



THE GOSPEL OF THE GLORY OF CHRIST

by Dale Rumble

The Great Commission

Every believer who has experienced the love and forgiveness of God has both a responsibility and wonderful privilege of bearing witness to that love through the gospel. This is our commission.

. . . How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things. (Romans 10:15)

The New Testament defines this “good news” as the “gospel of the kingdom.” A kingdom has two realities: a king, and the domain over which the king reigns. The king is Jesus; His domain is heaven and, which through evangelism, is growing to include all creation!

The question is, “How can believers be fruitful in their witness for Christ?” It requires the following two distinguishing qualities of excellence:

1. Preach *all* of the good news; a gospel that *fully* describes the glory of all that Christ has achieved in pouring Himself out for our redemption and adoption as God’s sons.
2. Living so that our personal life does not veil the truth that we preach.

The ultimate goal in witness is to lift up and glorify Jesus. The preeminence of Jesus is the source of all good news.

His Glory is the Issue

The prophet, Isaiah, foretold of the day when the glory of God would overcome darkness in the world.

For behold, darkness will cover the earth and deep darkness the peoples; but the Lord will rise upon you and His glory will appear upon you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. (Isaiah 60:2-3)

The light of God is the glory of the gospel of Christ. As disciples of Christ, it is important that our life and testimony do not veil or hinder the gospel, but reveal the glory of what He has done.

. . . if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. (2 Corinthians 4:3-4)

The gospel is uniquely centered in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. However, our gospel witness should express the fullness of His sacrifice. The following seven truths reveal the full glory of the gospel of Christ.

1 • The Love of God

The most important foundational truth of the gospel is the love of God. Without God’s love for lost humanity there would be no gospel.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. (John 3:16)

Jesus came willingly to earth to reveal the Father to mankind. God is love; and the life, ministry and sacrifice of Jesus was a visible expression of His love.

*For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from **the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.** (Romans 8:38-39)*

God's unconditional love for us is a wonderful declaration of His glory, something that we must accept by faith. This is where salvation begins. Our gospel witness will be veiled if we are not gripped by love for those whom we preach to.

2 • Becoming Sin

The first act in Jesus' sacrifice was to take upon Himself all the sin of the entire world; sins of the past, present and future. He essentially became sin, so that those who would repent, and by faith receive Him as their Lord and Savior, could through the Holy Spirit, become the righteousness of God.

He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

Jesus was completely without sin, so that for Him to become sin was surely the most painful act of obedience that He had to make (Luke 22:42).

And being in agony He was praying very fervently; and His sweat became like drops of blood falling down upon the ground. (Luke 22:44)

To glorify His Father by obedience, becoming sin was the first step in His sacrifice as the Lamb of God.

Our gospel must never veil the sinfulness of sin; it is the reason for the fallen condition of all men and for our need to repent.

3 · No Peace with God

The gospel teaches us that when one has been justified by faith in Christ, his sins are forgiven and he has peace with God (Romans 5:1).

As a result of becoming the bearer of our sins, Jesus forfeited all fellowship and peace with His Father. He bore the lack of peace that all of us deserve because of our sins.

*... the chastening for our peace (well-being) fell upon Him ...
(Isaiah 53:5)*

His chastening was evident in the cry of Jesus on the cross: “My God, My God, Why has Thou forsaken Me?”

Jesus made peace through the blood of His cross, and became the source of peace for all men, Jew or Gentile, who would thereafter believe in Him (Ephesians 2:13-15). He is the Prince of Peace. Because of what He did, we will never have to experience separation from our Father.

We will veil the gospel if we preach condemnation and do not show men how to have peace with God.

4 · The Scourging of Jesus

From the time that He was taken prisoner in the garden of Gethsemane, when He endured His so-called trials, and while He was led to the cross for crucifixion, Jesus suffered greatly. He was being mocked, spit upon and cruelly scourged. He was afflicted with severe whipping until His back was plowed with deep lacerations. A crown of thorns punctured His head, and His face was disfigured by whips and clubs.

His sinless, perfect body was broken so that the gospel could later be preached with miracles of healing and deliverance to lost men whose bodies were broken by sin, sickness and demonic activity. Not only that, His scourging was also the price He paid to heal believers who are sick in body. He willingly suffered the anguish of physical torture because it would bring glory to God from miracles and healings in the church.

... and by His scourging we are healed. (Isaiah 53:5)

. . . for by His wounds you were healed. (1 Peter 2:24)

Surely our grief (sicknesses) He Himself bore, and our sorrows (pains) He carries (Isaiah 53:4)

The glorious benefits that Jesus provides for His people through the physical brokenness that He suffered in His scourging and death on the cross, are listed in Psalm 103:

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget none of His benefits, who pardons all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases; who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with lovingkindness and compassion; who satisfies your years with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle (Psalm 103:2-5)

We can veil the glory of Christ if the gospel we preach fails to present the provisions that Jesus has made for healing the human body. Indeed, it is often by miracles of healing that the Holy Spirit opens the hearts of men in spiritual darkness to the power and divinity of Christ.

