

The Wednesday Word, October 20, 2021: Is the Gospel a Mere Doorway?

Yes indeed! For many professing Christians the gospel is merely a doorway into the kingdom of God. There, however, are others who seem to think it is not even that!

Take Sunday services for example. To get sinners saved, a good church, they argue, must provide a comfortable environment and have music from a contemporary band. A spotlight would be just the thing on the preacher and above all, they contend, our services must be upbeat, enjoyable and entertaining. The right kind of church service has now replaced the gospel as the power of God for salvation. May the Lord rescue us!

The following is attributed to Spurgeon.

“The devil has seldom done a cleverer thing than hinting to the church that part of their mission is to provide entertainment for the people, with a view to winning them. From speaking out the gospel, the church has gradually toned down her testimony as she excuses the frivolities of the day. Then she tolerated them in her borders. Now she has adopted them under the plea of reaching the masses!”

“My first contention is that providing amusement for the people is nowhere spoken of in the Scriptures as a function of the church. If it is a Christian work why did Christ not speak of it? “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature and provide amusement for those who do not relish the gospel.”

“Where do entertainers come in? The Holy Spirit is silent concerning them. Were the prophets persecuted because they amused the people, or because they confronted them? Again, providing amusement is in direct antagonism to the teaching and life of Christ and all his apostles.”

“Had Jesus introduced more of the bright and pleasant elements into his teaching, He would have been more popular. When “many people turned back and no longer followed him”, I do not hear him say, “Run after these people, Peter, and tell them we will have a different style of service tomorrow; something short and attractive with little preaching. We will have a pleasant evening for the people. Tell them they will be sure to enjoy it! Be quick, Peter, we must get the people somehow!”

Just as the gospel is the only way to save sinners it is also the only way to save saints. If we, as believers, are ever to enjoy the full extent of sonship, we must be bathed in the gospel. The gospel saves us in the beginning, middle and end of our Christian life.

Christ Jesus is the Alpha and Omega of salvation. As He is the beginning, He is also the end ... but we have forgotten that He is also everything in between. As we run this race, this Christian life, we are to look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:1-2). This means that we must look away from ourselves and behold the excellencies and glory of God in the face of Jesus the Christ.

But someone may reply, “Isn’t how we live the important thing to teach in our churches?” Yes indeed, how we live is of vital concern, but unless the gospel of Christ is central in the church,

then real godliness will not come!

Why not? Because the power for real godliness comes through the gospel of Christ (Romans 1:16). The gospel is the power of God unto salvation. The word used here for power is the Greek word 'dunamis' from which we get such English words as 'dynamite.'

In other words, the gospel of Christ is explosive! Full salvation will come no other way than by the gospel. When a pastor is not gospel-centred and the person of Christ and His completed saving and perfect work are not expounded his people are not growing in salvation. How can they? For there is no power for salvation in his message.

And that's the Gospel Truth!