

THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD

ACTS 20:24 • TV246A

A television broadcast sermon delivered
SUNDAY, MAY 12, 1985
by
HENRY T. MAHAN

Transcribed, edited and published
DECEMBER 8TH, 2010

HENRY T. MAHAN TAPE LIBRARY
Zebulon Baptist Church
6088 Zebulon Highway
Pikeville, KY 41501

Acts 20:24

“But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.”

If you care to follow in the Scriptures while I bring my message today, I will be speaking from the **Book of Acts**. If you would like to turn to the text, you will find it in **Acts chapter 20:24**. This is my subject: **“THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD.”**

While you are finding **Acts chapter 20:24**, let me make these comments: The apostle Paul wrote to the church of Galatia and declared in **chapter 1 of Galatians** that there is but one Gospel; he said, *“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”*

In the **Book of Romans** he identifies that Gospel as the Gospel of God; it is God’s Gospel. This Gospel, this glad tidings and good news of redemption through the Saviour, Jesus Christ, is God’s

THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD

ACTS 20:24 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Gospel. This is not man's Gospel. It is not the Gospel of a denomination or the Gospel of an organized church or an organized religion; it is God's Gospel.

Not only is it God's Gospel but Paul says in **1 Timothy**; "*It is the Gospel of God's glory.*" It is the glorious Gospel of God, or in other words; it is the Gospel of the glory of God.

"This one Gospel, God's Gospel, and the Gospel of His glory" is also called in the **Book of Romans**, "*the Gospel concerning His Son.*"

The Gospel is not a plan or a proposition or even a response on the part of the sinner to God's invitation. The Gospel is concerning His Son. The good news is not of a work to be done or a work that ought to be done, but a work that has been done. It has been totally and completely fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ.

This Gospel of God is a proclamation, an announcement. This Gospel is an announcement of the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus; it is concerning His Son. Paul, in **Romans 1:16**, calls this Gospel; "*The Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation,*" unto a full, complete, eternal, salvation.

Paul says, "*It is God's Gospel and it is the Gospel of God's glory. It is the Gospel concerning His Son.*" It is the Gospel which is the dynamite (the power) of God unto salvation, unto a complete, full, and eternal, salvation.

Now, in my text, the **Book of Acts, Chapter 20:24**: (I want to focus your attention, particularly, on this one verse of Scripture), he says; "*None of these things move me.*"

You might wonder what the background of this verse is. Well, Paul was going to Jerusalem and he had received word that prison, bonds, persecutions, and even death awaited him in Jerusalem. Some of his friends had warned him not to go.

Paul was determined to go because the Spirit of God was leading him to go that way. He was determined to go to Jerusalem. He was bidding farewell to the elders from the church at Ephesus. They had met together and Paul had preached to them and talked to them.

They told him; "You ought not to go to Jerusalem because you are going to suffer and die there." He said, "*None of these things move me. (This doesn't trouble me).*" He said, "*Neither count I my life dear unto myself. (It is not my life; I belong to God).*" "*I want to finish my course with joy and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus Christ.*"

"None of these things frighten me, trouble me, or change my direction. I don't count my life dear unto myself. I have given it to God." He further said, "*I want to finish my course, my ministry, with joy. (This ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus Christ, to preach the Gospel of the grace of God, to preach the Gospel of the grace of God is God's Gospel and it is the Gospel of His glory).*"

THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD

ACTS 20:24 • HENRY T. MAHAN

This Gospel is the Gospel concerning His Son. It is the Gospel which is the power of God unto salvation. It is the Gospel of His grace which is unmerited, undeserved, unearned, favor, and is the free gift of God.

My message has two points. It is a very simple message and I believe it is to the point. I will ask two questions. If you can lay hold of these two statements or two questions and the answer to these two questions, I believe that you will have the very heart of Paul's ministry and I believe the heart of my ministry.

Here are the two questions:

First of all: What do we mean by the term "*the Gospel of the grace of God?*" I know what we mean by the term and I hope you do too, the Gospel of God means that it is His Gospel.

The Gospel of the glory of God means that He gets the glory. The Gospel concerning His Son means that His Son did the work. The Gospel, "*which is the power unto salvation,*" means that He is not a weak Gospel; it is a sufficient and powerful Gospel that is life changing.

