

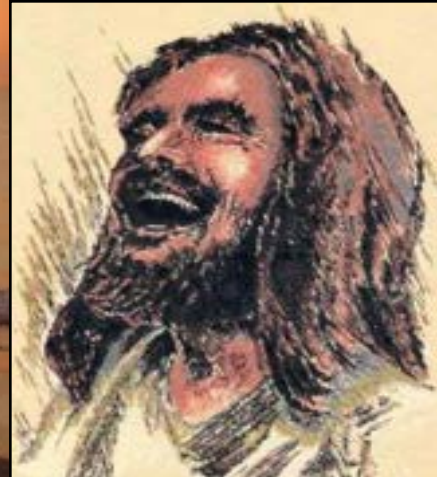
Gospel Challenges

To proclaim and clarify his gospel truth,
and challenge other things preached,
Jesus repeats the following often:



"You Have Heard
It Said"

"But I Say
Unto You"



See the difference between the gospel
and wrong beliefs, false assumptions,
half truths, and incorrect conclusions.

YOU BE THE JUDGE!

Roger Himes, J.D., The Gospel Life Coach

The Old Testament law demanded from ancient people what it could not produce in them.

The New Testament gospel produces in us what it does not demand from us.

It is God performing his good work in us by means of his gospel which is his process in us
(Romans 1:16-17, Philippians 1:5-6, Colossians 1:5-6).

Religion and law demand that we live life right.

The gospel is the presence and power of God in us that enables us to at least live life better than we could in any other way.

In other words, the gospel empowers us to live life better by accident than we ever could on purpose in ourselves.

A Lawyer’s Very Important Opening Statement **Don’t all lawyers make one?**

We have so many religious and even Christian variations of what we hear preached that I’ve come to call them ‘The Second Tower of Babel.’ They all say something at least a little different and all very convincingly claim that they are right.

The gospel is often presented as only one of many choices we have to consider. But this is not what Jesus says. He says to repent of all other beliefs. Forsake them! — and only believe and live his gospel. These were the very first words out of his mouth as he began his ministry, just after he spent 40 days in the wilderness tempted by Satan. His gospel was the most important thing on his mind and heart to talk about.

Satan also left the wilderness with the gospel being the most important thing on his mind too. But his agenda was quite different. In Second Corinthians the Apostle Paul says his agenda was to conceal the gospel from us, — to blind us from being able to understand and receive the light of God’s glorious gospel revelation. Sadly, he’s done a pretty good job, with the help of some modern preachers.

God also spoke about this in the Old Testament. Talking with Moses, God said he would send his special Messenger — Jesus, with his special Message — his gospel truth. He closes this by saying, “Anyone who will not hear my words, which he speaks in my name, ***I will REQUIRE it of him.***” (Deuteronomy 18:15-19).

Paul says: “In Christ Jesus I have begotten you
through the gospel” (I Cor 4:15).

BEGOTTEN is a very important word!

It means God sees us as BIRTHED into his gospel truth!

This means we cannot be UN-birthed.

This means the gospel is NOT a choice we have.

It’s REQUIRED. This is exactly what God told Moses

As I said, my purpose in writing this book is to show the difference between what is commonly preached and written (“You Have Heard it Said”) with what the gospel truly says (“But the Truth of the Gospel Is”). I don’t use the exact same words Jesus did so it’s not thought I’m presumptively speaking for him.

I've not seen many things that give us a comparative choice like this that highlights the gospel of Jesus!

Jesus asks, “Why do you reason in your hearts?” The gospel is what we lawyers call, “The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.” Thus it doesn’t require our human reason. It only requires our trust in God and our belief.

If we don’t know the gospel, then it’s so easy to get blind-sided by wrong beliefs, half truths, false assumptions, incorrect perceptions and even concocted opinions of different preachers who do not know the gospel either. Paul speaks to this in Galatians 1:8-9, 4:17, I Timothy 1:7 and elsewhere.

The Old Testament law demanded what it could not produce. But the New Testament gospel produces in us what it does not demand. Thus Paul refers to the gospel as “The Power of God.” The gospel produces in us an ability to live life better by accident than we ever could on purpose ourselves — a life lived in the Spirit, not in the flesh.

This makes it hard for us to know what is right or wrong, correct or false, unless of course our minds and hearts are founded on the gospel of the finished work of the cross of Jesus. Again, Jesus asks, “Why do you reason in your hearts?” Instead of reasoning, and considering other options, opinions, and doctrines, Paul says we should be ‘single minded,’ and ‘separated’ to the gospel.

As Paul tells Timothy, let it be your only ‘doctrine.’ In the histories of Jesus, it says Jesus declares his doctrine in his many Parables (Mark 4:2). Thus I’ve written a book: **The Parables of Jesus**. It shows how all his parables flow together to proclaim his gospel to us. I think you may find the parables described in a way you’ve perhaps never considered before.

In summary, the gospel should be our ‘worldview’ — because it is God’s worldview. It is his thoughts and his Kingdom ways.

If you will recall, when the angel visited Mary, to let her know she would be the mother of the Savior, she didn’t doubt him. But she did ask, “How can this be?” This was followed by her faith-filled words:

“Be it done unto me according to your word.”

Many people think the gospel is just too good to be true. They say they can't believe it. One said, "Even God can't be this good. Why would he want to bless us so much?" Read the statement about this on page 47. **The gospel is so good it can only be true!**

The human mind could never invent the gospel. It's too far over our heads. Only a God of love, grace and peace can invent the gospel, and bless us out of our minds.

Like Mary, we should say simply declare:

"Jesus, be it done unto me according to your word."

I began my Christian life being a legalist: trying to do all things my means of the law. I failed, just like everyone else who has ever tried to live it (Acts 15:10). As a lawyer, I cut my teeth on the law, and I assumed God did too. After all, he wrote it.

But then he led me into the truth of the gospel (it took 5 years to change my thinking.

Of course you don't have to be a lawyer to read the Bible, but having a legal mindset does help in understanding deeper things of God's gospel truth.

The Bible is full of legal words: justification — righteousness — adoption — covenant — judgment — redemption — reconciliation, etc., etc. Even faith is defined as 'evidence,' a very legal word. I became so absorbed in the gospel that I began my ministry over 20 years ago as **'The Gospel Life Coach.'**

The Apostle Paul was serious when he said anyone who didn't preach the gospel of Jesus should be 'cursed.' The gospel is the truth and the reality of God. Paul says the beliefs of our hearts will be judged by the gospel. Jesus says much the same thing when he says his words 'will judge us on the last day.' In Second Thessalonians 1, Paul says Jesus will return from heaven and judge those of us who are not believing and living his gospel.

The gospel is so often minimized, and even ignored.
Paul says we have **10,000 Instructors in Christ,**
but very, very few **Fathers of the Gospel.**
(First Corinthians 4:15).



Roger Himes

Table of Contents

Here is a listing of things we'll be looking at in this book.
Each is discussed separately on one page.

These are all false beliefs of one degree or another,
when compared to the gospel of Jesus.

I'm sure we all will find some of these
in what we call our 'truth box.'

Much of our truth boxes aren't filled with gospel truth.
Jesus says to forsake and repent of all other beliefs
and to only believe his gospel.

Hopefully, this book will reveal some differences
between what is LIGHT and what is DARKNESS.

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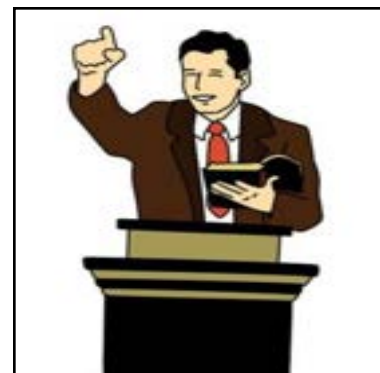
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Forgiveness of Sin Is God's Primary Objective

You Have Heard It Preached:

The gospel is all about God forgiving us of our sins. This is what the gospel is all about. Once you receive forgiveness of sin and salvation, this is all you need. You just live until you die and then go happily to heaven.



But the Truth of the Gospel of Jesus Is:

Forgiveness of sin is real, and fundamental to the gospel: Eph 1:7, 4:32, Col 1:14, 2:13, 3:13, I John 2:12. If we are in Jesus, then God even chooses to remember our sin: Heb 8:12, 10:17. Jesus took our sin away: Heb 9:26.

But Paul says there is 'much more.'

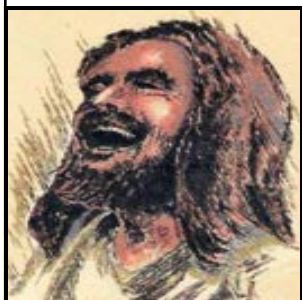
Hebrews 6 speaks of

'things that accompany salvation.'

These are revealed throughout the New Testament.

If salvation was all there was, we would not need

'things that accompany salvation.'



Forgiveness is only half of God's spiritual equation. Christ gives us righteousness also, so we can connect with God: II Cor 5:21. He gives us his abundant life, and much more prosperity and health than we can experience any other way: John 10:10, 3 John 2-3.

Jesus came to give us all the blessings, favor, benefits and promises of God. The Holy Spirit even shows us any free gifts of God we may miss: I Cor 2:12. Jesus came and took away eternal death, and gives us better life on earth, and eternal life in heaven once this life on earth is over: II Tim 1:10. Wow! Talk about hitting a home-run!

We must receive forgiveness of sins to experience all of this, but once we trust God's forgiveness, he pours his whole Kingdom into us, as Jesus says: Luke 12:32.

Forgiveness is so very important. We must receive it to get into heaven. But it is still just the starting point. As Paul says several times: there is so very 'much more.' Again, we should receive everything Jesus gives us in his gospel that his Father sent him to bring us and say, "Lord, be it done unto me according to your word."

God Writes Old Testament Law On Our Hearts

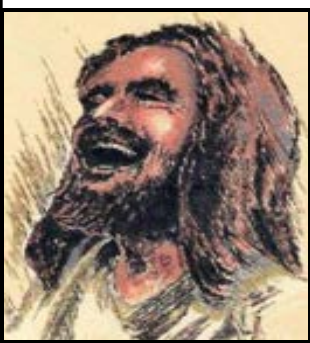
You Have Heard It Preached:

“God writes his Old Covenant Law on our hearts and on our minds, not just on tablets of stone. He then gives us his gospel and the Holy Spirit to help us keep his law” (Heb 10:16).



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:

Proverbs says, “As a man thinks in his heart, so is he.” So does God really mean for us to



constantly think about his law, so it becomes one with us, and so we depend on him to help us keep it? NO! In the New gospel, the law is said to be ‘the ministry of condemnation and death’ (II Cor 3:6-7). Does God want us living condemned and guilty lives? NO! *“In Christ there is NO condemnation” (Rom 8:1).*

Paul says apart from the law sin is dead (Rom 7:8). He says the law is what causes sin in us (I Cor 15:56) Sin occurs when we live in the flesh, but when we live in the Spirit — the Holy Spirit overpowers our sinful natures (Rom 7:5). Yes, we still sin, but we’re delivered from the power of sin in the law because it is dead. We live in God’s Spirit (Rom 7:6). *We must be dead to the law in order to minister unto God (Gal 2:19).*

Jesus came to fulfill his Father’s commands, and asks us to simply keep his commands. John says they are not grievous or burdensome, like the Old law was. He came to give us a new command (John 13:34). Jesus brought a change in the law (Heb 7:12, 16-19), because it was ‘a carnal command.’ We are told the law consists of : (1) believing in Jesus and his gospel (the first thing he ever spoke about (Mark 1:14-15) and (2) loving others (I John 3:21, John 3:36, Mark 1:15). Jesus says, “Love others **AS** I have loved you.” Love doesn’t begin with us, but with God. I call it ‘used love.’

We use God’s love and then just give it away. There are three parts to this: (1) receiving it, (2) relegating it to ourselves and our own blessing, and (3) releasing God’s love to others. The gospel empowers us in all of life. It is the power of God in us and through us (Rom 1:16-17). It motivates us to live right, and it also enables us to live in all the blessings of God, which includes loving others. The gospel is what enables us to live better by accident than we ever could on purpose in ourselves.

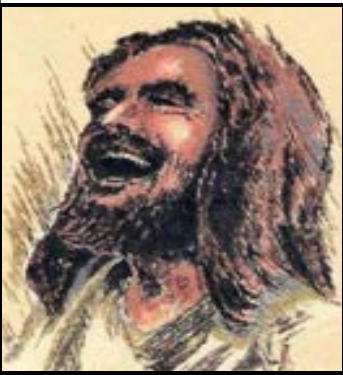
We Must Mix Law With Grace for Balance

You Have Heard It Preached:

“Too much grace will cause you to sin more because it has no controls. Therefore, you must mix grace with law so you live a better, more balanced and controlled life, and so you can be blessed by God.”



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:



Those who preach this say grace is only what we lawyers call ‘**an escape clause**’ so we cover our butts if we do bad things. Non-gospel preachers often lead us to think that grace says we can (1) do anything we want, and (2) believe anything we want. *This is not God’s gospel grace!* Paul’s ministry was the gospel: ‘**THE GRACE OF GOD**’ (Acts 20:24). He says to believe and teach anything else will produce a curse on us.

If our minds and hearts are rooted in law, sin increases in us (I Cor 15:56, Rom 7:4). Grace is much more, and it empowers us to say no to doing bad things (Tit 2:11). God’s grace is sufficient for us in all things (II Cor 12:9). If we really know God’s love, grace and forgiveness, we don’t want to do bad things.

“We can’t consistently act, on the outside, different from what we think and believe on the inside.” So if we have God’s grace in our hearts it’s a good thing, and allows the gospel to produce good things from us (Heb 13:9, Col 1:5-6).

**This defines grace as a term of God’s POWER,
not just an escape clause for when we do bad stuff!
(And we all do bad stuff at times).**

We’re not under law, but under grace (Rom 6:14). Being under law produces failures and headaches. Being under grace produces God’s gospel power (Rom 1:16). Paul says law preachers don’t understand that what they preach is harmful to us (I Tim 1:7). They teach us to try to live (1) by the New Testament, and then (2) by the Old Testament. It’s a $1+1=2$ theology that the New Testament denounces (II Cor 3:6, Mt 9:16, Mk 2:22).

