

# What Is The Gospel?

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# Introduction

## Why do we need to ask the Question: “What is the Gospel?”

Over the years I have noticed more often than not, the lack of understanding within the Church as to what is the Gospel. The word is used constantly but in reality do Christians even know what it means? Do ministers know what the term Gospel means? For that matter, how many seminary professors know what it really means?

It is sad to say, but most Christians do not really know or understand the Gospel and that includes most ministers and even many seminarians including professors.

The Gospel is the most important element in all of Christianity. It is at the very core of Christianity, and the heart of salvation, yet most people professing to be Christians have little clue as to what is actually the Gospel.

If you are a Christian, you may think you know what the Gospel is, but do you **really know** what the Gospel is? This publication seeks to answer the question and define exactly, what is the Gospel, according to the scriptures.

Amazingly perhaps, there is no more inaccurate, erroneous and or misunderstood doctrine of scripture than the Gospel. It is quite possible that most ministers, pastors, evangelists and missionaries of our day actually present common errors or inaccuracies on the idea of the Gospel and so for that reason, this publication may be of immense value to the reader.

In order to answer the question: “What is the Gospel?” let us take a look at the common errors or inaccuracies of our modern era in regards to the Gospel.

# **Chapter 1**

## **What the Gospel Is NOT**

### **Common Errors/Inaccuracies of the Gospel**

#### **A. Treating the Gospel as an Experience**

Treating the Gospel as an experience rather than as an announcement of fact creates errors and or inaccuracies or misperceptions. There is a whole segment within organized Christianity that attempts to treat the Gospel as an experience.

One of the first errors of many errors in our modern Church era, as far as the Gospel is concerned is the treatment of the Gospel as an experience rather than as a factual announcement from God. So how do these “experience-oriented” church leaders approach the Gospel as an experience? The approach usually runs something like the following.

#### **1. The Typical Approach of Gospel Presentation**

##### **a. It Presents the Gospel as an Experience.**

(1). You might come to an individual and say:

**“Here is something that can change your life.”**

(2). You might say, to someone who’s having a difficult time in life: “Is your life joyless and empty? You need something in life. Here is the Gospel and the Gospel in essence is something that can change your life.”

Now while the idea that the Gospel can change a person’s life in itself is true. The Gospel can change your life like nothing else in the world can change it, but when you say in approaching someone with the Gospel as:

**“Here is something that can change your life”**

##### **b. It Creates Misleading Misconceptions**

# **Presenting the Gospel as an Experience Creates Misleading Misconceptions**

When you present the Gospel as an experience it can and usually does create misconceptions that can be very misleading. The reason it can be misleading is that the moment you express an experiential aspect to an unbeliever, especially someone who has never heard the Gospel at all before you will most likely be setting up false expectations. Your approach might go something like this::

“So you’re having difficulties and stresses and strains in life? Do you want joy and happiness in your life instead of difficulties and stresses and strains? Well, I can offer you something that will change your life?”

Now when you take such an approach, what have you done?

You’ve been a little bit misleading because of what is going to happen in the mind of your recipient, either him or her. So what is going to happen in their mind?

The moment you offer him or her something to change their life, they are going to develop some expectations, aren’t they? Do you doubt that? Think about this from your own perspective then.

If someone were to say to you: “here’s something that can change you.” Your mind automatically goes into action and your mind says:

“Well I want to be changed – for the better. I want this and I want that changed and then there’s this problem to be resolved and that problem.” And on it goes.

## **c. It Creates Certain Expectations**

## **Presenting the Gospel as an Experience Creates Certain Expectations**

That person begins to create **certain expectations** with the idea of **change**. He or she might be thinking about a miserable marriage, and it may be that the change would involve not only themselves but their spouse also. So they think maybe you're going to offer them something that can straighten out their marriage.

While it is possible that a positive reception of the Gospel might lead to that, the fact is that it might not. Instead, the reception of the Gospel might make this person's marriage worse. I know that might sound hard to believe, but I've seen this sort of presentation made before and have seen people go through the motions of accepting the Gospel and instead of making a marriage better, the marriage crashed and burned.

Isn't it very conceivable that once your recipient believes the Gospel that his spouse might say – "now you're out on the back porch for good because I'm not going to live with that 'religion' stuff."

Can't that happen to people? I have encountered people who've had that happen to them, over and over, again and again.

So when one presents the Gospel as an "experience" it can set up false expectations. So this is one type of an approach of presenting the Gospel.

### **d. It Creates Doctrinal Error**

## **Presenting the Gospel as an Experience Creates Doctrinal Error**

Using the approach that the Gospel is an “Experience” that can change your life **creates doctrinal error**. When you state that the Gospel can change someone’s life for the better, **you’re confusing justification with sanctification**.

**Justification changes our position before God.** What produces change in my life? Just being saved? NO!

**Change and growth in the Believer’s life is affected as we absorb and obey the Word of God.** In other words, **it is sanctification through the Word of God that causes a believer to grow in grace and the likeness of Christ.** That is called **Sanctification** and it’s a change in life experience.

Now, before you can get that change, you have to be justified, but justification does not necessarily, automatically change your life at the moment you believe in Jesus Christ and become a Christian.

Don’t you know many people who are really saved, but they didn’t experience, and in fact, they’re still not experiencing a radical change in their life conduct are they? Why not? Because the sanctification process is not operating under the Word of God like it ought to, therefore to simply say to a person: “Getting saved can change your life” is confusing justification with the life that follows which we call sanctification.

There is another problem in offering the idea that the Gospel is an “experience” and it’s a very serious one and it is this and don’t forget it:

#### **e. Remember, Satan Can Also Change Lives**

This fact is often overlooked. Satan can clean you up. As a matter of fact, Satan is very anxious to clean you up.

If someone is living a horribly terrible, immoral or unethical, indecent life, that is not a good advertisement for anyone, let alone Satan. It is not going to make Satan’s ultimate program attractive to the world.

Satan would rather see everyone on his side, cleaned up, nice and shiny, so one could look at it this way:

One of Satan’s first objects is for everyone to clean-up and be nice – WITHOUT CHRIST.

Haven't you seen people who are unbelievers who lived a horrible life and suddenly one day they decided: "I'm going to transform myself" and they've done a pretty good job. They've developed a nice, bright, shining personality. We see all sorts of books on the subject, and of course TV talk shows focus on it – like Oprah Winfrey and the new TV Psychiatrists talk shows. The "Self-Help" segment of book publishing world is rampant with books on the idea of people cleaning themselves up.

Does this mean that someone who makes major personality changes and starts living a life that seeks to be "good" – does that mean they're saved?

No, it just means they experienced a definite change in their life so remember:

You may see someone out there who's hooked on drugs; don't you think God could change their life? Certainly. Don't you think Satan can change their life too? Of course he can. In fact, he's likely to because his system is always one of counter-fitting God.

There is still yet, another problem with presenting the Gospel as an experience.

**f. The Experience approach overlooks Objective Facts/Word of God**

Another aspect that is wrong with trying to present the Gospel as an experience is that in doing so, it overlooks "objective fact." In overlooking the "objective fact" aspect, the "experience approach" starts someone out on the wrong foot to begin with. Why? Because, the Gospel and the Christian Life is about objective facts via the Word of God and not an "experience."

Now I hope you haven't misunderstood what I've presented so far. I did NOT say that the Gospel will not change your life, because it will do that. I am saying that to simply say "here is something that can change your life" is an inaccurate and erroneous approach to the presentation of the Gospel.

