

## Searching the Scriptures / 5 / The Bible Is The Gospel / Part 5

In 1 Cor 15:1-4 we read the following: *“Moreover brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, and wherein ye stand, by which ye are also saved if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures.”*

Information concerning the Work of Christ and His Gospel is found only in the Bible. This is the reason we study the Bible – it is the only place in the world where can find a plan of salvation for sinners. The Bible reveals the Person and Work of the LORD Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit then uses the Scriptures to convict those whom God plans to save of sin, righteousness, and judgment according to John 16:8. We also know from Rom 1:16 that the True Gospel is *“the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.”* The Greek word for “power” is “*dunamis*”, from which we derive our English words “*dynamic*” and “*dynamite*”. This power is the greatest force on earth because it is able to give eternal life to the spiritually dead souls of those whom God has chosen to save (the elect) from before the foundation of the world. Nothing can withstand this power of God, as we see from this warning in Dan 4:35, *“And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay [stop] his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?”*

According to 1 Cor 15, we find that the Gospel is something we receive. Let’s look at Gal 1:12, *“For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.”* This is also seen in 1 The 2:13, *“For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.”*

Many people misquote and distort the Scriptures about “receiving” salvation. They often quote John 1:12: *“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.”* Then they stop quoting the Bible and don’t look at the very next verse which says: *“Which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”* When we look at all of the Bible concerning this subject, we realize that this “receiving” has nothing to do with anything man can “do” or “perform” in order to be saved. The Gospel has nothing at all to do with “*the will of man*” as we just read in John 1:13. All of the action of salvation is God’s.

We now want to focus on the next aspect of the Gospel. As we saw in our initial verse, 1 Cor 15:1, the Gospel causes us to “stand”. Let’s look at 2 Cor 1:24, *“Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.”* Those whom God has saved by the Gospel of the Bible will never fall – they will stand forever and ever. The Gospel is what brings salvation to the one God is planning to redeem, as we see in Jam 1:21, *“Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.”* Save our souls from what? From eternal punishment in Hell, that’s what. That is what the Bible describes as the “*second death*”. God saves us from His righteous condemnation for our sins. He also saves us from the guilt of sin. He washes us clean of all our sins, and we are given a new power and a new desire to obey God’s Law, the Bible.

Thus far we have learned that a true Christian is a person who has received the Gospel by God’s power alone. He has been made to stand securely by the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ and has become saved from sin and Hell. The next aspect of his relationship to the Gospel is to keep the Word, as we read in Luke 8:15: *“But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.”*

For the 100 or so occurrences of the word “Gospel” in the New Testament, we see that we could substitute “Good News” as a synonym for Gospel. However, a better meaning might be “True Message” because the True Gospel of the Bible is God’s message to mankind that contains both bad news and good news. The bad news is that all men are under God’s wrath and curse of death (Gen 2:16-17; 3:17-19). The good news is that the Lord Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners from eternal damnation in hell (Luke 19:10; 1 Tim 1:15) and that God allows sinners to humbly petition Him for mercy through prayer (Luke 18:13-14).

The “messengers” (believers) who proclaim the Gospel are like an aroma of life and death, as 2 Cor 2:16 explains: *“To the one we are the savour [aroma] of death unto death; and to the other the savour [aroma] of life unto life.”* Yes, the Gospel is Good News to those whom God is saving; but to those God is not saving, it is Bad News indeed.

So, we find that the whole Bible is this wonderful Gospel plan. Each book and each chapter – in fact each verse, and each word explains some aspect of the Person and Work of the Lord Jesus Christ. We find this declaration in John 5:39, *“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.”*

As we close this study of the Gospel that, among other things, saves and keeps, I am reminded of the old hymn which says *“Jesus what a Friend for sinners. Jesus lover of my soul; friends may fail me, foes assail me, He my Savior makes me whole; Hallelujah what a Savior! Hallelujah what a Friend! Saving, helping keeping, loving: He is with me to the end.”*

As we rejoice in this Savior and His Gospel – the Good News of Grace by God’s work alone – may we also heed the warning found in Heb 2:3 *“How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?”*