

6/24/01

**The Gospel Is For Sinners**

**1Tim. 1:15-17**

Paul the apostle has just finished stating the nature of his call to ministry. Vs.12-14

1. He said he was divinely called. Vs. 12
2. He said it was despite his past life. Vs.13a-c
3. He said it was a gift. Vs. 13d-14

God could of used angels to preach the gospel but He chose man who is sinful and imperfect.

Throughout the Scriptures the believer is said to be the light of the world, the salt of the earth, a vessel of honor, a servant of all, an ambassador of Christ and a herald to proclaim the good news, all of these refer to being an instrument of the gospel.

Jesus in sending out the twelve disciples to the house of Israel, who were lost sheep, told them to preach that the Kingdom of heaven was at hand and because freely they had received, freely they were to give. Matt. 10:5-8

\* They were to provoke other Jews through not only proclaiming the gospel of salvation, but through their lives in the gospel for salvation!

Paul is doing much the same thing except that he is including Jew and Gentiles as he gives the purpose

of his call to preach the gospel focusing on the nature of the gospel which consists of three elements. Vs. 15-17

- I. To proclaim the potential of the gospel of salvation. Vs. 15
- II. To provoke others to trust the gospel for their salvation. Vs. 16
- III. To praise God for providing such a gospel of salvation. Vs. 17

**I. To proclaim the potential of the gospel of salvation. Vs. 15**

A. Paul was to proclaim the person of God.

\* "Christ Jesus". Vs. 15b

1. He is God's Messiah, the title "Christ" is indicative of His prophetic office in the Old Testament, the anointed of God, emphasizing deity.

\* The title appears 569 times in the New Testament, 16 Times in First Timothy.

a. He was anointed to preach good tidings to the poor Is. 61:1b

b. He is the anointed Prince that was to come to Israel, rejected and cut off. Dan. 9:25-26

c. He is the Lord's anointed against whom the world will gather against in the Valley of Megiddo in attempt to

stop Him from setting up His kingdom. Ps. 2:2, Rev.19:11-16

2. He is God's mediator, being the God-Man Jesus, giving emphasis to His humanity.

\* The name Jesus is found 957 Times in New Testament, and 14 Times in First Timothy.

- a. Job revealed the problem of man when he cried out that there was no daysman between him and God that might lay his hand on them both. Job 9:33

\* A daysman is a judge, umpire or mediator or arbiter.

- b. The High Priest was Israel's mediator to God, he alone could enter into the Holy Place and Holy of Holies.
- c. Jesus has received a more excellent ministry than the Old Testament High Priest because it is based on a better covenant, the New Testament. Heb. 8:6, 9:15, 12:24
- d. Jesus is "the mediator" between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. 1Tim.2:5, Jn. 14:6

- B. Paul was to proclaim the plan of God.

\* "That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief." Vs. 15b-c

1. It implies God's plan of abdicating his place of glory in heaven for a time. Jn. 1:1, Phil. 2:5-11 (Humility)
- a. Jesus divested Himself of His glory not deity, taking on the form of man!
- b. Jesus pre-existed before His coming to the earth as He told the Pharisees, "Before Abraham was, I AM." Jn. 8:58
- c. Jesus prayed, "And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was." Jn.17:5
- d. Paul tells the Corinthians, "Though He was rich He became poor for our sakes, that we through His poverty might become rich." 2Cor. 8:9
2. It implies God's plan of incarnating His Son. Gen. 3:15 (Humanity).
- a. Jesus came into the world through a natural birth but a super-natural conception by the Holy Spirit. Matt. 1:20, Lk. 1:34, Jn. 1:14  
\* He occupied Mary's womb for nine months.
- b. Jesus was Emanuel, God with us after the prophecy of Isaiah. Is. 7:14, 9:6, Matt.1:23
- c. Jesus was the answer to Isaiah's prayer, "Oh that you would tear open