## A Second Major Error in Presenting The Gospel

### B. Including Extra Truth Under the Word Gospel

The second major error in presenting the Gospel revolves the idea of adding extra truth and information to the word Gospel. There are many ways of adding extra truth to the Gospel but for example, we'll look at here four that are used frequently.

#### **1. Error #1: Presenting Extra Truth: Of Man's Condition as a Need For the Gospel. While it is true that all men need the Gospel, man's condition nor the need is not the Gospel.**

Let's suppose we go to a church service where the pastor says he's going to present the Gospel and all of his time was spent on the area of going over Romans, chapter one and he spends all of his time explaining man's condition, that:

*"We're all sinners. We've all come short of the glory of God. We commit outward acts of sin. We have a sin nature," etc. etc. etc. and the pastor very carefully develops man's condition.*

Now all of that is true – very, very true, BUTTTTTTT that is NOT the Gospel. What he's doing is presenting the NEED for the Gospel but it's NOT the Gospel.

**Let me repeat that – He is presenting the NEED for the Gospel. BUT...**

#### **The Need for the Gospel is NOT – THE GOSPEL!!!**

Yet, very often, we think in terms of what are often called "Gospel tracts" or "Gospel Preaching" but very often the main emphasis is on 45 minutes of speaking or reading about how bad we all are, which basically we all knew anyway, but we're told about how bad we are. Then the last 5 minutes is what we ought **to do** about it.

The first 40 minutes may have been true, but the first 40 minutes was not THE GOSPEL, and what's the error?

If you call that exposition of Romans 1 the Gospel you are including extra truth under the word GOSPEL – but remember – The need for the Gospel is NOT the same as THE GOSPEL. The need is not the Gospel.

**So let's rephrase our example another way...**

The church service spends 40 minutes on the need for the Gospel and then the last 5 minutes in on what? It's usually centered around the idea of what you ought to do.

That could be anything from "believe" –clear up to as many as 8 or 10 other 'things' or actions that you need to do or go through and or including certain little rituals that you need to perform in order to be saved.

And in doing so, the last 5 minutes is NOT THE GOSPEL EITHER!

Even if the last 5 minutes is very accurate, you'll probably get the idea that you must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and that is the Gospel. Pay attention now carefully.

**Believing on the Lord Jesus Christ**

**Is NOT**

**I repeat**

**NOT**

**THE GOSPEL**

**Either!**

**2. Error #2 Presenting Extra Truth of what the response should be to the Gospel, or the “how” of the Gospel is NOT the Gospel either. I know – this is another shock.**

When you present the need for the Gospel: that is not the Gospel.

**When you present:  
The response to the Gospel  
or  
The “how” to the Gospel  
or  
The “How” you can be saved  
  
That is not the Gospel either**

**The Gospel is something different than presenting a need for the Gospel or presenting the “How” or the “response” to the Gospel.**

Yet very often both are presented under the term “Gospel” preaching. While those two elements are connected to the Gospel, they are **NOT THE GOSPEL** and **presenting them** as such is an **error** and **inaccurate**.

**A Third Major Error Very Common and Typical:**

**C. Adding Improper Human Action to the Gospel**

In preaching the “supposed” Gospel, **any time you have the implication that man can do something to solve the sin problem, you are perverting The Gospel.** That would include any system and I don’t care what it is.

Any system that adds anything to “believing” as the terms of Salvation is NOT presenting the Gospel accurately. Let me repeat that.

**Any system that gives man any thing to do in terms of solving the sin problem is NOT the Gospel –**

**instead**

**IT IS A RELIGION!**

**Adding Human Action or Human Effort To the Gospel**

**Makes it A False Gospel and a Religion**

**And**

**GOD HATES RELIGION**

**Yes, God is “anti-religious.”**

**Religion is any human system – it is a “works” system. Anything, that in any way allows man’s finger to get in the stewpot of salvation (so to speak) in terms of the preparation of the solution to the sin problem, is NOT the Gospel.**

**There is an entire epistle written by the Apostle Paul on this very issue which exposes this abominable idea that leads to eternal damnation for those who think that they can and or must “do something” in addition to what Christ has done, in order to solve the sin problem. We’ll look into that aspect later in this publication.**

**There is yet a 4<sup>th</sup> Major Error we need to note.**

**D. Error #4 in Presenting The Gospel: Using Wrong Scripture for a Definition of the Gospel.**

Failure to use correct scripture passages for the definition of the Gospel is probably one of the most typical errors because it is the one **most often abused by most evangelists.**

In fact, I have yet to meet an evangelist who knew the correct definition of the Gospel. For that matter, most pastors probably can't provide the correct definition of the Gospel either. It is so sad, but apparently so true, particularly of those who spend huge amounts of dollars on broadcasting their church services on television, and or have mega-churches. Now, I say that 'generally speaking' because there are always, so it seems, exceptions to the rule of generalization.

What is also sad is that most people will try to go to the Gospels for the Gospel. I mean by that, typically, people think the Gospel will be found in the "Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and or John.

**Now I'm going to make an assertion that may seem like a bombshell.**

**It is difficult, if not impossible to find THE GOSPEL in the Gospel's of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.**

As a matter of fact, did you know that THE GOSPEL is **NOT** found in John 3:16? Everybody, it seems, wants to witness to people by giving out John 3:16 but it is **NOT** the Gospel. Let me repeat that:

**John 3:16 is NOT THE GOSPEL**

Even the famous passage of Ephesians 2:8-9 is not really the definition of the Gospel. It is sorta close, but not quite. It is an overall explanation or summation of the How of the Gospel but it is also not the definition of the Gospel per se.

I'll explain this further into this later as we further explore "What is the Gospel?"

So the final and very common error in terms of presenting the Gospel is using incorrect scripture passages for a definition of the Gospel.

So now that we know something about what the Gospel is NOT, let's look at what is THE GOSPEL

# Chapter 2

## THE GOSPEL

### An Overview

Let's start by looking at the word – G-O-S-P-E-L

#### A. The Original Greek Word Background

##### 1. εὐαγγέλιον = euangelion = #2098

It is the Greek word – Eu-ahn-gel-ion or “euangelion” and you will find it in the Strong's Concordance dictionary under the **Strong's code #2098**.

Our English word “Evangelist” is almost a direct transliteration (not translation) of the Greek word. A transliteration means an English pronunciation of the original Greek word and so a transliteration is not the same as a translation.

The word “**euangelion**” is a compound Greek word, meaning it is two words joined together.

The word “**eu**” means “good.”

The word “**angelion**” means “message” or “news.”

##### 2. The Original Greek Definition: Combine the two words and your definition is “good message” or “good news.”

In general English usage, the word is usually translated as Gospel.

### **3. Where is the original Greek word found?**

#### **a. Never in the Old Testament**

#### **b. 76 Times in the Greek New Testament**

**If you check a Greek New Testament Concordance, you will find that the word is never found in the Old Testament. It is exclusively a New Testament term.**

If you take the word “Gospel” in its noun-form and trace it through the original language of the Greek, The Greek New Testament manuscripts you find something very interesting.

John, who wrote the Gospel of John and the Book of Revelation (and 3 letters to the early church) used the word Gospel only once – yes he only used the word one time – 1x. Peter in his writings uses the word Gospel only one time, 1x. The Book of Acts, written by Luke, uses the word Gospel two times (2x or twice only.)

The gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John – if you search them for the number of times you find the word “Gospel” – you’ll find it twelve (12) times. Actually, they are found exclusively in Matthew and Mark. Luke does not use the term and neither does John in his Gospel.

Then if you continue to trace the word “Gospel” through Paul’s writings you find that Paul uses the word “Gospel” 62 times (62x).

