

## BIBLICAL EVANGELISM

### Romans 1:14-17

***"I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. <sup>15</sup> So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. <sup>16</sup> For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. <sup>17</sup> For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."***

Paul considered himself to be a debtor to the Greeks and to the Barbarians, to the wise and to the unwise because God had imparted to him the gospel of the finished work of Jesus Christ. Knowing the blessings and benefits of understanding redemption by blood, the love of Christ constrained him to share this truth.

Since we all are sinners, the need for salvation is universal. Paul was ready to preach to the mistress of the known world, Rome, the gospel of Jesus Christ. They were surely skeptics to believe that a Jewish carpenter born of a peasant girl and crucified as a heretic was the Son of God and Savior of the world. Paul was not ashamed to proclaim this message. He was confident that Christ was the promised Messiah, ***"The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."*** John 1:14. Also, after his crucifixion He rose from the dead, ***"To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God"*** Acts 1:3.

The message of verse 16 is the introduction to the content of this excellent epistle. The gospel of Christ is – proclaiming the power of God in saving His people by His substitutionary death. ***"For he (God) hath made him (Christ) to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."*** 2 Corinthians 5:21 – *parenthetical remarks are mine.*

***"For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith", Romans 1:17.*** First, understand that our faith is not a condition of salvation nor does it determine our salvation. Secondly, it does not mean that faith is a lighter demand than being saved by the righteousness of the law. Faith is the contradiction of everything that is meritorious in man. Our faith does not make us righteous. It is the righteousness of Christ that justifies and nothing else. When God causes a man to be born again He imparts preliminary faith. Jesus is the ***"author and finisher of our faith", Hebrews 12:2.***

Regeneration prepares and enables a man to receive the gospel. Regeneration proceeds or comes before conversion. The Scriptures teach immediate regeneration (being born again) is solely the work of God. Consider a few terms describing the work of regeneration. ***Ephesians 2:10, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus"***. The act of creation is only done by God. Being regenerated is an act of creation. ***John 3:8, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."*** As no man can select his natural parents the term is used to emphasize that no one can select their spiritual parent. ***Ephesians 2:1, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins"***. The term quickened means making alive that which is dead. Only God can make alive that which is dead. Before a man can be born of God he cannot hear, understand, or believe the gospel. ***John 8:43-47, 1 Corinthians***

**2:14, John 10:26.** However, a man born of God can hear, understand, and believe the gospel. Remember the gospel is spread from faith to faith (From the faith, which is given by God when a man is born again to the faith of believing the message of the finished work of Christ, which is the gospel.) The preaching of the gospel to the child of God opens ***“the secrets of his heart”***. **1 Corinthians 14:25.**

Biblical evangelism is feeding sheep not manufacturing sheep. It is bringing them to the truth of salvation by the sovereignty of God and baptizing them into the church of Jesus Christ.

We are commanded to be evangelists. The Great Commission is recorded in each gospel as well as in the book of Acts. In **Matthew 28:19-20**, ***“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: <sup>20</sup> Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”*** Notice you are to teach first, then baptize. The word of God is clear, teach believers baptism. No matter where we go we are to share the truth of the gospel. In the book of Acts chapters 8-10 is the presentation of three major conversions – the Ethiopian eunuch (**Acts 8:26-40**), Saul of Tarsus (**Acts 9:1-22**), and Cornelius, a centurion (**Acts 10**). With each individual God had already prepared the heart before the man of God showed up with the gospel. Regeneration precedes conversion.

There are many forms of Evangelism. One of my favorites is Apologetics, which means the defense of the faith. We live in post-Christian America. Let me share my own experience.

- 1) The resurrection of Christ – much can be found on the internet
- 2) The inspiration of Scripture – *‘The Divine Inspiration of the Bible’* by A.W. Pink
- 3) The story of creation – the best book is by Henry Morris

Another form of Evangelism is a changed life – your own testimony. In **Acts 4:13**, after Peter and John changed from fearful and timid disciples to bold evangelists declaring a resurrected Christ who is the Savior of His people. The judges surmised them to be unlearned and ignorant men. ***“They took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.”*** Immerse yourself in the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John). You will understand why C. S. Lewis states “Jesus Christ is either a Liar, Lunatic, or Lord.” You will love our Lord and HE will change your life.

