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

Why We Should Preach Doctrine

By DR. C. D. COLE

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine. . . ."
(2 Tim. 3:16).

DOCTRINE is a despised word in many religious circles. It puts one in a bad light in many places to be known as a doctrinal preacher. Another word that is taboo is the word creed. But if it is a shame to have a creed and to preach doctrine, one may well glory in the shame. The English word creed comes from the Latin word *credo,* which means, "I believe." So the person who believes anything has a creed. I believe something — I believe some things very definitely — I have some rather positive convictions about certain truths; therefore, I have a creed. The man who has no creed believes nothing. And there are more people like that than one may think. They really believe nothing with conviction. They do not give enough thought to any subject of a religious nature to have any positive belief. It has been said that only five percent of the people really think, that ten percent think they think, and the rest had rather die than think.

A WRITTEN CREED

Moreover, I am willing to put down in black and white what I believe; therefore, I have a written creed. Writing out what one believes is right and proper, provided it is the truth. There are false creeds, because there are false beliefs. It is not the creed that is responsible for the false beliefs; it is the false beliefs that account for the false creeds. The wrong is not in writing it out; the wrong is in what is written out.

The basis of fellowship among Baptists is doctrine. This is why we require a church that desires association with us to present its creed or articles of faith. We want to know what they believe. If they are not in agreement with us they could not sincerely fellowship us and work with us in the propagation of what we believe. Amos once asked, "Can two walk together except they be agreed?"

There is a tendency nowadays to change the basis of fellowship from doctrine to method. I do not like this tendency, it is a false emphasis. Doctrine has to do with what we believe; method concerns how we do certain things. What we propagate is more important than how we propagate it; the message is more important than the method. The method may change, but the message, if it is the truth, must remain the same. This shift in emphasis has resulted in deterioration, doctrinally speaking. Baptists do not have the theological stalwarts they once had in such men as Boyce, Broadus, Carroll, Jeter, and Mullins, in this country; and such men as Gill, Fuller, and Spurgeon, in the old country; and the late T. T. Shields, in Canada.

We have shifted the emphasis from doctrine to methods. We have more meetings for training in methods than we have for fellowship and help doctrinally. We have many promoters of the work, but few expositors of the word.

I.

The word doctrine simply means teaching. What the Bible teaches on any given subject is the doctrine on that subject. What I believe the Bible teaches on any subject is my doctrine of that subject. To object to doctrine is to object to teaching and when we cease to preach doctrine we cease to teach the word of God.

There is no point in one saying that he believes the Bible, for many say that who know almost nothing about what the Bible says. Besides, people of conflicting opinions say they believe the Bible — everybody from the Mormon elder to the Episcopal high-church man. As Baptists we must deal with the doctrine of the Bible and give the true sense of what it says.

There are those who insist that we should express ourselves only in words of Scripture. But to give the sense of any passage we must, of necessity, use our own words — words differing literally from the words of Scripture. We are not teaching the word of God when we simply read or quote Scripture — we must give the meaning of it in our own words. In the restoration and reformation of Israel under Ezra and Nehemiah, "They read in the book of the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the meaning" (Neh. 8:8). When Paul "reasoned out of the Scriptures" he did more than merely read the Scriptures; he gave the meaning

of them.

Take, for example, the doctrine of salvation by grace. Romanists teach salvation by grace, that is, they use the word grace. But what they call grace is not what we call grace. We must define grace in words differing literally from the word grace. It is not enough to say that grace means grace. We must go on to show that grace is unmerited; that what we get by grace is not earned. Take the Church of Christ folk. They say that salvation is by grace, but not by grace only. They insist that we are saved by a lot of things in conjunction — saved by grace and faith and baptism and works. They find a verse of Scripture that says we are justified by grace, another verse that states we are justified by faith, and another that says we are justified by works, and a passage where Paul was told to arise and be baptized and wash away his sins. And their technique is to tie all these words together with the conjunction "and". In this way they make a show of learning, insisting that where the Bible speaks they speak, and where the Bible is silent they are silent. But they are not silent where the Bible is silent, for they add to the word of God. It is just as truly adding to the word by adding the little word "and" as it is to add the biggest word.

II.

The moving cause of salvation is the grace of God, nothing more nor nothing less. "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:24). This verse states the source or moving cause of salvation both negatively and positively. The adverb "freely" literally means "without a cause", and is so translated in John 15:25, where Christ says. "They hated me without a cause." Just as there was nothing in Christ as cause for hatred, so there is nothing in any sinner as the cause of salvation; the cause is in God's grace.

Someone may say, But this verse does not give us all the truth on salvation. Quite true, but it does give us all the truth on the two points it deals with; namely, the moving cause and the meritorious ground of salvation. The source or moving cause of salvation is the grace of God; the just ground of salvation is the redemptive death of Christ.

The meritorious ground of salvation is the blood of Christ. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Ep. 1:7). God forgives on the sole ground that Christ our passover was sacrificed for us. Who dares to add to that precious blood as the just basis of salvation?

The *individual way* of salvation is by faith. It is of faith, that it might be by grace (Rom. 4:16). To add to faith on the sinner's part would, of necessity, add to grace as the source, and to the blood of Christ as the ground of salvation. The object of saving faith is Christ and Christ only.

