



The Power of the Gospel

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Introduction:

Last week we looked at the powerful tool we have of speech. The words that we speak and declare have great power. This morning we are looking at the power of the gospel.

Romans 1:16

I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

The word gospel means good news. In most all of the scriptures where the word “gospel” is used, also the word “preach” is found. The preaching has to do with declaring, or speaking what is the gospel.

I. What is the Gospel?

The gospel is the good news. What good news do we know from God’s Word? *We are sinners and Jesus came to save us from our sin. We are condemned and Jesus came to stand in our place. We are bound because of sin, and Jesus came to release us from being bound and enslaved to sin. We are in darkness and Jesus came to be our light. The good news is that we are not alone. We have the comforter, the Holy Spirit, who God has sent to be with us and in us. The good news is that Jesus is right now preparing a place for those who love Him, to live with Him forever in Heaven. The good news is that soon He is coming back to take us to live with Him forever.*

Paul writes in our text and says he is not ashamed of the good news. Why would anyone be ashamed of a message that had power to save all those who believed it?

There is power in knowing truth. In [John 8:31-32](#) it says, to the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, **“If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”**

II. The gospel has power.

The word power here is the same word that is used for the Holy Spirit power that filled the disciples on the day of Pentecost. Jesus used the same word that is used here for the gospel, when He told the disciples to go to Jerusalem and wait for the promise of the Father there. He told them they would receive power after the Holy Spirit came on them, to be witnesses to Him - The TRUTH. The word power here from the Greek is the word **dunamis**, and it means *force*. It has to do with miraculous ability, might, strength, or work.

This power is contained in the gospel. The gospel carries with it the miraculous ability to bring people from spiritual death to spiritual life. The gospel carries with it the miraculous ability to bring people from spiritual darkness to spiritual light. The gospel carries with it the miraculous ability to bring people from spiritual deception to spiritual truth.

We know that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. People can not act without hearing or the knowledge of what to act upon.

Romans 10:14

How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?

Back in 1830, George Wilson was convicted of robbing the U.S. Mail and was sentenced to be hanged. President Andrew Jackson issued a pardon for Wilson, but he refused to accept it. The matter went to Chief Justice Marshall, who concluded that Wilson would have to be executed. "A pardon is a slip of paper," wrote Marshall, "the value of which is determined by the acceptance of the person to be pardoned. If it is refused, it is no pardon. George Wilson must be hanged."

We have all heard of individuals who die and leave great wealth, property, assets to their heirs, but somehow the heirs never hear about it to claim the wealth that legally belongs to them. As a result, those individuals live and die in poverty. In reality they don't have to live the way they do, but no one has told them that they are heirs to a great fortune, so in ignorance, they live and die impoverished.

III. The gospel has the power of truth to enlighten and reveal deception.

From the time that Adam and Eve allowed themselves to be deceived by Satan who presented a twisted version of the truth to them, to the present time, men and women have continually been blinded and deceived to the truth. After Adam and Eve disobeyed God's instruction, scripture tells us that their eyes were opened; they realized they were naked, and they hid from God. Isn't it interesting that people today still try to cover sin, and justify it, and hide from God?

2 Corinthians 4:3-6

And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. ⁴The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. ⁵For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. ⁶For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

A survey was taken in early 1991 where interviewees were asked, "Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly with the following statement: There is no such thing as absolute truth; different people can define truth in conflicting ways and still be correct." Only 28% of the respondents expressed strong belief in "absolute truth," and more surprisingly, only 23% of born-again or evangelical Christians accepted this idea!

What a telling revelation! If more than 75% of the followers of Christ say nothing can be known for certain, does this indicate, as it seems, that they are not convinced that Jesus existed, that He is who He claimed to be, that His Word is authentic, that God created the heavens and earth, or that eternal life awaits the believer? That's what the findings appear to mean. *If there is no absolute truth, then by definition nothing can be said to be absolutely true.* To the majority, apparently, it's all relative. Nothing is certain. It might be. It might not be. Who knows for sure? Take your guess and hope for the best!
[James Dobson, December 1991 letter, quoting George Barna, What Americans Believe.](#)

Even those who claim to be born again are not necessarily firmly grounded in the truths of the Bible. In his book which provides a statistical analysis of religious beliefs in America, George Barna cites several fascinating statistics which are based on a national survey.

In chapter four he states, "The Devil, or Satan, is not a living being but is a symbol of evil." Then asking that segment of his survey respondents who have identified themselves as being born again, he states, "Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly with that statement?" The born again population replied with 32 percent agreeing strongly, 11 percent agreeing somewhat and 5 percent did not know. Thus, of the total number responding, (48 percent) either agreed that Satan is only symbolic or did not know!

Should it then be surprising that a few pages later Barna would receive some very startling responses? His next question, "Christians, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, and others all pray to the same God, even though they use different names for that God." Again, the respondents were asked to agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat or disagree strongly.

Of that population surveyed who identified themselves as born again, 30 percent agreed strongly, 18 percent agreed somewhat and 12 percent did not know. That is a total of 60 percent! (What Americans Believe, pp. 206-212)

Watchman Expositor, Vol. 10, No. 4, 1993, p. 31.

IV. The gospel has the power to bring salvation.

When we see that there is only one way to be saved from sin, one way to be saved from eternal separation and punishment in hell, one way to be saved from ourselves, and that is through the power of the gospel about Jesus Christ, then we have to do something with that gospel.

I am so glad that someone told me that I was a sinner, and needed Jesus to save me. Salvation from sin and its consequences is possible today.

Salvation from sin can not come unless there the gospel is at work in that person's life. Do you think this is another reason why we are not bold about sharing the gospel?

Conclusion:

1 Corinthians 1:18

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

1. We aren't convinced that people need to hear the truth.
2. We aren't convinced of the powerful tool that God has given us in the gospel.
3. We aren't convinced that people will respond.
4. We aren't convinced that we have an obligation to share.

We get all timid when it comes to sharing the very thing with others that has miraculous power to save them from darkness, eternal death, from destruction, from deception, yet we clam up when it comes to being ashamed of it.

Let's not be ashamed. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation. This is another powerful tool that we have been given. This tool has power, similar to the power of the tongue. Can you imagine when we use the tool of the tongue to declare the truth of the gospel, we are using tools to bring life. If we choose to be silent, people around us walk in darkness and death. Speak to them. Speak truth to them that will bring them to life. Use the power you have been given to speak to them the good news.