the heavens! That you would come down!” Is. 64:1a-b

**3.** It implies God's plan of redeeming man. (fidelity).

- a.** Jesus came into the world to save sinners by His own testimony. Matt. 9:12-13, 18:11, Mk. 10:45, Lk. 9:10
- 1) This is a common phrase in John's gospel 1:9, 3:17, 19, 11:27, 12:46, 16:28, 18:37
  - 2) The word sinners is emphatic, this was His goal, they even called Him a friend of sinners and publicans Matt 11:19
  - 3) The phrase is used for both Gentile and Jew. Rom. 3:19, 20:23, Gal. 2:15
  - 3) Forty-three times Jesus says the Father “sent” Him in John's gospel!
- b.** Jesus came into the world to save sinners from present sin. Matt.1 :21
- 1) From guilt of and from sin. Rom. 3:19
  - 2) From bondage of sin. Rom. 6:13-14
  - 3) From the curse. Gal. 3:13, Rom. 5:12
  - 4) From alienation from God, His wrath and everlasting death. Eph. 2:12, Jn. 3:36, Eph. 2:5-6

- c.** Jesus came into the world to save sinners from permanent separation from God. 1Tim.2:5
- 1) Providing peace. Rom. 5:1, Phil. 4:7
  - 2) Providing access to God. Eph. 2:18
  - 3) Providing all spiritual blessing in Christ. Eph.1:3
  - 4) Providing reconciliation by God's love and everlasting life. 2Cor. 5:18, Gal. 5:22, Jn. 3:16
- d.** Jesus came into the world to save sinner of the worst kind.
- 1) Paul says of whom I am chief “protos” meaning in rank and prominence and it is emphatic at the present time.
  - 2) Paul has mentioned his former life, “Although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.” 1Tim. 1:13

- C.** Paul was to proclaim the promise of God.  
\* “This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance.” Vs. 15a
1. This phrase appears five times in the Pastoral Epistles and nowhere else. 1Tim. 1:15, 3:1, 4:9, 2Tim. 2:11, Tit. 3:8

- a. Twice is added the phrase “worthy of all acceptance.” 1Tim. 1:15, 4:9
  - b. All speak of salvation, except one. 1Tim. 3:1
2. The phrase implies that the gospel of salvation is reliable.
- a. The word faithful “pistis” means trustworthy, true, reliable and appears twelve times in First Timothy.
  - b. Paul told the Ephesians, “To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ.” Eph. 3:8-9, 1Cor. 15:9
3. The phrase implies that the gospel of salvation can be and must be personally appropriated.
- a. The word worthy “axios” has the idea of weight and of like value.
  - b. The word acceptance “apodokee” means to accept in mind acent.to what is offered from without.
    - 1) It will have personal value only when accepted. Rom. 10:9-13
    - 2) It can be accepted in it’s entirety for it is God's glorious Gospel

entrusted to men. 1Tim. 1:11, Rom. 10:14-17

### **Illustration**

John Calvin said, “The blindness of unbelievers in no way detracts from the clarity of the gospel, the sun is no less bright because blind men do not perceive its light.”

### **Application**

1. Are you proclaiming the person of Jesus Christ as God and Him alone as the gospel of salvation? Acts 4:12
  - a. That He alone can bring man to God being the anointed Messiah.
  - b. Or are you trusting in and proclaiming your Church programs and list of do's and don'ts?
  - c. Is He clearly and consistently the central message in your life and church?
  - d. If you proclaim a nebulous power or force in order to better man in his life, such as a higher power or cosmic energy none will be offended but if you become specific, “Christ Jesus”, you are labeled as narrow minded and a religious fanatic.
2. How about the proclaiming of God's plan, of the gospel of salvation or is it to far fetched that we change it or just don't mention certain things that may offend or cause people to reject it? In. 3:16
  - a. The abdicating of His place in heaven, the incarnation and plan of redemption.