Another form of Evangelism is serving people. Read **Matthew 25:24-40**. In **Romans 12** and **1 Cor 12** every member of the church has gifts to build up the body and draw new people to the church; gifts of mercy, wisdom, giving, hospitality, encouragement, and a host of others. A caring spirit and encouraging acts will build a church.

Another form of Evangelism is love. In **John 13:35**, ***“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”*** I am confident that a church that is filled with love for one another, which is the characteristic of what the church ought to be, will bring more souls to a congregation than any other attribute.

Another form of Evangelism is personally sharing the truth of the gospel with the authority of God's word. **2 Timothy 2:15**, *"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."* One of the reasons God's people are slow to witness to people is because they are afraid they don't have sufficient knowledge. Zeal and love will cover a host of ignorance. No one has complete knowledge of anything. But be a student of Scripture. If someone asks you a question you cannot answer, admit you don't know but will help them find the answer. To help you understand the gospel better included in this presentation is a copy from the Tyler Primitive Baptist Church website ([tylerpb.org](http://tylerpb.org)) 'Abstract to the Doctrine of Salvation as Advocated by the Primitive Baptists' authored by Elder David Pyles. It is an excellent presentation.

### Helpful Hints in Evangelism

- 1) **Never** begin with negatives, *e.g.*, we don't have Sunday schools, we don't have seminaries, we don't have musical instruments. Instead begin with the sovereignty of God and the finished work of Jesus Christ. If the negative are brought up, counter them with Scripture. There is something better than Sunday schools. **Ephesians 6:4**, *"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."*
- 2) Learn and memorize the wonderful message of the sovereignty of God in salvation. **Rom 8:28-39**. Show the comfort of God's mercy and the volume of people that He saves by His grace.
- 3) Do **not** try to tell everything in one sitting. Rome was not built in a day. Wet their curiosity with what excites you about the gospel of Christ.
- 4) Find areas of common interest to allow opportunity for meaningful dialogue. Build a bridge before you begin a spiritual conversation.
- 5) Pray that God will give you opportunity to share your faith. *"Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear"*  
**1 Peter 3:15b.**
- 6) Do not have a 'holier than thou' attitude, be humble. Do not criticize other denominations. Present a positive presentation. Never get angry if the person responds to your position in disagreement. You are not trying to win the argument but attempting to win the person to the understanding of the grace of God.

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Appendix:

Abstract to the Doctrine of Salvation as Advocated by the Primitive Baptists – by Elder David Pyles, pastor of Grace Primitive Baptist Church, Pearl (Jackson), MS

# Abstract to the Doctrine of Salvation as Advocated by The Primitive Baptists

To all who love Jesus Christ, the following doctrinal summary is offered in the confidence that upon careful inspection of the scriptural proofs advanced, all unprejudiced minds will be convinced salvation is of the Lord and not of man. This statement is not an approved creed of Primitive Baptists. Though it accurately reflects the beliefs of most Primitive Baptists, some may differ on certain points, and others may offer different explanations or different supporting texts.

**I) Total Depravity of Natural Man** – All men are sinners by nature and are dead to spiritual things while in their natural state. The fact all men are sinners is asserted throughout the scriptures (Gen 6:5, Gen 8:21, Job 25:4-6, Ec 7:20, Is 64:6, Mt 19:17, Rom 3:10-23). The scriptures also teach all men must be spiritually quickened before entering heaven (Jn 3:3-5). This is because all men are born with a corrupted nature which is unsuitable for heavenly existence (Ps 51:5, Ps 58:3, Job 14:4, Job 15:14-16). Furthermore, all men fall under the general condemnation of Adam's transgression (Rom 5:12-14, 1Cor 15:21), and this is evidenced by the fact all men die. The scriptures frequently describe natural man as being dead in trespasses and sins (Jn 5:25, Eph 2:1, Col 2:13). Being in a state of spiritual death, natural man is incapable of spiritual understanding, appreciation, and action (1Cor 2:14, Rom 8:5-10). A natural man therefore has neither the ability nor the desire to perform any spiritual activity (e.g. belief, baptism, etc.) which might give him eternal life (Jn 6:44-65, Jn 8:43-47, Jn 10:26, 1Cor 1:18, 2Thes 3:1-2, Rom 15:30-31).

