

THE SIMPLE GOSPEL

1 Corinthians 2:1-5

And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

Who was Paul?

Philippians 3:5-6 - circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

Paul studied under Gamaliel (see **Acts 5: 33-42**), a highly respected Jewish rabbi and member of the Jewish sanhedrin (sanhedrin: Jewish court of justice). He (Paul) had expert knowledge of the Tanakh (old testament) and had more than likely memorized the Torah. If there was ever a theologian with bragging rights, all would be a far second to Paul, but as lengthy as his list of accolades was, in the following verse he clearly states: (**Philippians 3:7**) ***But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.***

*****Upon receiving Christ, Paul counted everything he'd gained in the world as rubbish by comparison!*****

God doesn't need theologians to advance His kingdom. He actually enjoys using the ***foolish things of the world to shame the wise (1 COR 1:27)***. Paul writes that the very message itself is ***foolishness to those who are perishing (1 COR 1:18)***.

Note: *it's not that God can't or won't use what we've learned, but God by the power of the Holy Spirit can move mountains with nothing more than a revelation of the simple gospel and a willing messenger.*

What is the gospel?

Gospel (greek word: euangelion/yoo-ang-ghel'-ee-on) simply means "good news". It is **the** revelation of truth, but in the final analysis it is the operation of God's power with victory over sin and death.

1 Corinthians 2:4-5 And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

We live in a culture where the intellect is often deified and the demonstration of the Spirit and of power is either unsought or ridiculed.

Scripture suggests that when sharing the gospel, we should *expect* manifestations of the Holy Spirit, not

for show or sensation, but as means for God to validate the glory of the gospel.

Every messenger when operating in alignment with the will of God as shown in scripture, evangelizes in partnership with Holy Spirit.

The Lord has entrusted us with His supernatural gospel, why try to fix what isn't broken?*

CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED

John 15:13

Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

Jesse asked me:

Q: Why would you choose to follow Jesus and completely disregard the millions of other deities out there?

A: Because the love they supposedly have for me, if any, is cheap. It didn't cost them anything. My King gave up His life for me and for you. Why would anyone follow anyone else?

God left heaven and came to earth, not to be served but to serve, and willingly gave His life as a sacrifice for our sin, where all other gods would command us to serve them. No other God provides atonement for sin, nor do they offer the rest that comes with the **assurance** of salvation. That is completely exclusive to Jesus Christ.

THE CROSS

Hebrews 10:11-14

And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.

*****And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices*****

The Old Testament sacrifices were only earthly copies of heavenly realities, which necessitate better sacrifices than those of animals to make the heavenly realities and blessings accessible to us.

If the Levitical sacrifices had made the worshipers perfect, there would have been **no need** for the yearly repetition. This constant repetition only served to **remind** the worshipers of their sin **instead of removing them** from their conscience. Animal sacrifices cannot take away the guilt of sins.

The fact that Jesus only had to offer Himself once testified to His sacrifice being superior to the Old Testament sacrifices, and **only by His sacrifice** are the heavenly realities and blessings made accessible

to us.

What are the legal implications of the cross?

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death

God being morally perfect in every way, is holy and perfectly just, and He's so serious about sin, He's given us the death penalty as **wages** for our sin. This is God's perfect judgement for sin.

How can God be both merciful and perfectly just?*

2 Corinthians 5:21 - For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Brief summation: God commissioned Jesus, who having lived a sinless life (in the flesh), both fully man and fully God, to bear the fullness of God's judgement and wrath upon Himself, as a consequence for our sin.*

Isaiah 53:4-5 Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.

Jesus Christ endured the evil due to us in judgement, so that by faith in Him, we could inherit the heavenly blessings due to Jesus Christ in righteousness*

When we put our faith in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of our sins, God having poured out His judgement for our sin on Jesus, can as an act of mercy, do that which is both legal and just, and grant us everlasting life as a free gift*

In this way God can be both just and merciful, and in no way goes against His nature.

Hebrews 10:14

For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.

Because Jesus' sacrifice has made the heavenly blessings and realities available to us, not only does God guarantee that in Him we have everlasting life, but He's also sent us His Holy Spirit, who in power has cleansed our consciences, and given us a new nature in place of the sinful nature we were born in to. This is know as being born again!*

THE 5-FINGER GOSPEL

1) Creation

You were created by the one true eternal God, to intimately know Him. Only in relationship with God do we have eternal life.

John 17:3 - *And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.*

2) The fall of man

God is love, and because love can't exist without free will, God gave us free will so that we could make the conscious choice to love Him back. We've all used our God given free will to sin against God.

Romans 3:23 - *For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.*

3) Judgement

God is the highest authority. He's just, and His judgement is perfect. He's holy. He must judge our sin if He is to stay true to His perfect and sinless nature. In His perfect judgement, God has dealt us all the death penalty for our sins. Our sin first subjects us to a life lived apart from God, but if we die in our sin, we will subject our eternal souls to eternity in hell. When we use our God given free will to pursue a life apart from God, we subject ourselves to the consequences.

Romans 6:23 - *For the wages of sin is death.*

***Side note: By no means should you feel like you have to exclude the reality of hell from your gospel presentation. A revelation of the reality of hell can stir up the fear of the Lord. However, it's important we know God's heart for the people we're called to minister to, and to remember that God created hell for the "devil and his angels" (reference: Matthew 25:41). It's God's will that **none** should perish, but that all should come to repentance (reference: II Peter 3:9). God's original design for hell is actually quite glorious when you take in to account that it's an inescapable and eternal prison specifically designed for Satan and his demons ***

4) The covenant

God so loved the world, that He sent His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, who put on flesh like a hand puts on a glove, fully man and fully God, who being sinless, took the fullness of God's wrath upon Himself by dying on the cross for our sins, quenching God's judgement on our behalf. Because Jesus was completely without sin, death had no claim on Him, and 3-days after He was crucified, God raised Him from the dead. By putting our faith in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins, God can do that which is both legal and just, forgive us of our sin, and grant us everlasting life as a free gift.

John 3:16 - *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in*

Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

5) The promise

Jesus promised that after He was resurrected and had ascended to heaven, God would send the same Holy Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead, to us. God gives (and will give) His Holy Spirit to all those that believe in Jesus Christ. It is by the power of the Holy Spirit (God on earth) that we are sanctified and empowered to walk in the same signs and wonders Jesus and the apostles demonstrated, all for the glory of God in Jesus' name. This includes healings, miracles, raising the dead etc..

John 16:7 - Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.

Side note: Another way to present the promise element of the 5-finger gospel would be to mention Jesus' second coming, when He will rule and reign on earth as in Heaven, rid the world of sin and death completely, and restore all of creation to align with God's original design before surrendering it all back to the authority of God the Father (reference: 1 Corinthians 15:24)