

The Gospel

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What is the gospel? Many people cannot distinguish between the gospel and the effects of the gospel. The gospel is not:

- Salvation
 - The Bible
 - Grace
 - A product
- Christ never withdrew or modified any statement He ever made.
 - Great men readily apologize when they are wrong. Christ never had to apologize to anyone for anything.
 - Another amazing fact is that He never sought advice from anyone. He was never educated or taught. He always knew.
 - Another amazing thing is that He never once troubled to justify his ambiguous behavior. When He was asleep in the back of the boat and the storm came and the disciples were scared, what was Jesus doing? He was sleeping in the back of the boat! When they questioned him he said only, "O ye of little faith...Peace be still."
 - Another amazing fact about Christ is that you will never find a place where He asked prayer for himself.
 - What were Jesus's strong points? He did not have any. In order to have a strong point you have to have a weak point.
 - IT IS ALL ABOUT HIM! "Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures" Luke 24:27

Jesus is...

- Jesus is the better Adam who passed the test in the garden and whose obedience is imputed to us.
- Jesus is the true and better Abel who, innocently slain, has blood now that cries out, not for our condemnation, but for acquittal.
- Jesus is the true and better Abraham who answered the call of God to leave all the comfortable and familiar and go out not knowing where he went to create a new people of God.
- Jesus is the true and better Isaac who was not just offered up by his father but was truly sacrificed for us.

- Jesus is the true and better Jacob who, wrestled and took the blow of justice we deserved, so we, like Jacob, only receive the wounds of Grace.
- Jesus is the true and better Joseph who, at the right hand of the King, forgives those who betrayed and sold Him and uses his new power to save them.
- Jesus is the true and better Moses who stands in the gap between the people and the Lord and who mediates a new covenant.
- Jesus is the true and better Rock of Moses who, struck with the rod of God' justice, now gives us water in the desert.
- Jesus is the true and better Job, the sufferer, who intercedes for and saves his stupid friends.
- Jesus is the true and better David whose victory becomes his people's victory, though they never lifted a stone to accomplish it themselves.
- Jesus is the true and better Ester who did not just risk losing an earthly palace but lost the ultimate and heavenly one, who didn't just risk his life, but gave his life to save his people.
- Jesus is the true and better Jonah who was cast out into the storm so that we could be brought in.
- Jesus is the real rock of Moses, the real Passover Lamb, innocent, perfect, helpless, slain so the angel of death will pass over us. He is the true temple, the true prophet, the true priest, the true king, the true sacrifice, the true lamb, the true light, the true bread.

WHEN YOU GET RIGHT DOWN TO IT, IT IS ALL ABOUT HIM.

The Danger of Principles

- It can be a very confusing life to keep up with all the principles I/you/we are supposed to keep.
- It is cumbersome – somewhat like stuffing hundreds of marbles in each pocket
- It leads to individualism. Everybody has their own principles.
- It leads away from Christ and a focus on the gospel.
- It is a lifestyle that is not sustainable.

The Danger of Performance Lifestyle

Most of us are legalists at heart. A legalist is someone who lives by the formula “Jesus Christ PLUS _____ = A pleased God

The inherent danger of the statement, “This does not please God” is that most people have moved away from a biblical definition of what it means to please God. *ONLY ONE THING PLEASES GOD. CHRIST.*

RELIGION SAYS: “OBEY AND YOU WILL BE ACCEPTED.” THE GOSPEL SAYS, “I ACCEPT YOU IN CHRIST AND BECAUSE OF CHRIST. THEREFORE OBEY.”

Connecting the Gospel to Real Life

Before we will lean toward obedience we must understand what it means to live in ontological reality.

Ontology: Who we are or our state of being. Christians are “little Christs.”

Some practical examples:

1. Forgiveness – Matthew 18:23-35 (“As I had mercy on you” – the gospel)
2. Kindness – Ephesians 4:32 (Even as God in Christ forgave you” – the gospel)
3. Gratitude – Luke 7:47 (“Forgiven much loves much” – the gospel)
4. Serving – Mark 10:45
5. Suffering – 1 Peter 2:18-25 (“Christ also suffered” – the gospel)
6. Humility – Matthew 26:39 (“Not as I will” – the gospel)
7. Modeling – Ephesians 5:1 (“Be imitators of Christ” – the gospel)
8. Confession – 1 John 1:1-10
9. Self-Righteousness – Philippians 2:1-10
10. Anger - 1 Peter 2:1-5 “Taste the Lord”