

The Purpose of the Gospel

- I. A common question which is often asked when someone first hears of the doctrine of sovereign grace is: "If God chose people to save before He even created the world, then what is the point of preaching the gospel?"
- II. The word "gospel" means "good tidings" or "good news" (**Rom 10:15 c/w Isa 52:7; Nah 1:15**).
 1. Gospel - 1. a. 'The glad tidings (of the kingdom of God)' announced to the world by Jesus Christ. Hence, the body of religious doctrine taught by Christ and His apostles; the Christian revelation, religion or dispensation.
 2. The gospel is the good news about what Jesus did. The gospel tells us that:
 - A. Jesus died for our sins, was buried, and rose again three days later according to the scriptures (**1Co 15:1-4**).
 - B. Jesus destroyed the devil who had the power of death (**Heb 2:14**).
 - C. Jesus delivered us from the power of darkness (**Col 1:13**).
 - D. Because Jesus rose from the dead, so will we (**1Co 15:20-23**).
 - E. Jesus gave us eternal life (**1Jo 5:11**).
- III. The gospel, or the good news, is the declaration of an event that happened which brought salvation to men; but the gospel doesn't cause the event to happen, it just declares what already happened.
 1. For example: your brother gets into an accident and is knocked unconscious and when he gets to the hospital the surgeon does a heart transplant to save his life. When he wakes up in the hospital, you tell him what happened and that the heart transplant saved his life.
 - A. In this case, the good news (the gospel) is that the surgeon was able to give him a heart transplant which saved his life.
 - B. The act of telling him the good news (the gospel) didn't give him the new heart and save his life.
 - C. The act of him believing the good news (the gospel) didn't give him the new heart, it just allowed him to know it and to be thankful for it.
 - D. Once he has heard and believed the good news (the gospel), he can thank the surgeon that did the transplant and tell others what a great job he did in saving his life.
 2. The real gospel is the good news that Jesus died for our sins, saved us from eternal death, and gave us eternal life.
 - A. The act of telling someone the gospel doesn't give him eternal life, it simply declares what Jesus did.
 - B. The act of believing the gospel doesn't give the person eternal life, it just allows him to know that he has it and to be thankful for it.
 - C. Once a person has heard the gospel and believed it, he can thank God who saved him and tell others what God did for him.
- IV. Is belief of the gospel *necessary* for a person to have eternal life?
 1. Necessary - 1. a. Indispensable, requisite, essential, needful; that cannot be done without.
 2. If belief of the gospel is *necessary* for a person to have eternal life, then every person who does not believe the gospel is going to hell.
 - A. Babies can't believe the gospel. Therefore if belief of the gospel is *necessary* for a person to have eternal life, then all babies are going to hell.
 - B. If at least some babies go to heaven when they die, and they don't believe the gospel, then belief of the gospel is not *necessary* to have eternal life.

- C. If it is believed that all babies go to heaven when they die because they have no sin (which is not true - **Rom 5:12**), then belief of the gospel is not *necessary* to have eternal life.
3. If belief of the gospel is *necessary* for a person to have eternal life, and it is first necessary to hear the word of God before one can believe the gospel (**Rom 10:14-17**), then every person who does not hear the gospel is going to hell.
- A. This would mean that every heathen in the jungles of Africa or South America who has never heard the gospel is going to hell.
 - B. If all the heathen in the bush are going to hell because they were not fortunate enough to hear the gospel, and all the people who were fortunate enough to hear it are heaven-bound, but are too lazy to preach it to others, which will in turn cause them to go to hell; then what kind of God is that who would save in such a way?
 - C. This also puts the power of eternal life in the hands of the believer: he would decide who goes to heaven or hell by deciding to share or withhold the gospel from a person.
 - D. If it is believed that God will have mercy and save them which have never heard the gospel, then belief of the gospel is not *necessary* to have eternal life.
 - i. If all those who have not heard the gospel are going to heaven because of God's mercy, then why send missionaries to preach the gospel to them?
 - ii. If they are already going to heaven, and they hear the gospel and believe it, the gospel does nothing for them *eternally speaking*.
 - iii. If they are going to heaven until they hear the gospel and reject it, then the gospel becomes an instrument of condemnation instead of salvation.
 - iv. In such a case, the best thing we could do is stay at home and share the gospel with nobody because doing so will send men to hell that were headed to heaven.
4. The belief that people such as babies, the heathen, the mentally handicapped, etc. who cannot (or have not the opportunity to) believe the gospel will be saved by God's mercy and grace alone is partly right.
- A. This is how God saves all of His people, not just those who cannot believe -- by His mercy and grace (**Tit 3:5; 2Ti 1:9**).
 - i. Our unbelief will not stop God from saving us if we be His elect children (**Rom 3:3-4; 2Ti 2:13**).
 - ii. God even saves His elect who are enemies of the gospel (**Rom 11:28-29; Psa 89:30-34**).
 - iii. Does this mean we should continue in sin? God forbid. (**Rom 6:1-2; Rom 3:8**)
 - B. It is partly right because God does save *some* of those people (babies, heathen, handicapped) by His mercy and grace, *but not all of them*.
 - C. God saves people *out of* every kindred, tongue, people, and nation, but not every person from a particular tribe just because the whole tribe never heard the gospel (**Rev 5:9**).
 - D. God is not a respecter of persons (**Rom 2:11**) and He doesn't save people based on their circumstances, but only on His purpose according to election (**Rom 9:11-13**).
- V. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to believers (**Rom 1:16**).

