



Jesus... the key to setting the captives free! ~ John 8:31-32

The Gospel of Jesus Christ

" I was in prison and you came to visit me." ~ Matthew 25:36

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March 7, 2021

The Gospel of Jesus Christ

Dear Reader,

I pray this letter finds you safe, healthy, and daily experiencing the love of the Father, the grace of Jesus and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit!

Wow! These are definitely crazy times we are living through. I believe we are living in the last seconds of the last minutes of the last days. In my opinion, we have entered the beginning of sorrows, or the beginning of birth pains. Therefore, we are watching many prophecies in Daniel and Revelation unfold before our very eyes, as well as a large number of the signs Jesus spoke about in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21. What an honor it is that God chose us to be alive during these very important closing moments of this age. Let us all commit to well-represent Jesus to the world!

I am assuming almost everyone who reads and studies this teaching is "born again". If you are not yet saved, I pray you will make that decision during this study. Because of the times, it is so very important that those of you who are true believers let your light shine in the midst of ever-increasing darkness. We must be salt that flavors and preserves. As chaos increases, our peace, calm and joy in the middle of the storm will draw unbelievers to come to you and ask how they can have what you possess in Christ Jesus. Let the reality and sincerity of your genuine faith be evident to all in the way you live daily. Actions speak louder than words.

The purpose of teaching on "***The Gospel of Jesus Christ***" is to better equip you with the tools you need to explain your eternal life and hope in Jesus to others. It should also solidify your confidence in your own salvation as you take time to meditate on the Word of God, and especially on the unconditional, everlasting love of the Father towards you. The Gospel is more than most of us realize! The enclosed scriptures and articles are selected to show you and others the magnificence and wonder of His complete salvation available for those who truly believe, receive, and repent.

You are encouraged to study and save this teaching, so you can use it to help and encourage others when they come to you. We are entering the times when Jesus said, "men's hearts would be failing them for fear of looking after those things coming upon the Earth." We must "work while it is day because night is coming when no man can work." Your prayers will become ever more powerful as you study and believe the Word of God. Stay submitted and surrendered daily to the Lordship of Jesus and the Leadership of the Holy Spirit.

Let me strongly encourage you to realize what an outstanding opportunity God has given you to positively impact the Kingdom during the coming days. As I write to you, in some prisons, outside religious volunteers are still locked out. ***However, the Gospel is not locked out! Steel bars, concrete and razor wire do not stop the Holy Spirit.*** The Gospel is still the power of God unto salvation! (Romans 1:16) You are God's Ambassador. You are able to minister more effectively and timely than any outside volunteer could ever do. Ask God for more boldness to speak the Word of God (Acts 4:27-31; 5:41-42).

I pray you will personally rededicate your life to go "all in, and all out" for Jesus. Ask the Holy Spirit to set you apart from the world, and make you ever more holy daily. Make up your mind to do the best you can to be obedient in every area of your life, and repent quickly if you fall. ***This is absolutely not the time to be "lukewarm", "on the fence", or "playing with God".***

Remember, Jesus loves you and so do we!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen".

Stephen Canup
President

" I was in prison and you came to visit me." ~ Matthew 25:36

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From Diving Deeper: A Daily Leap into a Life More Abundant

By Stephen E. Canup

February 26

BE PREPARED

2 Timothy 4:2

“Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.”

God wants to use you right where you are. Many people tell me they want to “do prison ministry” when they are released. But I tell them that the most important person in prison ministry is the turned-on, committed Christian still locked up. That is the person who can see firsthand who needs help, who needs prayer, who needs encouragement – right there on the inside.

In fact, I believe if you are not already engaging in prison ministry on the inside, you won’t do it effectively, if at all, on the outside.

You should become a prayer warrior by praying boldly and diligently for the lost souls around you, for the officers in your unit, for the facility’s administration, and for your family. In fact, praying for your family is one of the most powerful and beneficial gifts you can give them. As I learned to pray inside prison I saw the Lord move in mighty ways that built my faith and made me want to pray more!

God is preparing you right where you are. If you fully surrender to Him in obedience He will achieve remarkable results. You are part of God’s Special Forces operating behind enemy lines!

TODAY’S CHALLENGE:

Tell the Father you are fully surrendering to Him so He can minister to others through you by His Holy Spirit. Ask Him to show how you can be more effective.

