

Sermon Title: The Features of the Gospel

Sermon Text: Mark 1:14-15; Romans 10:8-15

Sermon Purpose: To call the hearer to recognize and appreciate the features the gospel manifests in the life of those who believe.

Sermon Proposition: There are 6 features of Gospel impact.

Introduction: There was no confusion in the early church about the message they preached. Consistently throughout Acts, the message has a singular emphasis.

In C.H. Dodd's work, "The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments," claimed that there was a noticeable pattern. This pattern included: 1) Jesus introduces the fulfillment of messianic prophecy; 2) Jesus went about doing good and performing miracles; 3) Jesus was crucified according to God's plan; 4) Jesus was raised and exalted to heaven; 5) Jesus will return in order to judge; and 6) therefore, repent, believe, and be baptized.

What is abundantly clearing Acts is that a consistent message is proclaimed throughout. The message of the cross, Jesus Christ, death, and his resurrection, when paired with a changed life, is still the most powerful weapon for storming the gates of hell, being unleashed on the world. Jesus is the only one who purchased our freedom from the slavery of sin, he declares us not guilty, and has washed us clean, positionally, practically, and potentially.

There are five truths that have been lost in the modern day understanding of the Gospel that leads to salvation.

1) God authors the Gospel and authorizes its proclamation. God Himself is an evangelist.

(Acts 15:17; 16:10; Rom. 1:1-5; Gal. 1:11-16; 1 Thess. 2:2-9)

2) God is personally calling sinners to salvation through His human agents.

(Acts 10:36; 2 Cor. 4:4-6; Gal. 1:6; 2 Thess. 2:13-14)

3) Paul's gospel is both a witness to an expression of God's grace. **(Acts 20:24; Col. 1:5-6)**

4) Paul's gospel is both a witness to an expression of God's power. **(Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 1:17-25)**

"The Gospel effects the salvation it announces and imparts the life it promises."

5) Paul's gospel is both a witness to an expression of God's glory. **(2 Cor. 4:4-6; 1 Tim. 1:11)**

There are seven features that are to be manifested by those who have been impacted by the Gospel because, "The Gospel effects the salvation it announces and impacts the life it promises." These features are not necessarily in any order, because you can't put a stop watch to inward new birth.

I. The 1st feature of Gospel impact is believing.

The Gospel is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes (**Romans 1:16** *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ¹, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. **John 1:12** But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: **13** who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*). Believing on faith abandons all reliance on "works of the law" for justification, (**Rom. 3:28**) and trust in God's provision of Grace (His gift) imported in Christ (**Romans 3:22** *even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all¹ who believe. For there is no difference; **Romans 3:26** to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. **Galatians 2:16** "knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified. **Galatians 2:20** "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*). One must believe the message of the Gospel for in the Gospel God's salvation is mediated.

II. The 2nd feature of Gospel impact is confession.

The Greek word (homologeō) confess in the New Testament is most naturally used of public confession. In using the term mouth Paul is implying a public confession. The confession of Jesus as Lord, is confirming the acknowledgement that God has been incarnated in Jesus, that Jesus is God. This combined with believing in your heart (the inward part of man), the result is salvation.

III. The 3rd feature of Gospel impact is repentance.

The missing aspect of the modern day gospel and our efforts of evangelism is the feature of repentance. (**Matt. 3:2; Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 8:22; Matthew 4:17** *From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."* **Acts 2:38** *Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Acts 17:30* *"Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, Acts 20:21* *"testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Acts 26:20* *"but declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance.)*

The Greek word (metanoia) translates as "repentance." It means to change the mind yet in a deeper manner to change one's heart, mind, or purpose. This word is often confused with (metamelomai) which means to have regret or remorse. Godly sorrow that leads to repentance is conviction by the Holy Spirit. (**Luke 24:47; 2 Cor. 7:8-10; 1 Thessalonians 1:9** *For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,)*

Repentance is a redirection of the human will, a purposeful decision to forsake all unrighteousness and pursue righteousness instead. Repentance is not by human effort. It is like every element of redemption, a sovereignly bestowed gift of God. (**Acts 11:18** *When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, "Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life."* **2 Timothy 2:25** *in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth,)*

J.I. Packer has written, "The repentance that Christ requires of His people consists in a settled refusal to set any limit to the claims which He may make on their lives." (J.I. Packer, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*, Downers Grove, Ill.; Intervarsity, 1961, pp. 72)

Repentance includes basically 3 stages!

