

# Bryan Station Baptist Church

INDEPENDENT

MISSIONARY

## THE PIONEER BAPTIST

ORGANIZED 1786

VOL. 14, NO. 12  
SEPTEMBER, 1983

*"Preaching The Same Truth We Preached Before Kentucky Was A State"*

## THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

C. D. Cole

"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," Romans 1:16.

Introduction: To preach the gospel in Rome had long been the goal of Paul's hopes. He wished to do in the center of power what he had done in Athens, the home of wisdom. He knew the carnal mind would treat the gospel as a shameful thing and meet it with scorn and contempt, but he also knew that to those who believed it, it would be the power of God unto salvation, and therefore he was not ashamed to preach it.

To understand the audacity of these words we must try to listen to them with the ears of a Roman. Here was a poor little insignificant Jew with his head full of some fantastic nonsense about another Jew whom the Roman governor had put an end to in order to satisfy other Jews and keep order in the province. And Paul wanted to get into the very center of power with the notion that he had a power that would shake the throne of the Caesars. What proud contempt would

have curled their lips if they had been told that the ship-wrecked, travel-stained prisoner, trudging up the Appian Way, had the mightiest thing in the world entrusted to his care! Romans did not believe much in ideas. Their conception of power was sharp swords and iron yokes on the necks of subject peoples. But Christianity is a revolution of ideas and carries no sword or rifle. Paul said, I have a story to tell--it is good news--it is an idea that is the power of God to all who believe, the Jew first and afterward to the Greek.

Paul was not saying that his preaching of the Gospel would have power to convert believers. He was not talking about the power of his preaching but of the power of what he preached. Let us break this text into three parts and examine each part separately: I. What is the Gospel of Christ? II. How is it the power of God unto salvation? III. Who are the beneficiaries of this power?

I. What is the Gospel of Christ? The word Gospel means good news or glad tidings. It is a glad story--there is not a sad thing in it to the penitent sinner. It drips with the sweetness

of God's love. It gives life to those who have been killed by the law of God. It gives hope to those who have lost all hope. It replaces human weakness with divine power. It takes the sinner who has no reputation before men and makes him righteous before God. Now let us look into this story. What is the story about? What are the contents of this gospel?

A. It is not a statement of principles; it is a record of facts, things that have happened in this world. What are these facts that make up the gospel? I Corinthians 15:3-4 says, "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 least part of a fact is the visible part of it and has no significance unless there is an explanation and so Paul not only tells what the facts are but gives an explanation of them. The mere fact that Jesus, a young Nazarene, was crucified is no more gospel than that the two criminals were crucified beside him. It is the explanation of the facts that make his death the

gospel rather than their deaths. His death was the death of the Son of God and it was for our sins. Unless it was the death of the Son of God and unless it was for our sins, the death of Jesus would have no more meaning than the death of the two brigands.

Christ died for our sins. What does that mean? Somebody says it merely means that Christ died on our behalf and not as our substitute. But will you please tell me in what sense Christ could die in my behalf--how his death could save me--unless he died as my substitute? For his death to save me, it had to cancel my guilt before God; and, how could it cancel my guilt, unless he suffered for the guilt that was mine. How could his death help me if it were only an example of heroism, or a mere gesture of God's love? How could God be just and justify me unless God punished Him for what I have done?

B. So the contents of the Gospel are the facts that Christ died and rose again as the sinner's representative so that sinners die with and in Him. His death was their death and satisfied the law that was against them. Christ was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. He redeemed us from the curse of the law by being made a curse for us.

II. The power of God unto salvation.

A. The power of God. What Jesus did at the cross has the power to cancel the sin debt--to wipe out the ordinances that were against us. The gospel was provided by God. He gave His Son. He put His Son to death. He collected the sin debt from His Son. We are not saved because men killed Jesus. That was murder. We are saved because God put His Son to

death. And that was God making a sacrifice. Isaiah 53:6 says, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." See also Isaiah 53:4, 10.

B. Unto salvation. How does the blood of Christ save? Because it has power with God. Salvation is from the wrath and vengeance of God and to be saved there must be something that will satisfy His law and appease His wrath. And whatever does that cancels our sin debt and sets us free.

Illustration: Here is a man who has committed murder. The law fixes the penalty and says he must die by hanging. The man who committed the murder was acting as the tool of another man. The other man had already committed a crime and had been sentenced to hang, and no provision was made for him--he must meet his doom. But the law without compromise allows a substitute for the man who committed the deed. The substitute is found--a man is found who is willing to take the doomed man's place, and be hanged in his place. Now the death of this substitute is the power that cancels the guilt of the murderer and sets him free. It is the power of the death of the substitute and the murderer goes free. (MY SUBSTITUTE, by James V. Simpson.)

III. Who are the beneficiaries? Our text says, "To everyone that believeth." The death of Christ does nobody any good who scorns it and refuses to trust it. He that believeth not shall be damned. John 3:16, "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." 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." John 5:24. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."

Now what we want to do and try to do is to get men to believe on Christ. Not merely that he is the Son of God, but as the Son of God, He died and rose again to cancel the sinner's debt and set them free. We want men to trust that and that alone. There is nothing else that has the power to cancel the guilt of sin--nothing else will satisfy the law of God--nothing else will enable God to be just and yet justify the ungodly.

What can we do to get men to believe? Romans 10:17, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." We must tell them about Jesus Christ and His cross work. We must tell them to look to him and him alone, for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

Must we not get them to do something else? Must we not tell them to mourn and pray? Must we not invite them to a seat and labor with them? No, a thousand times no, if we do it with the thought that doing these things will get God to save them. No, a million times, No, if they think these things will cancel their sin debt and cause God to receive them. Mourning and praying are not any part of the Gospel, and it is the Gospel that saves. Nothing must be trusted but the Gospel.

Illustration: Here is a man who has committed a crime worthy of death for which the penalty is death. The human

# Church Covenant

court tries him and finds him guilty. He begins to cry and mourn, but will his crying and mourning cause the court to cancel his guilt and set him free? Can a man commit murder and cry a little and be let off? You would not want to live in a country where that could be done. Now suppose the law allows a substitute and another man dies at the hands of the law for the sin. And suppose someone comes to the cell of the doomed man and says, I have good news for you. What is it? Well Mr. Blank has been to the court and offered himself as a ransom for you, and the court accepted him and he has just been hanged for your sin. His death is the power that cancels your guilt before the law. What would that man have to do to be set free? Would it help him to sit there and cry and groan? Would that have any power with the law he had broken? This crying would be proof of his unbelief--it would be showing he had not believed what he had heard. Mourning would show the man was concerned about his condition.



## MY SPIRITUAL GARDEN

I went to my garden the other day and picked a red, ripe, juicy tomato, and as a believer I got to thinking of a spiritual garden:

### FOUR ROWS OF PEAS:

Presence  
Preparation  
Promptness  
Perseverance.

### THREE ROWS OF SQUASH:

Squash gossip  
Squash criticism  
Squash indifference

### FOUR ROWS OF LETTUCE:

Let us be faithful to duty  
Let us be unselfish and loyal  
Let us be true to our obligations  
Let us love one another

### NO GARDEN IS FULL WITHOUT TURNIPS:

Turn up for church  
Turn up with a smile  
Turn up with a good attitude  
Turn up looking for God's blessing  
- adapted -

Having been led, as we believe by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour and, on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale of, and use of, intoxicating drinks as a beverage; to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Saviour.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Saviour to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.