Be prepared.

Dive Deeper: Study 2 Timothy 3:1 – 4:8.

OUR GREAT SALVATION

By Rev. Mark Stripling

A man in his mid-forties moved to our small northwest Texas town and began dating one of the ladies in our church. I asked "Mary" about his spiritual condition, as any good pastor concerned about his flock should do, and she said he was not a Christian, but was open to the idea. He began faithfully attending church with her, so I began to feel a little better about the situation. After several weeks of dating, this man came by the church just before noon one weekday. He could not wait until the next Sunday!

He said, "Pastor, Mary is such a wonderful Christian lady. She has touched my life so greatly, and what she has, I want!" We knelt at the wooden altar of our church, and I explained to him the "Plan of Salvation." He had heard this every Sunday now for a while, but once again I explained that he must believe in his heart that Jesus is God's Son, that he died on a cross for his sins and the sins of the whole world, and that after his crucifixion Jesus was resurrected from the dead. If he believed these things, then next he must confess and "repent of his sins," and receive Christ as his savior and Lord. The Bible says do this and you will be saved.

As we knelt in prayer, the moment he confessed his sins and asked for forgiveness, his body shuddered, his head fell, and tears began to splash upon that wooden altar! In an instant, the savior had met the sinner! I had just witnessed the very moment that the guilt of sin was lifted off of him, his soul was converted, and he was born again! He felt it. He knew it. He was forgiven. He was saved! He and Mary soon became husband and wife, and their life together began as it should, with Jesus at the center of their lives AND their marriage.

In over 40 years of ministry, I have witnessed this event of "salvation" occur many, many different times, and in different ways. Some have immediate relief with tears and newfound joy. My own salvation experience was somewhat subdued and the effects delayed. I shed no tears and had no stirring moment the night I prayed to receive Christ. But over the next few days I noticed my behavior had changed. I stopped my horrible habit of cussing. I laid down to sleep at night in total peace instead of being afraid of dying during the night and waking up in Hell. No longer did I crave cigarettes and booze. I knew something had happened.

So I called that evangelist and asked him point blank, "What has happened to me!" He simply replied, "You have been born again. You are saved. You are not the same person you were before." This is the miracle that God provides in Our Great Salvation. The Bible word "salvation" comes from the Greek word "Soteria," which means deliverance, preservation, and safety. AW Pink refers to it as a 4 point salvation: saved from the penalty, power, presence, and more importantly, the pleasure of sin! Salvation says I am free from my past sinful life, that God has totally forgiven me for everything! I John 1:7, "The blood of Jesus his son cleanses us from all sin."

Salvation says I am loved, kept, protected, and preserved to live in peace with God today and every day. And salvation says that my future is secure through my faith in Jesus Christ, with the guarantee of eternal life in Heaven. Your past, present, and future is taken care of through your salvation! And none of us can ever argue our way to heaven! We can't say, "I am a good person. I've never done anything that should cause me to go to a place like hell!" No! Romans 3:10 says, "There is none righteous, no, not one." No one can say, "I joined the church, I have been baptized, I've taken communion, so I must be OK." No. "For ALL have sinned and come short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23). We are all sinners in need of a savior. The amazing thing is that God took it upon himself to provide a way for sinful man to be saved from the penalty of sin and restored to fellowship with him. Romans 6:23, "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Ephesians 2 tells us that God is rich in mercy, because of his great love for us. He would much rather forgive you than judge you! Ephesians 2:8-10 NLT says, "God saved you by his grace when you believed.

And you can't take credit for this, it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago."

This is what salvation is all about in a nutshell. God has a great plan, and a great future in mind for every person on earth. But that plan can only go into effect when we surrender our life to Christ as Lord. What is causing you to delay knowing Christ? What else has to happen before you say, "God, I am ready. I know I need Jesus in my life?" Mark 8:37-38, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and loose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" The Bible says "Today is the day of salvation!" Would you take time to meet with him now?

There's an old song titled, "At An Altar of Prayer." "At an altar of prayer I met Jesus, with compassion He welcomed me there, my burdens, so heavy, were lifted, when we met at an altar of prayer." If you don't know Jesus as Lord today, the Bible says he is looking for you! Luke 19:10, "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which is lost." No matter who you are. No matter where you are. No matter what you have done. Jesus has been waiting to meet with you the moment you call upon his name!