Law condemns us, disempower us. Grace gives us the gift of God’s righteousness due to his grace (Rom 5:17). It empowers us to live at higher levels than we can alone.

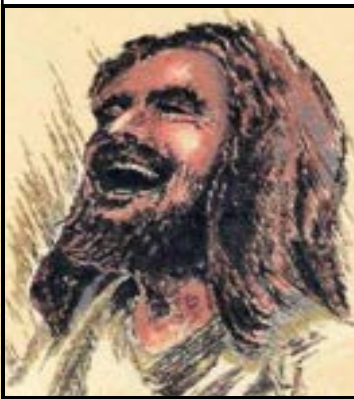
We Live In Both the Spirit and in the Flesh

You Have Heard It Preached:

“Christians have a split personality, like Dr. Jeckyl and Mr. Hyde. They are like a bad cop vs. a good cop. They are double-minded, sometimes living in the Spirit and sometimes in their flesh and have sin.”



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:



Most people live in one condition. Peter calls it ‘corruption that is in the world by lust.’ I John 2:15 says they love the world, the things of the world, and they don’t know God’s love. If a Christian is truly born again in Jesus, they don’t suffer from this. They are a new creation in Christ (II Cor 5:17). This means they are a new species in God: a ‘GodMan.’

They are ‘partakers of God’s divine nature’ (I Pet 1:4). Their focus is on God, not the world. Their minds are transformed and renewed by the gospel. This reveals God in their hearts (Rom 12:2), because they’re translated into thinking heavenly things (Col 1:13).

‘Short Circuit’ is an old movie, about an escaped robot discovering himself and the world and he kept wanting more ‘input.’ He wanted more information about things. We have it with God’s word always downloading new revelation into us, if we take time to seek it. But God does not simply want us to KNOW his word, but to DO his word. This is not a legalistic demand. It is powerful gift that enables us in all things.

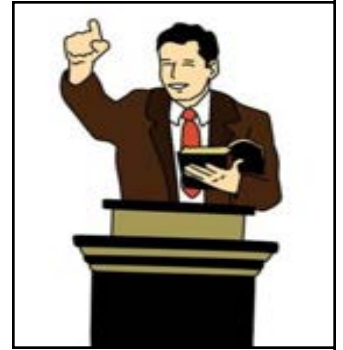
ALL OF US fight the flesh! It’s the way we can choose to live that isn’t God focused. It’s bad thinking and behaving. It’s how Paul defines ‘sin’ in Roman 7: it’s something inside of him, but it’s not him. **FLESH IS NOT US EITHER!**

It’s a pull and a temptation to live by means of the **WORLD**, not God’s **WORD** — to live contrary to God, and we’re never free of it while here on earth. We must choose to seek the Spirit and set our minds on him, or the flesh pulls us away. Flesh is old, non-Christian thinking and acting, trying to make life work apart from God. We must fight against it, for the Spirit. But we must remember the way God chooses to see us, no matter what we do or don’t do: **“We are NOT in the flesh” (Rom 8:9).**

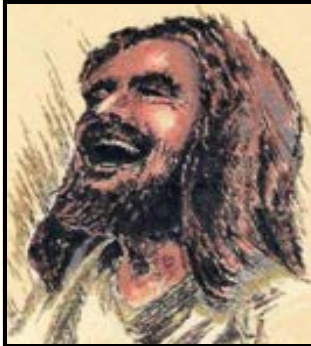
Christians Should Live In Health and Wealth

You Have Heard It Preached:

“God promises us health and wealth and prosperity, if we will only believe it and confess it. In fact, we even already have it, and just have to believe that we already have it.”



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:



The gospel does not PROMISE us any such thing. The apostle Paul, his disciple Timothy, and others he wrote about had bad physical problems that weren't answered or healed by prayer. And Paul wrote over half the New Testament. Neither of them, or others had wealth and prosperity. At one point we're told Jesus had 'no place to lay his head.'

The gospel gives a greater probability. . . to most often live a more healthy and prosperous life if we live and walk in gospel truth and reality (3 John 2-3). Then we are living in the blessings, promises, benefits and power of God. Those who do not live in gospel truth have only themselves, and their own flesh to rely on, which isn't good enough in many circumstances.

*If we live in things of God, life just naturally
GENERALLY goes better! But it's not an absolute!*

“Bad things happen to good folks.” Christians do get sick and have debt. We do have bad habits and sin. Some smoke cigarettes leading to cancer. Some are over-weight which leads problems. Some drink too much. “We reap what we sow.”

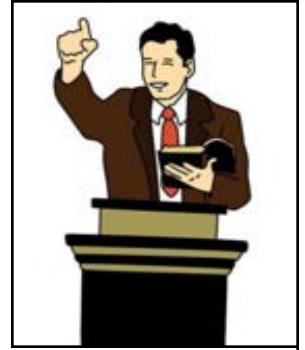
Medicine tells us the same thing: if we are fat, or smoke, or drink too much or take drugs, we're likely not to live in health. If we live in anger, strife, stress, bitterness, resentment, envy, etc., we're likely not to live in health. But if we live in joy, peace, thankfulness, forgiveness and love, we more often have health and prosperity. Gospel spiritual health most often produces good physical health. It is the power of God in us enabling us. It's God's doing, not ours.

But some of those '10,000 instructors' say we must do what they say and obey their preaching or bad things will come on us. They say we must be sure to live in God's perfect (which is of course stated in their preaching) will so we achieve the promises of God. Instructors always instruct 'what to do next,' and there is always a 'next.' Gospel Fathers show what God has done for us, and what he's doing in us now.

Everyone Is Saved and Going to Heaven!

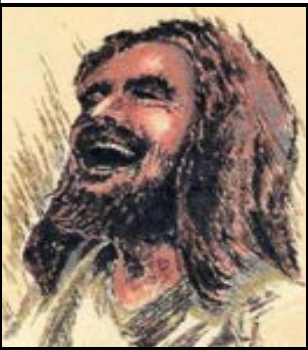
You Have Heard It Preached:

“Everyone is saved. Jesus was the propitiation of all our sins in the whole world (I John 2:2). God has reconciled the whole world to himself because ‘God so loved the world. . .’ (I Cor 5:18-19, John 3:36). It doesn’t matter what you do, or what you believe. You’re all saved.”



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:

We are not all saved. Everyone in the world is INVITED to be saved, but they must ACCEPT the invitation and wear the righteous robe they have been provided (The Parable of the Wedding Banquet). God gives us so many FREE gifts, including salvation, and his love, if we’ll simply believe and trust him. He even gives us the Holy Spirit to show us free gifts we may miss (I Cor 2:12).



Belief in Jesus is needed for forgiveness and salvation (Acts 10:43). Paul says turning to God is needed for forgiveness (Acts 26:17-18). Jesus says he does not refuse anyone who comes to him (John 6:37).

In II Corinthians, it is clear that many are perishing, and are in darkness and not light, and in Revelation it says many are thrown into the lake of fire.

We need to be baptized into Christ’s death and resurrection (Rom 6:3-4).

We must have the Spirit of Christ to be in God (Rom 8:9-10).

We must have Jesus in us to be saved (II Cor 13:5).

Some have a depraved mind and reject God (II Tim 3:1 et seq).

We are born dead in sin and must become alive in Jesus (Col 2:13-14).

We’re born flesh and must be freed by Jesus to be God’s kids (Rom 6:17-20, Rom 8:12-14).

We must be made a new creation (II Cor 5:17).

God justifies us who have faith in Jesus; righteousness is our gift (Rom 3:26, 4:22-24).

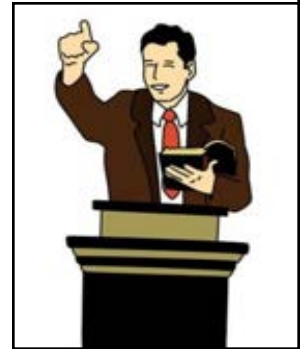
Jesus says believers are sheep and saved, but unbelievers are goats to be judged. We must have faith to be saved (Rom 10:17-23), and faith means believing in Jesus (I John 5:1). Some are cut off from Jesus (Gal 5:4-5).

God makes it so easy to be saved, but not everyone is saved. We must believe in Jesus, God’s MESSENGER, and also in the messenger’s MESSAGE: his gospel. This is so easy for most. God must make it EASY or some people wouldn’t be able to comply. But there are those who are apathetic, and uncaring about anything they can’t see, touch and feel. Coming to God doesn’t take much, but it does require a response from us.

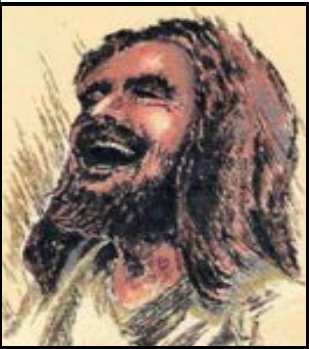
Forgive Others, Or God Won't Forgive You

You Have Heard It Preached:

“Jesus says in Matthew 6:14-15: “You must forgive others, or God will not forgive you. It’s repeated: If you forgive others, God will forgive you, but if you don’t forgive others, neither will God forgive you (vs. 14-15). It’s straight forward. Bank on it. Don’t question it. If you don’t forgive, you won’t go to God’s eternal heaven.”



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:



This is one statement Jesus made to the Jews, and it was made under Old Testament law. Jesus had two ministries: (1) the ancient law they had to live by, but (2) he came to fulfill all of this by means of his truth (Rom 15:8). “The law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus” (John 1:17).

The New Testament speaks clearly that God’s forgives us before we do anything at all, IF we’re in Christ. God’s grace and the blood of Jesus gives us forgiveness (Eph 1:7). God unilaterally forgives us in the New Covenant (Col 2:13). We should be kind and forgiving to others because God forgives us (Eph 4:32). Because God has ALREADY forgiven us, we should do the same to others (Col 3:12-13). God made us alive in Jesus and forgives all our sins (Col 2:13). Our sins are forgiven because of Jesus (I John 2:12).

God even chooses to FORGET our sin IF we are in Christ (Heb 8:12, 10:17).

This includes our sin of not being obedient in forgiving.

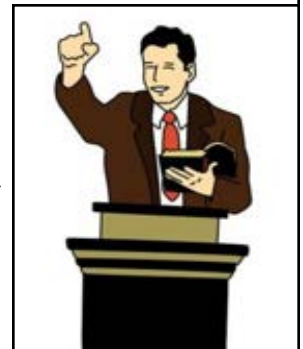
We’re told to live the New Testament only (II Cor 3:6), so we can’t apply Old Testament law to us. ALL things were made new in the New Testament (II Cor 5:17). *If we try to read the Old Testament ways into the New, we try to breathe life into a dead corpse (Heb 8:13), and mix the blood of Jesus with the blood of animals!*

The Old was based on LAW: “Forgive to be forgiven.” The New is based on GRACE: “You are forgiven if you’re in Jesus.” Paul says The Old was ‘the ministry of condemnation,’ and the New is ‘the ministry of reconciliation and righteousness.’ There’s a world of difference between them! But if we don’t live in the gospel, we are blinded to much of God’s truth. We either have a veil over our heart so we can’t see truth (II Cor 3:14-17), or it is Satan himself who blinds our minds to God’s truth (II Cor 4:3-4).

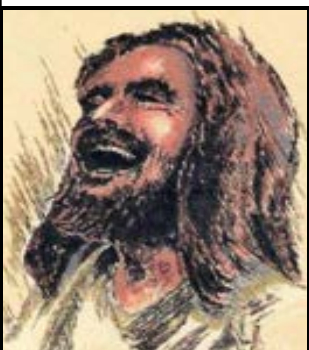
‘Depart From Me! I Never Knew You!’

You Have Heard It Preached:

Jesus says: “Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord... Lord...’ But I will say, ‘I never knew you. Depart from me, you who work lawlessness.’” (Matt 7:22-23). If you see what the people in this passage were doing, it will put the fear of God in you! These people were all doing GOOD things! So be careful or you’ll lose your salvation!



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:



Being in ‘lawlessness’ is living by the law, trying to gain favor with God. Elsewhere Paul calls it SELF-righteousness, that is born living under law (Phil 3:9), and keeps us ignorant of God’s righteousness in us (Rom 10:3). This is due to none of us being able to keep the law (Acts 15:10). If we fail in one point of the law we’re lawless in keeping all of it (Jam 2:10, Gal 3:10). The folks here were doing all sorts of great things that many of us don’t do: prophesying, casting out demons, etc. Yet Jesus said: “Depart from me, I never knew you.”

The gospel is not about being good or doing good works.

The gospel is about our belief in what God sent Jesus to do for us.

The gospel is not about SELF, but about our SAVIOR Jesus.

