within us. The scriptures tell us that God will be glorified when they see the light within us.

There is a third reason that the Gospel is power.

III. The Gospel has the Power to Multiply.

Colossians 1:5-6 (NASB)

⁵ because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel ⁶ which has come to you, just as in all the world also it is constantly bearing fruit and increasing, even as *it has been doing in you also since the day you heard of it and understood the grace of God in truth;*

The gospel has the power to grow. We know that there were approximately 120 believers in Jerusalem with the disciples prior to Pentecost in Acts 1:15. On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit fell upon the apostles and Peter preached to the multitudes. Approximately 3,000 people were added to the church when they accepted the word and were baptized. We find throughout the book of Acts that the church was growing mightily as the gospel was preached. It started with one church and 120 people. 50 short years later many new churches had been established and hundreds of thousands of people had been saved.

The gospel will multiply wherever and to whomever it is proclaimed. It is our job to proclaim it. The gospel has not lost its power, we, too often, have failed to proclaim it.

In Revelation we are told of the large multitude of people who will be saved by the gospel.

Revelation 7:9-10 (NASB)

⁹ After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and *all* tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches *were* in their hands; ¹⁰ and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."

I want to be standing with that multitude when the scripture is fulfilled. Thanks to God and His mercy and grace, we have that chance.

CONCLUSION:

1. The Gospel is Truth.
2. The Gospel is Hope.
3. The Gospel is Grace.
4. The Gospel is Power.

Matthew 16:24-27 (NASB)

²⁴ Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. ²⁵ For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. ²⁶ For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? ²⁷ For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and WILL THEN REPAY EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS.

God provided us a way to come to Him. You must realize that this requires a change in your life. If you have not accepted Christ as your Lord and Savior, do it today.

If you have accepted Christ as your Lord and Savior and you are still living like the world and not bearing fruit, the gospel tells us that you are still dead in your sins. You are either "**dead to sin**" or you are "**dead in sin**". There is no in between.

In order to be saved you must have an active faith. There are many "good" things that we can do such as

- Living a good life.
- Supporting your family.
- Giving to the Church and to the Poor.
- Going to church every Sunday.
- Being immersed in baptism.

But if you do not have Christ living in you, it is of no value.

We should not be asking, "Are you saved?" We should be asking "Does Christ live in you?"

Notice the picture on the wall. The picture is generally attributed to Revelation 3:20.

Revelation 3:20 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me.

The scripture was actually written to Christians in the church of Laodicea. They had become spiritually apathetic and lazy. He is pleading with them to get their hearts right with Him again.

The picture shows Jesus knocking at the door of your heart. You will notice a heart that is illuminated by Christ using the top of the door frames. It is entangled with thistles. Also notice that there is no door knob on the outside of the door. You must open the door to Him and let Him come in.

If you have been saved and have become spiritually lazy, Christ wants us to let Him back in.

If you have never accepted Christ as your Savior, He is knocking at your door. Let Him come into your heart.

The Family of God

I'm so glad I'm a part of the family of God.

I've been washed in the fountain, cleansed by His blood!

Joint heirs with Jesus as we travel this sod,

For I'm part of the family, the family of God.