

The Centrality of the Gospel

Romans 16:20-27 ESV “That our thinking will be formed by the message of the gospel; that our lives will be transformed by the power of the gospel; and that our hearts will become eager to share the love revealed in the gospel.”

- I. The gospel gives us peace.
 - a. We were at enmity with God because of our rebellion and religion (which led to our hypocrisy – 1-2), but the God of peace made peace with the human race through the blood of Christ because of His unconditional love. (Romans 3-5)
 - i. The sin that separated us from His Presence, never changed His love for us. (Romans 5:8)
 - ii. Romans 5:1 ESV “Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we^[a] have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”
 - iii. This peace includes being at peace with people. Romans 12:18 NIV “If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.” Not peace keepers while we live in self-protection, but peace makers – doing the hard work of forgiveness and, if necessary, confrontation.
 - b. This peace brings us into His victory over Satan if we walk in it.
 - i. Genesis 3:15 Prophecies that Satan would bruise Messiah’s heel but Messiah would crush his head (remove his authority) which is what Jesus did on the cross.
 - ii. We don’t live trying to get peace or favor from God, but entering into that which He has done for us on the cross. When we walk in peace we crush darkness, so to defeat us the enemy has to stir up first take away our peace. He has to get our eyes on the wind and the waves, or on each other, or on darkness and how horrible it is, or pre-occupied with ourselves. The paralysis of analysis.
 - iii. Not peace from trouble, peace in trouble. John 14:27; John 16:33 We don’t get to know why things happen – if we have to know why, we will be troubled and fearful because we just can’t seem to control events or people. We do get to ask for wisdom of how to respond and His peace will lead us.
 - c. Intimacy with God – Friday night – The Intimacy of our Calling - things that have happened in the last six years – some happened to us in the world; some happened to us in the body of Christ; some specifically to me, and some I caused by my own pride. In all of these messes all I could do was the next right thing. When it was my pride, the next right thing was to own it and repent. Be led by peace (Col. 3:15)
- II. The gospel gives us strength.

- a. Not just the means to salvation, but strength to live the Christian life. NIV “Establish you.” Romans 1:16-17 NIV “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. ¹⁷For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last,^[a] just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.” *God’s power is released through the gospel – sometimes you have to preach the gospel to yourself!
- b. Romans 16:25 ESV “Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages.” *The mystery of the gospel – not something that can’t be understood, but something that was previously hidden.
 - i. That Messiah would be God, not just a man sent from God. He would be both the root and descendant of David.
 - ii. That Messiah wasn’t coming to improve our lives by conquering earthly enemies, but was coming to give us new life by dying for our sins. *We didn’t want a new life – we like our lives, we like what we’ve made ourselves, but we could use help to be a little better. Sorry, that’s not the gospel. We have to lose our lives and find new life in Jesus. (Romans 6-8) (12-14)
 - iii. That God’s righteousness would not be attained by law but by grace; not by works but by faith. (Romans 1-11)

III. The gospel gives us our assignment.

- a. Romans 16:26 ESV “...but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith.” *Here, there and everywhere. Acts 1:8 is our theme. *Mark in the hot tub last Friday.
- b. Our debt to the world. Romans 1:14-15 ESV “I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians,^[a] both to the wise and to the foolish. ¹⁵So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.” Two ways to be in debt (Tim Keller) – someone loaned you something and you’re in debt until you pay them back. Or, someone’s given you something to give to someone else – you are in debt until you’ve fulfilled that obligation. Amazon – they have to take a picture. We have been given the gospel and now we have an obligation to tell others.
 - i. It is night for believers. Romans 13:12 NIV “The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.” This is the only hell a believer will experience and it’s not that bad.

- ii. It is day for unbelievers. John 9:4 NIV “As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work.” The time is coming when redemption’s time will run out – a wedding and a funeral. This is the only heaven an unbeliever will experience and it’s not that good.
- c. Our calling is the same and different. Together we must own the responsibility of the gospel going forward and being delivered to every person.
 - i. Paul speaks.
 - ii. Tertius writes.
 - iii. Phoebe delivers.
 - iv. Gaius hosts.
 - v. Others encourage.
- d. Some called to go and others called to send. Romans 10:14-15 NIV “How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? ¹⁵ And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” *Our missionaries are sent ones – we must share their heart and their mission because it belongs to us as well.
 - i. Hear their hearts. (Monday and Thursday and the desserts after)
 - ii. Pray for them. (Tuesday night)
 - iii. Financially support them. Members will receive a letter this week with a pledge card – our financial goal is \$325,000. On September 20th there will be a pledge card in every program – we want our missionaries to focus on their mission, not on their finances.
 - iv. Our bigger goal. To please God by our sacrificial giving in a culture that is fixed on consuming. Individually, but also together. A pleasing sacrifice to Him.

Salvation and communion.