

Gospel Power

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from multiple sources)

Introduction:

A. Rom. 1:16-17

1. The best and most concise summary of the greatest message this world will ever receive - 1Cor. 15:1-4, 1:17-24
2. Paul tells his readers that he is "ready to preach the Gospel to you that are at Rome," v. 15. Then, he tells them that he is not "ashamed of the Gospel" he is ready to preach. Why would anyone be ashamed of a message as powerful and profound as the Gospel?

B. The world of Paul and the Roman Christians:

1. The moral condition of that day -- Nero was the Emperor of Rome. He was a wicked, degenerate man. The city of Rome was the capital of sin and wickedness. The Gospel, with its demands for repentance, holiness and godly living, was opposed to everything Rome represented.
2. Paul was a Jew. Jews were despised, mistreated, and enslaved. The Gospel was a message that rose out of a Jewish background. Jewish Christians would be reluctant to teach it, and Greeks and Romans would be reluctant to hear about a Savior from Jerusalem.
3. The doctrine of a god that died and returned to life was anathema to Mediterranean pagans. The claims of the Gospel were just too bizarre in the minds of first century hearers to believe.
4. The Gospel is a difficult message for a lost, prideful world to accept. Things haven't changed much.

C. Proof of the poor reception of the Gospel: everywhere Paul preached, he was ridiculed, cast out, imprisoned, or treated cruelly.

1. He had been imprisoned in Philippi - Acts 16:23-24
2. Chased out of Thessalonica - Acts 17:10
3. Smuggled out of Berea - Acts 17:14
4. Mocked in Athens - Acts 17:32
5. Called a fool in Corinth - 1Cor. 1:18, 23
6. Stoned in Lycaonia - Acts 14:19
7. Restrained in Ephesus - Acts 19:29-30
8. 35 different forms of hardship and opposition - 2Cor. 12:23-28

D. Yet Paul was eager to preach the Gospel in Rome, the seat of political power and pagan religion.

1. What did he know that made him keep on preaching the hated Gospel?
2. What was it about the Gospel that drove the apostle around the world?
3. Paul reminds us that we have a Gospel to be proud of, to be excited about, and to be eager to share with everyone.

I. THE GOSPEL IS GIVEN BY SOVEREIGN POWER

- ### A. God could have exercised His power against sin any way He chose, including destroying the universe and starting again.

1. But, He loves us and chose a different means, one that cost Him a great deal - John 3:16; 1John 4:19
- B. It is the Gospel of Christ
 1. The gospel of human religion says, "Turn over a new leaf."
 2. The gospel of materialism says, "Your worth is determined by what you have. Gain is the goal of life."
 3. The gospel of deconstruction says, "I'm OK and you're OK. God accepts us as we are and takes us to Heaven if there is a Heaven"
 4. The gospel of society says, "Do as you please for life is short."
 5. The gospel of Christ says, "You are a sinner, and if you die in your sins, you will go to Hell. However, God loves you and sent His Son to the world to die for your sins, and He rose from the dead as a promise of your resurrection. If you believe and obey the Gospel, you'll be saved."
- C. Paul knew the power of the Gospel - 1Tim. 1:12-15
 1. Every life redeemed by the Gospel is a life transformed - 2Cor. 5:17

II. THE GOSPEL HAS A SINGULAR PURPOSE

- A. Why did God go to such lengths for fallen sinners? Why did He give up His Son to die on the cross for the sins of His people?
 1. Salvation for human beings He loves so much!
 2. Salvation is a powerful word - "safety, preservation, deliverance; rescue from all harm and danger" (Vines).
 3. Rescue from sin and its present defilement - Rev. 1:5
 4. Rescue from spiritual death, the immediate result of sin - Rom. 6:23
 5. Rescue from physical death, by eternal resurrection - 1Peter 1:3
 6. Rescue from aloneness and insecurity brought on by separation from God through sin - Eph. 3:13

III. THE GOSPEL IS A SIMPLE PLAN

- A. Rom. 1:16 - "for everyone who believes."
 1. The Gospel does not need complicated religious rituals or elaborate religious exercises. Salvation is the product of faith and obedience.
 - a. Acts 16:30-34, 8:34-39

IV. THE GOSPEL IS SEALED WITH A SOLEMN PLEDGE

- A. The Gospel is for every person in the world - Rev. 22:17; John 6:37, 1:11-12
- B. There is nothing that can prevent someone who wants to be saved from being saved, if by faith they obey the will of God. The promise of the Gospel is for every human, everywhere.

V. THE GOSPEL PRODUCES A SUBSTANTIAL PRODUCT

- A. The product of the Gospel in the life of the believer is righteousness.
 1. A human being has two great problems:
 - a. Number one: He thinks he is righteous and is therefore acceptable to the Lord.
 - b. Number two: He is completely mistaken about number one.

2. When faith is in the Gospel and not in the self, the Gospel has the power to transform the believer - 1Cor. 6:9-11
- B. Everything humans look for in religion: peace with God, acceptance by God, a right relationship with God, peace and comfort in this world, are all given through the Gospel.

Conclusion:

- A. The message that saved thousands in the first century still has the power to save millions in the 21st century.
 1. All we need to do to see the power of the Gospel is to believe in it and teach it to others.
 2. The Gospel of Jesus Christ does not need modification. It does not need adjustment with the changing nature of the world.
 3. All it needs is for those who know it and believe it to share it with those who need it but do not know it.
- B. Isn't it amazing that God would take the most important message the world will ever hear, and placed it in the hands of reformed sinners? That is proof that the Gospel is powerful apart from my ability to preach it.
 1. Isn't it amazing that He gave us His Gospel and then commanded us to take it to the world, knowing that no one would ever be saved apart from the preaching of the Gospel? - 1Cor. 1:21
 2. We who have been saved by the Gospel are not ashamed of it. And if we are not ashamed of the Gospel, why aren't we sharing it with others?
 3. Rom. 10:13-17