There can be an altar of prayer anywhere you are. A chair, a stool, a bedside, standing, sitting, kneeling, or flat on your face, nose to the floor. Romans 10:13, For "Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." No exceptions! No "I've sinned too bad." No "He will never forgive me." No "I need to clean my life up before I can be saved." No! Come just as you are. Come today! He will save you as he has the millions who have come before you. You have no sins he has not seen before, and no sins he has not forgiven before. "The Blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from ALL sin." (1 John 1:7). This Great Salvation offer is for you. It is free. It is a gift, just receive it! Would you meet him at the Alter of Prayer? Today is your day, In Jesus Name!!

Question: "What is the Romans Road to salvation?"

Answer: The Romans Road to salvation is a way of explaining the good news of salvation using verses from the Book of Romans. It is a simple yet powerful method of explaining why we need salvation, how God provided salvation, how we can receive salvation, and what are the results of salvation.

The first verse on the Romans Road to salvation is Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." We have all sinned. We have all done things that are displeasing to God. There is no one who is innocent. Romans 3:10-18 gives a detailed picture of what sin looks like in our lives. The second Scripture on the Romans Road to salvation, Romans 6:23, teaches us about the consequences of sin - "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." The punishment that we have earned for our sins is death. Not just physical death, but eternal death!

The third verse on the Romans Road to salvation picks up where Romans 6:23 left off, "but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 5:8 declares, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Jesus Christ died for us! Jesus' death paid for the price of our sins. Jesus' resurrection proves that God accepted Jesus' death as the payment for our sins.

The fourth stop on the Romans Road to salvation is Romans 10:9, "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." Because of Jesus' death on our behalf, all we have to do is believe in Him, trusting His death as the payment for our sins - and we will be saved! Romans 10:13 says it again, "for everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Jesus died to pay the penalty for our sins and rescue us from eternal death. Salvation, the forgiveness of sins, is available to anyone who will trust in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

The final aspect of the Romans Road to salvation is the results of salvation. Romans 5:1 has this wonderful message, "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Through Jesus Christ we can have a relationship of peace with God. Romans 8:1 teaches us, "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." Because of Jesus' death on our behalf, we will never be condemned for our sins. Finally, we have this precious promise of God from Romans 8:38-39, "For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Would you like to follow the Romans Road to salvation? If so, here is a simple prayer you can pray to God. Saying this prayer is a way to declare to God that you are relying on Jesus Christ for your salvation. The words themselves will not save you. Only faith in Jesus Christ can provide salvation! "God, I know that I have sinned against you and am deserving of punishment. But Jesus Christ took the punishment that I deserve so that through faith in Him I could be forgiven. With your help, I place my trust in You for salvation. Thank You for Your wonderful grace and forgiveness - the gift of eternal life! Amen!"

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Question: "What is the gospel of Jesus Christ?"

Answer: The word *gospel* means “good news,” so the gospel of Christ is the good news of His coming to provide forgiveness of sins for all who will believe (Colossians 1:14; Romans 10:9). Since the first man’s sin, mankind has been under the condemnation of God (Romans 5:12). Because everyone breaks God’s perfect law by committing sin, everyone is guilty (Romans 3:23). The punishment for the crime of sin is physical death (Romans 6:23) and then an eternity spent in a place of punishment (Revelation 20:15; Matthew 25:46). This eternal separation from God is also called the “second death” (Revelation 20:14–15).

The bad news that all are guilty of sin and condemned by God is countered by the gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ. God, because of His love for the world, has made a way for man to be forgiven of their sins (John 3:16). He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to take the sins of mankind on Himself through death on a cross (1 Peter 2:24). In placing our sin on Christ, God ensured that all who will believe in the name of Jesus will be forgiven (Acts 10:43). Jesus’ resurrection guarantees the justification of all who believe (Romans 4:25).