What do I mean? What did Paul mean when he said; "*I am determined to preach the Gospel of the grace of God?*" I will give you five or six things:

First of all: The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the good news of Christ Jesus and His work "*which is the power of God unto salvation.*" This salvation is by the grace of God in its planning and in its eternal purpose.

I ask you this question; how old is your Gospel? The Gospel which you preach, the Gospel which you believe, that hope of which you have of eternal life, the good news of redemption through the blood, how old is this Gospel?

I will tell you this; God's Gospel, the Gospel of God, and the Gospel of grace is older than Bethlehem's manger. The Gospel is older than Sinai's mountain. This Gospel of the grace of God is older than Egypt's Passover. This Gospel is older than Abel's sacrifice. This Gospel is older than Adam's fall.

This Gospel of the grace of God is older than the foundations of the world or even the created angels. It says in the Scriptures, in **Revelation 13**, "*Jesus Christ is the lamb slain.*" Jesus Christ is the Gospel and it is the Gospel of a lamb slain, and the Gospel of the blood of the lamb slain.

He says in **Revelation 13**; "*He is the lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*" Paul, writing to the church at Thessalonica says in **2 Thessalonians chapter 2**; "*Brethren, beloved, I thank God for you because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation.*"

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God." God hath from the beginning chosen you to this salvation through the Gospel.

THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD

ACTS 20:24 • HENRY T. MAHAN

**“Hail Sovereign love
That first began
The scheme to rescue fallen man.
Hail, matchless, free, eternal grace
That gave my soul a hiding place.”**

Jesus Christ is called “*The Surety of an everlasting Covenant.*” It is no new Covenant in the sense that it is newly born; it is new in the sense that it is newly revealed. It is not new in the sense that it is newly born because the Covenant of grace was purposed and given before the Covenant of works.

His blood is called “*The blood of an everlasting Covenant.*” You need to take the time to read **Ephesians chapter 1**. I believe that we ought to take the time to study the Word of God. Our Master said, “*My Word will judge you.*”

He said in **Ephesians 1**; “*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world that we should be Holy and without blame before Him in love. In love, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children, unto Himself, through Jesus Christ our Lord, according to the good pleasure of His own will; wherein, He hath made us accepted in the beloved.*”

So; how old is this Gospel? The Gospel is older than this world. It is older than man, older than the angels, and it is as old as the grace of God.

Secondly: This Gospel of the grace of God is of the Lord in its execution. When we talk about the execution of something, we are talking about the performing of it.

I use to be a signalman in the Navy in World War II. We would travel with a convoy of ships. Our ship was the flagship, the lead ship. We had a convoy ship behind us and if we wanted to make a turn to the starboard or to the port, we would run up a flag signal.

The commanding officer would give us a signal to run up and turn so many degrees to the right. We would run the signal up and leave it on the yardarm. Each ship behind us would run up the same signal.

When the lead ship got ready to turn, the officer of the day, (the commanding officer), would holler “Execute, execute!” The flag boy would come down and then all the other ships would bring their flags down and make the turn.

So, to execute something is to do it or to perform it. What I am saying is that this Gospel of the grace of God is totally of the grace of God in its execution, in the performing of it. His grace not only chose us but God in His grace sent His Son into the world to perfect us, to perform the doing of it, to provide all that He required and His Law and Justice required in order to redeem our soul.

THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD

ACTS 20:24 • HENRY T. MAHAN

You see; God promised fallen Adam right after he fell, *“The seed of woman will bruise the serpents head.”* There is Christ in promise.

God overshadows the virgin’s womb. When Mary asked, *“How can I have a son; I know not a man?”* She did not have a husband. The Lord said; *“The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee. The power of the High shall over shadow thee.”*

So, God overshadowed the virgin’s womb and gave His Son a human body. He said, *“A body Thou hast prepared Me.”* Who prepared it? God did.

You see, I am saying that this Gospel of redemption through Christ is of God not only in its planning from eternity past in its purpose, but also in the performing of it and in the execution of it. He prepared for Christ a body.

Not only that but it also says, *“God in the fullness of the time sent forth His Son.”* Christ said, *“As my Father sent me. (For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son). He sent His Son into the world made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were born under the Law.”* God did it.

