

GOOD NEWS

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

- The word “gospel” is from the Anglo-Saxon word “godspel,” meaning “god-message” or “good story.” We use the transliterated term “good news” in place of the Greek word “euaggelion,” and usually think of it as meaning ONLY the good tidings themselves. However, in the Greek language the word “euaggelion” actually signifies “a present given to one who brought good tidings,” or “a sacrifice offered in thanksgiving for such good tidings having come.”
- **Therefore, the “gospel” signifies NOT ONLY the message of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (the “good news”), BUT ALSO our response in “thanksgiving for such good tidings having come” (i.e. obeying the plan of salvation).**
- Paul called this “MY GOSPEL” (Romans 2:16), because God revealed to him that the full doctrinal content of the Gospel embodied not only our **relationship on the basis of grace**, but also our **responsibilities on the basis of gratitude**. This is why most of his epistles are divided between doctrinal and practical teaching. This is the REAL gospel! Therefore, you are NOT preaching Paul’s gospel if you preach “only believe!” Furthermore, you are not preaching Paul’s gospel if you preach “repent, be baptized, receive the Holy Ghost … and stop!” The gospel of the New Testament BEGINS with the working of God’s grace in SALVATION, but MUST CONTINUE with the working of God’s grace in SANCTIFICATION, or it is NOT COMPLETE.
- The gospel is not the gospel if you take away from it or add to it. It will not work if you do that! Paul says in Galatians 1:8, “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed” (“anathema” or “devoted to destruction”). This applies to those that mix God’s message with men’s ideas, creating a “perverted gospel.” The Judaizers of Paul’s day did not deny Christ; they merely changed the plan of salvation preached by his Apostles.
- **THE GOSPEL IS GOOD NEWS, NOT JUST GOOD ADVICE!** Good advice is what a banker gives when providing the address of the Salvation Army to someone he has just foreclosed on. Good news is when he tells the person that an unnamed benefactor has just paid the overdue mortgage in full and has also left an extra million dollars!

- Many people are tired of listening to good advice all the time. They have exhausted their ability to HOPE while trying to COPE with problems that just grow worse day by day. What they want is not good advice, they want good news!
- The Bible does not use the verb “to cope.” Its biblical equivalent would be the verb “to overcome.” The world teaches us how to cope with the wrong in our lives, but God does not want us just to COPE with our sin and our problems; He wants us to OVERCOME them!
 - **John 16:33** These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.
 - **Romans 12:21** Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.
 - **Revelation 12:11** And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.
 - **1 John 5:4** For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.
 - **1 John 4:4** Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.
- The question “WHY?” is Satan’s favorite question. No one can answer it but God, because to do so requires knowledge of every factor and possibility. It is nearly impossible to overcome your situation when you are constantly focused on “WHY?”
- A much better question is “WHAT FOR?” Instead of focusing on why you are in your horrible situation, focus on what God wants to accomplish through the events (even the BAD events!) of your life!
- PURPOSE TURNS PAIN INTO A SERVANT INSTEAD OF A MASTER!
- It’s the difference between a woman’s toothache and a mother’s labour; even though the latter causes more intense pain, she realizes that there is a purpose behind her suffering.

- JOB found the purpose behind the pain:

Job 23:8-10 ⁸Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: ⁹On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him: ¹⁰But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

- PAUL found the purpose behind the pain:

2 Corinthians 12:8-10 ⁸For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. ⁹And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

- DAVID found the purpose behind the pain:

Psalm 37:23-25 ²³The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way. ²⁴Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand. ²⁵I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

- JOSEPH found the purpose behind the pain:

Genesis 50:20 But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.

- THE GOSPEL IS NOT JUST GOOD ADVICE, IT IS GOOD NEWS. AND IT ALWAYS WORKS!
- The devil cannot stop God from bestowing grace upon us, because God is almighty. So, since Satan cannot prevent grace from reaching us, he focuses on preventing us from APPLYING it to the sin for which it is intended. IT IS POSSIBLE TO RECEIVE THE GRACE OF GOD IN VAIN!
- **2 Corinthians 6:1** We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.

- Satan is most effective when it comes to our HURTS, which are simply the tangible dimensions of the sins committed against us. The only way to deal with sin is through grace, and this is why God gives us grace to treat the sin hurting us. But we must RECEIVE and APPLY the grace of God to our lives.
- When Jesus died, He shed His blood to atone for the sins of the whole world – EVERYBODY was forgiven. But the question is not how many did God forgive, but how many received His forgiveness!
- Look at how Paul continues ...
- **2 Corinthians 6:2** (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)
- If we do not obey the gospel, we receive the grace of God IN VAIN. He is willing to forgive, but we are not willing to receive! It is like a person dying of pneumonia who receives the right antibiotics, puts them on the night table, but never takes them – a few days later, he dies. Even though he RECEIVED the medication, he failed to TAKE the medication.
- GRACE MUST NOT JUST BE APPRECIATED, IT MUST BE APPLIED! Satan would like to keep us fixated on the “WHY?” of our situation, so that he can keep us from applying God’s grace! He would like us to look at the gospel as good advice instead of good news that is able to change us eternally!
- **2 Corinthians 5:17** Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.
- At what point in your life did the “new things” of God begin to take hold? Many people would say “at the moment of my conversion” but that is not a complete answer! The people who believe that live many times under the shadow of their past, under the bondage of “WHY?”
- THAT IS NOT GOOD NEWS! In fact, having a pre-conversion life and a post-conversion life is like spiritual schizophrenia!
- At the moment of conversion, the grace of God enters our life and goes all the way back to the moment of conception, TURNING EVERY OLD THING INTO A NEW ONE.

- He takes what the devil intended for evil and now uses even those situations to bring good in our lives!
- **Romans 5:20b** But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:
- **Isaiah 59:19b** When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him.
- **Romans 8:23-31** ²⁸And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. ²⁹For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. ³⁰Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. ³¹What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?
- **Romans 8:35-39** ³⁵Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. ³⁷Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. ³⁸For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, ³⁹Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- The landscape of our soul was scarred with all kinds of evil before we met Jesus. He does not just HIDE our old lives, He TRANSFORMS our old lives!
- Someone may be here in this service whose life is a result of an unwanted pregnancy, or whose upbringing included terrible abuse, and you may have (consciously or unconsciously) lived with rejection all of your life. But the gospel is good news! THE SAME GRACE THAT ERASES YOUR SIN WILL ALSO CANCEL OUT THE SINS OTHERS HAVE COMMITTED AGAINST YOU, TRANSFORMING THE EVIL INTO GOOD!
- Grace reverses the degradation caused by sin! Grace is not soft, it is tough! It gets out the stains that others leave behind! GRACE CHANGES THE WORST SIN INTO THE BEST TROPHY!
- So how do I get God's GOOD NEWS to operate in my life? I must obey the gospel by EXCHANGING the old things in my life for NEW THINGS (that is called "repentance"). I MUST MAKE A CHOICE!