Tht *symbolic or pictorial* way of salvation is given in the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper. The ordinances are not the gospel, but symbols of the gospel. The late Dr. J. F. Love called them "The Gospel in two Acts." They are preaching ordinances, not saving ordinances. They are symbols, not sacraments. The saving facts of the gospel are the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, and to these facts the ordinances point. We know that baptism is no part of the gospel, for Paul said, "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel" (1 Cor. 1:17). He could remember but a handful at Corinth whom he had baptized, but writing to the whole church he said, "I have begotten you through the gospel" (1 Cor. 4:15).

We are saved *evidentially* by our works, and only by our works. The only way we can justify our profession of Christ is by our works, or the way we live . James gives some examples of justification by works and says, "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only" (Jas. 2:24). The lost, alien sinner is justified by faith in Christ; the saved believer is justified by works. Abraham was justified by works, not as a lost sinner, but as a saved man. He was justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac. But he had been saved many years before that, for in Gen. 15:6 we read that "he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness." And many years later, Abraham proved that his faith was genuine and lasting by the offering up of Isaac. In heart purpose he put Isaac to death, still believing that God would fulfill His promise and give him a seed through Isaac. He believed God would raise Isaac from the dead; "from whence also he received him in a figure" (Heb. 11:19).

III.

There has been much talk about harmonizing Paul and James on the question of justification. But really, there is no need to harmonize them for they have never fallen out. It was a serious mistake in Martin Luther to think that James contradicted Paul, and that he had to choose between them. He rejected the episle of James referring to it as that "strawy epistle." If I thought Paul and James were in disagreement, I would do as Luther did — I would choose Paul. But we do not have to choose one and reject the other for they are in utter agreement. Both of them taught justification by faith, and both emphasized the truth that a man shows his faith by his works. Paul had more to say about works than James. See Eph. 2:10; Gal. 5:6; 1 Tim. 6:17, 18; Titus 3:8.

James is showing the nature of true and saving faith. It is not the kind that does nothing but talk. Nor is it the kind that merely believes there is one God, for the demons believe that and tremble.

James seems to be supposing a sort of dialogue. One man says, I have faith. The other man says, "shew me." "Shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." We are saved by faith alone, but not by a faith that is alone, for faith without works is dead. We are saved by faith alone, but it is a faith that works by love.

What we have in Rom. 4:5 and James 2:24 is not contradiction. Paul is dealing with the justification of a person; James is thinking of the justification of profession. Paul deals with the way of salvation; James with the evidences of salvation. Paul is thinking primarily of justication before God; James of justification before men. Paul excludes works as the ground of salvation; James includes works as the evidence of salvation.

The foregoing will illustrate the need of doctrinal preaching. All Scripture is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness. Who wishes to surrender the doctrine of baptism? And is not the doctrine of grace precious? And how could we give up the doctrine of atoning blood? And let none of us shun to declare the whole counsel of God.

"For Whosoever Shall Call Upon The Name Of The Lord Shall Be Saved."

Romans 10:13

THE GOSPEL:

"THE POWER OF GOD UNTO SALVATION"

By: Al Gormley

I want to write upon the subject found in our text. "THE GOSPEL: THE POWER OF GOD UNTO SALVATION." How that God's power to save a sinner is manifested in the preaching of the cross. "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the POWER OF GOD.

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

Now if we were to ask the religions of today this question, we would get many answers. In fact, many Baptist church members do not know what the gospel is. There are many lost church members in Baptist churches. It is not my purpose to give you their answers but to give you God's answer to this question, and when I do, it will eliminate all other answers. And as 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." Then he says again the same words so that you may know that there is but one gospel.

The Apostle Paul declares the gospel in simple terms in I Cor. 15:1-4. "Moreover brethren, I DECLARE UNTO YOU THE GOSPEL which I preached unto you, which also you 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 AROSE AGAIN the third day according to the scriptures." Now these are the basic facts of the gospel. The word "GOSPEL" means good news. To the lost sinner who has not been convicted of the reality of sin and the consequences of sin these are just empty words. But to the sinner that has been made alive by the Holy Spirit in convicting him of sin, righteousness and judgment to come, who has seen himself under the condemnation of the law, realizing that he is lost, hell-bound and headed into an everlasting punishment, the gospel is wonderful news from God as to how he can be delivered from his condemnation and punishment. It is news of how God loves the sinner and sent His only begotten Son into the world to save the sinner who would trust Him as Saviour. Yes, the Gospel is the POWER OF GOD UNTO SALVATION to everyone that BELIEVETH.