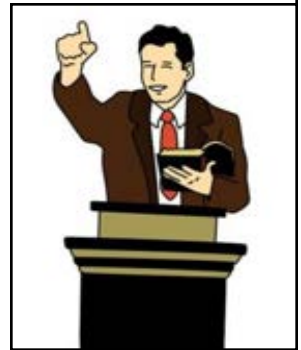
Jesus said he didn’t know them. But in the gospel, God knows us (Gal 4:9). Confidence in God is founded on our belief (I John 3:21-23). We can’t do the works of God in SELF (like the people in Matthew were doing). We do the works of God if we believe in Jesus and his finished work for us (John 6:29). *Our DOING is our gospel BELIEF!* If our faith is solid in Jesus, then God knows us, and we receive the depth of his love (Eph 3:18). We are adopted by him (Eph 1:5). He never says, ‘Depart from me.’ *The truth is: our correct gospel belief produces good fruit, or good things from us (Col 1:5-6, Phil 1:5-6).*

We ‘fall from grace’ when we try to live in law and do good works. We’re told that Jesus doesn’t profit us and has no effect on us (Gal 5:2-4). We only do good works that God sees and approves of if we believe and trust in Jesus (John 6:29). Everything else Paul calls ‘dead works.’ We don’t lose our salvation by bad things we do, and we don’t earn it by good things we do. **Hebrews says salvation is ‘an anchor for our soul.’ God even sees us seated with Christ in heaven -- right now -- if we’re believers (Eph 2:6). Law makes us doubt our salvation. The gospel gives us absolute total assurance of our salvation and even says it is ‘God’s work in us.’**

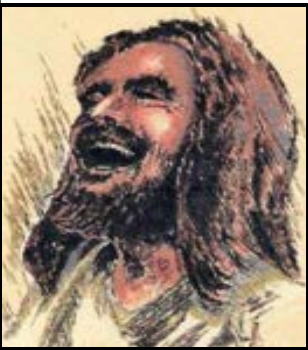
You Have a Wicked Heart— Don't Trust It

You Have Heard It Preached:

Many preachers preach from the Old Testament, which Paul says not to do (II Cor 3:6). It's good to have a broad knowledge of the Old, but don't try to live by it. Yet it's often preached from Jeremiah 17:9: 'The heart is deceitful... desperately wicked... who can trust it?'



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:



We have a good heart we can trust if it's founded on God's gospel grace (Heb 13:9). "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus" (John 1:17). Paul says everything was made NEW in the New Covenant. We're told we have a new heart, not an old heart of stone. Our new heart has God's 'law of faith' on it (Rom 3:27).

Jesus says to walk in the light of the NEW, not the Old ways. If we're ONE with God, and have the Holy Spirit, how can we have an evil deceitful, desperately wicked heart that we can't trust?

To elaborate on what was just said, Hebrews 13:9-10 says two things: (1) do not listen to strange doctrines, and to the OLD Testament ceremonial ways, but (2) instead have our hearts be established in GRACE. This means 'the gospel of grace,' which is the only thing Paul says he preached after his Damascus Road meeting with Jesus (Acts 20:24).

Hebrews then says if we turn our backs on the old ways and not try to live by them, 'we have a new altar that people who served in the Old Testament did not have.' We have something much better in the NEW ways (Heb 10:20, 11:39-40).

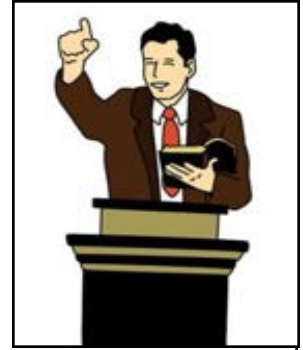
This means our HEARTS! If they're focused on Jesus and his gospel truth, they are filled with God's grace, and this is good. We respond to God and to other people. OLD ways focus on sin, and the law deceives our hearts if we try to keep it (Rom 7:5-6, 11). *But gospel grace is good because it produces good things from us (Col 1:5-6).*

In Revelation 3 God talks about spitting us out of his mouth if we are LUKEWARM. It says he wants us either hot or cold. This didn't make sense to me for a long time. Lukewarm is better than cold, isn't it? NO! God wants us HOT for his gospel, and COLD toward the Old law. But if lukewarm, we vacillate between the gospel and the law. We're complacent and don't really have a desire to change. A old deceitful heart does this to us. But a good heart makes us susceptible to things of God, wanting to change, and desiring his gospel.

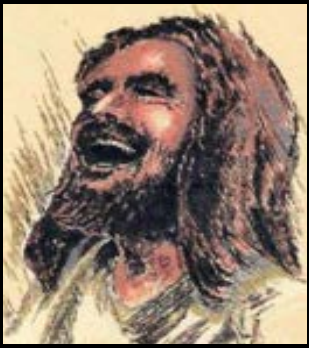
Gospel Grace Can Defile Your Conscience

You Have Heard It Preached:

“Grace can be dangerous and it can foul up your conscience so you don’t know right from wrong. Believing too much grace stuff will blind you to sin, so God won’t favor you, or even answer your prayers.”



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:



The above is preached by LAW preachers Paul says don’t understand what they say (I Tim 1:7). They are ‘Instructors in Christ’ because all they do is instruct people to do what they say. They want to draw you into listening to them, which is not good for you, putting you in submission to them (Gal 4:17).

Paul says many will depart from the faith, even listen to doctrines of demons (I Tim 4:1-3). Law preachers want you to think you can. It keeps you drawn to them and to their preaching (and giving them more money). They tell you God’s word is a BUFFET not a BANQUET. The buffet is doing what they preach. This is NOT what the gospel says. If we live by the law, we must do all of the law correctly, or we’re guilty of breaking all of it (Gal 3:10, Jam 2:10).

In saying the gospel sears (hurts) our conscience, they actually use a scripture that says do not live by law (I Tim 4:1-3). What does this say SEARS OUR CONSCIENCE?

- (1) It is listening to preaching that FORBIDS you from doing certain things, and
- (2) It this preaching also COMMANDS you to do other things that are preached.

This is LAW, pure and simple! This says nothing about the gospel.

It’s not the gospel that sears our conscience, it’s the law. It’s also legalistic law-minded preachers that keep our focus off the FINISHED work of Jesus, and puts it on us who must FINISH the work of Jesus (sic). It puts the spotlight on us — what we do and don’t do. In doing so it takes the spotlight off Jesus, which is where it should be.

The law sears our conscience, not the Gospel of God’s Grace!

How does it sear our conscience?

No one can live by law (Acts 15:10, Rom 3:10).

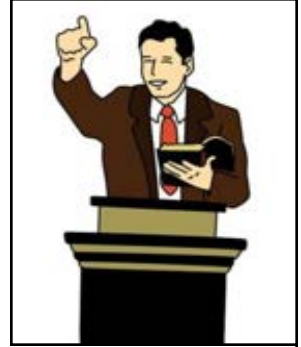
A seared conscience convicts us because we can’t do what preachers tell us to do!

Again, Paul makes a big distinction between ‘Instructors in Christ’ and ‘Fathers of the Gospel.’ Instructors will always instruct in the LAW. Fathers lead you into God’s GOSPEL truths. They say to trust Jesus (John 6:29), and to believe his gospel (Mark 1:15).

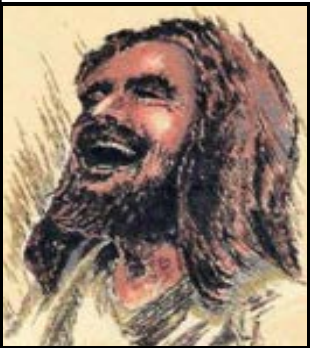
Always Live By the 10 Commandments

You Have Heard It Preached:

“All of the ceremonial and festival law may have been set aside, but we still have the 10 moral Commandments of God today that we must live by or run the risk of being abandoned by God, not having favor with him, and not receiving any of his blessings and benefits.”



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:



Paul says all the Old Testament law is 'the law of condemnation and death' (II Cor 3:6, 9). Most preachers will agree that 'MOST' of the law has been done away with, but not God's 10 commands. They preach them today like they did 2,000 years ago. **Is this right?** Read this: “The ministry of death (and condemnation) that was *written and engraved on stones, has NO glory...* because of the glory that surpasses it (the New Testament gospel). It has been *done away with*” (II Cor 3:7).

The 10 commandments were written in stone!

But what I call ‘*Do-Do Preachers*’ teach it like it’s still in force today. Why do they do this? I think it’s because LAW is easier to preach than the GOSPEL! The gospel takes a spiritual heart to understand it and teach it! Peter says Paul’s teachings were hard to understand. They are for us too. I work hard trying to explain things in a practical and personal way the heart can grasp. It takes what Paul calls, ‘revelation of the mystery of God.’ *Law is easy to preach: “Don’t lie, cuss, cheat, steal or covet.” Go to church, pray, and give lots of money.*”

Preachers don’t see that the gospel empowers us to LIVE in God (Col 1:5-6, Phil 1:6). But we must be DEAD to the law to live in God (Gal 2:19). The 10 commandments, and other LAWS strengthen and produce more sin in us (I Cor 15:56. Rom 7:4).

Our goal is to know God and know his Son — which is eternal life (John 17:3). Paul defines this as (1) the power of his resurrection, (2) his sufferings on the cross for us, and (3) God making us conformed to his death— of course life too (Phil 3:10). We can’t truly know God if we live in law, because ‘grace and truth came by Jesus’ (John 1:17).

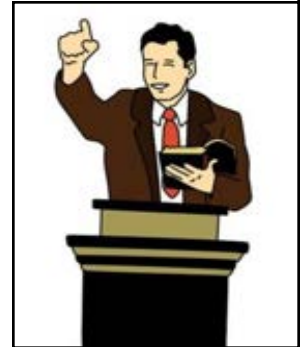
Only the gospel reveals God to our heart, letting us know him!

Is it good to live good, moral lives, based on The Ten Commandments? Absolutely! But today they are NOT meant to govern how God sees us and who we are in him. This is only governed by our faith and trust in Jesus. Being IN Jesus makes us part of ‘the IN crowd.’ Jesus plus anything else is nothing. Jesus plus nothing is everything.

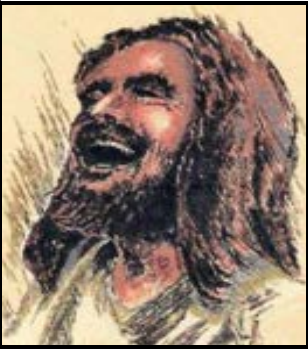
Tithe 10% to Your Church to Please God

You Have Heard It Preached:

“God says in Malachi 3:8 that we ROB him if we don’t give him at least 10% of our income. Come on, pay up! If we don’t get enough the first offering, we’ll take up a second offering. Tithing to your church is one of the foundational principles of Christianity. Even if you can’t afford to tithe you should certainly do your best to.”



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:



The Old Testament tithe is what funded priests that ministered to the people of Israel. Priests couldn’t own property, so the people had to provide for them, and the temple, and poor people, etc., etc., — and it was a lot more than 10% — like our federal, state and local taxes. So unless a preacher today doesn’t have any other property or assets, they shouldn’t preach to people that they must tithe to them. *A pastor-joke has him saying: “If each of you gives only \$100, I get a mansion!”*

Do-Do Preachers make people feel like they won’t be blessed, or favored by God if they don’t give the church 10%. Jesus says tithing is only ‘under the LAW’ (Matt 23:23), and we Gentiles aren’t even under the law at all (Rom 2:14). We Gentiles only live by the New Covenant Gospel — not Old Covenant law. There is nothing in the New Testament that tells us to pay 10% of anything to the church, or to any preacher or pastor.

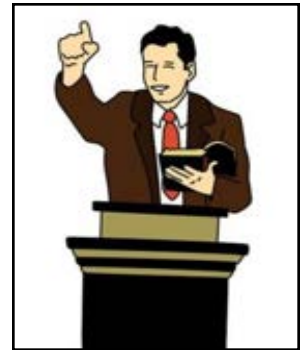
Today, we’re meant to LIVE by the gospel of grace. And we’re also meant to GIVE by the gospel of grace. We’re meant to give from the heart, not by pulpit pressure (II Cor 9:7). We are meant to give according to NEEDS we see and hear about, including our church (II Cor 8:11-14). But some people don’t give anything because they feel so EXCLUDED by thinking they have to give 10%.

YES — it is good to give as much as we can. We’re meant to be generous as believers, and not hoarders. Jesus says, “Give and it shall be given to you.” This doesn’t just mean money. It can mean a lot of things. We are urged to be GIVERS, because God gives us so much. Some rich people can afford to give 90%, but none do. It is only living wrongly in the law of the Old Testament that makes us feel guilty if we don’t give what we should.

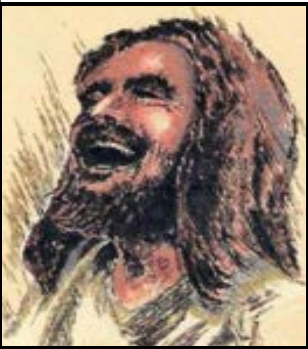
Die To Yourself Daily to Fulfill God's Will

You Have Heard It Preached:

"In John 12:25, 'Jesus says he who hates his life will keep it.' In Luke 9:23 he says if we want to follow him we must deny ourselves and take up our cross daily and follow him." So we must learn to die to ourselves daily, and decrease so he may increase. Having a self-focus robs of so many of the blessings of God."



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:



I really don't know where the preaching came from that we must DIE to ourselves. In our salvation, and being born again, we're told that what happens is that God KILLS our old man (not us personally). This is spiritually, not naturally (he doesn't literally kill us). It's said that we are DEAD and our life is hidden with Christ (Col 3:2). We are crucified with Christ (Gal 2:20). From God's perspective and in his eyes, our old self is dead and buried (Rom 6:4,6, Col 2:12).

This is dying to ourselves in God's eyes.

This can't be literal because God is always transforming our minds (Rom 12:2), and he's completing the good work he's begun in us as we fellowship in his gospel (Phil 1:5-6). We are a 'new man' as Paul puts it (I Cor 6:17). We are 'a new creation in Christ' (II Cor 5:17). We're like a new species, and are not just human anymore—but a 'GodMan.' For us 'to live IS Christ in us' (Phil 1:21). Christ is meant to become our life (Col 3:4).

Now we are told to 'deny ourselves' (Luke 9:23). This means to deny our fleshly (at times sinful) desires and to live in God's Spirit. This is a daily task as Paul says (I Cor 15:31). Jesus says God loves him because he 'lays down his life' (John 10:17). This can be seen as his crucifixion, but it can mean him laying down his expectations, desires-- demands.

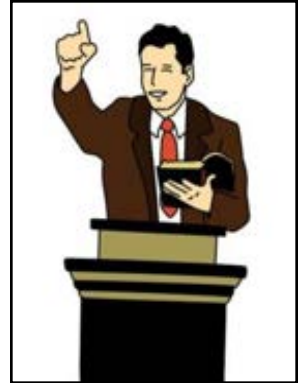
We should do the same for others too, as Jesus did. Then we're alive to God (Rom 6:11). This is denying self—dying into the earth so we bear good fruit (John 12:24-25). We are even given the power of God's gospel to help us bear good fruit (Col 1:5-6). Jesus quoted the Old Testament saying we should love others as we love ourselves. This is a good way to live, but almost none of us loves others more than we love ourselves.

