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Ron and Val Berrus

...Laboring for the Laborers

Just Checking In #105 The Glory of the Gospel Pt 1

February 15, 2011

Psalm 39:12 "Hear my prayer, O Lord... for I am a 'pilgrim' with You..."

The Gospel of God – Paul’s Letter to the Romans

As I have been studying and preaching through the first three chapters of Romans, I have been struck again and again by the reality that “the gospel of God” is a “glorious gospel.” As you know, the word “gospel” means “good news.” And how good is this good news? It is gloriously good beyond description, and that for many, many reasons. Let me mention just four for your present meditation.

First, it is the gospel of God. That is, it is the good news about the true and living God, who is holy and true, just and merciful, gracious and forgiving. The gospel of God is the good news about our God. The gospel primarily reveals the glorious character and saving purpose of God Himself. The gospel begins with God. A correct understanding of God as understood through the gospel is the only unshakeable platform on which to build a saving faith. Let us declare the glory of the true God. ***The gospel of God is the gospel about God!*** (See Acts 14:14-17; 17:22-31; 1 Tim 1:17)

Second, it is the gospel from God. That is, it is the good news that has come to us directly from God Himself. It is not a made up, hope so, could be, would be nice if it were true gospel. No! It is the good news that comes from an utterly faithful, true, dependable, clear speaking God that cannot lie. (Titus 1:2) Every “other gospel” is but the imagination of man, (Gal 1:6-7) extending the grip of darkness and blindness, unable to confront the bad news of sin and death. Hence Paul’s severest condemnation (Galatians 1:6-9) upon those who proclaim a perverted message, not from God. ***The gospel of God is the gospel from God!***

Third, it is the gospel about and from God to sinners who are the bad news! This message is directed to sinners who are the cause of all the bad news in the world! We deserve the evil that surrounds us, for we have chosen it, sought it, defended it, greedily consumed it, and reproduce it in every generation. We sinners are the cause behind the bad news. ***We are sinners without exception, guilty without excuse, and helpless without escape.*** We have inherited sin, lived in sin, and expanded sin. We deserve God’s wrath and the lake of fire. It is to us then, as wrath deserving sinners, that this good news has come. ***The gospel of God is the gospel about and from God to wrath deserving sinners. (Romans 1:18)***

Fourth, it is the good news about and from God to sinners who are the bad news, declaring how they can be forgiven, cleansed, set free, declared righteous, and be reconciled to God through His Son. Christ is the center and focus of the saving gospel of God for sinners.

Paul then sets about showing us that both Gentiles and Jews are

sinner without exception,

guilty without excuse

and helpless without escape.

He shows us God the Judge

who justly condemns us guilty as truth suppressors and law breakers,

God the Physician

who accurately diagnoses us as fatally afflicted with incurable, corruptible indwelling sin, and

God the Historian

who, detail by detail, chronicles our evil choices, conduct, words and deeds, concluding that we are indeed individually and collectively as a race, all sinners. (Romans 1:18-3:18)

Paul then launches into the gospel cure for wrath deserving sinners. *He uses three terms that bring different lenses to bear to focus on our condition.* He does this by using saving gospel terms to demonstrate the all-sufficient work of Christ in saving sinners by His work on our behalf.

The view from the Courtroom

We sinners are guilty lawbreakers, and stand condemned. But the gospel of God tells us that Christ has taken the penalty the law demanded on Himself, and provides us freely with the only thing that can remove our condemnation, “a-from-God-righteousness-apart-from-law!” Because we receive such a perfect, from-God righteousness, *we move from the guilt of condemnation to the peace of justification.*

The view from the Slave Market

We sinners are helpless slaves to sin, bound and filled with hopeless despair and cringing fear. But the gospel of God tells us that Christ set us free from bondage by His own blood, providing redemption from enslavement, removing our chains and *takes us from bondage in fear to the hope of redemption.*

The view from the Temple

We sinners are unclean, unfit to come before the presence of a holy God, and if they did so would face death before God's consuming fire. But the gospel of God tells us that Christ has made atonement, providing the sacrifice for sin by His own blood, satisfying absolute holiness, ***providing us with the cleansing that moves us from shame to confidence.***

O the glory of the gospel of God!

Preach it to yourself today!

Preach it to yourself every day!

Self Check:

1. Do you experience guilt or peace most often? Why? How should the gospel change your view of the past?
2. Do you experience fear or hope most often. Why? How should the gospel change your view of the future?
3. Do you experience shame or confidence most often? Why? How should the gospel change your view of today?

Think about it:

1. As God the Law-Giver revealed "His glory" to Moses, do you think Moses expected the opening words of God's self-declaration? Read it. Deut 34:6-7 a
2. Why do you think Moses even dared ask such a thing as to see God's glory?
3. How eager are you to see His face? (Rev 22:4; 1 John 3:2-3)

For further study:

Do a study on the word "gospel" throughout the scriptures. Notice the explanatory connections such as "gospel of God", "my gospel", "gospel of the glory of God", etc. Look for and define the saving terms found in the gospel: redemption, propitiation, atonement, forgiveness, cleansing, freedom, adoption, regeneration, reconciliation, justification, imputation, and more. Then make up a long, run on sentence to define the gospel of God in all it's fullness as applied to you personally.

"O Holy God, exalted above the heavens, just and merciful, gracious and compassionate, I know not why Thou shouldst look upon me, a vile, guilty, wrath deserving worm, and desire me as Thy child. I know not how Thou couldst give up Thine only Son to bear that infinite wrath for me. I

know not why Thou shouldst give me Thine own perfect righteousness in Thy Son, clearing my name, removing my guilt, cleansing my filth, setting me free, imparting life to my sin-deadened heart, renewing my affections for Thee. I only know that Thou, O God of grace, O God of gospel pardon, has made me Thine own, and done all these things and more. I stand amazed to sing Thy praise and to proclaim Thy gospel all my days. Be glorified, O God of the gospel! In Christ's name, Thy gospel incarnate I pray. Amen."

Remember, you are very special to us and we pray for you.

Living with leaving in view.... Jn 9:4 Ron & Val

Seeing The Invisible, embracing The Unapproachable, declaring The Unexplainable, changed by The Immutable,

running after The Irresistible with inexhaustible joy in our inexpressible sorrows,

spending our time on eternity, owning nothing yet possessing everything that matters and lasts.

We are Pilgrims in Paradox. Welcome to THE JOURNEY.

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