Now just in terms of the general spread of usage then in the Greek New Testament, if you go from Matthew through Revelation, what are you going to find?

You’re going to find the word, Gospel:

- 62 x in Paul’s writings
- 12 x in Matthew, Mark, Luke, & John
- 2 x in Acts
- 1 x in Peter’s writings
- 1 x in Revelation

So that you have to come to once conclusion and it is that “The Gospel” or the word “Gospel” – the term Gospel is compacted where? It is compacted in the writings of the Apostle Paul. So that for the most information we get about the Gospel is from the Pauline Epistles.

## **B. Euangelion: Can be Secular or Theological**

Now let’s examine the meaning of the word “euangelion” a bit more closely. We’ve examined the basic definition, per se, but it really has 2 functional meanings in scripture.

The very first meaning is a very broad meaning of the term “Gospel” or “euangelion.” Remember we said it was a compound word

Eu = good

Angelion = message or ‘news’ from Strong’s #32 = **ἄγγελος** = angelos = angel

The word “angel” actually means “messenger” or someone who delivers a message. An “angel” can be a human or super-human entity with a message.

So that the broader meaning of the word – “euangelion” that is translated into English as “Gospel” means in the broad sense:

### **“GOOD NEWS”**

#### **1. Secular Meaning**

In secular Greek writings, that is, in the Greek language outside of the New Testament, - **any good news** could be “euangelion.” For example:

If someone would say to you: “I just received a check for \$500 in the mail from an unknown source” – you might respond and say, “Well that’s good news.” – That is a broad meaning of the word “euangelion.”

Euangelion simply means – **good news of any kind**. It could be good news that you got a pay-raise, or that someone at the office is quitting, or that your car does not need a repair that you thought it would, or that your child comes home from school with a decent grade card – any kind of good news was “euangelion” – translated into English as “Gospel.”

## 2. Theological Meaning

Now, when you come to the New Testament however, the word 'euangelion' = good news becomes very specific. It means good news, however, every time it is used in the New Testament it is **good news that originates from God and given to man.**

So that its special meaning in the New Testament is Good news from God to man or

**Gospel = God's good message to man**

So that, whenever you have the word "gospel" or "good news" in the New Testament – it is NEVER – man to man good news, but always God to man and it is always a message that starts with God and He gives it to man.

Basically then, when you talk about the Gospel it is that God has some good news to give to us.

Now that gives us the first footing then as far as the Gospel is concerned.

The Gospel is NOT morbid, sad, horrible and or terrible.

We haven't preached the Gospel until we have made the announcement that God has some Good News for us/you.

Now what is that Good News? We'll get to that in a moment, but what I've just presented is basically the meaning of the word gospel or euangelion.

## **C. Euangelion Has 2 Different, Distinct Uses in N.T.**

Now, if you take that work and trace it throughout the New Testament and we won't go through all of the references because of time and focus, but this good news that God announces to man takes 2 different usages in the New Testament. Those two usages are:

### **1. The first form is Offering the Messianic Kingdom to Israel Message which is found only in the Gospels.**

The first form of the Gospel deals with the offering up by The Messiah – Jesus Christ of the physical, on planet Earth, Messianic Kingdom – TO ISRAEL – not to the world. It is reserved exclusively for ISRAEL and the Jews. It was rejected at His first advent but it won't be at His second advent.

### **2. The second form is Eternal Salvation for all of humanity found primarily in the Epistles.**

The second form deals with the issue of spiritual salvation for the entire human race, Jews and Gentiles alike. This is why it is found and defined in the Epistles.

# Chapter 3

## The Kingdom Gospel Explained

### A. Positively: What the Kingdom Gospel Is

The first form, found in only the Gospels is about **The Kingdom** being offered up to Israel. You'll find it for example in Matthew 23 and its good news about Israel's Messianic Kingdom. Now you may ask: "What's that all about? What does the "Kingdom" mean?"

**Notice that it always follows 'preaching' and healing.**

The Kingdom involves Jesus Christ as the Messiah over Israel in a physical kingdom on earth. Jesus is born in Bethlehem. He presents Himself to His people, the nation of Israel and what has the nation of Israel in the Old Testament been promised? They have been promised a spot in the land of Palestine where they would have a kingdom with Messiah reigning over it and over the whole earth. The Messianic Kingdom was not to be found in Heaven, but rather on Earth. It was to be on 'terra-firma,' or land, and not in Eternity. Consequently, Jesus comes along and says to Israel – "God has some Good News about the Kingdom – and the Good News was – "Here is the King"

So that Jesus says: "**Your King is here.**" – That is **Good News.**

Now Israel didn't take it as Good News because they didn't believe that He was their King – but essentially it was Good News about the Kingdom to Israel.

Look at Matthew 9:35 – It is Good News about the Kingdom, as is also Matthew 24:14 only in regards to the Kingdom and the Tribulation Period that precedes it. Why would they be preaching Good News about the Kingdom in the Tribulation Period? For a very simple reason – The Kingdom is about to appear with the Second Coming of Jesus Christ because the Jews will reject it at His first appearance.

He will come as King to rule and reign on this Earth and prior to that, there's an announcement that "We want you to know about the Good News concerning His coming Kingdom

The only thing we've got in Matthew is the Good News about the Kingdom and only the Messianic Kingdom for Israel that will be established on earth for a 1,000 year period of time. You'll also see other "Gospel"- Kingdom passages in for example Matt 26:13 and it being presented to the entire world, but what Good News is it? It is the offering up of the physical Messianic Kingdom on Earth for Israel.

*Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.*

The first thing to note in verse 13 is that before the word "gospel" is the word "THIS" – and "THIS" is a very emphatic term in the Greek. There is a demonstrative pronoun preceding Gospel – so that He says:  
"THISSSSS (specific) Gospel"

If you look at the context - you can only go in one direction. It **can NOT be the Gospel per se of the Grace of God**. Instead, it is the Gospel talked about in Matthew and what kind of Gospel was that? The gospel of the kingdom or the Good News that the Kingdom is about to appear.

So that is the gospel in the Gospel of Matthew.

And really then you have to admit in terms of the Gospel of the Kingdom, there's not too much there.

Also look at the Gospel of Mark. We won't look at all the passages of Mark dealing with the Kingdom Gospel but they all are in reference to the Messianic Kingdom for an earthly kingdom for Israel via the Messiah.

Mark 1:14 – Can you begin to see that there is a Gospel or "good news" in the Gospels that does not say "your savior is here?" No, instead, you find a good news message that says – "Your King is here."

*V. 14 "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,"*

*V. 15 "And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."*

The “kingdom of God” is the God’s earthly, “Messianic Kingdom” offered to Israel. So there is a gospel pertaining to an earthly kingdom that is very distinct and different from the gospel providing a savior.

Notice in Mark they are preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God. Well now, here we’re going to get a little definition of what is meant by the “gospel” or the “good news” about the Kingdom.

Mark 1:15 – “and saying the time is fulfilled and the Kingdom of God is” here, “repent and believe the Gospel”. This is pertaining to the good news about the Messianic, earthly Kingdom, not the Heaven and not Eternity.

So what’s he saying? He’s saying: **“Good news from God.”**

What is the Good News from God? – **“Here is your king.”**

**Notice the distinction.**

**He did NOT say:**

“Behold the Lamb of God, here is your savior.”

## **B. Negatively – What the Kingdom Gospel is NOT**

### **The Kingdom Gospel is NOT about Eternal Salvation for all of humanity.**

The Kingdom Gospel NEVER contains anything about personal salvation. It is instead about His Kingship and an earthly Messianic Kingdom for Israel wherein Israel rules the nations.