1. Notice the tenses: the gospel *is* (not *shall be*) the power of God unto salvation to every one that *believeth*.
2. This verse doesn't say that the gospel makes people believe, nor does it say that it is the power of God unto salvation to unbelievers.
3. The gospel has no power at all to unbelievers. If you don't agree, just preach the gospel to an unbeliever and see how much effect it has on him.
4. A man must already be saved eternally for the gospel to be the power of God to him (**1Co 1:18**).
 - A. Notice the tenses: the preaching of the cross (the gospel) *is* (present tense) the power of God to us which *are saved* (present perfect tense).
 - B. Being saved eternally comes *before* the gospel is the power of God to someone.
 - C. On the other hand, to them that perish (are not saved eternally), the gospel is foolishness and has no power.
5. If the gospel is the power of God unto salvation only to believers who are already saved eternally (**1Co 1:18**), then it is not the power of God unto *eternal* salvation.
 - A. It's not the power of God unto eternal salvation because a man has to already have eternal salvation for it to be the power of God to him, and furthermore, if he isn't a believer it is of no power to him since it is foolishness.
 - B. Therefore, the gospel must be the power of God unto *temporal salvation* to believers.
6. The gospel *reveals* the righteousness of God, not procures it (**Rom 1:17**).
 - A. The righteousness of God was procured for us by Jesus being made sin for us (**2Co 5:21**), not by the gospel telling us about it.
 - B. The righteousness of God is by Jesus' faith (**Rom 3:22**), and the gospel that reveals it is received by us by faith, which was preached to us by another person who received it by faith.
 - C. Therefore, it is from faith to faith.

VI. The gospel brings life and immortality *to light*, it doesn't cause life and immortality (**2Ti 1:10**).

1. It was Jesus that saved us and abolished death (**2Ti 1:9-10**).
2. It is the gospel that tells us about it.
3. Whereas Jesus destroyed him that had the power of death (**Heb 2:14**), the knowledge of the gospel delivers men from the *fear of death* (**Heb 2:15**).

VII. The gospel is the proclamation of the fact that God saves by grace, not the means by which God saves by grace (**Act 20:24**).

1. The gospel tells us about the hope which *is laid* up for us in heaven (**Col 1:5**).
2. The gospel brings knowledge of the grace of God (**Col 1:6**).
3. The gospel brings knowledge of salvation (**Luk 1:77**).
4. Preachers labor and endure all things for the elect so that they may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus in addition to eternal glory (eternal salvation) (**2Ti 2:10**).
 - A. All of the elect have already obtained the *eternal* salvation and *eternal* glory in Christ Jesus (**2Ti 1:9; Rom 8:30**).
 - B. They don't need a preacher to labor for them to obtain that salvation.
 - C. Preachers labor so that the elect may *also* obtain another salvation.
 - i. Also - 1. (went out of use in 1400's) 2. In the very manner of something else; in like manner, in the same way, likewise, similarly (passing in later times into 3). 3. As a further point, item, or circumstance tending in the

same direction; further, in addition, besides, as well, too; taking the place of OE.

ii. There is a salvation that is in addition to eternal salvation that the elect are in need of which is the preacher's job to tell them about.

D. This "salvation which is in Christ Jesus" is *with* eternal glory.

i. With - II. Denoting personal relation, agreement, association, connexion, union, addition.

ii. This salvation which is in addition to eternal salvation is *temporal salvation*, such as salvation from ignorance, deception, fear of death, trying to establish their own righteousness, chastisement in this life from God for sin; and salvation to the knowledge and assurance of eternal life, fellowship with like-believers, rest, and joy.

VIII. The gospel brings God's children into a better knowledge of Him and into fellowship with Him.

1. Cornelius was a child of God whom God had already cleansed (**Act 10:15 c/w Act 10:28**).

A. Cornelius was already a child of God with eternal life (**Act 10:2 c/w Act 10:35**).

B. He just needed to be told what he should do (**Act 10:5-6; Act 10:33**).

C. Peter was sent to preach Jesus Christ to him so he could also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus in addition to the eternal salvation he already had (**Act 10:36-43**).

D. After hearing the gospel, Cornelius was baptized (**Act 10:47-48**).

2. Lydia was a woman that worshipped God (**Act 16:14**).

A. She had a limited knowledge of God though.

B. God opened her heart so that she listened to the gospel that Paul preached (**Act 16:14**).

C. She was then baptized (**Act 16:15**).

D. She obtained *temporal salvation* by means of the gospel.

IX. Belief of the gospel gives us the assurance of eternal life.

1. The bible is written to God's children so that they may *know* that they have eternal life (**1Jo 5:13**).

2. The gospel tells us that if we hunger and thirst after righteousness, we shall be filled (**Mat 5:6**).

3. Belief of the gospel gives the evidence that we are born of God and have eternal life (**Joh 5:24**).

4. The gospel promises us that:

A. if we do righteousness, we are born of God (**1Jo 2:29**).

B. if we love one another, we are born of God (**1Jo 4:7**).

C. if we believe that Jesus is the Christ, we are born of God (**1Jo 5:1**).

5. The gospel assures us that if we love God, it is proof that He loves us (**1Jo 4:19**).

X. The purpose of the gospel is to locate and educate the regenerate.