But this is part of dying to ourselves. We often create such a mirage around ourselves that is difficult, if not impossible, to see others in the same light that we see ourselves. Jesus tells us not to judge. Judging is what separates us (good) from other people (bad).

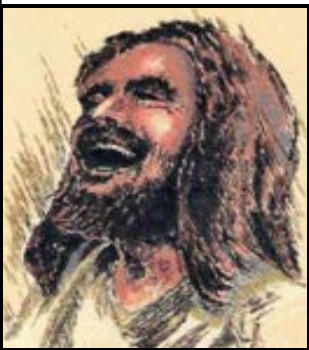
We Are Only Positionally Righteous Now

You Have Heard It Preached:

“We know we aren’t really righteous. It’s just that God sees and perceives us as being righteous because of his grace. Theologically it’s called political or positional righteousness. We’re really sinners saved by grace, and we’ll never be truly righteous until heaven. So stop seeing yourselves as righteous. You are just sinners God saves.



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:



See this: We won’t understand our righteousness, without doing everything right, until we first understand Jesus was made sin, without doing anything wrong.

To us, sin and righteousness are verbs: something we DO. To God, they’re nouns indicating our identity and state of being. To him it is who we ARE. Jesus was made sin for us, and then he imparted his righteousness to us and made us to be his righteousness. It was all the act of God on Christ’s cross, and not ours (II Cor 5:21, Heb 9:26).

We were slaves of sin, but now we’re ‘slaves of righteousness (Rom 6:18). Because Jesus is in us, God sees us as holy, blameless, beyond reproof because of the gospel (Col 1:22-23, etc.). We are ‘partakers of God’s divine nature,’ which of course has to be righteous (II Pet 1:4). Galatians 2-3 says life and righteousness could not be imparted by the LAW, but it can be by the GOSPEL.

Righteousness is our identity, and who we really and truly are in God’s economy. To us here on earth we tend to measure things by how well we DO, not who we ARE made to be in Christ because of the finished work of Jesus on the cross.

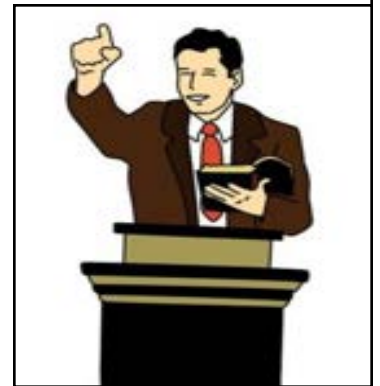
We see our performance, God sees our person! and he sees we’re made perfect in Christ (John 17:23). Gospel truth presents us perfect in Christ (Col 1:28). To God we are just like Jesus (II Cor 2:15). “As Jesus is so are we in this world” (I John 4:17).

Sin keeps us from being righteous so we are told how God sees us. “Whoever is born of God does not commit sin, *for God’s seed remains in him*, and he cannot sin because he is born of God” (I John 3:9 KJV). Do we sin. We’re all human so of course we do. God made us this ways and he knows all that we do (all our sin). But he chooses not to see it if we are in Jesus — to him we’re just like Jesus (Heb 8:12, 10:17, plus I John 4:17).

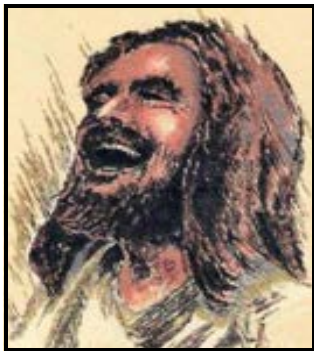
The Holy Spirit's Job Is to Convict Us of Sin

You Have Heard It Preached:

“John 16:8 says, ‘When the Holy Spirit comes, he will convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.’ So he will point out your sins and you must yield to him, repent, change, and live righteously, or you’ll be judged by God.”



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:



If you read John 16:8-11 without the Do-Do preaching, you see something different.

Verse 9 says he convicts UN-believers of sin because they don't believe in Jesus. Verse 10 says he convicts us believers of God's gift of righteousness in us because we know Jesus is with the Father as our advocate. Verse 11 is about Satan being judged, not us.

As you read the New Testament, it talks about all the things the Holy Spirit DOES FOR US — TO HELP US, and there are more good things than I can list here in this short space, *so I'll use the next page to categorize all the New Testament says the Holy Spirit does in us and for us.*

The above verse is the only verse that Do-Do preachers can find to show the Holy Spirit OPPOSES us by convicting us — **and it doesn't even say what they say it says!** Deep down inside, I wonder if this isn't a type of 'blaspheming the Holy Spirit'!

I don't know about you, but the longer I walk with Jesus, the LESS I need someone (even the Holy Spirit) to tell me my sin, and bad things I do. *I just know! My heart tells me!*

We all fight a flesh vs. Spirit battle because we're human. But we've been given a new heart at salvation and our hard heart of stone is gone (Ezek 36:26). We want to be obedient to God from the heart (Rom 6:17). *We may not always DO it, but we WANT to!*

When we do sin, we know we're going against what we truly want to do. But the Holy Spirit has power over our flesh, and that's why we're told to WALK in him. If we do so, we sin a lot LESS than we would otherwise. He keeps telling us in our hearts: we are (1) freed from sin, and we're (2) slaves of righteousness (Rom 6:18). We may not always live this way, but 'children live what they learn.' The more we hear it the better.

The Holy Spirit gives us wisdom so we better know God and understand his gospel truth (I Cor 2:10-13). He gives us spiritual gifts to use (I Cor 12:4). He gives us peace and joy in an uncertain, even hostile world (I Thes 1:6, 2 Cor 13:14, Rom 15:13). The whole book of Acts can actually be seen as the ministry of the Holy Spirit by using the apostles.

What the Epistles Say About the Holy Spirit

ROMANS says he reveals God's love, — righteousness, peace joy, and hope, and it says he sanctifies us. He assures us that we have no condemnation in Christ if we walk in him — he is the Spirit of the Christ life in us — he is the Spirit that raised Jesus and also dwells in us. He leads us as sons of God, out of bondage and fear, and lets us know we are adopted sons of Abba Father. He bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. He helps us in our infirmities and weaknesses. He makes intercession for us, according to God's will, and causes us to be able to work signs and wonders at his discretion.

I and II CORINTHIANS say he teaches us to compare spiritual things with spiritual things (not natural, worldly things to spiritual things). We are the temple of the Holy Spirit on earth. He empowers us to declare Jesus is Lord. He causes us to have communion with the grace of Jesus, and the love of the Father. He reveals to us all the things of God. He causes us to profit in all things we do. He gives gifts of God to us. He even shows us any free gifts we may miss.

GALATIANS says he causes us to cry Abba Father, thus knowing God intimately and closely, as family, not just as a distant God or deity. He works all of the good fruits of God into us.

EPHESIANS AND COLOSSIANS say do not grieve the Holy Spirit by not ministering grace to people. Ministering law and principles to them is not ministering grace to them. He strengthens us mightily in our inner man (our souls where we need to be ministered to most). He also seals us and keeps us safe until the day of redemption. He causes us to love with God's love, not just our love.

THESSALONIANS, TIMOTHY and TITUS say he sanctifies us. The gospel comes to us by his power in us, and joy becomes a by-product of this infusion. He keeps the good things committed to us by the gospel at work within us, and these things pertain to both this earthly life as well as eternal life to come. He regenerates us and renews us.

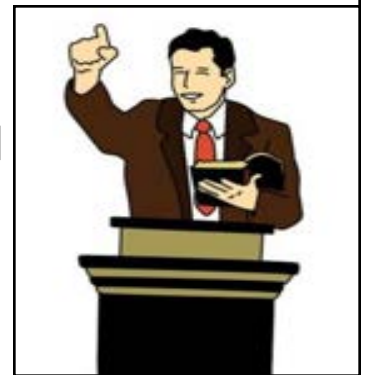
HEBREWS says he purifies our conscience from dead works, and calls him "the spirit of grace" at work within us. He gives divine gifts to us. He prompts us to hear God's voice. He helps us to distinguish between the Old and New Covenants — between law and grace. He witnesses to us that we are sanctified and perfected forever by the blood of Christ.

PETER, JOHN AND JUDE say he is "the Spirit of Truth." He guides us into all truth, shows us all things of God, purifies our souls in God's truth, and causes us to love with unfeigned, sincere, fervent affection. He helps us preach and minister the gospel correctly (evidently as fathers of the gospel). He helps us speak correctly. He causes us to know all things. He causes us to pray in the mercy and grace of Christ. It is reiterated that he sanctifies us, and causes us to know our sanctification.

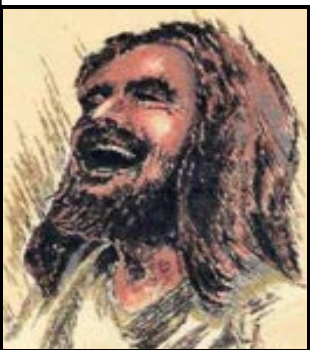
Love God With All Your Heart, Mind and Soul

You Have Heard It Preached:

“Jesus says the greatest command is for us to love God with ALL our heart, soul, mind and strength. If you have any sin, and if you don’t live the way God wants you to live, you don’t really love him like you should. And you must love other people to the max: the same way as yourself” (Mat 22:37-40, Mk 12:30-31).



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:



Jesus knows the law is impossible to live, so he abolished it in the New Covenant gospel. If you love God with ALL you have in you, what do you have left to love anyone else with? NOTHING! You can’t love others or even yourself as this passage also says.

The only way we love is if we know God’s love (I John 4:10,19). Humans can initiate nothing at all. All we can do is respond. Paul says we have nothing except what God gives us (I Cor 4:7). Jesus tells us to love others — **‘as I have loved you’ (John 13:34).**

He says his Father loves us as much as he does him,
which seems impossible to us (John 17:23).

Paul says to allow God ‘to make us increase and abound in love’ (I Thes 3:12): receive it, relegate it to ourselves, and then release it to others. This is experiencing God’s fullness in us (Eph 3:18-19). When we have the fullness of God’s love in us, we love him back more than we ever thought possible. Human love isn’t bad, but it lacks a lot of the way God wants us to love him and others.

When Jesus gave this command to love God he was preaching law. The text tells us he was responding to a TRICK question from a LAWYER about the LAW. Jesus knows under law we fail (Acts 15:10), but the gospel produces God’s power in us to love (Rom 1:16), and when we live the gospel, it produces good from us— even love (Col 1:5-6). It all begins with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Jesus says, “Without me you can do nothing.” — We’re told our love begins with us knowing God loves us (I John 4:10).

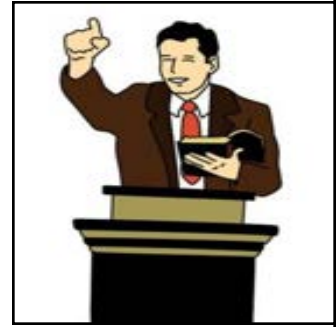
The law says to us, “Now you love God, and others as yourself. It’s your job.”

The gospel shows us how GOD initiates everything in us. Our job is to respond by allowing him and his Holy Spirit to work in and through us.

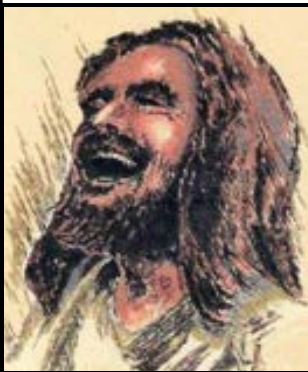
Love Others as Much as We Love Ourselves

You Have Heard It Preached:

“After loving God with everything you have in you, Jesus also says to love others as we love ourselves. If you don’t love everyone else as much as you love your own skin, you’re failing one of the two greatest commands in the Bible.”



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:



The gospel is actually the gospel as ‘the LOST command of Jesus.’ It’s not officially labeled a ‘command,’ so preachers often overlook it. But it was the most important thing on his heart, and the first words out of his mouth. The gospel is important to Jesus: it is how we are (1) blessed, (2) empowered, and (3) how God produces good things in us and through us (Acts 3:22-26, Eph 1:3, Rom 8:32, Col 1:5-6).

Perhaps most important is that the gospel is the process of God’s power in us and through us, and the process by which God performs his good work in us (Phil 1:5-6). Thus this passage speaks of us having ‘fellowship in gospel,’ which to mean both with God himself and with each other. *It is God’s centrifugal, synergistic force in us.*

If we live at all in the flesh, and not the Spirit, it’s impossible for us to love other people as much as we love ourselves. This is true even though Paul also tells us to prefer others over ourselves. But Satan knows man’s thoughts even more than we do. He says in Job, “All that a man has will he give for his life.” The passages about living in the flesh vs. the Spirit shows us that our flesh is so important to us.

It takes God’s power to change us!

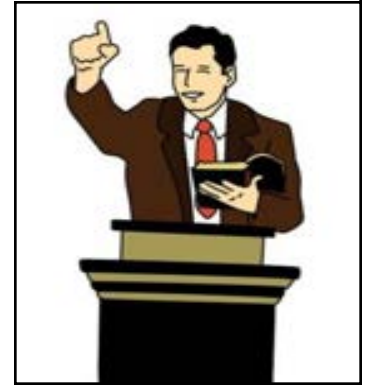
And God puts selfish, unlovable people in our lives to complicate things. Loving ourselves is ‘doing what comes naturally.’ Jesus told some men: “I know you, that you do NOT have the love of God in you” (John 5:42). If we don’t experience God’s love, there’s no way we can love others as much as we do ourselves.

It takes God’s power to do so! Elsewhere I show we can’t truly love others unless we see them as being EQUAL with us. If we see them as beneath us (poor/needy) or above us (wealthy/complete), we can’t truly love them— especially not as we do ourselves.