So, the Kingdom’s Good News is what is presented in the New Testament’s “Gospels.” .

The **Good News of the Gospels** of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John is basically that – **“The King has arrived.”**

**This then is the first kind of Gospel which is the Gospel of the Kingdom.**

One other passage, I'll mention is Mark chapter 10 vss 28-31

*V. 28 "Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee.*

*V. 29 "And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's,*

*V. 30 "But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.*

*V. 31 "But many that are first shall be last; and the last first."*

What is He talking about? "Leaving everything for the sake of the Gospel."

Is He talking about being saved? **NO, ABSOLUTELY NO!**

He is simply saying: "Look, some of you have gotten the good news that the King is here and you pulled up stakes up there in Galilee and you've been following Me – you've left your parents, children, you've left everything to follow Me in my preaching throughout Galilee" and that has nothing to do with getting to Heaven and yet... ..

Yet -- How often does an evangelist grab a verse like that and say:

"Now at the end of the service, unless you are willing to give up houses, and lands, and family and follow Jesus Christ you cannot be saved."

That is absolute heresy – absolute blasphemy and an abomination and certainly a perversion of the Gospel of Eternal Salvation.

The above verse has absolutely nothing to do, whatsoever, with the Gospel of Salvation and the Grace of God. It has to do with the offering up to Israel of the earthly Messianic Kingdom, which Israel then turned and rejected.

The verses in Mark have to do with the earthly kingdom of Israel during the 1,000 year Millennial reign of Christ. In that time, Jews who managed to survive the Great Tribulation will undoubtedly be faced with such decisions.

# Chapter 4

## The Gospel of Eternal Salvation

### A. General Overview

#### 1. It is for all humanity – the whole world.

Now there is a second kind of Gospel in the New Testament. It is God's Good News about Salvation and it is for the whole world.

The first time we find this "gospel" discussed and analyzed is in Acts, chapter 15 and verses 6-7.

*V. 6 "And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter.*

*V. 7 "And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe."*

Setting: The Jerusalem Conference and the Apostles and elders are having a sort of "pow-wow" meeting. They're wrestling with the idea of "What is the Gospel/Good News." They are asking the question: "what is the Good News." The Apostles and elders were asking each other:

**"What is the "Good news?"**

**AND –**

**"How do you appropriate it?"**

In other words, they were looking to set a definition for the term – See Acts 15:6-7. Notice Peter says it is "**the word of the Good News**" and then "**believe.**" So that Peter is adding, that after the Good News is given, there follows a response to the Gospel. He is noting that along with the Good News message, there must be a response which "appropriates" the Good News.

## 2. The Gospel is eternal spiritual life

If you follow down in the context of what follows, particularly down before verse 11, as you search for context you might be asking yourself – “what kind of Good News was it?” Well, Verse 11 answers that question.

*V. 11 “But we believe that through the grace of the LORD Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.”*

It was the Good News of Salvation, eternal life. Notice it says: “We believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved even as they.”

Question: What was this good message all about?

Answer: When you hear and then believe the message - you can be saved.

## B. God’s Original Gospel Teacher - Paul

Now, God in His course of history as found in the book of Acts – in explaining this Gospel that saves – puts His finger on one particular man and in doing so said: “you will be the single one specific person (vehicle) through which I am going to use to explain to the world something called “The Good News about Salvation.” That man (vehicle) that God would use was the Apostle Paul. How so? Take a look at Acts 20:24.

*Acts 20:24 “But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.”*

In Acts 20:24 we find the man that monopolized the word “Gospel” in the New Testament, using it 62 times. Paul says in verse 24, and by the way, this is the first time he will mention the word “euangelion” (Good News) in all of his preaching. Paul says “”none of these things move me ...” and he elaborates until he gets to the end and says... “To testify.”

Now we need to take a look at the original Greek word that is translated here as “to testify.” It is the Greek word – “diamarturasthai” = **διαμαρτυρασθαι**

The root word is “diamarterieoh.” = Strong’s Code # 1263.

The word begins with a key Greek prefix = “dia” which gives the word add punch and or dogmatic emphasis.

The root word = “martereoh” means “to testify” or to “witness solemnly”

So what is Paul saying in verse 24? Paul is saying:

**“my ministry is this –  
to affirm (testify) emphatically –  
the Good News about the Grace of God.”**

Now here is the first time, as far as the scriptures are concerned, that Paul announces to people that: “I have Good News” and then he defines it.

It is Good News – from God – about Grace – from God.

**Now Paul**, as stated a bit earlier here, was **THE MAN**.

Paul was the man that God especially set aside to define this Good News about the grace of God.

Now let’s establish that Paul was THE MAN from which we get the definition of the Gospel.

Keep in mind; you do not get the definition of the Gospel from Matthew, Mark, Luke or John.

There is one man whom God put his finger on and said: “you will be the man to define “Good News.” Which means, to get the Gospel, you’ve got to look at the writings of Paul.

# Chapter 5

## God's Teacher - Paul Explains The Gospel

### A. Paul's Teachings About the Gospel

The Gospel Salvation Message of Paul is laid out in detail in Paul's letter to the Romans. It is the broad teaching of what the Gospel and eternal salvation is all about.

Paul also provides comments about the Gospel and salvation in his other epistles, but of all the Pauline epistles, one letter stands out. It is a letter to the churches of Galatia, known as the Letter to the Galatians or the "Book of Galatians."

What is so special about Paul's letter to the churches in Galatia? The churches in the region known of Greece, known as Galatia had been having a problem with other teachers coming in from Israel teaching something different than Paul about how salvation was to be appropriated. These teachers were primarily devout orthodox Jews who were teaching what amounted to be a different gospel. Paul responds by writing a scathing letter to the churches in Galatia called the Epistle to the Galatians.

Paul's letter to the Galatians zeroes in on the heart of matter and teaches the Galatians that there is only ONE true Gospel and it is the one Gospel given to Paul, directly by Jesus Christ, face-to-face. Anything that deviates from the Gospel that Paul received from the Godhead is a false gospel that provides only eternal damnation, not eternal salvation.

Paul gives us a clear understanding in his letter to the Galatians of what the Gospel is all about no uncertain terms. It is about grace, not human effort.

In Galatians 1:6 the Apostle Paul, THE MAN, whom Jesus Christ personally gave face to face instructions in a super-natural manner, the full explanation of the Gospel and salvation says to the Galatians ...

*I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel*

“I marvel ... to another good news.” i.e. “gospel.”

**Paul makes his first point to the Galatians.**

**Point #1. The Gospel Can Be Counterfeited.**

## **B. Paul Warns of False, Counterfeit Gospels**

Notice that the Gospel can be “counterfeited” and proclaimed as a pretender to the Gospel. Yes, this verse tells us clearly that the Good News – The Gospel - can be counter-fitted. Let’s look at the background of the Galatians’ situation.

The Galatians had left THE GOSPEL and had bought into the claims of another gospel, a fake gospel. The Gospel can be counterfeited. Notice that the Galatians were being removed, so that they were buying into the counterfeit gospel – and the context of the book of Galatians is that the Galatians claimed that they were believers.

**Point #2. Pretend-Believers Can Be Fooled by a Counterfeit Gospel**

## **C. Paul Warns: Only 1 Gospel Saves**

### **1. False Gospels Fool People Into Thinking They’re Saved but in reality, they are unsaved.**

We can conclude that even people who claim to be “believers” may not in fact be saved. People claiming to be believers can be “snowed” or fooled into believing another gospel or a fake gospel. Just because someone claims to be a believer, doesn’t mean that they’re actually saved, even if there are certain outward signs of “fruit” done in the flesh as a basis for salvation. This was the case with the Galatians.