The Bible specifies the content of the gospel message: “Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time” (1 Corinthians 15:1–6). In this passage, Paul emphasizes the primacy of the gospel—it is of “first importance.” The gospel message contains two historical facts, both supported by Scripture: Christ’s death and His resurrection. Both those facts are bolstered by other proofs: Christ’s death is proved by His burial, and His resurrection is proved by the eyewitnesses.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is the good news that God provided the way for man to be freed from the penalty of sin (John 14:6; Romans 6:23). Everyone dies physically, but those who believe in Jesus Christ are promised a physical resurrection unto eternal life (John 11:23–26). Those who reject Christ will not only die physically but will undergo a “second death,” which the Bible describes as an eternal lake of fire (Revelation 20:13–14). Jesus is the only One in whom salvation can be found (Acts 4:12).

The gospel of Jesus Christ is the best news anyone will ever hear, and what a person does with this news will determine where he or she spends eternity. God is calling you to choose life. Call on the name of the Lord and be saved (Romans 10:13).

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What is the Gospel?

By Greg Gilbert, October 7, 2016

A Message from God

What exactly do Christians mean when they talk about the “gospel of Jesus Christ”? Since the word “gospel” means “good news,” when Christians talk about the gospel, they’re simply telling the good news about Jesus! It’s a message from God saying, “Good news! Here is how you can be saved from my judgment!” That’s an announcement you can’t afford to ignore.

Why Is the Gospel Good News?

So, what is the good news about Jesus Christ?

Since the earliest Christians announced the good news about Jesus, it has been organized around these questions:

1. Who made us, and to whom are we accountable?
2. What is our problem?
3. What is God’s solution to our problem?
4. How can I be included in his solution?

Christians through the centuries since Christ have answered those questions with the same truth from the Bible.

1. We are accountable to God.
2. Our problem is our sin against him.
3. God’s solution is salvation through Jesus Christ.
4. We come to be included in that salvation by faith and repentance.

Let’s summarize those points like this: God, Mankind, Jesus Christ, and Our Response.

God

The first thing to know about the good news of Jesus is that “in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth” ([Gen. 1:1](#)). Everything starts from that point, so if you get that point wrong then everything else that follows will be wrong. Because God created everything—including us—he has the right to tell us how to live. You have to understand that in order to understand the good news about Jesus. To understand just how glorious and life-giving the gospel of Jesus Christ is, we have to understand that God is also holy and righteous. He is determined never to ignore or tolerate sin. Including ours!

Mankind

When God created the first human beings, Adam and Eve, he intended for them to live under his righteous rule in perfect joy—obeying him and living in fellowship with him. When Adam disobeyed God, though, and ate the one fruit that God had told him not to eat, that fellowship with God was broken. Moreover, Adam and Eve had declared rebellion against God. They were denying his authority over their lives.

It’s not just Adam and Eve who are guilty of sin. The Bible says, “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” ([Romans 3:23](#)). Sin is the rejection of God himself and his authority over those to whom he gives life.

Once you understand sin in that light, you begin to understand why “the wages of sin is death” ([Romans 6:23](#)). That’s not just physical death, but spiritual death, a forceful separating of our sinful, rebellious selves from the presence of God forever. The Bible teaches that the final destiny for unbelieving sinners is eternal, active judgment in a place called “hell.”

But . . .

Jesus Christ

The word “Christ” means “anointed one,” referring to anointing a king with oil when he is crowned. So, when we say “Jesus Christ,” we’re saying that Jesus is a King!

When Jesus began his public ministry, he told the people, “The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe the good news!” As Jesus died on a cross, the awful weight of all our sins fell on his shoulders. The sentence of death God had pronounced against rebellious sinners struck. And Jesus died. For you and me!

But the story doesn’t end there. Jesus the Crucified is no longer dead. The Bible tells us that he rose from the grave. Jesus’s rising from the grave was God’s way of saying, “What Jesus claimed about who he is and what he came to do is true!”

Our Response

What does God expect us to do with the information that Jesus died in our place so we can be saved from God’s righteous wrath against our sins? He expects us to respond with repentance and faith.

To repent of our sins means to turn away from our rebellion against God. Repentance doesn’t mean we’ll bring an immediate end to our sinning. It does mean, though, that we’ll never again live at peace with our sins.

Not only that, but we also turn to God in faith. Faith is reliance. It’s a promise-founded trust in the risen Jesus to save you from your sins. If God is ever to count us righteous, he’ll have to do it on the basis of someone else’s record, someone who’s qualified to stand in as our substitute. And that’s what happens when a person is saved by Jesus: All our sins are credited to Jesus who took the punishment for them, and the perfect righteousness of Jesus is then credited to us when we place our trust in what he has done for us! That’s what faith means—to rely on Jesus, to trust in him alone to stand in our place and win a righteous verdict from God!