God Keeps a Record of Our Sins in His Book

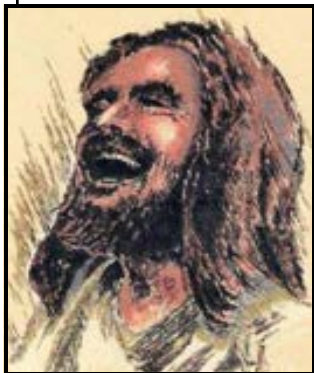
You Have Heard It Preached:

“God has his ‘Book of Life,’ and he keeps a record of our sins in it. He knows every sin we commit. And we should keep a record of our sins too, so we can be sure to confess each one of them so God forgives us. Matthew even says to include every bad thought we’ve ever had, and every idle word we ever speak.”



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:

We have a hard time believing that God FORGIVES all of our sins, but the gospel says he does (Eph 1:7, 4:32, Col 1:14, 2:13, 3:13, 1 John 2:12). The other piece of this is that God also chooses to FORGET all our sins (Heb 8:12, 10:17). So many people struggle with this because they know God is ‘all knowing.’ So how in the world can he possibly forget anything?



God has divine capabilities we don’t have. We have memories like an elephant— if anything BAD is done to us. *God is not a human being like you and I are! And he doesn’t keep a record of our sins.*

Often when we talk to God about sin we say something like this: “Now, Lord, I know I’ve come to you about this same issue, and problem I have quite a few times, but . . .”

It’s here God interrupts us, *“Now wait a minute! I have no record of you coming to me about this issue before! This is the very first time I’ve heard about this!”* And if we go to him again about the same issue — the very same thing happens!

It’s not that God is forgetful. No, he’s all knowing. I heard one grace preacher say he is like ‘the absent minded professor.’ *This is not true! God isn’t absent minded!* It’s just that he sees us believers as totally different since the cross of Jesus.

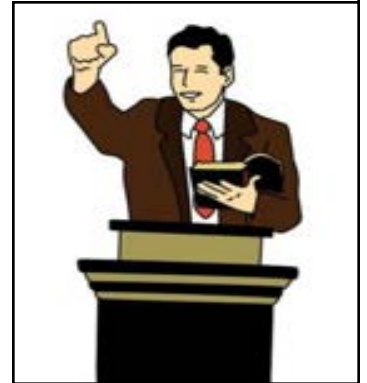
He sees us being ‘IN CHRIST,’ and Jesus has no sin. So we don’t have any sin either the way God sees us in Jesus. Colossians 1 and other passages call us ‘blameless.’ Jesus says he will never accuse us of anything (John 5:45). So we are told: “Have boldness in the day of judgment, because as (Jesus) is, so are we in this world” (1 John 4:17).

**We should have NO doubt at all that God is a GOOD God!
If we do, let the gospel reveal just how good he really is!**

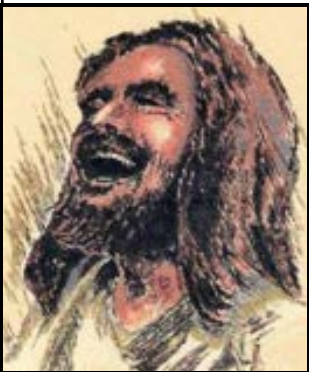
If You Sin, You Break Fellowship With God

You Have Heard It Preached:

“Fellowship means you are relating to God and connecting with him personally. But when you sin, this destroys this connection and God doesn’t listen to what you say, and may not answer any of your prayers. ‘What fellowship has light with darkness?’ If we sin we are in darkness and God’s light can’t get through to us.”



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:



We all sin, and we will all die with sin in us: something that is not right in a Christian’s life. Perhaps we die with several ‘somethings’ in us. **This is why we need Jesus!**

Paul says, “You were sometimes enemies of God and alienated **IN YOUR MIND**, because of wicked works” (Col 1:21). We feel like this way when we do bad things. *But notice it says it’s ‘IN OUR MIND.’ It is not reality! But if we perceive it is reality, negative thoughts flood our mind and make us feel condemned and guilty.*

If we feel condemned and guilty it’s hard to remain in fellowship with God.

As a lawyer, I think of John chapters 12-17 as “**The Dying Declaration of Jesus.**” Legally, a dying declaration is very important, because people who are about to die don’t usually lie. They say the most important things on their heart.

Jesus was about to die in these chapters, and he spoke over and over and over about us being in him... him being in us... the Father being in us... us being in the Holy Spirit. He said we were **ONE** with God! *Ask this: If you’re ONE with God, is it even possible to break fellowship with him?*

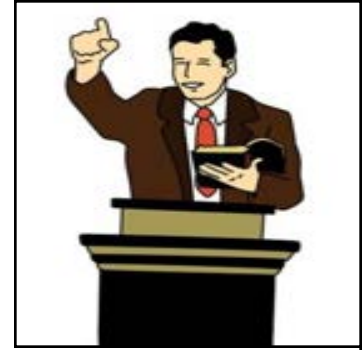
We can’t break fellowship with God! Acts 17:28 says that in him “We live and move and have our being.” We have continual fellowship with God (I John 1:5-7). Jesus calls us into our fellowship with God, so nothing we do overpowers this (I Cor 1:9).

If we think we break fellowship with God due to what we do, we are living in **SELF-righteousness**, which means we’re living under law (Phil 3:9). We’re not living in God’s gifts of grace and righteousness (Rom 5:17), and we have not submitted ourselves to living in his free gift of righteousness (Rom 10:3). Paul says preachers who say we lose fellowship with God ‘don’t understand what they’re saying’ (I Tim 1:7).

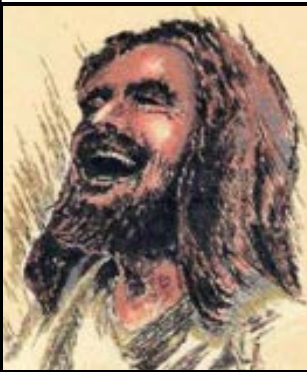
We Must Live By Every Word of God

You Have Heard It Preached:

“Jesus says in Luke 4:4: ‘Man should not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’ So we should know the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and abide by every single word we read in his holy word.”



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:



We just often read things and assume what we read is literal, and we know what it means, without thinking through the whole ISSUE. We lawyers are big on seeing the ISSUES. We know if we miss one, we lose our case. *This issue is this: Jesus doesn't mean every word from Genesis to Revelation!*

I say this because Paul speaks of some of the Old Testament as being ‘the ministry of death and condemnation’ (II Cor 3:6-9). He doesn't mean to live by this. The Old Testament puts a VEIL over our hearts so we can't understand the New Testament gospel: the finished work of Jesus on the cross (II Cor 3:14-16). The Old declares us guilty before God (Rom 3:19), and Paul calls it ‘the law of sin and death’ (Rom 8:2). *Much of the Old Testament is a carnal command directed at our FLESH, that we should not try to live in (Heb 7:16).*

*The gospel is ‘the ministry of righteousness (II Cor 3:9,
and also reconciliation with God’ (II Cor 5:18).*

Live in this, and not in ‘the ministry of condemnation and death.’

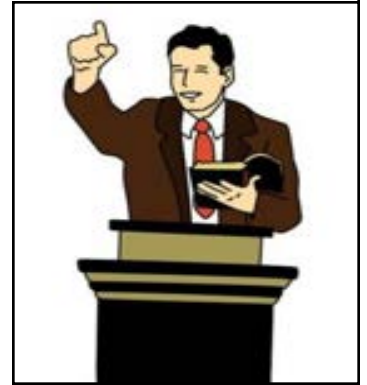
In Luke 4:4, quoted by many ‘**Instructors in Christ,**’ Jesus can't be referring to the whole Bible. “The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ” (John 1:17). The gospel shows our righteousness in Jesus (Rom 1:16-17, 5:17, II Cor 5:21). We must live in this or we remain ignorant of God's righteousness (Rom 10:3).

‘**Fathers of the Gospel**’ know Jesus was only talking about only living his gospel truth (Mark 1:14-15). It judges the secrets of our heart (Rom 2:16), and he will judge us for not living it at his return and second coming (II Thes 1:7-9). God told Moses he'd send a special Prophet Messenger (Jesus) with his special Message (the gospel), and he'd REQUIRE us to believe it (Deut 18:15-19). *We live by every word of God when we live his gospel. It's his only word to us this side of the cross!*

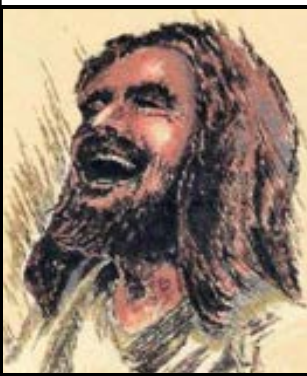
Be Sure To Always Live In God's Perfect Will

You Have Heard It Preached:

"The will of God isn't always easy to discern or discover, but diligently find it and live in it so God will support you. Romans 12:2 speaks of three levels of his will: (1) good, (2) acceptable and (3) perfect. So live in his perfect will. Don't just settle for what is good or acceptable to God. Jesus says, "Be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect" (Matt 5:48).



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:



The above verse in Romans 12:2 has caused people a lot of sleepless nights because they never quite know what God's will is, and especially not his 'perfect will.' They come to see God's will as being unattainable. Some get so up-tight, they wonder if they should ask if they should turn left or right at Main Street. Missionaries leave the mission field in confusion due to this.

For most of us, God doesn't care what we do for a living if it's what we like, and he doesn't care where we live. He wants to give us 'the desires of our hearts' IF we 'delight in the Lord' (Psa 37:4). *If we do this then we DO what he says to do: (1) believe in his Son and (2) believe and live his gospel. Doing this, we are in God's will, no matter what our job is or where we live!*

God does have a special call or task for some people ('Exhibit A' is Billy Graham). But if we're living as God says to live, and believing what he says to believe, it is much easier for us to listen to him and hear him, and for him to direct us and guide us. If we're not living his gospel, we're much harder for him to relate to, and reveal his will to. It's like we speak different languages.

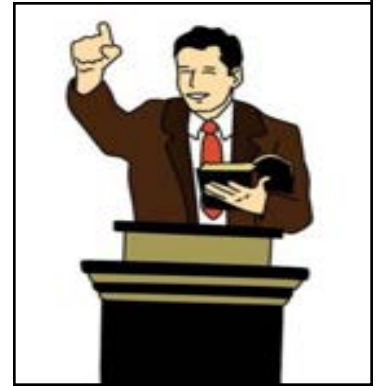
God wants our fellowship to be in the gospel (Phil 1:5), so he can work in us to complete his work in us (Phil 1:6). God's will is easier to discern and discover if we relate to him in his gospel truth and Kingdom reality. It's harder for God to direct us if we're fearful of not knowing his will. Being fearful of not knowing his will shows we don't truly trust him, and his faithfulness to us. If you delight in him and live in his gospel truth, be confident in God and trust your heart (I John 3:21-23). This fills our hearts with his GRACE, which makes them good, trustworthy hearts (Heb 13:9).

We tune in to HIM, and not so much into trying to find his perfect WILL!

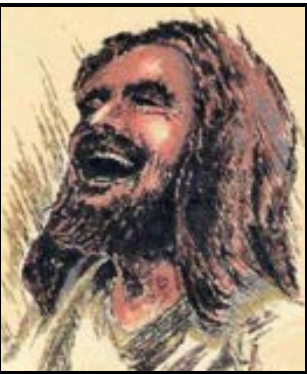
The Gospel Empowers Us to Keep God's Law

You Have Heard It Preached:

“Jesus came to fulfill the law, not to destroy the law (Matt 5:17). Therefore, our job is to still live by the law, but we have help doing so today: The gospel of God, and the Holy Spirit, now empower us keep his law better than people could in the Old Testament where everyone failed doing so (Acts 15:10).”



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:



Many committed Christians today will go to any retreat or seminar they can find to help them become better people — stronger, living better, being victorious and overcomers. This is all noble, even commendable, but it's focused on SELF, not on JESUS. They are led by what Paul calls, *'10,000 Instructors in Christ'* (I Cor 4:15). Their focus is their FLESH. God wants us to focus on our spirit, as *'Fathers of the Gospel'* lead us into doing. We should only live and minister the New Testament— meaning the gospel (II Cor 3:6).

At all these events we attend we usually hear, “Go try A-B-C and see if it helps. If it does not help then buy my books and they'll give you other things to try.” But God didn't give us his grace and gospel to be able to keep his law. To think WE can keep it is pride: one of the 7 deadly sins. It's called PRIDE.

No one else could live by laws and rules (Acts 15:10), so it is only SELF-righteousness if we think we can. Paul says, “The law is not of faith.” He also says, “Anything not done in faith is sin.” So is living by laws and rules something God sees as sin? If we live the law, we must keep ALL of it to be right with God (Jam 2:10). Paul says if we live by law and don't keep it all, we are CURSED (Gal 3:10). We can't be selective about it.

Adam and Eve only had ONE rule, and they couldn't even obey it!

The Old Covenant law condemned and disempowered people. The New Covenant gospel empowers us to live in God. It transforms our minds to think like God thinks, whose thoughts are far above ours (Isa 55:8-9). But God no longer thinks in terms of law now. He thinks in terms of grace and blessing, knowing if we'll live in his gospel the way he says to, we will hear Jesus say, “My way is easy” (Matt 11:28-30). John says Jesus kept his Father's commands, so we'd keep his. His are not burdensome (I John 5:3).

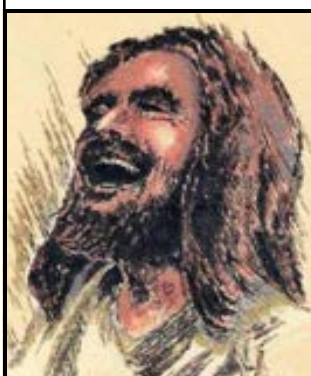
We Have Two Testaments to Live Under

You Have Heard It Preached:

“We have a $1+1=2$ theology, and have two covenants we live under, the Old and the New. We get saved under gospel grace of the New, but then must we go back under the Old Testament and balance grace with the law. We must combine both Testaments and not only live under the New one.