- 1) Intellectually – repentance begins with a recognition of sin, and the recognition of who Christ is and His right to govern our lives.
- 2) Emotionally – genuine repentance often accompanies an overwhelming sense of sorrow. But it is not just sorrow Judas (**Matt. 27:3**), rich young ruler (**19:22**). It includes a sense of having sinned against God. (**Job 42:6; Jonah 3:5-6**)
- 3) Volitionally – repentance involves a change of direction, a transformation of the will, there is a willingness to abandon stubborn disobedience and surrender to Christ.

Repentance is not a one-time act. The repentance that takes place at conversion begins a progressive, lifelong process of confession and repentance. (**1 John 1:9; Matt. 5:3-6**). No message that eliminates repentance can properly be called the gospel truth.

IV. The 4th feature of gospel impact is growth.

The gospel is both a message to be received and a place to stand (**1 Cor. 15:1-2**); the gospel both gives and sustains new life. The Spirit imparts wisdom by taking people ever more deeply into the gospel of the cross (**1 Cor. 1:18-2:16**). (**Titus 2:11-15; 2 Peter 1:3-9; Rom. 5:1-5**)

V. The 5th feature of gospel impact is hope.

The hope held out in the gospel (**Col. 1:23**) includes Christ's return and the heavenly glorification of the saints, (**Colossians 1:5** *because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel, 2 Thessalonians 2:14* *to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. 15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle. 16 Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given us everlasting*

consolation and good hope by grace), as well as the final judgment. For those who embrace the gospel the judgment holds no terrors, because the judge has rescued them from the wrath to come (**Romans 8:1** *There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus¹, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. 1 Thessalonians 1:10 and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.*), the last judgment marks their final vindication (**1 Cor. 4:5; Gal. 5:5**).

Those who died after believing the Gospel will not suffer the same fate of the lawless, their response to the gospel assures them of approval by the coming King, as well as guarantees them a share in the imperishable inheritance of heaven. (**1 Peter 1:4**).

It also provides hope for the Jews about the restoration of the land and the Jewish nation (**Rom. 9-11**).

VI. The 6th feature of Gospel impact is to call upon the name of the Lord.

To call upon the name of the Lord means to pray in faith for deliverance. Calling upon the name of the Lord can only be done by those who are already justified by faith in Christ. So the order in Romans 10:8-15, looking backwards is as follows: a preacher is sent, then preaching takes place; people hear and believe. Those who believe can then “call on the name of the Lord.” This is an act of worship throughout the Old Testament. (**Gen. 12:8; 13:4; 26:25; Elijah and the prophets of Baal; 1 Kings 18:34a cf. 18:25-27; Ps. 14:4; 18:3; Acts 25:11; 1 Cor. 12:2; 2 Tim 2:22**)

Jesus purchased our freedom from the slavery of sin, declaring us not guilty, and has washed us clean.

Hodges comments on this section, “feels the salvation under discussion is a broad concept, embracing God’s generous provisions and aid for the believer in any and every circumstance of daily life. The Lord is a defender, provider, sustainer, and savior in all the problems and difficulties of life.” (Charlie Hodges, Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, Grand Rapids; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1947)

Conclusion: The practical lesson of this passage is this: Publicly identifying with Christ has a cleansing and sanctifying effect on our lives. If nothing else, openly confessing Christ makes the Christian conscious of his lifestyle. He now knows that non-Christians will quickly respond to his inconsistencies and compromises with, “I thought you said you were a Christian?” Inevitably, the vocal Christian becomes careful to live godly because he or she never wants a non-Christian friend to confront him with hypocrisy. The world is certainly watching Christians. But watching Christians who can be identified as such. I can be a secret Christian, but I can never be a victorious secret Christian. One vital principle for victorious Christian living is the public, vocal, regular identification with the Lordship of Jesus.