

Last week-

The gospel was God's gospel, and Paul was God's messenger...  
...and the purity of the gospel was worth fighting for.

We saw in Acts 13 that from the very beginning of the work of God in Galatia, Paul had shown the benefit of Jesus and forgiveness over Moses and the law.

**Have you ever marveled at something that was really dumb?  
Been blown away by the absolute stupidity of someone?**

That is where Paul is going today...Marveling but not Marvelous.

So he begins...

**3 Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord  
Jesus Christ,**

Grace and peace are the new testament twins.

**You can't have the peace of God without the grace of God.**

...Grace is God's unmerited favor...

...& because of His grace we can have both the peace *of* God...  
...and peace *with* God.

*I have peace knowing that He is with me and for me and loves me, and my standing is not based on my performance.*

**4 who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, 5 to whom *be* glory forever and ever. Amen.**

**1. It is the will of God to deliver us from this evil age.**

Jesus is God and God became flesh and gave Himself for our sin. In order that we might be delivered from this evil age.

Paul has a great description of this evil age in II Timothy 3:1-5

II Tim. 3:1 But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: 2 For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, 4 traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 having a form of godliness but denying its power.

This is a great description of the present evil age.  
And do you know what the **real** problem is?

***The problem of this age isn't...***

***...economics, politics, or education...***

***...and those things won't solve the problem...***

***2. The problem with this evil age is sin.***

And it is the will of God to deliver us from this present evil age.

How are we delivered from this evil age?

Do we disconnect totally? Do we check out completely?

Join a monastery or stay in our holy huddle?

Nope, that is not the plan.

**Jesus revealed His plan in His prayer in John 17...**

John 17:15 I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. 18 As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.

It is God's truth that sets us apart.

Jesus is truth, and Jesus set Himself apart with truth...

...and he sets us apart by truth.

Jesus is truth, the truth sets me free, Jesus sets me free.

### **3. Living in truth delivers us from the lies and lusts of this world.**

**It is knowing, understanding and living according to God's truth that sets us apart from this evil age.**

Just as Moses delivered the children of Israel...

...from the Pharaoh's power and the slavery of Egypt...

*...Jesus delivers us from Satan's power and slavery to our sin.*

**I have a new life, a new heart, a new mind.**

**I am delivered by God from the power and the consequences of sin...and I am given a new power to live it out.**

God doesn't seek to remove us physically from this world...

...Christianity is not about physical deliverance...

*... Life in Christ is about spiritual deliverance and physical victory.*

*There may be times I need to physically remove myself for my own good...the temptation is too strong, the situation too much.*

...But that is not the overall theme of God's work.

*The overall theme is— He came into the world to save sinners, and He sends us into the world to share the gospel and make disciples that also will follow the truth.*

*Jesus was with tax collectors, drunks, and prostitutes...  
...so that they might be saved and transformed...  
...not so that He get rich, get drunk, and fornicate.*

#### **4. It is God's will that we live like citizens of heaven while we are residents of this world.**

In that way, others can become citizens of heaven as well.  
I hear the gospel, I believe in Him and I am born again.

I continue to hear truth and believe Him and I grow in grace.

**It is like in JH when you were always worried about what people thought.**

**Then you grew up and realized the truth—**

**...people actually think very little about you—  
... and you are delivered from that bondage.**

*We understand that God loves us and His plan and purpose are best, and though sin is tempting we believe what God says about us and about life.*

Now Paul's brief introduction quickly turns to his primary issue...

**6 I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, 7 which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ.**

**Paul says, he marvels...Greek: "thoudmazo"...**

**...to wonder, be surprised at the unexpected...**

**...like people that marvel at a miracle because it is uncommon.**

**...like people that wonder at a fool because it is unbelievable.**

Not just the act of it, but the speed of it...He says, "so soon!"

**Greek: tak-hay-ous:**quickly, speedily, hastily, rashly, suddenly  
...Like a tachometer-measures speed of an engine.

How long did they stick with God's grace? Maybe 4-5 years?

*In a race, it is not how you start, it is how you finish.*

There are no awards for starting, only for finishing.

...And they didn't make it very far...and Paul marvels!

**BUT-Notice specifically what they are turning away from-HIM!**

- They are not just turning away from one message to another.
- They are not just changing the way they think about the gospel.
- They are turning away from Jesus Himself.

**5.To abandon the gospel of grace is to turn away from a right relationship with Jesus.**

The gospel is not just an intellectual understanding.

The gospel is the good news that there is a personal relationship with God by grace accessed through faith in Jesus.

**Anything besides grace and faith in Jesus is not the gospel...  
...it is just another work related religion.**

And you can't have a real relationship with God based on works.

**None of our works achieve forgiveness or eliminate our sin.**

...to a different gospel, 7 which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ.

There are some that trouble you...

...and pervert (metastrephō) the gospel.

