

# THE CALL TO PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL

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- *I am not ashamed of the gospel (Rom 1:16)*
- *I am put here for the defense of the gospel (Phil 1:16)*
- *All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit (Col 1:6)*
- *Pray also for me, that...I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel (Eph 6:19)*
- *If only I may finish the race and complete the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace (Acts 20:24)*

## 1. Definition of the Gospel

- Jesus Christ

## 2. Result of the gospel

- New churches and changed lives

## 3. Enemies of the Gospel

- Idolatry and Religion

## 4. Defenders of the Gospel

- How can we be faithful carriers of the gospel?

## 1. Definition of the Gospel

*Rms 1:1-2: Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God – the gospel...regarding his Son...*

(Mk 1:1, 2 Cor 2:12, 2 Cor 10:14, 1 Thess 3:2, 2 Thess 1:8, Rms 1:9, 2 Cor 4:4, Rms 15:20)

### Jesus is the Gospel



The gospel of the Cross (1 Cor 1:17)

The gospel of Grace (Acts 20:24, Gal 1:6, Col 1:6)



The gospel of peace (Eph 6:15) The gospel of hope (Col 1:23)



The gospel is the death of death and gift of immortality (2 Tim 1:10)

*Mark Driscoll: drawing from 1 Cor 15:1-4 defines the gospel as 'continual, proclamational, personal, salvational, essential, central, Christological, penal, substitutional, and eschatological' (Examining Enemies of the Gospel at Creative Church Conference).*



Saying and doing (Acts 1:1) with signs, wonders and miracles (Lk 9:6; Rms 15:19)



Kingdom expression because he brings his kingdom (Matt 24:14, Mk 1:14-15, Acts 20:25)

*Tim Keller: 'The gospel is to be applied to every area of thinking, feeling, relating. Working and behaving'. (Quoted by Mike Gunn in his paper 'Christ-Centred Theology')*

## **This is a very full gospel!**

*D.A. Carson: structures his talk entitled 'What is the Gospel' at The Gospel Coalition around 'eight summarizing words, five clarifying sentences and one evocative summary'!*

## **How could I ever proclaim and demonstrate it all as a preacher? Not supposed to....**

*Eph 3:7-12: I became a servant of the gospel...to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ...His intent was that now, **through the church**, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known...according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. In him, through faith we may approach God...*

## **2. The Results of the Gospel**

**1 Pet 2:9** *But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. **10** Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. **11** Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. **12** Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.*

### **A. A new people – churches planted (V9-10)**

- In Acts, the result of the preaching of the gospel was always the formation of a gospel community – a local church.
- God has always wanted a people!

### **B. Changed lives through a thorough process (V11-12)**

#### **A process**

- We receive then continue in the gospel (1 Cor 15:1)
- In the same way you have received him you walk in him (Col 1:6)
- The gospel includes sanctification by the Holy Spirit (Rms 15:16)
- Once received, we must hold firmly to the gospel (1 Cor 15:2)
- We grow in grace and knowledge (2 Peter 3:18)
- The gospel establishes us (Rms 16:25)

#### **Resulting in changed lives**

- The gospel is also a lifestyle (Gal 2:14; Phil 1:27)
- Obedience and good works must accompany the gospel (2 Cor 9:13)
- The gospel changed Zacchaeus behaviour (Luke 19:8)
- They forsook their idols when they turned to God (1 Thess 1:9)

### 3. Enemies of the Gospel

#### Don't be naïve - the battle rages

- We must defend and confirm the gospel (Phil 1:7)
- Paul rebuked Peter for defiling the gospel (Gal 2:14)
- There are counterfeit gospels (2 Cor 11:4; Gal 1:6f)
- The gospel can be perverted (Gal 1:7f)
- We must defend the gospel, and contend for it (Phil 1:16; Phil 1:27)
- The gospel will be opposed (1 Thess 2:2)
- In chains for the gospel (Phil 1:13)
- Many warnings about false teachers and our calling to defend (Titus 1:10-16; 2 Peter 2)

#### Enemy #1: Idolatry

*Rms 1:25 They worshipped and served created things rather than the Creator.*

*1 Thess 1:9 They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.*

#### Idolatry is putting anything else as a God other than Jesus.

- Food (Phil 3:19). Sex (Rms 1:24, 26). Self-promotion (Jer 45:5). Money (6:24).
- They make promises to satisfy on which they can't deliver.