- b. That one can not continue in certain activities or be involved in certain practices like stealing, lying or sexual sin, etc.  
\* The Son of Man has come to seek and save that which was lost.” Matt. 18:11
- 3. Are you proclaiming the reliable promise of God in the Gospel of salvation? 2Tim. 3:16-17
  - a. That it is reliable, trustworthy if one is given to it wholeheartedly.
  - b. That it is God's revelation of man's redemption from sin to eternal life.
  - c. That each person must personally appropriate this proclamation of the gospel of salvation to receive the benefit.

*The purpose of Paul's call to preach the gospel was to proclaim the gospel of salvation!*

## II. To provoke others to trust the gospel for their salvation. Vs. 16

- A. Paul was to provoke people regarding the gospel of salvation by the mercy God had imparted to him.  
\* “However, for these reason I obtained mercy.” Vs.16a
  - 1. He had obtained mercy because he was chief of sinners and God loves sinners.
    - a. Too often Christians as well as churches proclaim a gospel that is anti-sinner rather than anti-sin.

- b. The gospel is presented as a legalistic, loveless, relationship rather than a love relationship.
- 2. He had obtain mercy because he was a man who was miserably obsessed with Christians and in need of pity for his conduct and deeds.
  - a. The mercy imparted to Paul was less than he deserved not what he deserved. Ex. 34:6-7, Jonah 4:2, Rom. 12:1-2  
\* The word mercy “eleeo” is related to one in misery or distress and receiving pity and compassion 2Cor..4:1
  - b. The imparting of mercy sees man in his or her miserable state in need of help despite his popularity and success or lack of it.  
\* Parable of the Good Samaritan not only teaches us how to love our neighbors but it is God's love towards lost man, even a Samaritan. Lk. 10:25-37
- 3. He had obtained mercy because he had done it ignorantly.
  - a. Mercy is imparted when there is spiritual blindness despite of the deeds.  
\* The unbeliever is spiritually dead in trespasses and sins. Eph. 2:1

- b. Mercy confronts the individual with personal guilt to impart personal compassion and mercy. Tit. 3:5, Matt. 18:33

**B.** Paul was to provoke people regarding the gospel of salvation by the long-suffering of God towards him.

- \* “That in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering.” Vs.16b
- 1. God's longsuffering is one of His attributes which enables Him to exercise full extent of forbearance with sinful man.
  - a. It has been stated as, “ongoing practiced restraint.”
  - b. It is made up of two words.
    - 1) The word “Makros”, which means long.
    - 2) The word “thumos”, which means soul or spirit.
- 2. God was longsuffering in Spirit regarding Paul’s words, blasphemous speech which communicated injurious words. Vs.13a
  - \* So is God with those who had spoken against God, Jesus and heaven itself!
- 3. God was longsuffering regarding Paul’s deeds persecution as he pursued, terrorized, imprisoned Christians and putting them to death Christians. Vs. 13b

- \* So those who perhaps had thought they had gone too far and done too much!
- 4. God was longsuffering regarding his insolence or attitude. Vs. 13c
  - a. Those of a proud attitude whose heart is hard and set in their ways.
  - b. The biblical history is a witness in itself to God's longsuffering with sinners; Noah, Pharaoh, Israel and Samson, etc. Rom. 2:4, 9:22
  - c. The evidence to be show in Paul was “all long-suffering”, the extent of God’s patience with sinful man.

**C.** Paul was to provoke people regarding the gospel of salvation by his former life revealing the kind of people that could be saved.