This article is adapted from the tract "[What Is the Gospel?](#)" by Greg Gilbert.

Greg Gilbert (MDiv, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary) is senior pastor at Third Avenue Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky. He is the author of *What Is the Gospel?*, *James: A 12-Week Study*, and *Who Is Jesus?*, and is the co-author (with Kevin DeYoung) of *What Is the Mission of the Church?*

The Gospel of Jesus Christ

Some Relevant Scriptures

“But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. **Always be prepared** to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect...” 1 Peter 3:15

As true followers of Jesus Christ, we must always be prepared to respond when someone asks us about our faith in Christ Jesus – or maybe they want to know about our peace, calm and joy in the middle of the crazy, dark days our world is experiencing. Here are a number of scriptures that, when considered together, give a clear picture of the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ:

John 3:16-17 “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”

1 Corinthians 15:1-8 “Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. ² By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

³ For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵ and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. ⁶ After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷ Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, ⁸ and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.”

Colossians 1:15-23 “The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. ¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

²¹ Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. ²² But now he has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation— ²³ if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.”

Philippians 2:5-11 “In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

⁶ Who, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

⁷ rather, he made himself nothing
by taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.

⁸ And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
by becoming obedient to death—
even death on a cross!

⁹Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,
¹⁰that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
¹¹and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.”

Acts 10:34-43 Then Peter began to speak: “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism ³⁵but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right. ³⁶You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, announcing the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. ³⁷You know what has happened throughout the province of Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached— ³⁸how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.”

³⁹“We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a cross, ⁴⁰but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen. ⁴¹He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen—by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴²He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

Acts 5:30-32 “The God of our ancestors raised Jesus from the dead—whom you killed by hanging him on a cross. ³¹God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might bring Israel to repentance and forgive their sins. ³²We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”

Acts 2:22-24; 32-33 “Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. ²³This man was handed over to you by God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. ²⁴But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him... ³²God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. ³³Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.”

Hebrews 1:1-3 “In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. ³The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.”

Other important Scriptures: John 1:1-5, 9-14; Isaiah 53; Psalm 22; Acts 8:30-35; Romans 10:9-15; Acts 13:26-39; Titus 2:11-14; Colossians 1:13-14; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21.

“The fact is that the New Testament message embraces a great deal more than an offer of free pardon. It is a message of pardon, and for that may God be praised; but it is also a message of repentance. It is a message of atonement, but it is also a message of temperance, righteousness and godliness in the present world. It tells us that we must accept a Savior, but it tells us also that we must deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. The gospel message includes the idea of amendment, of separation from the world, of cross-carrying and loyalty to the kingdom of God even unto death.”

A. W. Tozer

We are committed to the whole message

By A. W. Tozer

To many observing persons today it appears that conversion does not do for people as much as it once did. Too often the experience passes, leaving the seeker unsatisfied and deeply disappointed. Some who are thus affected, and who are too sincere to play with religion, walk out on the whole thing and turn back frankly to the old life. Others try to make what they can out of a bad bargain and gradually adjust themselves to a modified and imperfect form of Christianity spiced up with synthetic fun and enlivened by frequent shots of stimulants in the form of "gimmicks," to give it relish and sparkle.

The knowledge that revival campaigns can come and go without raising the moral level of the cities and towns where they are held should surely give us serious pause. Something is wrong somewhere. Could it be that the cause back of this undeniable failure of the gospel to effect moral change is a further back failure of the messenger to grasp the real meaning of his message? Could it be that, in his eagerness to gain one more convert, he makes the Way of Life too easy? It would seem so. In other times it was not an uncommon thing to witness the wholesale closing of saloons and brothels as a direct result of the preaching of the message of Christ in revival campaigns. Surely there must have been a difference of emphasis between the message they preached in those days and the ineffective message we preach today.

To allow the gospel only its etymological meaning of good news is to restrict it so radically as actually to make it something it is not. That "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures" is good news indeed. That He, having by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens from which exalted position He mediates grace to all believers, is wonderful, heartening news for the sin burdened race. But to limit the Christian message to this one truth alone is to rob it of much of its meaning and create a bad misunderstanding among those who hear the resultant preaching.