Since spiritual activity derives from spiritual life, such activity can never be the cause of spiritual life. Spiritual life, like natural life, comes only from the quickening power of God (Jn 5:25-29, Eph 1:19-20, Eph 2:1, Col 2:13). Spiritual activity then manifests the life God has already given. Total depravity does not imply natural man is without freedom of will. He has freedom to do both good and evil. However, the corrupted nature of man will cause him to choose evil as predictably as the righteous nature of God will cause Him to choose good. Accordingly, the scriptures present man's problem as being one of nature – not one of will (Mt 12:33-35, Rom 8:5-10, 1Cor 2:14-16, Eph 2:1-3). Man's corrupted nature is itself the product of sin, deriving originally from the sin of Adam, and furthered by personal sins (Jn 8:34, Rom 6:15-18, 2Pet 2:19-22). Alcoholism both causes and is caused by drinking. Similarly, all sins tend to self-perpetuate through corruption of nature.

**II) Personal and Unconditional Election** – All who are to possess spiritual life were individually chosen by God to receive such life; moreover, this choice was not based upon any merit seen or foreseen in the elected; rather, this election was motivated by the sovereign love of God. There are numerous scriptures teaching God has elected or chosen a people for salvation (Mt 24:24, Mt 24:31, Lk 18:7, Rom 8:33, Rom 9:11, Rom 11:7, Eph 1:4, Col 3:12, 1Thes 1:4, 2Thes 2:13, Tit 1:1, 1Pet 1:2, 1Pet 2:9). The elect are elsewhere described as having been given by the Father to Christ (Mt 1:21, Lk 1:21, Jn 6:37-40, Jn 10:25-29, Jn 17:1-2, Acts 18:10). The scriptures offer no justification for the theory claiming election was based upon foreseen obedience in the elected. To the contrary, all men were foreseen as being disobedient (Ps 14:2-3, Rom 3:10-23, Rom 11:32, Eph 2:1-3, Tit 3:3-5). Accordingly, election could not have been based upon any spiritual activity in the elect since totally depraved man is spiritually dead and therefore spiritually inactive. The scriptures teach that men were elected unto spirituality and obedience (Eph 1:3-5, Eph 2:8-10, 1Pet 1:2, 1Pet 2:9). Therefore, election could not have been based upon such criteria.

The doctrine of election is frequently charged with unfairness in that it is claimed to exclude some believers from the scheme of redemption. This charge is itself unfair because Primitive Baptists affirm that belief in Christ and obedience to His commandments are the consequences of election; therefore, all such persons are in fact the elect of God (Acts 13:48, 1Thes 1:4, 1Pet 1:2, 1Jn 4:19). The wicked were not elected to hell in the same sense in which others were elected to heaven. Rather, God elected a people from the fallen mass of humanity while leaving all others to their self-determined destiny. Hence, the righteous will enter a kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world, but the wicked will enter fire which was not prepared for them, but for the Devil and his angels (Mt 25:31-46).