So Paul says in verses 6 and 7 ... “I marvel ... to another Gospel, which is not another.”

## **2. Fact: There are counter-fit Gospels.**

## **3. There is only ONE Gospel of salvation**

In other words, you can try to counter-fit the Gospel, but there's only ONE GOSPEL – there are not two or three different kinds or versions of a salvation Gospel. There is only one Gospel regarding salvation.

Even back in the early, 1<sup>st</sup> century church, people were hung up on and confused by the Good News of the Kingdom of Israel and Christ's teachings about Israel's earthly Kingdom and attempting to mix that with the Gospel of Salvation for eternal life for all of humanity, which is the only Gospel for the whole world and all of humanity.

Yet the Only One Gospel for all humanity can be counter-fitted. We see this in Galatians 1:7 in the terms “which is not another”

*Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.*

However, something can happen to the true Gospel.

## **3. The Gospel can be Twisted/Distorted.**

Verse 7 tells us that the Gospel can be twisted and distorted and the whole book of Galatians is about twisting the Gospel into a disoriented, erroneous, inaccurate, twisted gospel. Now as a reader, you may ask “Why is it so picky? Is it that important?”

The answer: Well it must be important because Paul is going to say in the context; “If you continue ... may God damn you.” That is the strongest statement Paul makes anywhere in his writings. You should also realize that – IF – there is only 1 Gospel – and only 1 Gospel that is the means of eternal salvation, then we'd better have that 1 Gospel straight and correctly understood because the consequences are enormous. In fact, getting the proper understanding of the 1 true Gospel of Salvation is a life or death issue, isn't it? It most assuredly is a Life and Death issue.

This is the issue in Galatians and Paul notes it is a life and death issue. Rejection of the 1 true Gospel, even by adding to it, negates it and results in eternal damnation.

So at least in Galatians 1:6 and 7, we know the 1 true Gospel can be counterfeited. We know that people claiming to be Christians will buy into and swallow a counter-fit gospel. We also know from verse 7 that the 1 True Gospel can be perverted or twisted.

#### **4. Adding to the Gospel Results in Damnation**

Now, notice in verses 8 and 9 Paul says:

*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*

*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.*

The phrase “Let him be accursed” at the end of verse 8 is the polite way of stating “let him be damned” or “Let him be God damned” which is the full force of the original text meaning.

The word “accursed” is the Greek word: “anathema” = ἀνάθεμα = Strong’s #331.

Strong’s concordance gives a short, generic definition = cursed or accursed, it can also mean to be banned or excommunicated in either a secular or theological sense depending upon its usage in general Greek literature.

Thayer’s Greek-English lexicon goes much deeper and notes that in secular Greek usage the term was applied to anything that was given to a pagan, religious temple as a votive offering, which was to be hung on the temple wall or pillar for all to see.

In the Greek version of the Old Testament it was applied to anything that was given to God without hope of being redeemed, i.e. an animal for sacrifice that was to be slain. See Leviticus 27:28-29.

Thayer goes on to note that when applied to a person it means someone who is doomed to destruction and without hope of redemption.

In the New Testament then, the term literally means someone who is eternally cursed and given over to the most dire judgment consequences. B-A-G-D's Lexicon, Moulton's Lexicon, and Mounce's Lexicon, also confirm this word to be a reference to Divine accursedness and without redemption.

## **5. Those who believe a different Gospel are damned**

So what is Paul saying here? "If anybody comes in and preaches a different (or another) gospel" Question: different than whose? Answer: "than that which we have preached unto you"

Let him be damned by God and in doing so he becomes an offering to be slain that cannot be redeemed which means he/she is eternally cut-off from God and or in the English vocabulary, the word "damned" is the single word which hits the Greek meaning square on the head without a lot of wordiness. Note who is doing the damning? God ultimately does this.

## **6. Tampering with the Gospel Leaves No Alternative but damnation.**

Why would Paul then note that the person is anathema or damned by God? Because tampering with the Gospel leaves no other alternative but damnation because only Christ's death is satisfactory to God, nothing more, nothing less. Any addition to the Gospel is tampering and tainting the whole salvation program. So yes, it is imperative that we accurately and completely understand what the Gospel is.

## **7. You Can Not Deviate From the 1 True Gospel**

You cannot vary one bit from the one true Gospel of Salvation that Paul proclaimed to us. If any of us do so, may he/she be eternally damned by God because that is what God requires – eternal damnation for any other means of solving the sin barrier problem between man and God.

Now there are some who might claim that Paul has no right to make such a statement. It's a normal reaction and Paul realizes that, so he proceeds to spend a lot of time and words telling us something else. Paul tells us that the reason he is so emphatic about the one True Gospel being the only one and the only means for salvation.

Paul claims that he directly received the Gospel from Jesus Christ in person. It was communicated directly to Paul by Jesus Christ, face to face, without the aid of any human being or teacher. Paul develops this in Galatians chapter 1.

Now it should also be noted that Paul makes this emphatic statement **not once but twice**. He repeats his statement of verse 8 again in verse 9 as a way of emphasizing the statement as being **an absolute certainty**. In other words, **damnation is a guarantee** for anyone altering the Gospel by adding to it or taking away from it.

Now here's a question. What are we to conclude from Paul's statements in these verses?

## **8. The 1 True Gospel: a Fixed & Inflexible Message**

Answer: The Gospel – the one, true Gospel of Salvation – is a fixed, inflexible message. Is that a fair conclusion to be drawn from these passages? Isn't that what Paul is telling us?

Isn't Paul saying:

“If you preach any other “good news” beside that which I have given you, let him be God-damned.

“And if you vary from that message which you have received...” -- what is Paul saying?

Paul is saying that the Good News, THE GOSPEL, is a fixed, absolute, inflexible, never-ending, cannot be added to, cannot be modified, dogmatic, never to be changed, fixed, inflexible message. Yes I repeated that for added emphasis to drive the point home.

The Gospel cannot be altered without the one altering it being damned eternally. That is the whole point of Galatians chapter 1, verses 6 through 9.

As I noted earlier, such emphatic and drastic statements could cause some readers to bristle with indignation and respond to Paul saying – “Paul, who do you think you are?” “You have no right to make such statements.” “Paul you have such a fantastic ego, to the point of sin.”

## 9. Paul Responds To Potential Objections

Paul realizes that sort of an objection and cuts it off with a response beforehand by making the statements found in verses 11 and 12.

*But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.*

*For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

Note here that verse 11 – “preached by me” means the Gospel that you can’t vary from and it is not originated from a man.

Then in verse 12, Paul adds: “For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it.” Notice Paul is simply saying the whole normal process for receiving a message was passed over and not utilized.

Now, how do you and I get the Gospel today?

## 10. The Gospel Comes to us in 2 Steps

I was taught the Gospel, and for most of us, it comes in 2 steps.

