

BIBLICAL TRUTH ABOUT GOD THE FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT

Lesson 16: Jesus Preached the Gospel

Biblical doctrine is the study of what the Bible teaches about God and other important truths. This is the sixth of ten lessons about Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and our Lord and Savior. We will explore what the Bible teaches about Jesus Christ preaching the gospel.

MAIN TRUTH, CENTRAL SCRIPTURE, AND OUTLINE

Jesus Christ came and preached the gospel to sinners. He came with all authority to preach the gospel, declaring that sinful man could be made right with a holy God through repentance and belief in the name of Jesus. Everyone who believes this gospel receives a new heart, eternal life, and bears the fruit of obedience to God's Word. When Christ ascended into heaven after His resurrection, He entrusted the same gospel to His disciples so they would preach this message to all people everywhere.

(Luke 4:15-44)

1. Jesus preached (Luke 4:15-44)

If you were a follower of Jesus when He lived on earth, you would have seen Him perform miracles, heal the sick, and even raise the dead. But you would also have heard Him preach. His miracles attested to His authority and identity as God's Son, but first and foremost, Jesus came to testify to the truth (Jn. 18:33-38).

- A. An authoritative message – In the time of Christ's earthly ministry, Jesus could be found in the synagogue teaching the Scriptures. But He did not teach like the other rabbis who quoted other respected rabbis to prove their points. Instead of saying, "This rabbi says," Jesus said, "But I say to you" (Mt. 5:22, 28, 32, 34, 39, 44). He taught as one having authority from God, not as the Jewish scribes (Mt. 7:28-29). The people were astonished by His teaching. No one had ever preached like He did (Mt. 13:54; 22:33). But what was Christ's message? He preached that all people must repent. This was the same message that John the Baptist preached (Mt. 3:1-2; 4:17). He also preached the gospel (good news) of the kingdom of God (Lk. 4:16-21, 43). Jesus preached the gospel—the good news that He came into the world to save His people from their sins by living a perfect life of obedience, which earned the righteousness that they owed God, and by dying in their place, which paid the penalty they owed God.
- B. A saving message – Someone could attend church, read his Bible, and even pray to God, yet still go to hell because he has not repented and believed the gospel. If you call upon God with faith in Christ, God will save you.

2. Jesus' preaching changes sinners (Luke 6:27-49)

Christ preached the necessity of the new birth (John 3:1-10). He told Nicodemus, “Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again” (Jn. 3:7). This is a new birth, a second birth “from above.” The Holy Spirit takes the dead heart of the sinner and makes it alive. Christ did not preach that sinners need to start living better or become religious. He preached that they must have a new heart and new life that is characterized by obedience to God.

- A. It changes the way sinners treat others – Christ blessed those who cursed Him and prayed for those who wronged Him, just as he instructed believers to do.
- B. It concerns the inner man – Good trees bear good fruit (Luke 6:43). Faith in Jesus comes by hearing His Word, but to hear the Word of God and not obey is a demonstration of dead faith (James 1:22; 2:18-26). When Christ saves a person and gives him a new heart, He enables that person to produce good fruit and obey Him by doing good works (Gal. 5:22-23; Eph. 2:8-10). Christ lives in His people and they think, speak, and act according to a changed heart.

Jesus Christ is the answer for sinful man’s ruined condition before God. Through His sinless life and atoning death, God brings His people into a right relationship with Himself. Repent and believe the gospel, and God promises to save you, forgive you, justify you, cleanse you, and adopt you into His family. Faith in Christ comes by hearing His Word (Rom. 10:17), but to hear the Word of God and not obey is evidence of dead faith (James 1:22, 2:18-26).

MEMORY VERSES

Matthew 4:17 *From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

Luke 7:22 *Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached.*

Mark 1:38 *And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth.*

ADDITIONAL NOTES

The following notes are from a sermon preached by Pastor Stan titled, *Christ the Master Teacher*, preached on March 15, 2020.

Subject: *Christ the Master Teacher*

Scripture: *Matthew 5:17-20*

I have kept a letter from May 2005 written by Don Mumpower, who was then Administrator of Tri-Cities Christian School. At that time I was teaching part-time at the school and Mr. Mumpower wrote this to all teachers during Teacher Appreciation Week and it said in part: “My dad told me, when I was very young, that when I became old I would realize that if I could identify ten people who made an impact on my life, five of them would be teachers.” Those words are absolutely true. In this sermon I want us to consider Christ the Master

Teacher. Of all teachers He is the greatest. We have read a small portion of the Sermon on the Mount. We can read about the setting of His sermon in Matthew 5:1-2, and we can read about the impact of His sermon in Matthew 7:28-29. In this message, we will look at one aspect of Christ as the master teacher, namely that He based His teaching on the authority of God's Word, the Holy Scriptures.

