

# Why Preach the Gospel?

How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!  
Romans 10:15

## Introduction:

1. As we study through the book of Acts, we need to understand Paul's evangelism of the Gentiles (Acts 13-28).
2. This point of faith is a very distinguishing doctrine of our church, and we all should be established in it.
3. To wisely defend God's sovereignty in salvation, it is important to rightly understand the gospel and our duties.

## I. The ERROR

- A. Most hold gospel preaching saves the lost, rescues the perishing, and so fills heaven.
  1. The common scheme is God wants to save everybody so bad that He sent His Son to pay for all their sins, and the Holy Spirit tries to get everyone to believe; so salvation is possible for all, if they would but cooperate with God's desires.
  2. Gospel preaching is understood and treated as a sacrament for Baptists – an outward sign that conveys inward grace – to bring eternal life to lost wicked men.
  3. Their doctrine may be reduced to decisional regeneration – the unregenerate and unsaved person may become regenerated with a reservation in heaven by making a mere decision in response to hearing the gospel presented by any sort of means.
  4. They sing songs like “Rescue the Perishing,” “Throw Out the Lifeline,” “There's a New Name Written Down in Glory,” and so forth.
  5. Organizations to “spread the gospel” are legion with constant financial pleas.
- B. Arminians propose lost men are ignorant and only need to believe the gospel to be saved.
  1. They deny total depravity and exalt the free will of man in God's plan to save all.
  2. A mere emotional moment of “deciding for Christ” is sufficient for eternal life.
- C. Calvinists propose lost men are dead and will by necessity believe the gospel to be saved.
  1. Teaching total depravity and unconditional election, they still require man's faith.
  2. They defend this contradiction by calling faith the instrument of salvation; but once faith is necessary, we ask how much? how long? how correct? how alone?
- D. Explanatory outlines are available comparing Calvinism and Arminianism to the Bible.
- E. Because we hold eternal life an unconditional gift of God by election and predestination in Christ with all the operations of grace performed by Divine Power without a single loss, we are ridiculed for removing any purpose or value from preaching the gospel.
  1. Some holding our doctrine became Fatalists to most human responsibility.
  2. Some holding our doctrine became Antinomians to good works after salvation.
  3. Some holding our doctrine became Universalists of a false hope for most all men.
  4. Some holding our doctrine became opposed to evangelism or preaching to others.
- F. Many say they see both God's sovereignty and man's free will taught in Scripture, but they choose to exalt man and make salvation their own work. We choose rather to exalt Jesus Christ alone and reconcile verses about faith and works as evidence, not conditions.
- G. These two doctrines of salvation differ greatly with horrible consequences (Ezek 13:22).
  1. The righteous are made sad by not hearing the glories of an all-sufficient Saviour.
  2. The wicked are strengthened by a false promise of life from decisional salvation.

## II. The TRUTH

- A. Eternal life is not merely a possibility for any or all; it is rather a certainty for the elect.
  1. God chose some in Christ Jesus before the world began to be saved (Eph 1:3-12).
  2. God guarantees all the operations of grace for their glorification (Rom 8:29-39).
  3. God sent Jesus Christ to die a Substitute for these elect (John 6:38-39; 10:11,15).