**a. Step 1. We were taught the Gospel by the Bible (i.e. the Apostle Paul).**

**b. Step 2. Somebody took what Paul said and explained it to us, you and I.**

**So we were taught the Gospel.**

However in Galatians 1: 12, Paul is sitting back and saying – “I know there is Peter and all the apostles, but I want to claim something to you – I didn’t learn one thing from Peter, nothing from James, nothing from the rest of the Apostles. I was taught, not by any man ... **but by the revelation from Jesus Christ, directly.**”

**So what is Paul telling us? He is saying that –**

**“Jesus Christ died, was buried, rose, went back to heaven and took His place at the Father’s right hand and later on, Jesus put his finger on me, stepped off of the throne, and appeared to me and said, ‘Paul, here is Good News from Myself to humanity. I’m putting it in your hands, - you announce it, and there is only ONE, GOOD NEWS.’ “**

And so Paul simply says, **“I insist that in this document (letter) written out to you here is the same information that God handed to me and labeled “Good News.” It is something you don’t mess with, tamper with, or play around with.”**

Paul is also saying: **“God handed me a Gospel, there’s only one – it is fixed, it is absolute, it’s unchangeable and I have taken that one single message without any additions or changes and I am passing it on to you, just like I got it, straight from God, the Son’s mouth.”**

Can it get any more authoritative than that? Can Paul be any more authoritative?

Does Paul then have the right to warn us, that any tampering with the message will result in eternal damnation? You bet he does and you and I had better pay attention to it.

Failure to do so, results in eternal damnation because tampering with the Gospel means that we never understood it to begin with.

**IF we didn’t understand the one true Gospel to begin with, then we never believed the one True Gospel. Believing it requires a correct understanding of the one true Gospel. IF, instead of believing the one, true Gospel and have added to it, we have then believed a perverted and false idea and we never, ever had salvation, to begin with because we never understood the true Gospel in the first place to have the salvation process to begin with.**

Bottom line: Do not vary from the Gospel message that Paul proclaimed. It is not to be tampered with, so that the preaching of the Gospel is a very important thing, as far as maintaining accuracy.

# **Chapter 6**

## **Answering the Question: What is The Gospel**

### **3 Key Elements**

As we noted in previous chapters, Paul was designated by God to be the sole instructor of the nuances of The Gospel of Salvation and Eternal Life for all of humanity. For that reason, we need to look and find specifically what the Gospel of Salvation actually is.

By that, I mean that we need to understand the actual Gospel itself. Seldom is the Gospel itself isolated in presentations. It is always sandwiched with necessary and additional truth, such as the reason why there is a Gospel in the first place. That usually precedes the Gospel itself. Then after the Gospel is stated, comes the information as to how we are to appropriate it, which of course is – believe it.

Yet, so often, the actual, one true Gospel itself, is not quite so easily recognized by Christians because it is seldom by itself. For example:

In my freshman year of studies at Calvary Bible College one of the classes I took in the very first semester was on a study of the Gospels of the New Testament. The professor of that class gave the class an overnight assignment. Define just the one true Gospel in 25 words or less. I think there were about 100 students in the class. The next day, not one student had written out the correct answer as the Gospel was defined by the Apostle Paul in his first letter to the church at Corinth in chapter 15. Keep in mind that class response came in 1971.

The church, even years ago was not properly teaching the finer points of Salvation or the Gospel and from all that I can gather, nothing has changed for the better since then, despite all the alleged “advancements” in technical knowledge and teaching. The American church is still primarily as ignorant of the basics of Christianity today as it was decades ago. In fact, the church has pretty much been ignorant since the end of the first century of the Church era. For that reason, it is incumbent to look very carefully at Paul’s writing in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians chapter 15.

First Corinthians chapter 15 gives us the explanation of how Paul received the Gospel from Jesus Christ. In this chapter, Paul is going to define the Gospel and I'm going to put it down in terms of 3 points and if any of these 3 points are omitted – you do NOT have the Gospel.

## **There are 3 Key Points To The Gospel**

### **#1. The Specific Work**

To have the Gospel you must have a specific work. It must be a specific work. See 1st Corinthians 15:1.

*Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;*

*By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.*

Notice in verse 2 is the “Saving Gospel” as “Good News about salvation.

“If you keep in memory” = to hold fast.

Now moving on to verses 3-5

*V. 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;*

*V. 4 “and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures*

*V. 5 “And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve”*

What is Paul saying? Let me paraphrase:

“God handed me a message – I’m going to deliver to you what the message was...”

In other words: The message comes from God to Paul, and Paul is going to now write down to you what God’s message was, just exactly like or how God gave it to Paul.

So Paul gave the intact gospel with no variance, no variations from what God gave to Paul.

Notice Verse 3b – “that Christ ...”

Now the Greek word “that” - is the word - “oti” in Greek = “**οτι**”

It functions in the Greek language like a quotation mark, because the Greek language does not contain a tool for quotation markings like we have in English.

So that Paul is saying:

**“Quote – Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures ...”** (verse 3 and the quote continues into verse 4)

Quote continues ...”**and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures...and that he was buried and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve.**” At this point the quotation marks of “oti” end. So that all of the above verses 3 through 5 is a single quotation directly attributable to God via Paul

**Now note the above 3 verses have 4 key verbs.**

#1. Christ died

#2. Christ was buried

#3. Christ rose

#4. Christ was seen

**Those 4 words make up something that Paul calls “Good News.” (Christ: died, was buried, rose, was seen)**

Now how do these 4 words/verbs relate to each other?

**Christ died – Christ rose:** These are the key ideas that **Christ did something.**

What about the “was buried” and “was seen” – these **are not actions taken by Christ**, but **were testimonies instead to the other two verbs.**

**Christ died – others buried him – because he was indeed, dead.**

**Christ rose – others saw him – because he was indeed alive.**

**Christ died – that is a stated fact.**

Prove it.

**“He was buried” by others, who were alive to testify, that He was dead.**

**“Christ rose” - that is a stated fact.**

Prove it.

**“Christ was seen” – people saw him.**

So, that the words, **“buried and seen,”** are doing something. They are **underscoring** the **fact** that **Christ really died** and that **He literally rose from the dead.**

So that you couldn't really say – “Well, He really didn't die, He swooned on the cross. **You're forgetting the fact that they buried Him.**”

You say: “Christ rose” was someone's imagination. No, Paul spends several more verses establishing that “He rose” and we've got witnesses, many, many witnesses.

SO, what is Paul underscoring here?

**Paul is underscoring that:**

**The Gospel begins with basic, specific, historical facts.**

**Something actually, really happened.**

Now, if you were Satan, and IF this was part of the Gospel – which it is – can you think of one mode whereby you can pervert the Gospel? One approach that is?

It is pretty simple and pretty common. Implant in people's minds that Christ really didn't die and He didn't really come out of the grave. It is very common for people to believe the false idea that Christ's body didn't come out of the grave, just His Spirit. No, that is a denial of the fact that He really, literally rose from the dead. The apostle John in his gospel writings makes it a point throughout his gospel of the physical aspects of Jesus life both before his death, and his physicalness after His resurrection. He was physically touched, embraced physically, by many. He ate and consumed food. He fixed food for others. It was indeed a physical body which Jesus Christ had.

The 2 basic attacks on the Gospel are Rationalism, that says the Resurrection couldn't occur and also there is the attack of 'mysticism denies something really happened in space and time but instead was a mystical dream-like experience.

No, He really died on a cross, on this Earth and He really was raised from the dead, bodily and is very real.

**Christ performed a specific work.**

Now coupled with Christ's specific work, we've got a second thing in the Gospel.

# A Second Key Point To The Gospel

## #2. The Gospel Involves A Specific Accomplishment

If you don't have this accomplishment included, you do not have the Gospel. The specific accomplishment is found in Verse 3.

I want you to notice something.

What was accomplished by his death, which was a work?

**“He died for our sins.”**

Yes, Christ rose, but that is not what saves us. His Resurrection proves that His death was adequate before God. His burial is not saving, nor is being seen, saving. So what saves?

**Notice in verse 3 that you have a specific accomplishment.**

“Christ died for our sins.”

