

Simply Christ

Gospel Newsletter

Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ

April 1, 2017

How the Gospel Works

Perhaps the simplest and clearest verse in the Bible to explain how the gospel works is this: *“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”* II Corinthians 3:18. Through *“beholding”* the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image. There is nothing else that can bring such a transformation. No religious work, discipleship program, indoctrination, or life principle can change you into the image of Christ. The apostle Paul said *“it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”* I Corinthians 1:21. This is why we continually declare the gospel of Christ and what he accomplished upon the cross. It is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes it. Yet only those who *“see”* it can believe it.

In God’s commission to Isaiah he gave insight as to how the gospel of Christ works. God was preparing Israel for judgement so he instructed Isaiah to shut the eyes of the people *“lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.”* Isaiah 6:10. The *“eyes”* and *“ears”* spoken of here are the eyes and ears of our understanding. If our heart through *“seeing and hearing”* the gospel begins to understand the truth of Christ,

our heart will convert (turn around) and God will heal us.

The voice of the Law is always the same. Every week it speaks in church houses around the world. It continually offers *“the knowledge of good and evil”* as the answer for the sin problem. If you will discern, you can hear its darkened cry. It says *“the man which doeth those things shall live by them.”* Romans 10:5. This is the great “carrot on a stick.” It is a promise that cannot be fulfilled. It offers something it can never give. Paul used Israel as its sad example, saying, *“But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone.”* Romans 9: 31-32. They thought that by “doing” they would become righteous, but they never attained unto righteousness. They could never accept that *“...with the heart man believes unto righteousness...”* Romans 10:10.

Do not be deceived into thinking that the righteousness of faith is somehow less than the righteousness the Law promised. It is in fact the “greater righteousness” Jesus spoke of. He said *“For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”* Matthew 5:20. The righteousness of the Law said *“love thy neighbor,”* but the righteousness of faith causes you to love your enemy also. Matthew 5:43-44. The “doing” of the Law may cause you to not commit adultery, but the righteousness of faith takes the sinful lust out of your heart. Matthew 5:27-28. It is the glory of this “greater righteousness” that caused Paul to count the fact that he was *“blameless ...touching the*

righteousness which is in the Law” to be “but dung” in order to “win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:”

Philippians 3:6-9. Paul chose a righteousness that did not change only what he did; it changed everything he was!

The gospel of Christ does not give you something to do, it gives you something to see, to hear, and to believe.” The blood speaks Hebrews 12:24 and we hear it say that Jesus suffered *“that he might sanctify the people with his own blood.”* Hebrews 13:12. The gospel shines into our heart and we *“know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.”* 1 John 3:5. We believe that *“our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin”* Romans 6:6 and we know that it is so. The things the gospel of Christ declares are absolutely impossible for anyone to do or live up to, but if we “see” and “believe” it, we are changed into the same image of that which we see in the glory of Christ. It is the work of the gospel! It is the power of God unto salvation. Can you believe it? Romans 1:16