**III) Special Atonement** – The saving benefits of Christ's death were intended for the elect only; furthermore, His redemptive work was alone sufficient to secure their salvation. The death of Christ was intended either for all people or some people. If the former be true, then Christ's death did not actually secure salvation for any; rather, it merely made salvation possible for all. However, the scriptures teach that Christ came to accomplish definite salvation for a definite number of people (Mt 1:21, Lk 19:10, Jn 6:37, Jn 17:1). Accordingly, the scriptures teach Christ was victorious unto this end (Rom 8:32, Rom 5:10, 2Cor 5:14, 2Tim 2:11). If the death of Christ were intended for all people, then the fact not all people will be saved proves that conditions apart from the death of Christ are needful for salvation. The various denominations differ in their claims as to what these conditions are; however, all of the proposed conditions are sadly alike in one important regard; namely, not all people have had the opportunity to comply with them. It is inconsistent to claim God loved all people to the extent He would die for their salvation, but that He did not love all people to the extent He would give all opportunity to procure the benefits of this death. Critics of special atonement frequently claim that God would be unfair if He did not give all men opportunity to be saved. Such reasoning fails to appreciate the fact that God is under no obligation to save anyone, and that salvation is therefore a gift of grace. Furthermore, if God is obligated to provide opportunity to all, then it follows that He is also obligated to give equal opportunity to all, yet experience plainly shows God has not done this.

**The claim God loved all men to the extent that Christ died for all men is inconsistent with what the scriptures teach about the love of God. This inconsistency occurs at several points:**

- 1)** Though God never deals unjustly with any man, the scriptures clearly teach His grace is not extended in equal degrees to all men (Mt 11:25, Mt 20:1-16, Lk 4:25-27, Rom 9:11-24, 2Thes 2:13). Inasmuch as grace derives from the love of God, varying degrees of grace imply varying degrees of love.
- 2)** The scriptures teach God's corrective chastisement is upon all He loves. But the scriptures also teach not all are under this chastisement (Ps 93:12-13, 1Cor 11:32, Heb 12:6-8, Rev 3:19) .
- 3)** The scriptures teach God's love is effectual in the sense it produces change in those receiving it; however, in no case is the effect universally observed; therefore, the cause cannot be universally applied (1Jn 4:19, Tit 3:3-5, Eph 2:4-5).
- 4)** God's love is presented as an assurance of salvation (2Tim 2:19, Rom 8:32, Rom 8:38), yet it could be of no assurance at all if others under this same love will finally be damned. Salvation is assured by God's love because He changes not (Is 49:15, Jer 31:3, Mal 3:6, Heb 13:5, Heb 13:8). The unchangeableness of His love implies that if He ever loved one to the extent that He would die for them and save them, then He will continue to love them to this same extent through all eternity.

Scriptures which refer to God loving the world or to Christ being given to the world (Jn 3:16, 1Jn 2:2) do not encompass all people without exception. Instead, such scriptures are intended to teach that God's love extends beyond the bounds of the Jewish people unto every nation, kindred, people and tongue (Rev 7:9). The term world is used repeatedly in the scriptures in a limited sense; however, this fact seldom receives proper recognition. In the Gospel of John alone there are such usages in: Jn 6:33, Jn 8:12, Jn 8:26, Jn 12:19, Jn 14:19, Jn 15:18, Jn 16:20, Jn 17:9, Jn 17:14, Jn 18:20. It is unfortunate that the few texts which are misinterpreted as teaching universal atonement are not interpreted in light of the many texts which describe Christ's work as being for a special group of people (Mt 1:21, Jn 10:11, Jn 11:51, Jn 15:13, Jn 17:1, Rom 8:32-33, Eph 5:25, Tit 2:14, Heb 9:15).

