

The Gospel - Part 2

Preached Sunday, July 21 2019

Review

T-Shirt outreach

We all know we're called to *Evangelize*. We are familiar with *the great commission* **Matt 28:19-20 (ESV)** (19) *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (20) teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.* "

Evangelism can be intimidating, especially striking up conversations with new people and then turning them toward Christ. Toward that end, we are going to wear shirts that say *Ask me about Jesus* . The hope is people will strike up a conversation with us - and that conversation will be already focused on the Lord! From there, we hope to share the Gospel.

Our Wednesday sessions are about training for this outreach, and as we do so, we are gaining confidence to have these discussions when people approach us.

Last week

Last Sunday we talked about the Gospel - since our goal is to share it. Wanted to understand it better. We used the passage **1 Cor 15:1-4 (ESV)** (1) *Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, (2) and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you--unless you believed in vain. (3) For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, (4) that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,*

And we said from this passage:

The Gospel is

- Jesus died
- For our sins
- And he rose from the dead

The Gospel promises

Rom 10:13 (ESV) (13) *For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."*

The Gospel must be

- Preached
- Received
- Clung to

Introduction

This morning, I want to continue sharing on the theme **The Gospel**, looking specifically at the **power** of the Gospel

We've already discussed the prologue to Romans where Paul says he's not ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of God. **Rom 1:16-17 (ESV)** (16) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.* (17)

For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."

This morning, I want to study a couple of additional passages from the opening chapters of 1st Corinthians

Our text **1 Cor 1:18 (ESV)** (18) *For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*

And a few verses later, see **1 Cor 1:23-24 (ESV)** (23) *but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, (24) but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.*

What is the power of the Gospel?

Let's consider the power that should accompany the preaching of the Gospel

Convict the sinner

First, when the Gospel is preached, it should include the power of the Holy Spirit present to convict the sinner.

Illustrate: Wednesday we shared about our first encounter with the Gospel message. Missy indicated she'd not grown up in church, but came to a little holiness church. She felt such great conviction! She knew she had to get right!

See the **response on the day of Pentecost to Peter's sermon** After Peter had concluded this message on the day of Pentecost, see the response from the crowd: **Acts 2:37 (ESV)** (37) *Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"*

Ask How many of us can relate to the power of the Gospel to convict the sinner? Do you remember what it was like when you felt the weight of your sins and longed for an answer?

Point: We need to pray for this power / anointing to return to our presentation of the Gospel

Convince the sinner

The Gospel should be preached with the expectation of the Spirit's power to *convince* the sinner.

When we preach the Gospel to another, we are asking them to believe in an invisible God

Consider Paul's remarks in **1 Cor 2:4-5 (ESV)** *(4) and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, (5) that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.*

Here we see that Paul's presentation of the Gospel was accompanied with a manifestation of the Spirit's power. We know from the book of Acts, this included:

- Healing the sick
- Driving out demons
- Raising the dead

We've said before... many times... that the manifestation of the Holy Spirit is to accompany evangelism!

Change the sinner

The ultimate power of the Gospel is to transform the sinner into a saint. When it is shared, and received - it has the power to transform us!

See **2 Cor 5:17 (ESV)** (17) *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.* No matter what we were - through the Gospel we become new. Children of God!

A little later on in the book Paul reminds them: **1 Cor 6:9-11 (ESV)** (9) *Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, (10) nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. (11) And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*

It doesn't matter what we were - the Gospel has the power to make us children of God!

Note: This is a process. We are to keep *clinging* to the Gospel as we let its power work in us! We are not the same as we once were!

How can I experience that power?

As we are preparing to share the Gospel - it should be our desire to see the power of the Gospel at work in us. Let's consider three things when we share the Gospel

I must be living under it's power

God is merciful and he won't let his word return void. In and of itself it has the power to change the sinner. However, it is much more effective when I am living under the power of the Gospel as well.

I am not perfect (nor are you), but I am being changed by the Gospel. Because of that I can share with conviction and confidence its hope for the sinner. Worse - what if I offer the hope of salvation to another, only to miss it myself. See **1 Cor 9:27 (ESV)** (27) *But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.*

It must be preached

The Gospel is God's power to change the sinner as we have preached - but it must be preached, i.e. released for the sinner to hear. We've covered this from **Rom 10:14 (ESV)** (14) *How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?*

I will keep on reminding us - unless it is preached, it cannot change a life! We have the privilege and obligation to preach the Gospel!

Consider again the parable of the sower. It demonstrates the various types of *hearts (soils)* upon which the message of the Gospel will fall. Not everyone will hear and be transformed. Recall however the beginning of the parable... **Matt 13:3 (ESV)** (3) *And he told them many things in parables, saying: "A sower went out to sow. The Word (Gospel) is the seed - but it must be sown!*

As we head into this outreach - sow the word!

It must not be watered down, or muddied up

The point of the passage we are studying is that Paul relied on the Gospel message to change his hearers. He didn't try to be eloquent and persuasive, excelling in the art of rhetoric.

Consider **1 Cor 1:17 (ESV)** (17) *For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.*

Adding human wisdom and fine speech take the focus off of the cross and therefore empty it of its power. Remember, the Gospel is:

- Jesus died
- For our sins
- And he rose from the dead!

It's all about Jesus and Him crucified. See again **1 Cor 2:1-2 (ESV)** (1) *And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. (2) For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.*

Communion

Let's come now to the Lord's table and celebrate His provision for us

1 Cor 11:23-26 (ESV) (23) *For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, (24) and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." (25) In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." (26) For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.*