**“Died” is a work – Christ’s work**

**“For our sins” – is an accomplishment.**

Notice the word “for” is the Greek word “**huper.**” = **ὑπερ**

**ὑπερ** = “**huper**” means **“on behalf of.”**

**Christ died – “on behalf of – our sins”**

Now notice what is very clear in the text.

**Jesus Christ personally took up the problem of my sins and your sins.**

He personally took up the problem of the sins of all humanity.

Christ personally took up the problem of the sins of all humanity at His death.

**Notice that when He did this, it was at His death.**

Now let me ask you a couple of questions.

Question: “Where were you (or I) when He handled your (my) sin problem?”

Question: “Were we around to be consulted?”

Did God say, “Now look, we’ve got a little problem here, you’re a sinner and this creates problems between you and me, so now I solicit your cooperation in the solution of the problem?” Or did He say: “If I provide salvation for you, will you buy it, or accept it?”

We all know that when Christ died on the cross, we weren’t consulted.

We weren’t even around to be consulted.

This means that Christ, personally dealt with the sin problem apart from your (my) cooperation in any sense of the word.

**Until you get that understanding straight in your mind – that you have absolutely nothing, NOTHING, whatsoever to do with a solution of the sin problem in any degree you can’t be saved.**

**There is no salvation available to anyone who thinks that they have to or must do something or anything to obtain salvation.**

**God totally resolved the sin problem, completely by Himself.**

**We were not involved in any way, and the problem was totally solved back at the cross, once and for all time, not just up until the present moment.**

**Until you understand this, you’re not saved  
You have no eternal life.**

**No human being has any part in salvation or the salvation process.**

**We have NO Part in salvation.**

Let me repeat that again.

**You don't have any part, whatsoever in salvation. You can't have any part whatsoever in salvation.**

**It is all God's work,  
“on your behalf.”**

**So that, man's part in understanding the Gospel is:**

**Sit down. Shut up. Listen.**

**You have no part whatsoever in salvation.**

**Christ died for our sins**

**That IS  
THE GOOD NEWS!**

# It is THE GOSPEL

**Now let me ask you another question.**

Is that an offer of an experience? – “Christ died for our sins.”

Is that offering you an experience? NO.

Is that an offer to change my life? NO.

**Do you know what this is? -**

**“Christ died for our sins.”**

**It is an objective fact**

**It is an announcement of an objective fact. It is ‘Good News.’**

God says: “I have done something. Christ died on behalf of your sins.”

Christ did something – a work – on behalf of our sins.

**His specific work was “death.”**

**The death accomplished something. It was on behalf of our sins.**

Now, let this question come up in your mind.

**How much of an accomplishment was it?**

**How good of a job did Christ do?**

And that brings us to the last detail of the Gospel – a specific person.

## **A Third Key Point To The Gospel**

### **#3. The Gospel Involves A Specific Person**

Question: When the sin problem was dealt with – who handled the problem? Who handled the sins? Who handled your sins?

Answer: First Corinthians 15:3 makes it very clear who handled them.

“**Christ died**” – that is Christ’s work.

**Question: Why did He do it?**

**Answer: “on behalf of our sins.”**

**Question: Was Christ’s work adequate?**

**Are you going to say that the accomplishment  
was fantastic:**

**It dealt with 99% of the sin problem?**

**But that you**

**ALSO MUST CONTRIBUTE**

**in Some Way?**

**If you say that, you are insulting the person who did it,  
namely, Jesus Christ, the Son of God.**

**Can you conceive of this?**

**God did NOT do a complete job  
of providing salvation????**

**Are You Saying**

**God didn't do an adequate job????**

**God Says He Did Do An Adequate Job  
The Resurrection Confirms It**

**Are you calling God a liar?**

If you're thinking Christ's death only handled some or most of the sin problem like maybe 99.9999% of the problem, but there's a teeny, weenie bit left for us to do then you've insulted God.

**You're saying He wasn't big enough for the job?**

**You're saying He made an error?**

**Your saying He failed to do the job completely?**

**You've slapped Him in the face  
and you've also**

**Rejected Salvation!**

# WHY Do I Say This?

**Because you are then adding to the Gospel a human addition, you're adding a human work effort into the salvation equation.**

**Remember Galatians 1:6-9 and the damnation for anyone who adds to the Gospel of Salvation.**

**Look also at Galatians 2:21**

***“I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.”***

**Remember, it was earlier noted that we as humans can have absolutely nothing whatsoever to do with the provision of salvation. Notice in Galatians 2:21.**

**Here in the verse you have the idea that if you try to intrude on the True Gospel, the Gospel of Salvation given by Jesus Christ to Paul and he repeated it verbatim – then what happens? If human effort is involved, then Christ died in vain.**

**“... if righteousness (salvation) comes by the law...(that is, being good or doing good) what conclusion do we come to?”**

**Answer: “Christ died in vain.”**

Notice that the Greek word for vain is “dohreahn.” = **δωρεάν**

It is a Greek word that means **“undeservedly”** or **“without cause or reason.”**

So that, what is Paul saying?

**“If you can contribute something to obtaining salvation, if you can contribute something to the salvation process, - please explain the cross.”**

**Paul is saying colloquially in Galatians 2:21 that IF you can accomplish your salvation by what you do, the cross is the greatest rip-off that ever occurred. How do you explain His death?**

**If you or I can or must somehow contribute to the salvation process,**

**then there was no need for Christ to die period**

**in other words**

**Christ died without a reason**

**In other words**

**Christ died needlessly**

**if we can help solve the sin problem**

**Why Conclude That Logic?**

**Because if we can do something to appease God,**

**then we can solve the sin problem without Christ's death,**

**and thus Christ died without reason**

**and thus He died undeservedly.**

**Paul is saying that:**  
**Christ's death would be unnecessary**  
**If**  
**our actions**  
**can be part of**  
**the solution**  
**to the sin problem**

**That is the ultimate conclusion that is being proposed when someone attempts to add their own human actions, activities, good deeds, and good works into the salvation process.**

**Warning: If you put your fingers into  
the salvation process – you have just  
declared that Christ's death was  
unnecessary and undeserved.**

**In Doing So**

**You Are**

**ETERNALLY**

**DAMNED**

For those of you who think that you can do something to please God for solving the sin problem, do you realize that such thinking then also calls into question, the righteous character of God, and or also God's rationale – for giving His son to die unnecessarily.

**Those who add their own actions  
into the salvation process  
totally VOID Salvation.**

Unless they reject that notion before their death, they will be eternally damned.

This attempt to add human effort into the salvation process is blasphemous and it totally derails the concept of salvation by grace through faith alone. Those how add to the Gospel of Salvation by Grace through faith alone have equated their own abilities with that of Christ in terms of pleasing God.

Ephesians 2:8-9 states unequivocally a description of how the True Gospel works.

*“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*

*“Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

Grace is the word that means “undeserved, unearned gift” Grace is not something you can earn or pay for.

“Saved” is the Greek word “sohdzoh” = σωζω and it means saved, but it’s a verb that just happens to be **a perfect participle** in Ephesians 2: 8.

A perfect participle is a word that involves an activity that begins at a point of time in the past (at the time of crucifixion) and continues up to the present moment of time and continues on and on and on forever and ever and ever throughout infinity.

**A perfect participle means that the word is a process that never ends.**

**A perfect participle means**

**It is an Eternal Process**

**It can also never be exited from that process**

**The process can not be stopped**

**Salvation can never be stopped once started**

**So what does Ephesians 2: 8-9 tell us?**

**So that by a free, unearned, undeserved gift we were saved at a point of time in the past and that salvation has continued to the present moment and continues on into infinity, forever, non-stop throughout all eternity.**

And verse 9 tells us that this salvation is not by human actions or good deeds.