4. God the Spirit regenerates Christ's sheep by His Will (John 1:13; 3:8; 5:25-29).
  5. God designed this glorious doctrine of salvation for His glory (Romans 9:22-24).
  6. God wrote their names in the book of life before the world began (Re 13:8; 17:8).
  7. The final salvation of all the elect is guaranteed in the covenant of redemption, and there is not the slightest possibility of a single one of them being lost.
  8. Eternal life is not offered to any on conditions, but guaranteed to some freely.
  9. The certainty of eternal life is based in the Faithfulness and Grace of God in Christ; it is not based in the cooperative efforts, faith, or works of sinners.
  10. Outlines are available on "Unconditional Salvation" and "Phases of Salvation."
- B. The gospel is the good news of this incredible gift from God in Jesus Christ for the elect.
1. The English "gospel" combines the Old English **god** (good) + **spel** (to announce).
  2. Our English Bibles use the word "gospel" as "good tidings" (Rom 10:15; Is 52:7).
  3. God's church of the Old Covenant – the Jews – had been locked under a system of law works they could not keep until the gospel would come (Gal 3:22-29).
    - a. Much of the New Testament presents gospel hope for law-trusting Jews.
    - b. The rest of the New Testament presents gospel hope and duty for Gentiles.
  4. The "gospel of Christ" is the good news of God's power and wisdom in Jesus Christ to secure eternal life for the elect of Adam's fallen and condemned race.
  5. The "gospel of Christ" is not a spiritual formula for taking eternal life to sinners.
  6. The "gospel of Christ" is not a sacramental pinata to be struck at by blind sinners.
- C. The gospel is not the power of God itself, but rather the good news about God's power.
1. The gospel is good news – it is the revelation of God's glorious gift of salvation.
  2. Because verses are abused repeatedly for their *sound*, it is hard to see the *sense*.
  3. The gospel preached in simplicity is only received such by the saved (I Cor 1:18).
  4. The gospel reveals God, whom they would not know by nature (I Cor 1:19-21).
  5. The gospel reveals the power and wisdom of God in Jesus Christ (I Cor 1:22-24).
  6. So we easily see the gospel as the good news of God's power (Rom 1:16-17), for it reveals God's righteousness from the faith of preachers to the faith of hearers.
  7. Jesus secured life and immortality; the gospel brings it TO LIGHT (II Ti 1:9-10).
  8. Jesus Christ reconciled us to God; the gospel is the WORD OF it (II Cor 5:18-21).
  9. The gospel purges consciences from sins by providing the knowledge of a sacrifice already made for all sins (Hebrews 9:9,14; 10:2,22; I Peter 3:21). It does not do any purging itself – it reveals the good news about how we were purged.
- D. The gospel was preached and should be preached to all who will hear for the elect's sake.
1. Consider Paul's great desire to preach the gospel to Roman saints (Rom 1:15-17).
  2. Consider Paul's standard practice of preaching in synagogues (Acts 17:1-3,10,17).
  3. Consider Paul's other preaching beside rivers and in markets (Acts 16:13; 17:17).
  4. Consider Paul's preaching at Antioch and the condition for belief (Acts 13:48).
  5. Consider Paul's declaration he endured all things for the elect (II Timothy 2:10).
  6. Consider Paul's bondage to thank God for choosing Thessalonians (II Thes 2:13).
  7. If John 3:16 is the sum and substance of the gospel, why is there not a single use of the word "love" in the book of Acts? Why didn't Paul offer it to all openly?
- E. The gospel has no value or purpose for the unsaved, for they do not care for its message.
1. The gospel cannot help the lost, for their god has blinded them to it (II Cor 4:1-7).
  2. The gospel cannot help the perishing, for it is foolishness to them (I Cor 1:17-21).

3. The gospel cannot help the perishing, for it manifests their death (II Cor 2:14-17).
  4. The gospel cannot help the perishing, for they hate the truth (II Thess 2:9-12).
  5. The gospel cannot help the natural man, for he cannot receive it (I Cor 2:6-16).
  6. The gospel cannot help the man in the flesh (John 3:6; Romans 8:5-8; Gal 5:17).
  7. The gospel cannot help the man without faith, so avoid them (II Thess 3:1-2).
  8. The gospel cannot help those not of God and not His sheep (John 8:47; 10:26-27).
  9. The gospel cannot help those not already enlightened (Matt 11:27; Jn 6:44-45,65).
- F. The gospel is never modified to accommodate or entice or attract any group of hearers.
1. Jews wanted signs and Greeks wisdom, but Paul preached Christ (I Cor 1:21-24).
  2. Paul determined to avoid polished presentations to prove their faith (I Cor 2:1-5).
  3. The weapons of Paul's warfare in the ministry were not carnal (II Cor 10:3-6).
  4. Jesus knew when men were following Him merely for natural bread (John 6:26).
  5. Kind favor or miracles cannot change the heart to believe (Is 26:10; Luke 16:31).
  6. Why did Jesus preach in parables at times and explain them later (Matt 13:9-18)?
  7. Which gospel has a Legion of gimmicks and worldly seduction to "save souls"?
  8. What heresy spawned the idea of feeding men, clothing men, hospitalizing men, and entertaining men in order to get them to make some profession of "faith"?
- G. We believe the gospel, not to earn or obtain or secure eternal life, but to assure our hearts.
1. We believe and obey the gospel to LAY HOLD on eternal life (I Tim 6:12,19).
  2. Faith in Christ is the evidence of eternal life (John 1:12-13; 5:24; I John 5:1).
  3. Faith without works is a devil's faith and cannot save; so faith with works is the evidence of an elect child justified by Jesus Christ (James 2:14-26; Mark 16:16).
  4. This justification is our knowledge and confidence of it by faith (Gal 5:1-5; 2:16).
  5. Therefore, we must give diligence to add to our faith such fruit that proves eternal life, as Peter intended to often repeat for evidence of election (II Peter 1:5-15).
  6. Paul knew the Thessalonians were elect by obedience to the gospel (I Thes 1:2-4).
  7. Brother John clearly explained the purpose for his first epistle (I Jn 1:1-4; 5:13).
  8. Brother Paul used all the gospel means for resurrection confidence (Phil 3:8-11).
  9. Paul preached to convert the elect from ignorance to confidence (Rom 10:1-17).
  10. We can lose gospel assurance by forgetting it or getting it confused (I Cor 15:2).
- H. Many never hear it; many reject it; many confuse it; yet all elect will be saved anyway.
1. We believe and maintain a consistent plan of salvation for infant and adult alike.
  2. We believe and maintain a consistent plan of salvation for idiot and intelligent.
  3. We believe and maintain a consistent plan of salvation for perfect or faulty faith.
  4. We believe and maintain a consistent plan of salvation for strong or weak faith.
  5. We maintain a consistent plan of salvation for Old and New Testament alike.
  6. We maintain a consistent plan of salvation for Abraham and Lot (II Peter 2:7-8).
  7. Others holding to God's grace must make difficult exceptions for these categories.
  8. From this dilemma, we often hear the "age of accountability" and other sophisms.
    - a. If the popular "age of accountability" is true, then abortion fills heaven, is very efficient evangelism, and saves children from growing to damnation.
    - b. If the popular "heathen get another chance" is true, then leave them alone.
    - c. If the popular "heathen are saved" is true, evangelism becomes damnation.
  9. We understand the work of both Adams to be applied irrespective of cooperation.
    - a. We sin, die, and will face eternal condemnation, because of Adam's sin.
    - b. If a person has not heard of Adam or rejects him, it does not matter at all.