1. CHRIST'S HIGH VIEW OF SCRIPTURE

In our text Christ said four things about Scripture:

A. He taught that *Scripture is precious* (vs. 17)

Jesus wanted to remove any idea that He was going to undermine or replace Scripture. He came not to destroy, but to fulfill Scripture. In referring to the law and the prophets, Christ was referring to the OT scriptures. This designation confirms that the Old Testament writings were commonly recognized as God-given holy books. He fulfilled OT prophecies and pictures (types). The four gospels contain a total of 3,779 verses. According to Dr. Graham Scroggie, 1,934 (about half) of these verses are the actual words of Christ. In 1 out of 10 of verses in which Christ is speaking, He either quotes or refers to the OT.

Christ believed all the stories and people in the Old Testament. He never said anything to cast doubt on the integrity and accuracy of Scripture. He honored it in every way. The people were amazed at His teachings because He used Scripture to support everything He said.

B. He taught that *Scripture is permanent* (vs. 18)

Heaven and earth are temporary and changeable, but God's Word is eternal and unchanging. Christ said that even one jot (the smallest Hebrew letter, like our apostrophe or comma) or one tittle (the smallest part of a Hebrew letter) would not fail until all Scripture was fulfilled. In effect, Christ said "Not the least part of Scripture will pass until every "I" is dotted and every "T" is crossed. This was a powerful confirmation of God's Word.

C. He taught that *Scripture is preeminent* (vs. 19)

God's Word is significant and most important and this is a clear warning against anyone who would trifle with it or belittle it. Anyone who has a casual or flippant attitude toward obeying Scripture is condemned. Because Scripture is God's inspired Word it deserves the highest respect and confidence.

D. He taught that *Scripture is practical*

Over and over Jesus said, "You have heard it said, but I say unto you." Jesus brought out the spiritual depth of Scripture. Jesus went beyond the external and the superficial teachings of the scribes and Pharisees. He taught the importance of the heart and the attitude as well as the outward act. He taught the importance of the heart and the attitude as well as the outward act.

2. CHRIST'S FREQUENT USE OF SCRIPTURE

A. He used Scripture *to explain His mission*

He said that He did not come to destroy the Scripture, but to fulfill it. When Jesus taught it was evident that He not only knew His subject, but He was the subject. When Jesus preached His first sermon, He went into the synagogue at Nazareth and read the Scripture, then explained what it meant.

Luke 4:16-21 *And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.*

John 5:39 *Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.*

Luke 24:27 *And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.*

B. He used Scripture *to answer moral questions*

Jesus referred to the OT scriptures many times, but He never referred to any writings of so-called wise men or philosophers.

Matthew 19:3-5 *The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?*

C. He used Scripture *to overcome Satan's temptations*

Matthew 4:4 *But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*

During His temptation He quoted three times from the OT book of Deuteronomy.

D. Christ used Scripture *to explain unbelief and rejection*

On one occasion His disciples asked Him why He spoke in parables (stories). He told them that it would be easy for anyone with a humble and teachable heart to understand the parables, but for those who didn't want to hear and believe, the parables would make no sense.

Matthew 13:14-15 *And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.*

John 13:18 *I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.*

E. Christ used Scripture to expose and confront sin

Matthew 15:7-9 *Ye hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*

Matthew 21:12-13 *And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.*

F. Christ used Scripture to warn of coming judgment

Matthew 24:37-39 *But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.*

In this text and many other places we see Jesus confirming the historical accuracy of the Old Testament. He spoke of Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Noah, Abraham, Lot, David, and Solomon. He referred to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. He spoke of Moses and the serpent in the wilderness. When asked to give a sign that He was the Messiah, He said, "The only sign is that of the prophet Jonah."

Jesus taught with the authority of God and His Word. He expected people to listen seriously, to believe and obey what He taught. He said this is the sure mark of true disciples.

John 8:31-32 ³¹ *Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;* ³² *And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*

The following article “What Is the Gospel Message?” has been condensed from a chapter in *Evangelism & the Sovereignty of God* by J. I. Packer, 1961. Inter-Varsity Fellowship, England. For more Gospel literature and Christ-centered messages visit ChapelLibrary.org.

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL MESSAGE?

J. I. Packer (1926-2020)

In a word, the evangelistic message is the Gospel of Christ and Him crucified, the message of man’s sin and God’s grace, of human guilt and divine forgiveness, of new birth and new life through the gift of the Holy Spirit. It is a message made up of four essential ingredients.

I. THE GOSPEL IS A MESSAGE ABOUT GOD

It tells us who He is, what His character is, what His standards are, and what He requires of us, His creatures. It tells us that we owe our very existence to Him; that for good or ill, we are always in His hands and under His eye; and that He made us to worship and serve Him, to show forth His praise and live for His glory.