In other words, there is **nothing we can do** or **participate in** for **salvation**. God handled it all by Himself – and it has eternal results – and those results last forever and **we cannot get out of the process, not matter what we do.**

**We can conclude then that with the True Gospel, you have the complete adequacy of the work of Christ.**

There are a couple of additional passages to prove this.

John 17: 4 says:

*I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.*

Also John 19:30 says

*When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.*

In both cases we see “the work” of the Gospel being finished. So that, the work of Christ was finished on the cross.

# **Chapter 7**

## **Without 3 Factors**

### **You Do Not Have the Gospel**

**Now, without these 3 factors you do not have the Gospel.**

**#1. A Specific Work**

**#2. A Specific Accomplishment**

**#3. A Specific Person**

You must have included a specific work – Christ died. That work accomplished something – it was on behalf of our sins, and the whole issue revolves around the Person who accomplished the removing of the sin barrier forever. And that is expressed in “What is the Gospel?”

**The Gospel is this:**

**“Christ died  
for our sins.”**

Or to put it more literally in the original language of the Greek

**“Christ died  
on behalf of  
our sins.”**

**That is THE GOSPEL**

**Now, can I go back and support what I stated at the beginning of this publication when I stated earlier that you cannot find the Gospel in John 3:16?**

Check John 3:16 for the Gospel.

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

What is missing from the verse? Is there anything there in the verse that says “He died for our sins?” Notice that the True Gospel is NOT in the verse.

Yet, what have we been taught in church and or Sunday School from Childhood on up?

Someone wants to be saved, what do you do? If you’ve been trained in Sunday School, you were probably taught to quote John 3:16, right?

Well John 3:16 tells them “HOW” to be saved – by believing (no works) but John 3:16 omits one thing – It omits THE GOSPEL.

The work was “Christ died.”

What did it accomplish? “On behalf of our sins” and it was accomplished by a specific Person – Jesus Christ.

Does the accomplishment have to be included in the Gospel?

I think maybe from the passages read in Paul’s writings, that Paul might lean toward the fact that we ought to include the accomplishment. Am I correct in drawing that conclusion? I’m being a bit sarcastic with that statement but the answer is emphatically, that the accomplishment must be included. The accomplishment **MUST** be included in the Gospel as also the Specific Person, Jesus Christ and the specific work.

# Chapter 8

## 4 Conclusions to be Drawn About the Gospel

NOW – let’s draw 4 conclusions about the Gospel since the Gospel is the fact that “Christ died for our sins.”

IF words mean anything, we can conclude this:

**#1. The barrier of sin is removed**

**#2. Without human assistance, without human cooperation**

**#3. The Issue is our attitude toward this accomplishment**

*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*

**The issue is: my attitude toward the objective fact that Christ died on the cross on behalf of my sins.**

**#4. We do NOT have the Gospel until we see:**

1. A specific work – Christ’s Death
2. A specific accomplishment -- sin barrier removed  
“on behalf of our sins”
3. A specific person – Jesus Christ

**This is called “GOOD NEWS”  
“THE GOSPEL”**

## **Final Remarks:**

**Now, unless I'm way off base here, I'm afraid that many/most evangelists out there don't give out much "Good News."**

**Most Preachers/Ministers don't proclaim the True Gospel either.**

**In other words, there's not a whole lot of spreading of the Good News going on, is there? I mean really now, do you see much of what we've covered here being presented in churches today? Do you see or hear it much from TV or radio presentations?**

Even Gospel tracts – I don't see much of the True Gospel in Gospel tracts these days, because the Gospel is not being proclaimed nor is it being taught properly with those 3 factors which we just finished examining.

**It's getting harder and harder to find someone out there proclaiming that salvation was accomplished by God without human assistance.**

It was a matter of His work – His death on a cross – removing the sin barrier forever and my relationship to it is simply that I will accept or not accept that fact.

**It is as simple as believing or not believing**

Now, you may say that is awfully simple. That's right. That is why the Word of God uses those simple terms – because **it is so simple.**

**Now, virtually every minister, evangelist, missionary, and lay people trying to witness out there in the real world - wants you and I and everyone else to jump through some set of hoops for salvation.**

**Question:**

**Has Anyone Ever Been Saved  
By Alter Calls and Invitations?**

**Answer:**

**NO! NEVER!**

**Here's the reason why  
no one has ever been saved  
by an "Altar Call"  
or  
"Invitation after a church service."**

Have you ever noted how many church services or evangelism services end with a 5, 10 minutes or maybe even an hour in some cases, "invitation" – with pleading and cajoling and crying and whining, and all sorts of emotional sales pitches?

It is like they're trying to sell you on the idea of salvation.

In most cases, those folks are presenting a false gospel.

In most cases, if you look closely and carefully, you'll find "human effort" somehow thrown into the mix.

If nothing else, they'll ask you to raise your hand, or stand up or most likely to come forward to the front of the church and maybe even kneel at the altar for prayer.

Nearly everyone will then tell you to pray the "sinner's prayer."

And of course, there will be those who will say that you're not really saved until you also get dunked or sprinkled with a water baptism.

Those who do these things are promoting a false gospel. They are promoting a gospel that mixes human actions, human activities, and human deeds as part of the salvation process.

Now, if confronted they'll either deny it, claiming Ephesians 2:8-9 is what they're preaching and proclaiming but their actions betray them. The fact that you **MUST DO** something is a form of Legalism that negates Christ's death on behalf of your sins.

Why? Because if you do that – you've just derailed grace and you have added into the mix a human action, a human activity.

**No one, and I mean – NO ONE – has ever, ever, ever been saved by going forward to the front of the Church or to the front of a podium or stage. No one has ever been saved by praying a prayer.**

**It has NEVER happened.**

**Prayer saves no one!**

**Christ only saves  
and it is by  
a  
mental attitude**

**Salvation Comes By Faith  
Faith is Believing  
Believing is a Mental Attitude  
Believing is a Mental Conclusion  
Believing is a Mental Acceptance**

**Salvation occurs when someone comes to a mental conclusion which concludes or believes that Christ died for their sins or that Christ died on behalf of their sins.**

**The how of salvation happens  
by believing the simple fact that  
Christ died for or on behalf of our sins.**

**The very moment someone comes into mental acceptance of that objective fact, and accepts it as a fact that Christ died on their behalf and that they're believing it, and relying on it – that is Faith that results in salvation.**

It is the faith in Christ's death, on their behalf that saves them.

It is a mental attitude of acceptance of that fact.

Saving Faith is not a prayer, therefore prayer cannot save anyone that is a human effort. Prayer however is a common result of – after the fact that salvation has already occurred.

Saving Faith is not going forward at an altar call or invitation, because those are human efforts

Saving Faith is not being baptized. Yes, I know, that will shock some Baptists. It will also shock a lot of Catholics, Presbyterians, Episcopalians and Methodists too.

Those might come after the fact, but they do not have any role in the actual act of salvation, because the work of salvation was totally that of Jesus Christ via His death.

**If you are reading this and for the first time have come to the realization that Faith alone in Christ's work on the cross on your behalf is what removes your sin problem with God, then ...**

## **Welcome to the family of God**

You have just accepted salvation by grace through faith alone and not by anything you can do to earn it. If this is the case, feel free to contact the e-mail address below and tell us about it. It is not necessary for salvation, but you are more than welcome to share that with us and or to ask questions or seek further guidance. Oh, and you will not be hounded afterwards, nor pestered nor spammed.

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