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:



James says a double-minded person is unstable in all his ways. I see this as relating to the Old and New Covenants. Jesus said he came to do the will of his Father: (1) he took away the first, Old Covenant, and (2) he established the second, New Covenant (Heb 10:9). This is not a $1+1=2$ theology. Paul says Jesus ABOLISHED the Old ways (II Cor 3:10-13, Eph 2:15), nailing it to his cross (Col 2:14). Paul says we're cursed if we don't live God's New gospel (Gal 1:8-9).

Living under the Old Testament is living in the law producing SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS (Phil 3:9). This lifestyle keeps us ignorant of God's New ways, and don't allow us to experience the free gift of God's righteousness that is ours (Rom 10:3, Rom 5:17).

God knows we human beings cannot or will not live by law. A U.S. Supreme Court justice says, “We now have 10,000,000 laws to enforce the 10 commandments.” Ancient Jews only had fewer than 700 laws to abide by and they broke a lot of them. Adam and Eve only had ONE law, and they didn't keep it.

And don't miss this: Living by law was not meant for us Gentiles at all. We aren't part of the Old Covenant law (Rom 2:14). When we take the law that belongs to the Jews only, isn't this being a thief and a robber? Are we religious crooks doing this?

Galatians 3:16,19 says the law was only meant to be TEMPORARY, until Jesus came. Jesus says it too, but says it was only to exist until John the Baptist (Luke 16:16).

Jesus and Paul lived 2,000 years ago. They said the living by the law was abolished then. Does this mean we are in spiritual jet-lag if we live by the law? Paul says all things are made new in the New Covenant gospel (II Cor 5:17).

Salvation is Immediate but Not Sanctification

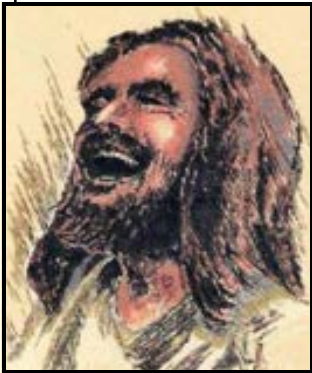
You Have Heard It Preached:

“Salvation, and being born again, happens immediately when you give your heart to Jesus. That is step one. But then, step two is when we work to be more spiritual, keeping the law, trying to be better so we have God’s favor and are qualified for his blessings. This is sanctification, and it’s progressive.”



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:

This may surprise you: most seminaries and Bible schools don’t teach **The gospel of Jesus**. They seem to assume the gospel is only about salvation. But Paul says that other things ACCOMPANY salvation (Heb 6:9). *Salvation is an all-encompassing word that doesn’t just mean being ‘born again,’ but it covers every aspect of our lives in Jesus!*



Man looks at the outward appearance but God looks at the heart (I Sam 16:7). Most Bible schools view sanctification as ‘our outward appearance.’ They say to clean ourselves up and get better. This is sanctification. And it takes work over time. *It is a ploy they use to get people back to living under the law, not just in the New Covenant gospel!* They may also call it ‘holiness’ and ‘godliness.’ **YES!**

We should clean ourselves up and get better. But this is not sanctification. We all need to clean up and be better. If you don’t think you do, ask someone you live with and they’ll tell you. They may even give you a list!

Paul says Christ has been MADE TO US sanctification (I Cor 1:30). Our sanctification is by the Spirit (I Pet 1:2). We are sanctified by believing gospel truth (John 17:19). We’re sanctified by faith in God (Acts 26:18). We’re sanctified by the Holy Spirit (Rom 15:16). We are a vessel of honor and sanctified (II Tim 2:21). Jesus, who is the sanctifier, and we who are sanctified are ONE, and this makes us the siblings of Jesus (Heb 2:11). Sanctification is not progressive, It’s done to us by God. It’s not what we do living in the law preached by *‘Instructors in Christ,’* not *‘Fathers of the Gospel.’*

Too many preachers are afraid to give Jesus too much credit.

The greater sin is in not giving Jesus all the credit he is truly due.

But it is true: knowing we are sanctified by Jesus helps us live better.

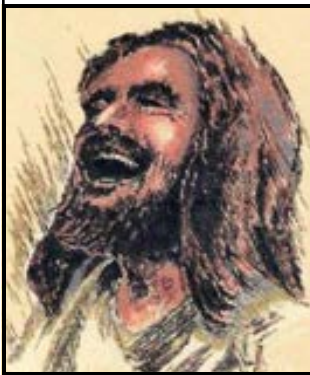
Make Jesus Lord of Every Area of Your Life

You Have Heard It Preached:

“You must make Jesus Lord over every area of your life. You can’t keep things hidden from him. It is said, ‘If Jesus isn’t Lord OF all, he is not Lord AT all.’ You can’t have any portion of your life that you don’t give Jesus control over. If you do, this is why the Holy Spirit must keep convicting you of sin.”



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:



Jesus is Lord because of what he has done, not because of what we do, or allow him to do in us. Our confession is: “Jesus is Lord.” *This is a troublesome teaching to many because ALL of us have an area of life that we have not made Jesus Lord over. It’s called sin, even if it’s hidden sin. We’ll all have sin, even when we die.*

Gospel salvation is a mystery because it’s founded on belief, not on behavior, which is how our human minds tend to function. Our job is to ACCEPT him as Lord. We don’t MAKE him Lord. He has dominion and authority (Eph 1:19-22). The issue really about our

GODLINESS. Do-Do Preachers say we must be godly in ALL areas of our life. We can’t have any sin areas, and this is how we make Jesus Lord.

But Paul says, “Great is the MYSTERY of godliness” (I Tim 3:16). Godliness, like everything in the GOSPEL is a ‘mystery’ to us because it’s not the way we think. But it is how God thinks. This passage lists 6 things about godliness: (1) God was manifest in the Spirit, (2) justified in the Spirit, (3) seen by angels,, (4) preached unto Gentiles, (5) believed on in the world, and (6) received up into glory.” How many of these do we have anything to do with? *The answer is simple: (5) believed on in the world!*

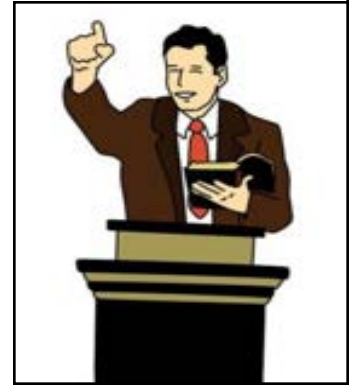
Jesus says our JOB is to believe (John 6:29), and this is what produces JOY in us. This is why Jesus can say, “My yoke is easy and my burden is light.” *He doesn’t require much from us, but he does require our belief and trust in his finished work, which is the subject of the gospel!*

Godliness is connected to the person of Jesus. The mystery of godliness is “Christ in you the hope of glory” (Col 1:27). If Christ is in us he is **Lord of our Life** because we are ‘believers’ (number 5 above). This is true even though we still have sin in us.

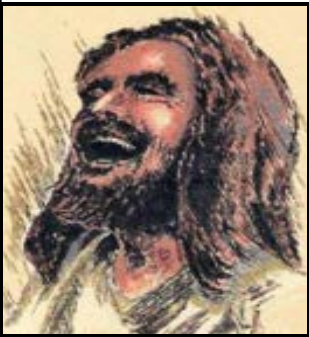
We Need Revival: A Fresh New Move of God

You Have Heard It Preached:

“We know we want revival, and for God to move in our lives in a big way. We need to give him space to do this, and rededicate ourselves to him, clean up our act, and let him know we’re serious about being Christians. This is how to bring revival.”



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:



I’m not saying this isn’t a good attitude to have, but often all preachers mean by this is for us to get back under the law, keep the standards they preach more seriously, and put our nose to the grindstone and work harder to please God.

Revival is about GOD: what he does. But so many do-do preachers say it’s about US: what we do and don’t do. They preach much more about a movement of our flesh, not one of God! **They preach. . .**

“DO attend church more, read your Bible more, have longer quiet times, pray more, serve in the church more, attend small group more, and give a whole lot more money.”

“DON’T lie, cuss, cheat, steal, commit adultery, yell at your spouse, kick the cat, or be a brat.” ***This is the way to bring on revival!***”

I spent a lot of time in the Vineyard movement. I was even on their boards, in leading worship, and was pastor of a church a short while. The reason we left was they became so big on prophecy, **and bringing about ‘new waves of God,’— i.e., REVIVAL!** Their focus was no longer on teaching the gospel but on trying to bring about REVIVAL.

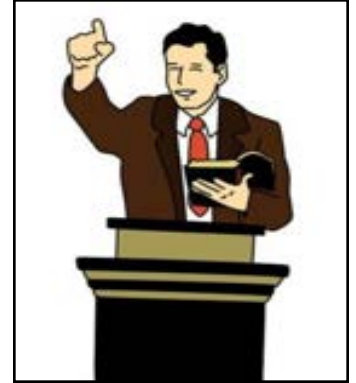
Of course we want fresh moves of God that most folks call REVIVAL! **But we cannot create this in our flesh!** We have the reformation of Christ’s cross (Heb 9:9-10). All things have been made new in the gospel (II Cor 5:17). God wants us empowered by gospel truth, and not just in what we think might be ‘right in our own eyes’ (Jud 21:25).

***We want to see God move in new and more powerful ways.
But we sure won’t see this by living by the Old Covenant law,
and putting our noses more to the grindstone,
as so many Do-Do Preachers say!***

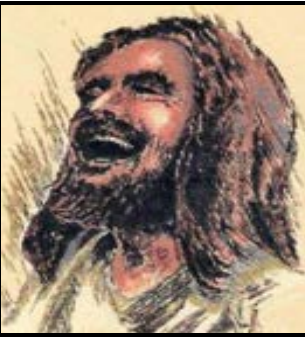
Our Biggest Goal in Life is to Conquer Sin

You Have Heard It Preached:

“Sin management is a big problem in Christians. Some studies show that we have as much sin as many non-Christians. God is angry at us when we don’t deal with our sin. It should always be in the forefront of our minds. Our focus must be constantly on our sin, and our goal must be to conquer it at all costs.”



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:



There is an interesting verse in the KJV that but other translations say it differently, and legalistic Do-Do Preachers pick up on it. The KJV says, “Awake to righteousness, and sin not” (I Cor 15:34). The KJV, being an OLD language, often says things ‘backwards’ to us.

This verse really says, “Awake to righteousness and not to sin.”

*Many modern translations say something like this:
“Be righteous and stop sinning!”*

Sin is of the flesh. Paul says, “The mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace” (Rom 8:6). In Galatians he says to walk in the spirit, not in the flesh. Paul also tells us sin comes from trying to keep the law, which none of us can be successful in doing (Phil 3:9, I Cor 15:56, Rom 7:4, Acts 15:10).

Paul says this is ‘the ministry of condemnation’ — or guilt. He says we can often be quick to create our own laws too (Rom 2:14). This is true of too many preachers. You see, we are ALL legal minded — some more than others. We’re raised in a legalistic society and we have more laws and rules than we can begin to count.

Jesus took away sin by the sacrifice of himself (Heb 9:26). He became sin for us and we were made to be his righteousness (II Cor 5:21). Don’t be weighed down by over-consciousness of sin (Heb 10:2). Jesus made one sacrifice for sin forever (Heb 10:12). Jesus dealt with sin so that God even chooses to forget our sin. **But this does not mean we should be ignorant of our sin!**

Sin is something that weighs us down if we don’t deal with it properly and timely. But do so knowing that Jesus has already done so for us. His is ‘the religion of DONE.’ Begin your time in prayer by saying, “Jesus, thank you for becoming sin for me and taking away my sin forever. Now, I’m ready to talk to you about my short-comings.”

Your Sins Disqualify You From God Using You

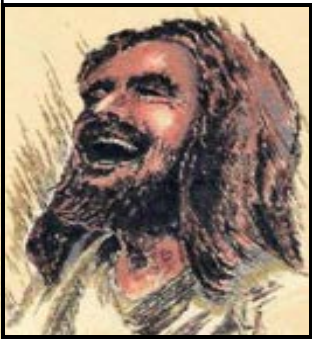
You Have Heard It Preached:

“God cannot use sinners. He can’t use you when you sin. So get control of your sin so that God can use you in greater ways. Stop sinning or you’ll never be worth anything in God’s Kingdom.”



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:

One great example of a ‘loser’ in the Bible, when it comes to sin,



is the Apostle Peter. He promised Jesus he’d always stand with him, and die with him. But when it came right down to it, he denied he ever knew Jesus three times, and the last time he did so, he even cursed when he said it. Yet God restored Peter and he became the head of the church. The Catholics declare he was their first Pope.

Then there is the Apostle Paul, a very God-honoring, religious man, at least under the Old Testament law, who had Christians tortured, jailed, and even killed. Yet God even took Paul to heaven where he showed him great things he couldn’t repeat to us (II Cor 12:1-4). God used Paul more mightily than anyone else.

“The just shall live by faith.” God knows us by our faith. “Without faith it is impossible to please God.” Paul says, “Whatever is not of faith is sin” (Rom 14:23). Our trust in God results in our belief and faith making us right with God, not our being sinless. God knows we’re human and we sin. Nothing we do surprises God. He looks at our hearts, and whether they are filled with faith, not at what we do (I Sam 16:7). And he knows if the secret beliefs of our hearts come from his gospel (Rom 3:16).

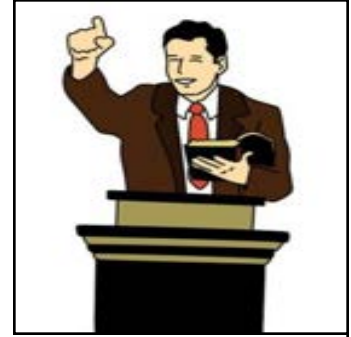
Romans 10:14-16 is a passage that says we are called and sent by God due to our belief in his gospel: ‘the good news of good things.’ The work of God in us is that we trust him enough to believe him, and live by the good news of good things — all his blessings — that he shares with us when he plants his good gospel ‘seed’ into us — as The Parable of the Sower shows.

