

## Gospel, Part 3

**The gospel message is how our lives are changed by God's power!**

**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 gospel will not work if you take away from it or add to it.**

**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.

**The gospel has three parts – death, burial, and resurrection.**

**1 Corinthians 15:1-4** 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. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ **died** for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was **buried**, and that he **rose again** the third day according to the scriptures:

The word “gospel” means “good news” and comes from the Greek word “euaggelion.” Have you ever wondered why, when the gospel message was preached the very first time, the question of the people hearing is was “**What shall we DO?**” It’s because the word “euaggelion” is a circular word – it means “a sacrifice given in thanks for good tidings,” and is closely linked with the thought of victory in battle. That is why they responded with this question when they heard the great news of Christ's eternal triumph over sin, Satan, and death on their behalf!

**Acts 2:36-38** Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, **Repent**, and be **baptized** every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the **Holy Ghost**.

- Jesus died, He was buried, and He rose again.
- We repent, we are baptized, and we receive the Holy Ghost.
- This is our “euagelia” (thanksgiving sacrifice) for the GOOD NEWS!

**There is only ONE salvation message, regardless of what various denominations say! It is not that WE are right and THEY are wrong; it is that the BIBLE is right and EVERYONE ELSE is wrong!**

Many people today think they are saved by “accepting Christ as their Saviour” or by “asking Jesus into their heart” or by “believing on the Lord” – MANY TIMES THIS IS NOT EVEN REAL REPENTANCE, BECAUSE REPENTANCE IS BEING “SORRY ENOUGH TO CHANGE!”

But even for those who really repent, many people stop there and go no further – this is the theological equivalent of leaving Jesus on the cross! **Paul told us that the next part of the gospel was Jesus' burial, and Peter told us that our next step is baptism in Jesus' name!**

Many people today think that baptism is merely a ritual that makes you a member of a certain church congregation. Many others think that, since baptism is just a ritual, it doesn't matter how you do it. MANY TIMES, PEOPLE WHO THINK THEY HAVE BEEN BAPTIZED JUST GOT WET, BECAUSE THEY DIDN'T OBEY THE BIBLE WHEN THEY DID IT!

**THERE IS A SUPERNATURAL SHIFT IN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD WHEN I AM BAPTIZED IN JESUS' NAME. I ENTER INTO A LEGAL COVENANT WITH HIM THAT FOREVER HAS IMPLICATIONS ON MY RELATIONSHIP WITH SIN.** (*i.e. backslider vs. sinner*)

But even for those who have been baptized biblically, many people stop there and go no further – this is the theological equivalent of leaving Jesus in the grave! **Paul told us that the next part of the gospel was Jesus' resurrection, and Peter told us that our next step is receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost!**

How important is the resurrection of Jesus? **Paul's IF/THEN statements** – Christianity literally hangs on Christ's resurrection!

**1 Corinthians 15:13-20** But **if** there be no resurrection of the dead, **then** is Christ not risen: And **if** Christ be not risen, **then** is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, **if** so be that the dead rise not. For **if** the dead rise not, **then** is not Christ raised: And **if** Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. **Then** they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. **If** in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now **is** Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

What is so important about the resurrection? It proves that Jesus was who He claimed to be – He was God in the flesh! Of all the claims that

Jesus made, the claim that He would rise from the death was the most audacious – and He made it many times. Sometimes He said it subtly, and sometimes He said it outright ...

**John 2:19** Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

**Matthew 20:18-19** Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again.

Jesus allowed himself to be put on trial and crucified just so there would be no doubt about who He was. When He was hanging on the cross, the skeptics and critics mocked him, "If you're the Son of God, why don't you just come down from that cross and show that you're really God?" Jesus had something more spectacular planned – "I'm going to let you bury me for three days, then I'll come back to life to prove I am who I said I am."

Easter is the good news about Jesus Christ our Lord, who died for our sins and then rose from the dead. Four historical records say he showed himself to 500 people at one gathering. Can you imagine witnessing his death and then seeing him walking around Jerusalem three days later? That clinched it! The city of Jerusalem was the very last place on earth Christianity could have started if Jesus' tomb remained occupied!