#### How do we defend the gospel in this regard?

#### Enemy #2: Religion

*Eph 3:8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

#### Religion: Get righteous through doing stuff – from self

#### Gospel: Get righteousness through free gift from God

- *Rms 1:17 For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last.*
- *Rms 3:20-22 Now righteousness from God apart from the law has been made known...it comes from God through faith in Christ Jesus.*

#### Religion: Works result in identity

#### Gospel: Identity results in works

#### A. The gospel of grace gives us a brand new identity as Righteous Sons.

- *But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them – yet not I, but the grace of God in me. (1 Cor 15v10)*
- *I labour, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me (Col 1v29)*
- *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose (Phil 2v12-13)*

#### Religion: Provokes sin

#### Gospel: Provokes holiness

#### A. How does religion provoke me to sin?

**The law provokes sin:** But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire. For apart from the law, sin is dead (Rms 7:8)

**The law is impotent to produce righteousness:** If a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law (Gal 3:21). Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law (Rms 3:20)

**The law is only for use on the unsaved:** We also know that law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful (1 Tim 1v8). The law was our

schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster (Gal 3:24-25 KJV)

### **B. How does the gospel provoke righteousness?**

### **C. How do we defend the gospel in this regard?**

Continuously ooze grace through our handling of people, preaching, songs, and prophecy.

Application to Giving

Application to Worship

## **4. Defenders of the Gospel**

That's us – preachers, church leaders, church planters, saints.

### **Aspects of gospel integrity that we have already covered include:**

- Planting churches
- Preaching the gospel
- Honouring the Sovereignty of God
- Diligent discipleship to result in changed lives
- Tearing down idols
- Tearing down religious legalism

### **Get convinced of the gospel yourself**

- My gospel (Rms 2:16; Rms 16:25; 2 Tim 2:8)
- Our gospel (1 Thess 1:5; 2 Thess 2:14)
- Entrusted with the gospel (1 Thess 2:4; 1 Tim 1:11; Gal 2:7)

### **Get set apart and called to it (Rms 1:1-2)**

### **Get accountable in the gospel (Gal 2:6)**

- Check your message
- Check your calling

### **Get unashamed of the gospel**

- Unashamed as you march on a city (Acts 17:26-27)
- Unashamed at getting yourself a hill, a stand (Mt 5:14-16)
- Unashamed because the good guys win in the end (Hab 2:14)
- Unashamed of calling people to repentance (Mt 4:17; Acts 2:38)

### **Become a slave of the gospel (Rms 1:1; Eph 3:7)**

- Mk 8:35; Mk 10:29; Eph 3:7; 2 Cor 8:18; Phil 1:12; 2 Tim 1:8
- *Now let us ask ourselves some very plain questions. Does God come first in my life or does business hold the supreme place? Is it God first or pleasure? God first or money? What about my family, my loved ones? Do they come first or does God?" "What then, are the terms of discipleship? Let me give the answer in just two words: "GOD FIRST." And if I could, I would put them on a banner in the sight every congregation in the world - GOD FIRST." (Oswald Smith; The Man God Uses).*

•**Matthew Parris. The Times. December 27, 2008:** "As an atheist, I truly believe Africa needs God. It confounds my ideological beliefs, stubbornly refuses to fit my world view, and has embarrassed my growing belief that there is no God. Now a confirmed atheist, I've become convinced of the enormous contribution that Christian evangelism makes in Africa: sharply distinct from the work of secular NGOs, government projects and international aid efforts. These alone will not do. Education and training alone will not do. In Africa Christianity changes people's hearts. It brings a spiritual transformation. The rebirth is real. The change is good."