The Gospel starts by teaching that we, as creatures, are absolutely dependent on God, and that He, as Creator, has an absolute claim on us. Only when we have learned this can we see what sin is, and only when we see what sin is can we understand the good news of salvation from sin. We must know what it means to call God *Creator* before we can grasp what it means to speak of Him as *Redeemer*. Nothing can be achieved by talking about sin and salvation where this preliminary lesson has not in some measure been learned.

II. THE GOSPEL IS A MESSAGE ABOUT SIN

It tells us how we have fallen short of God’s standard, how we have become guilty, filthy, and helpless in sin, and now stand under the wrath of God. It tells us that the reason why we sin continually is that we are sinners by nature, and that nothing we do or try to do for ourselves can put this right or bring us back into God’s favor. It shows us ourselves as God sees us and teaches us to think of ourselves as God thinks of us. Thus, it leads us to self-despair. And this also is a necessary step. Not until we have learned our need to get right with God and our inability to do so by any effort of our own can we come to know the Christ who saves from sin.

The very idea of sin in the Bible is of an offense against God that disrupts a man’s relationship with God. Unless we see our shortcomings in the light of the Law and holiness of God, we do not see them as sin at all. For sin is not a social concept; it is a theological concept. Though sin is committed by man, and many sins are against society, sin cannot be defined in terms of either man or society. We never know what sin really is until we have learned to think of it in terms of God and to measure it, not by human standards, but by the yardstick of His total demand on our lives.

To be convicted of sin means not just to feel that one is an all-round flop, but to realize that one has offended God, and flouted (mocked) His authority, and defied Him, and gone against Him, and put oneself in the wrong with Him.

We must be on our guard, therefore, against equating a natural bad conscience and sense of wretchedness with spiritual conviction of sin and so omitting in our evangelism to impress upon sinners the basic truth about their condition—namely, that their sin has alienated them from God and exposed them to His condemnation, and hostility, and wrath, so that their first need is for a restored relationship with Him.

III. THE GOSPEL IS A MESSAGE ABOUT CHRIST

The truth is that you cannot make sense of the historic figure of Jesus until you know about the Incarnation—that this Jesus was in fact God the Son, made man to save sinners according to His Father’s eternal purpose. Nor can you make sense of His life until you know about the atonement—that He lived as man so that he might die as man for men, and that His passion (suffering), His judicial murder was really His saving action of bearing away the world’s sins. Nor can you tell on what terms to approach Him now until you know about the resurrection, ascension, and heavenly session (sitting at the Father’s right hand)—that Jesus has been raised, and enthroned, and made King, and lives to save to the uttermost all who acknowledge His Lordship. These doctrines, to mention no others, are essential to the Gospel. In fact, without these doctrines you would have no Gospel to preach at all.

What the New Testament calls for is faith in (Greek, *en*) or into (*eis*) or upon (*epi*) Christ Himself—the placing of our trust in the living Savior who died for sins. The object of saving faith is thus not, strictly speaking, the atonement, but the Lord Jesus Christ, who made atonement. We must not, in presenting the Gospel, isolate the cross and its benefits from the Christ whose cross it was. For the persons to whom the benefits of Christ’s death belong are just those who trust His person and believe, not upon His saving death simply, but upon Him, the living Savior. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,” said Paul (Acts 16:31). “Come unto me...and I will give you rest,” said our Lord (Matthew 11:28).

IV. THE GOSPEL IS A SUMMONS TO FAITH AND REPENTANCE

All who hear the Gospel are summoned by God to repent and believe. Repentance and faith are rendered matters of duty by God’s direct command, and hence impenitence and unbelief are singled out in the New Testament as most grievous sins. With these universal commands go universal promises of salvation to all who obey them. “Through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins” (Acts 10:43). “Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely” (Revelation 22:17). “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). These words are promises to which God will stand as long as time shall last.

The demand is for faith as well as repentance. It is not enough to resolve to turn from sin, give up evil habits, and try to put Christ’s teaching into practice by being religious and doing all possible good to others. Aspiration (longing desire for high achievement), and resolution, and morality, and religiosity (religious feelings or sentiments), are no substitutes

for faith. If there is to be faith, however, there must be a foundation of knowledge: a man must know of Christ, and of His cross, and of His promises before saving faith becomes a possibility for him. Sinners must abandon all confidence in themselves and trust wholly in Christ and the power of His redeeming blood to give them acceptance with God. For nothing less than this is faith.

The demand is for repentance as well as faith. If there is to be repentance, however, there must be a foundation of knowledge. More than once, Christ deliberately called attention to the radical break with the past that repentance involves. The repentance that Christ requires of His people consists in a settled refusal to set any limits to the claims He may make on their lives. He had no interest in gathering vast crowds of professed adherents who would melt away as soon as they found out what following Him actually demanded of them.