- \* “As a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life.”
- 1. Paul was to be a model of those who need and can obtain salvation.
  - a. The word pattern “hupotupsis” means a prototype, outline, blueprint or sketch of an artist.
  - b. The word appears two times in New Testament. 2Tim. 1:13
    - 1) The people who can obtain salvation is not limited to the morally upright or religious person Rom. 3:9-18

- 2) The people for who Christ died for were the ungodly and sinners.  
Rom. 5:6-8
2. Paul was to be a model of how they were to obtain salvation.
- a. A person must believe on Him.
  - b. The word believe “pisteuo” means to entrust oneself to:
    - 1) To confess Jesus as the Son of God. 1Jn. 5:10
    - 2) To forgive all past sins. Eph. 1:7
    - 3) To change one's life. 2Cor. 5:17
    - 4) To receive everlasting life. Jn. 3:36, 1Jn. 5:13
      - \* Age abiding life revealing a god like quality here and a guaranteeing eternity with God.

### **Illustration**

Billy Sunday said, “God does not owe you salvation. You deserve damnation, but He provides salvation.” (More Gathered Gold).

\* Jesus was asked if there are few who are saved? He said, “strive “agonize” to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able.” Lk.13:24

### **Application**

1. Each of us have received mercy from God in various areas of our lives and God desires that we provoke people regarding the gospel of

- salvation as He opens those opportunities, like the lame man at the Gate Beautiful. Acts 3
- \* Be it a drug life, violence, sex or moral self-righteousness.
2. Each of us can provoke people as we share the longsuffering of God towards our long life of sin without God giving us up for we are His witnessess. Acts 1:8
  3. Each of us can provoke people regarding the gospel of salvation by our former life revealing that God saves sinners not perfect people and in need of constant grace and mercy. Heb. 4:16

*The purpose of Paul's call to preach the gospel was to provoke others to trust the gospel for their salvation!*

### **III. To praise God for providing such a gospel of salvation. Vs. 17**

\* This is the context of Paul's doxology the gospel of salvation and it's efficiency to reconcile man and women to God. 1Tim. 6:15-16, 2Tim. 4:18, Rom. 11:36, 16:27, Gal. 1:5, Eph. 3:21, Phil. 4:20

**A.** Paul praised God for His person.

\* “Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible” Vs. 17a-c

1. He declares God to be the King eternal, who offers eternal life in the gospel of salvation.

- a. The quality of this King is eternal “aion” means age with the idea of perpetuity, the present and the age to come.
- b. Paul acknowledges He is a King among many who have declared themselves to be Kings.
- c. Paul acknowledges that the King is superior to all because He is the King of the ages, past, present, future and in control to the very day. He rules in the affairs of men. Dan. 4:32-36.
- d. Paul acknowledges that this King has had and has a Kingdom.
  - 1) Jesus went about preaching the gospel of the Kingdom Matt. 4:23
  - 2) Jesus promised those who lived the gospel would inherit the Kingdom Matt. 5:1-10
  - 3) Jesus taught His disciples to pray for the Kingdom to come. Matt. 6:10
  - 4) Gabriel said of His Kingdom there would be no end Lk. 1:33
  - 5) Jesus said, "My Kingdom is not of the world" to Pilate Jn. 18:36
    - \* Jesus is King of Kings and Lord of Lords.
- 2. He declares God to be immortal, who offers immortality through the gospel of salvation.

- a. The reference to immortality “aphthartos” means non decaying in essence or continuance.
  - 1) He does not tire Deut. 32:27
  - 2) He does not weary. Is. 40:28
  - 3) He does not die. Ps.103:15-17
  - 4) He does not change. Mal. 3:6
- b. The believer will be raised incorruptible 1Cor. 15:52
  - \* The believer is call to an inheritance incorruptible 1Pet. 1:4
- 3. He declares God to be invisible, who offers an invisible Kingdom by the gospel of salvation. 1Tim. 6:16
  - a. The word invisible “aoratos” means that which can not be seen.
  - b. God is Spirit and must be worship is Spirit and truth. Jn. 4:24
  - c. The Holy Spirit teaches God's truth and is invisible. 1Cor. 2:13
  - d. The church is endowed with spiritual gifts that can't be touched but seen in operation. 1Cor. 14:12
- B. Paul praised God for His preeminence.
  - \* “To God who alone is wise.” Vs. 17d.
  - 1. God is the only one of His kind revealed in the gospel of salvation. Deut. 6:4, Is. 43:11-13, 45:21-22
    - \* The word preeminence “prototokos” though not found here means to be



first or hold the first place appearing only one time in the New Testament. Col.1:18