**IV) Irresistible Grace** – All of the elect will be quickened by the Spirit of God at some point in their natural lives. Jesus taught one could enter the Kingdom of God only after being born again (Jn 3:3, Jn 3:5). Jesus also taught that all who were given to Him by the Father would indeed come to Him and be raised at the last day (Jn 6:37-40, Jn 10:27-29, Jn 17:1-2). It follows that all given by the Father to Christ will be born again. Natural man, being unreceptive to spiritual things, would invariably resist the spiritual birth if he could. The quickening power of God's Spirit must therefore be irresistibly imposed. This reasoning is confirmed by the fact that the scriptures consistently describe salvation as being the result of God's will and not of man's (Jn 1:11-13, Jn 5:21, Rom 9:11-16, 2Tim 1:9-10, Heb 10:7-10). Jesus taught the work of the Holy Spirit in the new birth is analogous to the wind in that it is sovereign and irresistible (Jn 3:8). Jesus also taught this was the case for everyone that is born of the Spirit. The principle of irresistible grace is clearly illustrated in the case of Paul on Damascus road. Since the Spirit works in similar fashion for all (Jn 3:8), it follows that all must experience the same irresistible power that confronted Paul. Accordingly, Paul later claimed his experience to be a pattern for all believers (1Tim 1:12-16).

**All analogies of the new birth presented in the scriptures suggest an irresistible power working on a passive object. In particular, the acquisition of spiritual life is presented in the scriptures as being analogous to:**

- 1) birth – Jn 1:11-13, Jn 3:3-8
- 2) quickening – Eph 2:1-5, Col 2:13
- 3) translation – Col 1:12-13
- 4) resurrection – Jn 5:25-29
- 5) creation – 2Cor 5:17, Eph 2:10

No individual experiencing any of the above transitions ever contributed in the least degree to the transition, nor have they ever successfully resisted it.

**V) Preservation of the Saints** – The blood of Christ is sufficient both to procure and secure salvation of all for whom it was shed. Therefore, all of the elect will finally be saved. The truth of preservation is implied when the scriptures describe the saved as being children of God. Hence, they are in vital relationship with God in the same sense in which a son has vital relationships with his natural father. This relationship can never be destroyed. That is, a man can never cease to be his father's son. However, the fellowship between a father and son can be greatly diminished through the son's disobedience. This is also the case between God and His children. The scriptures directly assert all saved persons are the current possessors of eternal life (Jn 3:36, Jn 5:24, Jn 6:47, Jn 6:54, 1Jn 5:11) and that this life can never be lost (Jn 6:37-39, Jn 10:28, Rom 8:35-39, 1Pet 1:3-

5). Indeed, life which can be lost cannot properly be called eternal. The Lord's people are said to be predestined to glorification (Rom 8:28-30, Eph 1:3-6), but a predestined event is irreversible by definition. Romans 8:29 asserts all who are called and justified are also predestined to glorification. It follows that any falling short of glorification must never have been truly called and justified. Man can be condemned to hell only after a valid charge has been made against him. This cannot be the case for God's children (Rom 8:33) since they are sanctified once for all (Heb 10:10) and are forever perfected (Heb 10:14). Were eternal life secured by man's power, it would doubtlessly be lost. However, the scriptures teach eternal life is secured by the infinite power of God (Jn 10:27-29, 1Cor 1:8, Philip 1:6, 1Thes 5:23, 1Pet 1:5).

The doctrine of preservation is not intended to teach that saved persons can sin with impunity. The scriptures teach God will bring corrective chastisement against all of His disobedient children (Ps 93:12-13, 1Cor 11:32, Heb 12:6-8, Rev 3:19). Accordingly, scriptures teach the power of God's Spirit is ever at work within His children bringing forth the fruits of righteousness (Philip 2:13, 1Thes 4:9, 2Thes 3:3). Though the Spirit of God moves His people both to will and to do His good pleasure (Philip 2:13), both scriptures and experience teach this Divine influence is not of such degree to bring forth complete sinlessness. Therefore, the good works performed by saved persons cannot account for the preservation of their eternal salvation. Salvation is both obtained and maintained by the grace of God. The scriptures often associate good works with eternal salvation, but salvation is not the result of works; rather, works are the result of salvation (Mt 12:33-35, Jn 8:43-47, Jn 10:25-29, Jn 15:16-19, Acts 11:18, Acts 13:48, Acts 16:14, 1Cor 1:22-24, 1Cor 1:30-31, Gal 5:22-24, Eph 1:4-5, Eph 2:10, 1Thes 1:4-5, 2Thes 2:13-14, 1Pet 2:9).