It is the gospel that makes our hearts open to God. *When our hearts are open to him he can direct us and use us in any way he wants to, and he knows it! If our hearts are focused on some type of law or religion that is not the gospel, what God says may go in one ear and out the other. **Belief and trust in him causes him to use us!***

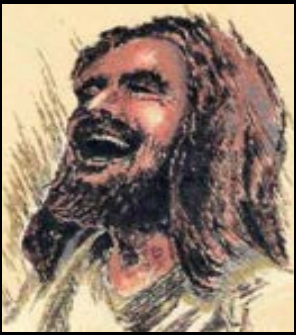
The Harder We Pray the More God Answers

You Have Heard It Preached:

“Paul says, ‘Pray without ceasing.’ The more often you pray, and the harder you pray, and the longer you pray, the more likely it will be God will answer, giving you what you ask for. Ask, seek, and then knock the door down. Pray fervently as James says.”



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:



We often use the parable of the Unjust Judge to show us how we should pray long and forcefully (Luke 18:1-8). But this judge was unjust and he didn't like people, so he was no relationship to GOD! Paul often speaks of God wanting to do 'much more' for us than we can ask or think or imagine.

God is not like a judge, as so many consider him to be, but a very loving Father! He wants to answer our prayers, but he can't always answer the way we want. We pray emotionally, or in panic and hurt, and don't have the BIG picture of things. My mother died of lung cancer, and she and I prayed together for her healing. But she had smoked very heavily for 50 years, and to her prayer was like 'the last resort.' I doubt she thought about praying until she got lung cancer and was told she was going to die.

A man wanted me to pray for him for a heart condition and upcoming surgery. He was about 150 pounds overweight, and the surgeon said he didn't think surgery would be a success. It wasn't. Again, God can't always answer our prayers the way we want. *Often we reap what we sow! Other times there is a bigger picture than we can see at the moment, and God sees everything!*

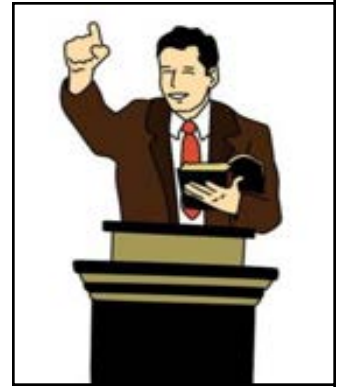
My wife Eileen and I were part of what our church called 'the healing rooms' for two years. There were 4-5 of us praying for others in need. We never saw one healing, but there were a couple healings reported by other rooms praying for people.

Our Abba Father God knows what we need even before we ask (Matt 6:7-8). But praying in fear and trembling will often keep us from praying in faith and trust. But often we pray for the impossible without knowing it because we pray in fear and trembling. Eternal life comes by simply knowing God and his Son Jesus (John 17:3). *Often we want earth to be like heaven! If it was, there would no desire for heaven. Pray your heart out, but don't take OWNERSHIP over your prayers.*

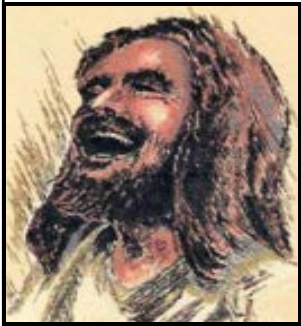
You Won't Endure More Than You Can Bear

You Have Heard It Preached:

“God will not allow you experience more hardship than your emotions and your mind can tolerate. He'll cut pressure off before you are so depressed you just can't take any more pressure, hardship or turmoil. Trust God and he will remove your problems and pain before they bury you because they are more than you can handle” (I Cor 10:13).



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:



This is a very nice thought for those of us living in the usual comfort of the western world. But what about in other parts of the world where our missionaries are even slaughtered for what they do? We're told that our temptations are common to others, and God is faithful and won't let us be tempted without making a way of escape (I Cor 10:13). But this verse is talking about temptation to sin. 'The world, the flesh and the devil' are our troublemakers.

Paul, who wrote over half the New Testament about the gospel, said he had so many bad things happen to him he was depressed and even despaired of life (II Cor 1:8). God is 'no respecter of persons.' Some of us may be depressed and despair of life itself too. Many people we hear about face tragedies and fatalities in life that we are always glad we don't have to experience — “There but for the grace of God go I.”

Paul said all he could do was place his faith and trust in God (I Cor 1:9). Sometimes it's all we can do too in circumstances that may stretch our minds to breaking. Paul said one big thing he learned was to be CONTENT in all things. Wow! I haven't learned this I guess. Hebrews says 'through faith and patience we inherit God's promises.' There are many examples of our 'faith and patience' not happening in our lifetime.

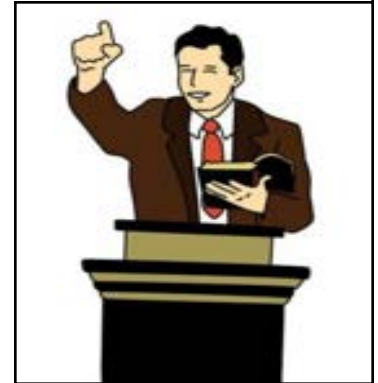
We do live in an overbearing world. 'The world, the flesh and the devil' are often more real than we would like. But TRUSTING God takes on a new dimension, even if we don't understand what's happening and pray against it.

We forget: 'bad things happen to good people.' Trusting God is absolutely essential. Trust and faith won't cure all things but they help us be overcomers in them.

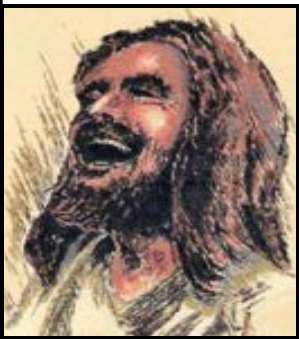
We Need Prayer To Have God's Anointing

You Have Heard It Preached:

“Especially in the new prophetic ministry we’re experiencing today we need more anointing from God. We need a gifted, anointed prophetic minister to pray for us to have more of God’s anointing so we can be more effective in ministry and be of more value to God and other people.”



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:



It may be true that we don’t manifest God’s power like we want to, but we really don’t need to receive more anointing than we have. Read the book of Acts and you see about 30 reported healings — over 30 years (I’m not saying there may have been more). That’s only about one per year.

Jesus says he’s ‘anointed’ to preach the gospel, heal broken hearts, preach deliverance to captives, give the blind sight, and set at liberty them who are bruised (Luke 4:18). But none of these deal with PHYSICAL anointing. Paul makes much the same testimony (Acts 26:18).

We’re told Jesus did no miracles, but God did them through him (Acts 2:22). So even Jesus wasn’t anointed to do physical things the way we often want to be. We can’t understand all this, but it’s a dynamic here to consider. Jesus says we’ll do greater WORKS than he did (John 14:12). But two verses earlier he’s talking about the WORDS he speaks (his gospel truth), not his works. *Jesus says our WORK is to believe (John 6:29), which means believe in him and his words (him as God’s Messenger, and his Message being God’s gospel).*

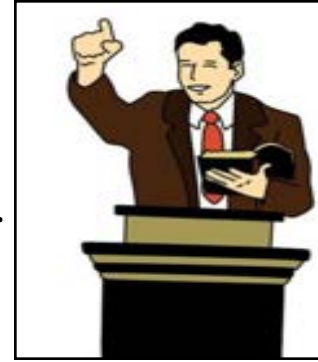
Does Jesus speak more about his gospel, and what we do for people through it, than he does physical things? We walk by sight and we want to SEE natural, physical things, not mere gospel things. We’re anointed by God. He teaches us all things (II Cor 1:21-22, I John 2:20, 2:26-27).

Did Jesus talk about healings and miracles only? — the things we want to be anointed for and known for? *Being a disciple means we continue more in his WORD, and not just try to copy his WORK (John 8:31), We’re even told he didn’t do the works himself — God did them through him (Acts 2:22).*

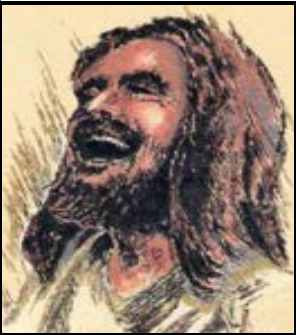
We Need More Faith to Do Greater Things

You Have Heard It Preached:

“What you need is a faith overhaul that I can give you. I’ve got 25 points that will make your faith take off like a rocket. All you need to do is pay to attend my seminar and buy my books. You’ll have all the faith you’ll ever need for God to use you.”



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:



It is true that we don’t feel like we have enough faith at times. But it is just a FEELING, and not gospel truth. Even the disciples asked Jesus to increase their faith (Luke 17:5). They knew they didn’t have enough faith to move mountains. We don’t either, at least literally (Mark 11:23).

The difference: **SUBJECTIVE** versus **OBJECTIVE** faith.

Paul says, “I know **WHOM** I have believed” (II Tim 1:12). This is objective faith. Too often we want our faith to be about **WHAT** we believe, not whom we believe. What we want to see happen and believe for is subjective faith. It is subject to our desires and expectations.

We should have faith in God, not so much as in circumstances, as we often want to have. And faith in God is meant to be elementary (Heb 6:1-2). This does not mean to leave it behind like elementary school. Faith in God is so **BIG** in us that we never get over it. *We can call it trust, or trust in God’s faithfulness to us! But faith is all about connecting with God, not our work by means of our flesh, which is subjective.*

Faith is a **GIFT** from God, like everything else in our lives (Eph 2:8-9, I Cor 4:7). Faith is a gift of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23). Faith comes to us by our knowing and relating to Jesus (Gal 3:23). We are meant to live in the new dispensation of God’s grace, in which faith is part of the package if we trust God (Eph 3:1-4).

Paul says, “We run well when we obey God’s truth—and God’s love empowers our faith (Gal 5:5-7). He says the same type thing in Ephesians 3:18-20). We all have **THE** measure of faith (Rom 12:3), not just ‘a’ measure. Faith is God’s gift that works automatically in us — synergistically and centrifugally — the more we trust him! “Without faith it is impossible to please God” (Heb 11:3). “Whatever is not of faith is sin” (Romans 14:23). If we live in laws, rules and principles we don’t live in faith. Living in law is not living in faith (Gal 3:12).

Hearing My Gospel Truth Will Set You Free

You Have Heard It Preached:

“It is said that, ‘Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.’ Jesus says, ‘The truth will set you free’ (John 8:32). Just hear good gospel preaching like mine, and you’ll be set free from troubles, and set free to do mighty things, and you’ll have more love for God and more love for other people. Amen!”



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:

I once heard a preacher say, “Everything I preach is the gospel truth.” So I listened to him. But I didn’t hear any gospel truth at all. This happened to me too. I wrote a book, *Counselor, State Your Case!* as a young Christian. It was praised by several Christian celebrities who said it was a doctrinally accurate. **God said: “It may be doctrinally accurate, but it doesn’t have a word of GOSPEL truth.” How could it have good doctrine but be dead to gospel truth?**



Many books and preaching are like this today. We just don’t know it. This isn’t true of all preachers (but it was of me). There are some fine ones Paul calls ‘Fathers of the gospel.’ Others Paul calls ‘Instructors in Christ.’ Instructors say what to do next to get more from God. It can be from A to Z. *“They forever learn, but are never able to come into a knowledge of (God’s) truth” (II Tim 3:7).*

The fact is it takes more than just HEARING the truth. Jesus says we must UNDERSTAND ‘the word of the Kingdom’ (Matt 13:19). This means ‘the GOSPEL of the Kingdom of God’ (Mark 1:14-15). The parables of Jesus contain his doctrine (Mark 4:2). It’s the gospel that must be preached in all the world before the end times will come (Matt 24:14).

The gospel is central to the teaching of Jesus! *But we can do lots of things and miss God. We can read the word and miss God (John 5:39) — We can hear Jesus and miss him (Matt 7:24-27) — We can pray and miss him (Matt 7:21) — We can be a preacher and miss God (Matt 23:5-12) — We can worship and miss him (Isa 29:13).*

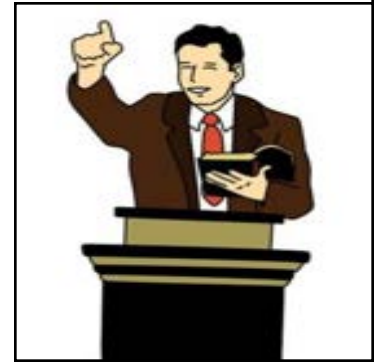
We can also hear the best teachers and miss him too (I Sam 3:7).

Jesus is the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6). Jesus is the truth, and he was born to testify to the truth (John 18:37). It says we are ‘of the truth’ if we clearly hear his voice. We must abide, or live in Jesus, and continue in the word of his gospel (John 8:31). *Just listening to truth being preached won’t set us free — it is too often not the gospel truth being preached at all (as God said about my book). We must DO the word for freedom.*

We'll Be Judged For All Our Sin\$ in Heaven

You Have Heard It Preached:

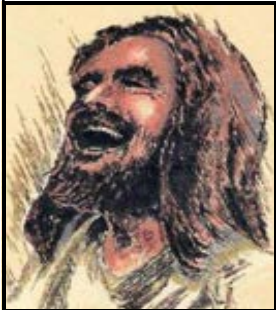
“We are told to repent of our sin and confess it. If we don't do this, and don't deal with ALL our sin, we will be judged for it. All of us will be judged according to our deeds (Rev 20:13). We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ to receive the things we have done, whether good or bad (II Cor 5:10).”



But the Truth of the Gospel of Jesus Is:

Paul does talk about the judgment seat of Christ, but he says this is what makes us fear God and produces terror in us. So the next verse says:

“Thus he PERSUADES us” (vs. 11).