*Greek: metastrephō means to turn around.*

*Like people that enjoy pranking people by turning the water fountain or the kitchen dish sprayer around...*

## **6. Some purposely turn the gospel around from grace to works.**

- There are people that take pleasure in making things difficult.
- They feel like people should earn it, work for it.
- They are stuck in guilt and want everyone else to be stuck too.
- They carry their spiritual burden and think you should too.

What does Paul say about that?

**8** But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. **9** As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.

So Paul is marveling, blown away that so quickly they have given up on grace and allowed someone to turn the gospel around toward works...but now he says that anyone who does this is accursed!

## **7. If you give a different gospel than grace you are cursed.**

*Even if an angel from heaven or Paul himself tries to change the gospel...let him be accursed.*

How could that be??

**There are three prominent other gospels...**

**Do you know what the Later Day Saints believe?**

**This is from their own website for kids Sunday school...**

- Moroni was a messenger sent by God to Joseph Smith. Moroni told Joseph that God had an important work for him to do. Moroni also told Joseph that a book written on gold plates buried in the hillside contained the fulness of the gospel and a history of the ancient inhabitants of the American continent.
1. Before class, prepare several pieces of paper, each listing a basic element of the gospel such as faith in Jesus Christ, repentance, baptism by immersion, the gift of the Holy Ghost, the Book of Mormon, living prophets, continuous revelation, priesthood, and temple ordinances. Label an empty jar or other container with the words *The Gospel of Jesus Christ*.  
In class, display the empty container. Remind the children that the angel Moroni told Joseph Smith that the gospel was to be restored to the earth. Explain that this has now happened. Have each child select a piece of paper, read it aloud, and place it in the container. Have the child explain why this element of the gospel is important to us. Continue until all the papers have been placed in the container, and then point out that as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints we are blessed by having the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Later Day Saints has clearly added to the gospel because an angel gave it to Joseph Smith at 17 yrs.

Paul would say no. That is a dangerous contaminated gospel.

## **The prosperity gospel:**

God rewards faith with health and wealth.

The atonement of Christ is not just for the removal of sin but the removal of poverty and sickness.

Give to God and He will give to you...and you will be wealthy.

Trust God, and give to God, and you will not be sick or suffer.

God wants you to be healthy and wealthy...so think positive, say good things, do good things, and send in your money...so you can get good things back.

## **Let's get this straight...**

*God is a rewarder of those who seek Him, but salvation is not earned, and His favor cannot be bought.*

Jesus died to deliver us from sin...

...But...Poverty and sickness are not sins.

We may be poor, Jesus was.

We may get sick, Paul was.

We will definitely die, everyone does.

*We love because He loved us...*

*...not so we can get something from Him.*

We trust Him because we believe He is true, we love Him because He loves us...

...not cuz we want a bigger house, a nicer car, or a happier family.

“if the prosperity gospel is true, grace is obsolete, God is irrelevant, and man is the measure of all things. Whether they're talking about the Abrahamic covenant, the atonement, giving,



faith, or prayer, prosperity teachers turn the relationship between God and man into a *quid pro quo* transaction.”

### **Social Gospel:**

According to the social gospel, the betterment of society equals salvation.

People are basically good and society is becoming better.

If we feed enough people, educate enough children, dig enough wells, and redistribute enough wealth, **then** we will see God’s kingdom manifest.

If we preach enough love, justice, brotherhood, and goodwill toward men, **then** the remnants of greed and selfishness in mankind will be overwhelmed and give way to goodness.

A theologian who lived during the peak of the social gospel movement described the message of the social gospel this way: “A God without wrath brought men without sin into a kingdom without judgment through the ministrations of a Christ without a cross” (Niebuhr, H. Richard, *The Kingdom of God in America*, Harper & Row, 1937, p. 193).

This is also a perversion of the gospel...

**The gospel teaches us that sin is the problem and we are all sinners.**

But God sent His Son to die for our sin and rise again from the grave for our justification.

**We are not called to educate sin away, we are called to preach the gospel and let God wash sin away!**

When I am born again, my life changes, my heart changes..  
...I want to love mercy, do justly and walk humbly.

I may dig wells and feed children, but those are short term problems and only part of the mission.

**We don't need to be better people, we need to be born again.**

Paul would say, the bottom line with these "other" so called gospels is they are not the gospel.

The Judaizers in Paul's day were adding circumcision and laws about food and Sabbath and other Jewish practices.

**People today are still adding deeper revelations, pushing for more money, and telling people to do more good things to gain God's favor.**

All of this takes away grace and I lose my peace.  
It gives me something to do and I am proud of myself in salvation  
**But...False gospels always say Jesus is not enough.**

Jesus' work is not enough....He didn't really pay it in full...  
...there is some left over for you to pay or do.

And this is simply not true...  
Jesus died for our sin.  
He rose again for our justification-our right standing with God.  
And all we need to do is believe Him...

**8. The gospel is all about Jesus and Jesus is enough.**