**VI) Direct Operation of the Holy Spirit** – The Holy Spirit accomplishes the new birth by direct operation upon the heart, and therefore works independently of all agency of man, including the gospel as preached by man. Since the gospel is a spiritual thing, and since natural man rejects things of the Spirit, the gospel can never serve towards elevating natural men to a state of spirituality. Belief of the gospel is not a cause of spiritual birth; rather, it is a manifestation of such birth (Jn 1:11-13, Jn 5:24, Jn 8:43-47, Jn 10:25-27, Acts 13:48, 1Cor 1:18, Gal 5:22-23, 1Thes 1:4-5). The scriptures teach certain infants have experienced spiritual birth (Ps 8:2, Ps 22:9, Mt 11:25, Mt 21:16, Lk 1:15, Lk 1:41) even though infants are incapable of receiving the preached word. However, the scriptures offer no support to the theory that infants are spiritually quickened by means other than adults. Indeed, the opposite is suggested (Mk 10:15). Nor do the scriptures teach a different scheme of spiritual quickening for those in Old Testament times. There is but one method of spiritual quickening that can be common to all; namely, by direct operation of the Holy Spirit. Jesus taught that those dead in trespasses and sins would be quickened by the power of his voice (Jn 5:25-29). In this same context it is taught this voice will also raise the bodily dead at the end of time. A man can give the words of Christ but not His voice, and as Christ will not use man to raise the bodily dead, neither does He use man to raise the spiritually dead. If it were the purpose of the gospel to accomplish spiritual birth in natural men, then the gospel should be most urgently directed toward the nonspiritual. In fact, this is not its principal direction in the scriptures (2Thes 3:1-3, Rom 15:31, Acts 18:9-10). Though certain of the elect may be deprived of the natural faculties or circumstances necessary to receive the preached word (2Sam 12:18-23, Mt 9:37-38, Rom 15:30-31, 2Thes 3:1), such considerations do not limit the power of God to directly reveal His Son in the hearts of all the elect (Mt 11:25, Mt 16:17, Mt 21:16, Lk 1:15, Lk 23:39-43, Jn 5:25, Jn 5:38, Jn 6:37, Jn 6:44-45, Gal 3:8, Heb 8:10-12).

**VII) Revealing Gospel** – The purpose of the gospel is to bring those quickened by the Spirit to the intelligible discovery of the Lord Jesus, and transform them to the example of His life, in both truth and works, that God may be glorified thereby. Though the Spirit produces life without the means of the preached word, it is the gospel which brings this life and immortality to light (Rom 1:16-17, 2Tim 1:9-10). The gospel establishes believers in truth, convicts them of their sins, and leads them to repentance (Ps 119:9-11, Acts 17:30-31, Col 1:3-6, 2Tim 3:16-17) that God may be glorified, both by their profession and works (Mt 5:16, Acts 13:48, Rom 15:8-9, 1Cor 6:20, Philip 2:9-11, 2Thes 1:12, 2Thes 3:1). The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth (Rom 1:16, 1Cor 1:18, 1Cor 1:23-24), in that it delivers those quickened by the Spirit from the darkness of Satan unto the light of Christ (Jn 8:12, Jn 12:46, Acts 13:47, 1Jn 1:5), and leads them to the intelligible discovery of their Savior (1Cor 14:24-25), and transforms them toward the example of His life (2Cor 3:18, Philip 2:5-11, 1Jn 2:6), all of which will be brought to perfection at His glorious appearing (1Cor 15:51-57, Philip 3:20-21, 1Jn 3:2). All other forms of knowledge are inferior to the gospel (Philip 3:8-11), and without the gospel there can be no true worship (Jn 4:24, Jn 5:22-23). The gospel is inherently evangelical. All who are blessed to have it are commanded to teach it to others also (Mt 5:14-16, Mt 10:27, 2Tim 4:1-6, 1Pet 3:15), and this should be the happy task of all who love God's truth and His children.

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