What does he persuade us about? The rest of the chapter speaks to this. He persuades us in the gospel — that we shouldn't take pride (or fear) in our appearance (what we do). He says the LOVE of Christ constrains us, not the LAW (II Cor 5:14). God's goodness is what leads us into repentance, not his judgment (Rom 2:4).

He then says Christ died for us all. And God sees us all as now being DEAD in him (and alive in him also). We're baptized into death (Rom 6:3). We're dead and our life is hidden in Christ (Col 3:3). Paul goes on to say we don't know each other 'after the flesh,' and God doesn't know us this way either (II Cor 5:16). We're a new creation—everything is made new— we're like a new divine species (II Cor 5:17). God has reconciled us to himself (II Cor 5:18-20). Jesus became sin for us (II Cor 5:21).

The rest of this chapter shows why we DON'T stand before Christ's judgment seat to be judged for our sin! Jesus tells us not to even think that he will accuse us of sin (John 5:45). And he is our appointed judge! Yet Do-Do Preachers preach just the opposite, to keep us under their control, and listening to their preaching.

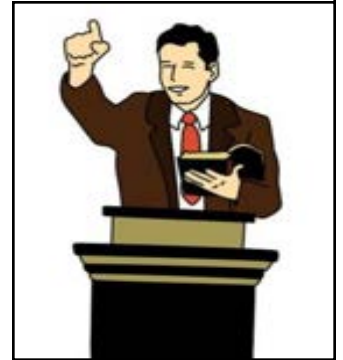
John tells us to be confident and bold in the day of judgment (I John 4:17). We can't be bold if we falsely think we will be judged for our every sin.

The only judgment I see we believers may face is for our gospel beliefs, and whether or not we are living them (Rom 2:16, II Thes 1:7-9, John 12:48). The issue in the Old Testament was sin. John the Baptist still preached repentance from SIN (Mark 1:4). But Jesus came preaching BELIEF, not sin. We will be judged for our gospel beliefs.

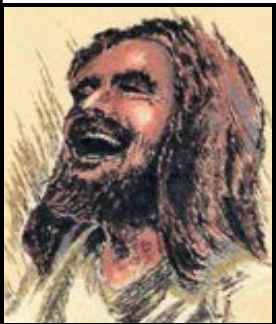
Do Good Here and You May Get A Mansion

You Have Heard It Preached:

“Do bad and you’re judged for your sin. But Do good, and God will give you rewards in heaven — maybe even a mansion. Whether you live in a shack or in a mansion in heaven will depend on what you do good here on earth. So live good and do good and God will reward you more.”



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:



Many verses talk of a REWARD: Mat 16:27, Lk 23:41, I Cor 3:14, I Tim 5:18, II John 1:8, Rev 22:12). The teaching by Do-Do Preachers is that we get rewards (plural) if we do good. Some say they may even get several crowns to wear on their head, or a mansion in heaven (SIC). But the Bible talks about a ‘REWARD’ in heaven, but notice the word is singular not plural. And do you think we will have shacks and mansions in heaven? This is only human materialistic thinking and comparative thinking (II Cor 10:12).

The Parable of the Workers (Mat 20:1-16) says they all got paid the same, and I’d expect this to be the way of heaven. Paul talks of having the reward of knowing Jesus as Lord (Phil 3:8-9). Everything else was garbage to him. But our human nature wants to make God INDEBTED to us (Rom 4:4). It’s an ENTITLEMENT mentality: “God owes me because chose to be a Christian — I found the Lord.” *But he wasn’t lost!*

Both I Corinthians chapters 3 and 9 speak of Paul’s reward of preaching the gospel which gives him power in this life (I Cor 9:18). Paul speaks of us getting the reward of our inheritance in Christ (Col 1:12, 3:23-24, Acts 20:32, 26:18). Can some people think they deserve a greater reward or inheritance than Jesus deserves? NOW we’re even equal joint heirs in Christ’s inheritance (Rom 8:37).

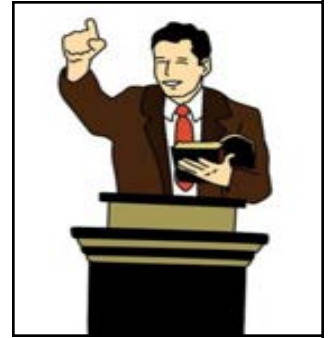
Speaking of crowns, the elders threw them at the feet of Jesus (Rev 4:10). I can’t even conceive of us wearing crowns in heaven. Only Jesus deserves a crown. But we are given the gift of righteousness, even while we’re here on earth (Rom 5:17).

**Like so many groups of people, we often have ‘special rights thinking.’
Don’t think like this! Or be entitlement minded! Or be materialistic!
This is earthly, fleshly, humanistic thinking born in SELF-righteousness.**

We are Held Accountable For All Our Sins

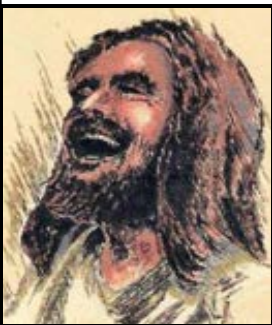
You Have Heard It Preached:

“No matter what you hear from grace preachers, remember you are personally accountable to God for your sins. I John 1:9 says we must confess our sin so God will forgive it.” You must confess each sin each day or you will experience an angry God.”



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:

I mostly challenge the words of LAW preachers — I jokingly call them *‘Do-Do Preachers’* — they bury us under a pile of what I call *‘Religious Do-Do.’* One thing they say is we must constantly confess our sins to God in to be forgiven. I knew a pastor who told folks if they failed to do this, they’d go to hell. It was hard to get him to see gospel truth.



Is it important to deal with sin! But believers, are not judged for sin. Jesus paid the price on the cross by becoming sin for us (II Cor 5:21) — he did this on the cross (Heb 9:26). Sin confession is not the issue for believers but confession of JESUS finished work for our sin is. I John 1:9 was written to everyone— and unbelievers must confess and repent their need for Jesus to deal with their sin (John 16:9).

First John also says: “Whoever is born of God does not commit sin — because God’s seed remains in him, and he cannot sin in because he’s born of God (KJV-- some translations minimize this).” This does not mean we can never sin. **This is a picture of how God sees us if we are in Jesus. Our response should be: “Thank you, Jesus!”**

If we sin on any level, our conscience grieves us, as we do the Holy Spirit (Eph 4:30). And we can quench him working in our lives (I Thes 5:19). But this is because we feel guilty in our minds, and feel we are not right with God (Col 1:21). **We’re still right with God because of Jesus, but we don’t feel like we are.**

What we have to do is tune into gospel belief: “Good behavior will never produce correct belief, but correct belief will eventually produce good or at least better behavior.”

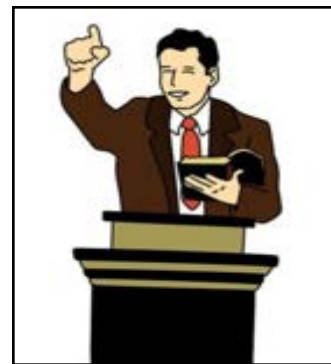
We believers are not held accountable for our sin — because of the finished work of Jesus on the cross. But God knows our sins and wrongs so we need to be honest about them, talk to him about them, confess them, and ask him to work in us to not continue in them. But we do this because we love God and trust him, not to gain anything by means of confession, repentance or anything else. **Jesus paid for all our sin!**

Most churches try to keep us sin-focused because it keeps their pews filled making us feel we need them to help us deal with sin — plus it helps collections. If our focus and trust is in Jesus, we should be righteousness-conscience, not focused on sin.

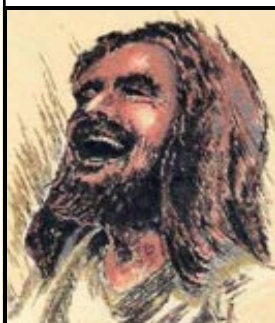
Clean Up Your Act or Fear God's Anger

You Have Heard It Preached:

“God is a loving God, but he can be provoked. Don't let his anger burn against you for wrong-doing. Clean up your act. Be afraid of God's anger. Remember Jesus saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Don't get God too mad at you or he may hurl a lightning bolt down at you. Don't forget the book titled, “Sinners In the Hands of An Angry God. Remember the song: *“God's Gonna Get You For That!”* Beware of facing an angry God.



But the Truth of the Gospel Is:



The Old Testament does talk about ‘having fear of the Lord,’ and God did even kill some people in the Old Testament, just like we're told he killed Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5. We must work out our salvation with fear and trembling (Phil 2:12-13).

The gospel talks about God's goodness and love and grace, and does not tell us to FEAR him, *at least not the way we view fear!!!* We're even told to have boldness in the day of JUDGMENT (I John 4:17).

We are God's kids — his sons and daughters. Kids don't fear a good, loving parent. There is now NO condemnation in Jesus (Rom 8:1). We are delivered from God's wrath (Rom 5:9). We can walk right up to the throne of God in our New Covenant gospel (Heb 4:16). In the Old Testament to approach a king wrongly most often meant execution.

Jesus tells us not to even think he will accuse us of anything — and he is our judge (John 5:45). Paul says any thoughts of God's anger because of bad things we do are only ‘IN OUR MINDS.’ The truth is we're really reconciled, meaning having atonement with God and we are one with him (Col 1:21, Rom 5:11-KJV).

In Luke 4:8, Jesus speaks to Satan: “You shall WORSHIP the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.” He's quoting a verse out of Deuteronomy that says, “You shall FEAR the Lord your God...” **Jesus changed the word fear to the word worship.**

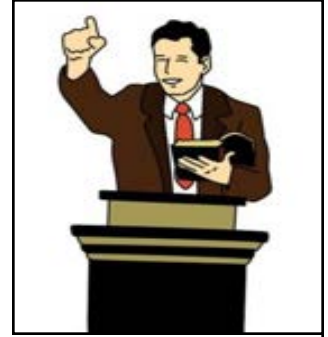
We're told in Romans 4:15 that it is the LAW that produces God's wrath or anger. The Old Testament law was fulfilled by Jesus and replaced by the New Testament gospel. The Old was based on the blood of animals; the New is based on the blood of Jesus. Plus, the law was never meant for us Gentiles at all (Rom 2:14).

Without law there is no anger! Us living the gospel causes God to rejoice!

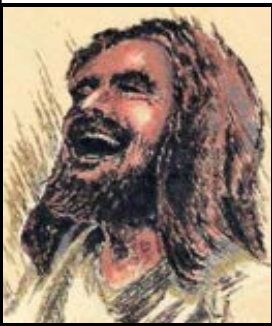
If You Stand Firm to the End You'll Be Saved

You Have Heard It Preached:

"This is a statement that should put the fear of God into you. In Matthew 24:13 Jesus says, "He who stands firm to the end will be saved." Jesus is saying you can't deviate from living the Christian life, or you may not be saved. You must stand firm. You must always live as you know you should and be good all your days."



But the Truth of the Gospel of Jesus Is:



These words of Jesus can put fear into our hearts. How many of us stand totally firm in everything Jesus says every day of our lives? I wish I did, but I don't. The fact is God knows we're human. He made us this way. He knows we sometimes say, "Lord, I believe, but help my unbelief." We all get off on rabbit trails, and what we lawyers call 'a lark of our own.' We aren't always steadfast. The gospel says a lot of things that are hard to believe. But they are all blessings and empowering benefits for us to experience.

Jesus said to stand firm to the end, but he also spoke about us being offended for our gospel beliefs (Matt 24:10). He spoke about false prophets (non-gospel preachers) who were deceiving us (vs.11). He spoke about sin abounding, and our love being colder than it should be (vs. 12). Then he says, "He who stands firm to the end will be saved." *He then says his gospel must be shared everywhere in the world (vs. 14).*

Jesus isn't CONDEMNING or warning us, but is COMMENDING us if we stand firm in gospel belief, even in light of things happening near us!

The gospel 'begets us' into God's Kingdom, keeping us secure (1 Cor 4:15). If we must share it with others, as Jesus says in verse 14, then the gospel must of course be in our hearts and part of our life. 'You can't give away what you ain't got.' Something must first be ours in order for us to be able to give it away.

All Jesus is doing here is encouraging us to continue believing his gospel, even in light of opposing theologies, opinions, and other things going on around us, — tempting us to stray and not stand firm in our beliefs.

We're told to continue living in faith, grounded and settle, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel — because this gospel given to Paul for us fulfills the word of God in us (Col 1:23, 25). **Think about the gospel fulfilling God's word in you!**

Can the Gospel Really Be This Good?

I've heard this said by folks several times: "*The gospel is too good to be true. Even God can't be this good.*"

If you truly understand the wonderful things the gospel says and how God blesses us out of our minds, I can see why folks have a hard time believing it. It seems too good to be real.

God's Old Testament ways demanded from us what it could not produce in us. The New Covenant gospel produces in us what it does not demand from us.

The gospel is so good it can only be true!

The human mind could never invent the gospel. It's too far over our heads. Only a God of love, grace and peace can invent the gospel.

The Apostle Paul had a special visit to heaven to talk with God (II Cor 12:1-4). We are told here that he saw and heard such wonderful things that God would not allow him to repeat them all to us.

So, no matter how good we ever come to see the gospel as being, it is really even BETTER than we think it is.

Here are a few other books on Roger's bookcase.
 There are over 20 of them — books of 35-200 pages.
 They all reveal gospel truth and they are all FREE.
 Jesus and Paul didn't charge to present the gospel.
 Roger doesn't either.
 God blesses him financially in other ways.

Roger Himes has been The Gospel Life Coach for 20 years!
 Here are 12 of his free books at Rogers-Inspiration-Books.com
**Jesus and Paul didn't charge money to preach the gospel
 and Roger doesn't either!**
 He is a lawyer in Denver, Colorado, and a business owner:
MountainPeaksInn.com in Hill City, South Dakota USA,
 a short drive from Mount Rushmore.

All his books are on his bookshelf:
<http://fliphtml5.com/bookcase/xmrub>