NO POWER IN BAPTISM TO SAVE

There is no power in baptism. The power of God goes with the lifting up of Jesus Christ upon the cross by the preaching of His death, burial and resurrection. God will save those who repent and believe the gospel. "And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:15). Paul very plainly tells us that baptism is not a part of the gospel. "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel. (I Cor. 1:17). He even thanks God that he baptized none of the Corinthians but Crispus and Gaius and one other household. If baptism was a part of the gospel, and it took baptism to save, then Paul got very few people saved because he baptized very few. Those who add baptism to the gospel and make it a part of the gospel have left the power of God. You do not believe the gospel when you go to the water to get to the blood. The power of God has never or never will be manifested in baptism. The power of God was manifested when Jesus hang on the cross of Calvary dying for the lost sinner who would believe on Him as his personal Saviour. Ask the thief on the cross as he died beside Jesus when the power of God was manifested. It was when he believed. When did he have the assurance he was saved? It was when Jesus said, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." Jesus was his salvation. Jesus became his salvation through faith, and the words Jesus said to him gave him the assurance that thrilled his heart. But Jesus' death, burial and resurrection was the power of God unto his salvation, and it came when he believed. Read Luke 23:42 and I Cor. 1:17-21.

GOD'S POWER TAKES TWO DIRECTIONS

God has the power to save us or to destroy us. All of us are breakers of God's laws. The Bible says that sin is the transgression of God's laws. "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law" (I John 3:4). The scripture has concluded, says Galatians 3:22, that all are under sin. Romans 6:23 says that the wages of sin is death. Time and time again, God says that He will punish sin. How foolish it is to think that you can break God's laws and not be punished. It is appointed unto man once to die and after this, the judgment. Who was it that gave the law? Was it not God who gave the law through Moses? Do you think the law was given in vain? There is one Lawgiver who is able to save and to destroy says James 4:12. Sin will be punished in a lake of fire which is everlasting. Mark 9:43-44; Rev. 21:8. God has the power to destroy you with an everlasting destruction in flaming fire. "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (II Thess. 1:8-9). But God also has the power to save you. The Apostle Paul says, "THE GOSPEL IS THE POWER OF GOD UNTO SALVATION TO EVERYONE THAT BELIEVETH." This is God's way of saving the sinner. Salvation is a personal experience. You must believe that Jesus died FOR YOU. The gospel is good news to those seeking deliverance from their sins and they find out that God loved them and sent His Son to die for them. Almost everyone can quote John 3:16, but very few believe it. "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." The believing is your responsibility, the saving power belongs to God. It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save those that would BELIEVE. This is God's way, and there is no other. Don't add anything to God's way or take anything away from it. The message is to those who BELIEVE.

GOD'S POWER WILL SAVE

How does God save a lost sinner? Is it not by sending His Son to die for the sinner? How does God cleanse a guilty sinner? Is it not by sending His Son and by His shedding His blood for the remission of sins? "The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe" (John 1:7). How does God punish sin without punishing the sinner? Does He not say that God hath made Jesus to be sin for us who knew no sin. (II Cor. 5:21). By Jesus Christ suffering for sins, the just for the unjust. (I Peter 3:18). How does God present a dirty, filthy, hell-deserving sinner blameless and without spot before His presence? The answer is found in Colossians 1:20-22. It is through the blood of His cross. It is in the body of His flesh through death to present you holy and unblameable and unreprovable in His sight. This is God's way of saving the sinner. Jesus came into the world to save sinners and He has finished the work God gave Him to do. The last words He uttered on the cross were "IT IS FINISHED." The work of salvation has been completed. God will impute or charge to your account that salvation when you believe. It is the power of God unto salvation.

KEEPS ON BELIEVING

Romans 1:16 says that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth. This verse teaches that there is more than just a past believing. Too many Baptist are preaching that you just believe in the past and then excuse their sin on ONCE SAVED, ALWAYS SAVED. The Bible says that the JUST (justified people) shall live by faith. (Heb. 10:38). The faith they were saved by is the faith that they live by. They were saved by the power of God through faith in the gospel and they are kept by the power of God through faith in the gospel. (I Pet. 1:5). The gospel is the power of God unto salvation unto everyone that BELIEVETH or keeps on believing.

Our salvation is not complete until we receive our new bodies. Therefore, in this life we live by faith, and we also die in faith, not receiving the promises, but seeing them afar off, and believe them and are persuaded of them and claim them as our very own. (Heb. 11:13). I Peter 1:9 says, "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." Colossians 1:23 says, "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister." For those who have a living faith, given to us by the Holy Spirit of God, are kept by the power of God. It is God's power that justified us through faith in the gospel. It is God's power that continues to cleanse us from sin that we commit as we live in this life by faith, and it will be the power of God that will raise our old bodies up from the grave and we, by faith, wait for it. Listen to Paul in Gal. 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Yes, the just shall live by faith. Rom. 4:5 says that God justifies the ungodly and his faith is counted for righteousness. The blessed man is described in Rom. 4:7,8, "Blessed is the man whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." Who is this man? It is the man that lives by faith. It is the man that knows he is a wretched sinner and deserves nothing but judgment, but has heard the good news of how that God loved him and sent His Son and died in his place. He trusts Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord and depends on God to perform that which He has promised. It is our responsibility to believe. It is God's power that saves.

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for IT IS THE POWER OF GOD UNTO SALVATION TO EVERY ONE THAT BELIEVETH. May God help you to see yourself a sinner, lost and doomed to an eternal suffering and turn to God and believe the Gospel. God will save all those that call upon Him. Rom. 10:8-13.

"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" (Rom. 1:16).