Christ’s coming was not a plan of men or the work of men. We didn’t ascend to heaven and bring Christ down; God sent Him. Christ came into the world.

Then, God turned His Son over into the hands of wicked men to do with as they pleased. They, with wicked hands, nailed Him to a Roman cross. But, *“they did what God determined before to be done because it pleased the Lord to bruise Him.”* Christ said to Pilate; *“You could have no power over me at all unless it is given you from above.”*

The death of Christ was Pilate’s decision and the decision of wicked men, the Pharisees and the Roman soldiers. In a real sense, they did what they wanted to do. But in doing all of that, *“They did what God determined before to be done.”*

“He was the lamb slain before the foundation of the world.” He was born crucified. He said, *“For this cause came I to this hour.”* The crucifixion of Christ is recorded in prophecy throughout the Old Testament.

If you read **Psalm 22**, you will read the exact words He spoke from the cross. Some say that **Psalm 22** are the words that He said from the cross and that He really quoted the entire Psalm. I do not know for sure.

I do know that God raised Him from the dead. God accepted His sin offering. God accepted His sacrifice for every believer. God made Him our Priest and God received the Priest’s atonement, the perfect atonement for sin.

THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD

ACTS 20:24 • HENRY T. MAHAN

“God hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name.” He has declared Him *“To be both Lord and Christ”* and put in His hands all authority. He said, *“Sit Thou at my right hand until I make all your enemies your footstool.”*

So then this thing of the Gospel, this announcement of redemption and the proclamation of redemption, is of the Lord not only in its planning, but is in its execution. Men were second causes. God was the first cause. Christ is the appointed Saviour who was born at the appointed time, who lived the appointed righteous life, died the appointed death upon the appointed tree, for His appointed people. This is all written in the Word.

Thirdly: The Gospel of the grace of God, this Gospel of grace, is unmerited favor and is undeserved. Someone said, “Grace is God giving us what we don’t deserve.” We don’t deserve life, we deserve death. The Scriptures says; *“The wages of sin is death.”* This is what we deserve. God gave us life in Christ.

This Gospel of the grace of God is by His grace in its application. What do I mean by the word application? This means that something is applied; something is given and made mine, given to me. *“Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.”* God applied this redemption, this salvation, to Noah.

Abraham was in a country of idolaters. God came to him and said; *“Abraham, get thee out of thy father’s house.”* Abraham found grace in the eyes of the Lord. God called him; he did not call on God.

David was chosen and anointed king by God. God sent His prophet down to the home of Jesse. Samuel would have anointed any of those other sons. In fact, he tried to, from the oldest on down. Finally, God said to him every time he tried to anoint one of these brothers of David; *“The Lord’s anointed is not before thee.”*

Finally, Samuel, out of frustration, turned to Jesse and said; *“Are these all the boys that you have?”* Jesse said, *“No; I have one more; I didn’t think that you would be interested in him. He is out in the field keeping sheep.”*

Samuel said, *“We won’t sit down to eat until you go and get him.”* So, they went and got David and brought him in. The minute that he walked into the door, God said, *“The Lord’s anointed is before thee.”*

God said, *“I will be merciful to whom I will. I will be gracious to whom I will.”* He chose David. David found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

Because God told Samuel; *“God seeth not as man seeth. Man looks on the outward countenance; God looks on the heart.”* This thing of the application of salvation is of the Lord.

Do you know what Saul of Tarsus said? He said, *“God who separated me from my mother’s womb was pleased to reveal His Son in me.”* I’m not saying that he was pleased to just reveal Him

THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD

ACTS 20:24 • HENRY T. MAHAN

to me, but in me. God was pleased to do it. He was pleased to do it when He was pleased to do it. *“We love Him because He first loved us.”*

The people of God are willing; they come to Christ willingly. But, they are willing *“In the day of His power.”* We are the called of Christ Jesus and we do call upon the name of the Lord. We call because *“He first called us.”*

The Bible teaches that there is a general call which is experienced by most people. There is the call of nature, the call of conscience, the call of the Law written on the heart, and there is even the call of general public preaching.