The fact is that the New Testament message embraces a great deal more than an offer of free pardon. It is a message of pardon, and for that may God be praised; but it is also a message of repentance. It is a message of atonement, but it is also a message of temperance and righteousness and godliness in this present world. It tells us that we must accept a Savior, but it tells us also that we must deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. The gospel message includes the idea of amendment, of separation from the world, of cross-carrying and loyalty to the kingdom of God even unto death.

To be strictly technical, these latter truths are corollaries of the gospel, and not the gospel itself; but they are part and parcel of the total message which we are commissioned to declare. No man has authority to divide the truth and preach only a part of it. To do so is to weaken it and render it without effect.

This is more than a mere splitting of definitions. It has real consequences among Christian workers and, what is more serious, it has consequences among the trusting seekers who come to these workers for counsel. To offer a sinner the gift of salvation based upon the work of Christ, while at the same time allowing him to retain the idea that the gift carries with it no moral implications, is to do him untold injury where it hurts him worst.

Many evangelical teachers insist so strongly upon free, unconditional grace as to create the impression that sin is not a serious matter and that God cares very little about it. He is concerned only with our escaping the consequences. The gospel then in practical application means little more than a way to escape the fruits of our past.

The heart that has felt the weight of its own sin and along with this has seen the dread whiteness of the Most High God will never believe that a message of forgiveness without transformation is a message of good news. To remit a man's past without transforming his present is to violate the moral sincerity of his own heart. To that kind of thing God will be no party.

We must have courage to preach the whole message. By so doing we shall undoubtedly lose a few friends and make a number of enemies. But the true Christian will not grieve too much about that. He has enough to do to please his Lord and Savior and to be true to the souls of all men. That may well occupy him too completely to leave much time for regrets over the displeasure of misguided men.

(as found on 2/25/21, <https://freshfaith.net/index.php/blog/11-we-are-committed-to-the-whole-message>)

A Summary of the Gospel (by Paul Washer)

FEBRUARY 25, 2013 / DREW MERY

I am currently reading through Paul Washer's new book, *The Gospel's Power & Message*, the first book in a three-book series entitled *Recovering the Gospel*. In the preface of this book Washer supplies what I believe to be one of the best succinct definitions or overviews of the gospel. It is certainly worth memorizing.

Note how Washer does not merely focus on the crucifixion and resurrection, but likewise mentions the obedient life of Christ and the ascension of Christ to glory at the right hand of the Father, where He now reigns. These are aspects of the gospel that I believe are often neglected, yet are just as necessary. Further, all three Persons of the Trinity are mentioned (another important quality to this gospel summary). So, here is Washer's excellent summary of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ (all Scripture references are found in the footnote section of the book):

“In accordance with the Father’s good pleasure, the eternal Son, who is equal with the Father and is the exact representation of His nature, willingly left the glory of heaven, was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of a virgin, and was born the God-man: Jesus of Nazareth [Acts 2:23; Heb. 1:3; Phil. 2:6-7; Lk. 1:35]. As a man, He walked on this earth in perfect obedience to the law of God [Heb. 4:15]. In the fullness of time, men rejected and crucified Him. On the cross, He bore man’s sin, suffered God’s wrath, and died in man’s place [1 Pet. 2:24; 3:18; Isa. 53:10]. On the third day, God raised Him from the dead. This resurrection is the divine declaration that the Father has accepted His Son’s death as a sacrifice for sin. Jesus paid the penalty for man’s disobedience, satisfied the demands of justice, and appeased the wrath of God [Lk. 24:6; Rom. 1:4; Rom. 4:25]. Forty days after the resurrection, the Son of God ascended into the heavens, sat down at the right hand of the Father, and was given glory, honor, and dominion over all [Heb. 1:3; Matt. 28:18; Dan. 7:13-14]. There, in the presence of God, He represents His people and makes requests to God on their behalf [Lk. 24:51; Phil. 2:9-11; Heb. 1:3; Heb. 7:25]. All who acknowledge their sinful, helpless state and throw themselves upon Christ, God will fully pardon, declare righteous, and reconcile unto Himself [Mk. 1:15; Rom. 10:9; Phil. 3:3]. This is the gospel of God and of Jesus Christ, His Son.”