- c. We will live in perfect righteousness in heaven, because Jesus obeyed.
      - d. If the elect have not heard of Christ or reject him, it does not matter at all.
      - e. In both cases, the work of the representative is applied regardless of faith.
    - 10. We recognize and believe that some elect do not hear or believe the gospel.
      - a. The Israelites in the wilderness were unconverted elect (I Cor 10:1-14).
      - b. There was a mysterious part of elect Israel unconverted (Rom 11:25-32).
      - c. For more examples of this point, see the outline for “Unconverted Elect.”
    - 11. We recognize other elect who may reject the gospel and turn away from it.
      - a. Were the Galatians still saved after falling from grace (Galatians 5:4)?
      - b. Could Jews lose their salvation (Heb 2:1-3; 6:4-6; 10:26-31; 12:25-29)?
    - 12. God cannot reject His elect, even if they believe not (II Tim 2:13; I Thes 5:23-24; Rom 8:28-39; 11:25-32; I Corinthians 10:1-5; I Kings 11:1-13).
  - I. We are not taught to preach the gospel to save the lost from hell anywhere in the Bible.
    - 1. Jesus is the Sole Saviour as the Second Adam, and there is no role for man in it.
    - 2. There is not a mention of New Testament churches “winning the lost for Christ.”
    - 3. In the epistles, there are no programs, prayers, or priorities for saving the ungodly.
    - 4. The eternal destiny of no one is hinged upon human obedience or financial giving.
    - 5. The “Great Commission” was for the apostles, and they fulfilled it completely (Mark 16:14-20; Col 1:6,23). There is an extensive outline proving this assertion.
  - J. We preach the gospel to know what God has done for us and what we can do for Him.
    - 1. The N.T. emphasis is two: God’s grace in eternal life; our duty for God’s glory.
    - 2. Rather than saving others, we must work out our own salvation (Phil 2:12-13).
    - 3. The salvation of the gospel is from error (Rom 10:1-3; I Tim 4:16; Jas 5:19-20).
    - 4. The gospel is preached for conversion – turning or changing – of men (Lu 22:32), which educational process shall continue all our lives (Jas 5:19-20; II Pet 3:18).
    - 5. Some epistles are for correction (I Cor; Gal), and others for fruit over the flesh.
    - 6. The emphasis of the New Testament is maintaining good works (Titus 2:15; 3:8).
    - 7. Cornelius was born again and feared God, but he needed to know more (Ac 10:6).
  - K. The gospel brings the knowledge of a peaceful relationship of fellowship with God.
    - 1. Such fellowship was an important part of John’s epistle (I John 1:1-4).
    - 2. Our sins cannot alter our relationship, but they can alter fellowship (Ps 89:28-37).
    - 3. Obedience brings God’s Presence by His Spirit (John 7:39; Act 2:38; Ep 1:13-14).
    - 4. The knowledge of salvation is a very peaceful message (Romans 5:1-2; 15:13).
  - L. The gospel and the obedience it teaches may save us from the righteous judgment of God.
    - 1. Peter, like Jonah (Jon 3:4), warned against judgment upon Jerusalem (Acts 2:40).
    - 2. God’s chastening may be avoided by changing (Heb 12:6-8 cp I Cor 11:29-31).
  - M. Peace and joy are benefits of hearing the gospel, believing it, and remembering it.
    - 1. There remains a rest for the people of God in the gospel (Heb 3:18-19 cp 4:7-11).
    - 2. Salvation from misery and hopelessness is by the resurrection (I Cor 15:19,1-2).
    - 3. Joy and peace is for believers (Phil 4:4-9; II Pet 1:2; Rom 14:17; 15:13; I Pet 1:8).
    - 4. The gospel can save men from the fear of death (Hebrews 2:15 cp Isaiah 26:3).
- III. The APPLICATION
- A. How do you hear the gospel? With joy and repentance and obedience? Or a dull sermon?

- B. Do you fully appreciate the commandment of God for you to hear it (Romans 16:25-27)?
- C. Has God sent beautiful feet to you in the past and present? Thank Him.