God’s people experience a personal, intimate, effectual call. This call is called by the old writers as the *“Invincible and irresistible call of the Spirit of God.”* This is true! The Scripture says, *“Saul, why dost thou persecutest thou me? Matthew, follow me. James and John, leave your nets and follow me. Abraham; get thee out of thy father’s house. Zacchaeus, come down.”*

This is effectual. The word effectual means that it gets the job done. Effectual means that it works. God calls men effectually; *“Of His own will begat He us with the Word of truth.”*

If God singles a man out as an object of His grace, I guarantee you that He will bring him to Himself. He will come willingly, lovingly, personally, individually, continually; he will come. *“All that My Father giveth me shall come to Me.”*

I love the words *“shall”* in God’s Word. *“He shall come to me. He will come to me.”* Who is coming? *“All that the Father gave me.”*

Fourthly: Actually, this Gospel of the grace of God is of the grace of God in its sustaining power. God not only saves us by His grace but He keeps us by His grace.

In **Jude, verse 24-25**, (there is only one chapter), Jude says; *“Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.”*

We will fall if we can. If Satan has his way we will fall. If your flesh has its way you will fall. If the world has its way you will fall. God is going to have His way. His will shall be done. You see; *“He worketh all things after the council of His own will. He doeth according to His will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.”*

**“The soul that on Jesus
Hath leaned for repose,
He will never, no never,
No never, desert to its foes.”**

THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD

ACTS 20:24 • HENRY T. MAHAN

1 Peter 1:5 says, *“We are kept by the power of God through faith.”* **Philippians 1:6** when Paul writes to the Philippians, says this; *“Being confident, (absolutely sure), of this one thing, (this very thing), that He which hath begun a good work in you, will finish it in the day of His power.”*

What is this good work? This is the work of redemption; *“We are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus and He that hath begun a good work in you will finish it until the day of Jesus Christ.”*

You see, my friends, the Word of God teaches us to continue in the faith. We have been saved; we are being saved, and we will be effectually saved. The Bible teaches two things. The Bible teaches preservation; *“We are preserved, kept, by the power of God.”* It also teaches perseverance, that is, through faith. It is God who preserves us and keeps us by His Spirit and by His power. He said, *“I will never leave you.”*

All true believers who have a new life, new nature, new heart and the Spirit of God, will continue in the faith and will not leave Him. He said, *“I will never forsake you and you will never leave me.”*

True believers never quit; John said that. You see, a true believer is not just a religionist. He is just not a professor. He is not just a cultist; a true believer is a Son of God; *“He is a new creature.”*

“Salvation is of the Lord” is in its ultimate perfection. He will sustain it and He will perfect it. John said this; *“Some folks left us but they were not of us. If they had been of us, they no doubt would have continued with us.”*

“They left us” and it is clear to anyone who understands the Scriptures; *“they were not of us.”* Because *“My sheep hear My voice and I give them eternal life and they will never perish.”*

Last of all: This Gospel of the grace of God is by the grace and power of God in its ultimate perfection, in its greater glory, in its glorious revelation.

He talks about creation, *“waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God.”* What is this *“manifestation of the sons of God?”* Well, we are going to die and we are going to be buried and we are going to go back to the dust.

Here is my question; *“Who is going to raise us from the grave?”* We put so much stock in our free-will, our profession, our priest and our preachers. Do you reckon any of those things can raise us from the grave and bring us back to life? No sir! God can; *“He who started this work will perfect it and will perform it.”*

Who is going to give us a new body? Who is going to make us like Christ? Someone said, *“I can’t find the way to heaven; I don’t even know where it is.”* God knows and God can and will.

THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD

ACTS 20:24 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Who is going to create a new heaven and a new earth and give us eternal glory? God can and God will. God is the only one who can. Don't leave too much up to me because I don't know much about it. I have to cast myself upon His mercy. I have to cast myself upon His grace. I have to have God do for me what I don't even understand needs to be done.

Philippians 3:20-21 says this; *“For our conversation (our citizenship) is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.”*

You see; it is all of His grace; *“Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. He is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. He is the gift of God and He is eternal life.”*
What did Paul say? He said, *“I am what I am by the grace of God.”* That is what I am saying.

What is this Gospel of grace? This Gospel of grace is what I am or ever hope to be by the free grace of God.