5 • The Death and Burial of Jesus

Jesus lived a perfect life of complete obedience to His Father. His life was not taken from Him; Jesus willingly laid it down as payment for all sin. He became the unblemished Lamb sacrifice that fully satisfied God's commandment: "The soul that sins shall die" (Isaiah 53:6-7).

Death came into the world by the disobedience of one man, Adam. Through the one act of sacrificial righteousness by Jesus, many will be made righteous through the gospel. We are saved by grace through personal repentance and faith in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

There are no relative levels of righteousness in heaven. One can only be saved and go to heaven if he possesses the perfect righteousness of God. This he receives when he is born again by the Holy Spirit, and has the righteousness of Christ imputed to him.

The burial of Jesus removed from human sight the crucified body of sin, so that the all important, next appearing of Jesus would be that of His resurrection.

We identify with the burial of Jesus by being baptized in water after our new birth, to do away with our body of sin (our old man) and begin to walk in newness of life (Colossians 2:11-12).

Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life . . . knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with . . .
(Romans 6:4, 6)

The word of the cross is the central theme in the gospel; it is foolishness to the world, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God! We can veil the gospel we preach to the extent that we fail to walk in victory over sin, or fail to deny ourselves, pick up our personal cross daily, and follow Him (Luke 9:23)

6 · The Resurrection of Jesus

The death of Jesus would have no meaning if He was not resurrected, for this revealed that His sacrifice had been accepted by the Father. It proved Him to be the Son of God (Romans 1:4).

Jesus became the firstborn from the dead, the firstborn of all creation, and the beginning of a vast new family of God's sons who have been transformed into His image and made heirs of His glory (Romans 8:16-18; Colossians 2:17-19). Jesus is the firstborn among many brethren in God's family.

To each son, Jesus is the resurrection and the life. His resurrection promises a future redemption of their bodies to bodies of glory at His return (Romans 8:23; Philippians 3:20-21). All believers will possess the image and likeness of God on that day.

But we all with unveiled Face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit. (2 Corinthians 3:18)

The resurrection of Jesus is an open door into the glories and power of His kingdom, including all the gifts, ministries and fruits of the Holy Spirit. When the gospel is preached and is demonstrated by miracles of salvation, healing and deliverance it is more than a mes-

sage of words; it reveals the power and love of God. Such ministry can come through children as well as adults.

We can veil the gospel if we focus on how well we perform all of our various religious activities; on the other hand, true resurrection life is measured in how well we allow Jesus to live His life in us. The life that one receives when he is born-again is the resurrection life of Jesus. All who are led by the Spirit of God are His sons (Romans 8:14).

To be “in Christ” is to be accepted by our heavenly Father in exactly the same way He receives the Lord Jesus. Once we are saved, we are dead and our life is hid with Christ in God. All because of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.

7 · The Intercession of Jesus

Many believers consider the redemptive ministry of Jesus in the gospel to have been completed at His resurrection. However, this is when His ministry of intercession began. While on earth, Jesus was both man and God. As man, He faced the same pressures that we do today, issues such as persecution, trials, temptations, ridicule, bigotry, and even death. Therefore, He is well able to intercede for us as we face the many tests that accompany our salvation.

Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. (Hebrews 7:25)

For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:15-16)

The goal of our Lord’s intercession for us is not simply to deliver us from difficult trials, but rather to help us overcome and mature in character. We are being conformed into the image of Christ. Each member of the body of Christ is called to a specific sphere of service. The Lord brings us into trials and testings that help prepare us for the gifting and ministry of our call. The sufferings and disagreeable experiences that we may face are not worthy to be compared to the glory that they can bring to us (Romans 8:16-18). God

causes everything that He allows into our life, to work together for our good and help us to fulfill our call in His purpose (Romans 8:26). One who does not accept this truth will always be looking for “easy ways” to be a witness. We can veil our testimony if we don’t frequently and boldly come to the throne of grace to receive mercy and find grace to help us in our witness for Him. This will veil the power and glory of Christ.

Seven is the number of completion. This last truth completes the seven glorious provisions that Jesus has given of Himself for our salvation. They make up the gospel of the glory of Christ!

Our Challenge

Every believer, who has experienced the forgiveness of his sins, has both the privilege and responsibility to bear witness of the love of God. *This is a challenge.*

And Jesus, in His message to John the Baptist, listed supernatural signs that follow and confirm the gospel.

. . . the blind receive sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have the gospel preached to them (Luke 7:22)

These signs are a challenge too.

And finally, the great end-time harvest of souls will be gathered in as spiritual darkness is exposed and destroyed by the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ.

These are our challenges, our quest, our resolve. Amen.

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