Now anyone can claim to be God, but how do you prove it? You prove it by rising from the dead! When Jesus came out of the grave, that one act validated everything else He ever said about himself. The founders of other religions said, "Follow me – and I'll show you the way to truth." Jesus said, "Follow me – I AM the way, the truth and the life!"

But the message of Easter doesn't stop with the resurrection of Jesus Christ; in fact, after the gospels theology takes an exciting turn ...

**1 Corinthians 6:14** And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power.

**Romans 8:11** But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

**LIFE IS WHAT YOU ARE ALIVE TO!** Paul wrote, "For to me to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21). Paul was alive to Christ and dead to anything that opposed that relationship – and so it should be with every believer.

I read about two friends who enjoyed the "party life." After they got saved they received an invitation to a wild party and sent their RSVP in these words: "We regret that we cannot attend because we recently died."

That's exactly what the Apostle Paul was saying ...

**Colossians 3:1-4** If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

The new birth experience is designed to let your old life die and be buried, and to give you a literal new life by the power of the Holy Ghost. The point of the resurrection is not just that Jesus got up from the grave, but that I can get up out of the deadness of my old life!

Jesus' being put to death was an act of men.

Jesus' burial was an act of men.

But Jesus' resurrection was an act of God!

Repentance is my action in response to the Gospel.

Baptism is my action in response to the Gospel.

But the Holy Ghost is God's action in response to my obedience!

Jesus rose from the grave in a glorified body – He didn't need the stone rolled away to get out of the tomb. But the stone was rolled away as a SIGN to us that He had actually, literally risen from the dead.

The Holy Ghost is God's Spirit – it encompasses much more than merely speaking in tongues. But speaking in tongues is given as a supernatural SIGN to us that we have actually, literally received the Holy Ghost.

That's why every Christian in your Bible was baptized in Jesus' name, and every Christian in your Bible spoke with tongues ...

- Isaiah prophesied of God speaking to His people through stammering lips and another tongue (Isaiah 28:9-12).
- When the church began on the Day of Pentecost, the disciples spoke in tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2:1-4).
- Simon the Sorcerer observed "evidence" when the Samaritans received the Holy Ghost by laying on of hands (Acts 8:14-20).
- Cornelius' household, who were gentiles, spoke with other tongues when they received the Holy Ghost (Acts 10:44-48).
- Believers who had only experienced the baptism of John the Baptist were re-baptized and spoke with tongues (Acts 19:1-6).
- Paul had this experience (Acts 9:17-18), for he spoke with tongues

more than anyone in the Corinthian church (1 Corinthians 14:18).

So many churches celebrate Easter, but totally miss the point of the resurrection! It was so you and I could be raised up also – not just in the future after our physical death, but right now out of our spiritual death!

**THE HOLY GHOST IS POWER TO LIVE FOR GOD – YOU NEED IT!**

**Luke 24:49** And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

**Acts 1:8** But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

HOW COULD JESUS, THROUGH HIS DEATH, BURIAL AND RESURRECTION, GIVE US THIS POWER? BECAUSE HE WAS GOD!

**John 20:11-12** But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

**WHERE ELSE IN JUDAISM WERE THERE EVER TWO ANGELS FACING EACH OTHER? ON THE ARK OF THE COVENANT – IT WAS CALLED THE MERCY SEAT, WHERE THE BLOOD WAS SPRINKLED AND WHERE THE SHEKINAH PRESENCE OF GOD DWELT!**

**THE TWO ANGELS WERE THERE BECAUSE GOD'S SHEKINAH PRESENCE HAD BEEN THERE – IN THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST – AND THIS IS THE SAME POWER YOU GET WHEN YOU RECEIVE THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST!**

**John 14:16-18** And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

**John 14:25-26** These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

**John 16:7** Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

**Acts 2:4** And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

**THE HOLY GHOST IS POWER TO LIVE FOR GOD – YOU NEED IT!**