- a. Jesus is the image of God. Col. 1:15
  - b. Jesus created all things being God. Col. 1:16
  - c. Jesus holds all things together. Col. 1:17
  - d. Jesus is the head of the Church. Col. 1:18 a-c
  - e. Jesus is the first in to kind to resurrect as we will. Col. 1:18d
  - f. Jesus holds the supremacy because He is one of a kind. Col. 1:18e
2. God is the only one who is all wise evident through history and the gospel of salvation. Rom. 16:27 a-b
- a. He imparted wisdom to Bezalel and Aholiab for the building of the Tabernacle. Ex. 36:2
  - b. Isaiah begs the question, who has directed the Spirit of the Lord or as His counselor taught Him? Is.40:13
  - c. Solomon asked for wisdom to rule and come to be the wisest in the nations. 1Kings 4:30-34
  - d. Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar that God was the source of wisdom. Dan. 2:21
  - e. To provide the gospel of salvation without violating the holiness!

f. In Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Col. 2:3

- C. Paul praised God for His proper due.
- \* “Be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.” Vs. 17e-f
1. God deserves all honor for the gospel of salvation.
 

\* The word honor “time” means value due, esteem or reverence by virtue or rank or state of office he holds.

    - a. He alone promised redemption through His Son Gen. 3:15
    - b. He reminded His people through the prophets. Gen. 22:5, Is. 7:14, Mic. 5:2, Mal. 3:1
    - c. He was true to His word Matt. 1:21-23, Phil. 2:6-8
  2. God deserves all the glory for the gospel of salvation.
    - a. The word glory “doxa” refers to splendor and brightness often identified with some visible form, when used of man towards God, it refers to acknowledging and giving God recognition for who He is and what He has done Ps. 150
    - b. Paul called it the glorious gospel. 1Tim. 1:11
      - 1) He is to receive glory as Creator. Rev. 4:9-11

- 2) He is to receive glory as Savior of the Church. Rev. 5:9-13
- 3) He is to receive glory for the tribulation saints. Rev. 7:9-12
  - \* How different this is from the ministers who proclaim the potential of their church, provoke others to stumble by their manner of life and praise their accomplishments constantly!
- 3. Paul's praise must be understood wholeheartedly.
  - a. His praise focused on the eternal not the temporal. 2Cor.4:16-18
  - b. His praise focused on man's salvation from sin not a life without problems and difficulties. 2Cor. 4:7-12
  - c. His praise focused on a transformed life, not a static one. Phil. 2:7-11
  - d. His praise focused on being used in the future not the past. Phil. 2:12-14

### **Illustration**

John Calvin said, "Praise is the best of all sacrifices and the true evidence of godliness." (*more gathered gold*).

### **Application**

- 1. You and I as believers must never forget to praise God for His person, eternal. Matt. 1:23
  - \* He is God not man, King not servant, eternal not temporal, Spirit and not flesh!

- 2. You and I owe praise to God for His preeminence seeking one lost. Lk. 19:10
  - \* He took the initiative to save us and there is no one like Him, the epitome of wisdom!
- 3. You and I should praise God because it is His proper due! 2Tim. 4:6-8
  - \* He is a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in loving-kindness, one who relents from doing harm!

***The purpose of Paul's call to preach the gospel was to praise God for providing such a gospel of salvation!***

### **Conclusion**

Paul has given the purpose of his call to the preach the gospel focusing on the nature of the gospel which consisted of three elements.

- I. To proclaim the potential of the gospel of salvation!
- II. To provoke others to trust the gospel for their salvation!
- III. To praise God for providing such a gospel of salvation!