

The Wednesday Word, February 25, 2026:  
The Gospel and Authentic New Testament Ministry Part 8  
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For Paul, the Gospel was no mere entry-level doctrine. In the mind of the apostle, the Gospel determined and empowered a New Covenant lifestyle. He writes to the Philippians, *"Only let your manner of life be becoming to the Gospel of Christ: ..."* (Philippians 1:27).

There is a newness of life, a Gospel lifestyle which comes when we are saved. This is not, however, as some would have us believe, a lifestyle married to law and divorced from the Gospel. It is, rather, something which gets its vitality from the very Gospel itself.

The Gospel is not only for evangelistic meetings, but also it teaches us how to live. Paul tells the Romans, *"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."* (Romans 6:4). Paul is saying, look what happened through the Gospel, you were buried and raised with Christ, now walk in the newness of life which is already yours.

Much of today's preaching tries to get us to walk in newness of life, but since the preaching is usually devoid of the Gospel it cannot produce the desired results. Churches, therefore, whose purpose is to teach its people how to live the Christian life are doomed to fail unless the Gospel is on centre stage. To teach "how to" and not relate it to the Gospel is merely to plunge the church back under law. When Paul, for example, wanted to teach the saints how to live a lifestyle which would not offend others in the church, he didn't bring them law he brought them to the Gospel saying, *"--Destroy not him with your food, for whom Christ died."* (Romans 14:15). He doesn't say, "Guys, you know it's not the right thing to offend your brother with what you are eating. You are destroying him. Cut it out!" No, as an authentic New Testament minister he brings them to the gospel and then makes application. He tells them, Christ died for your brothers so don't destroy someone for whom Christ died.

Paul didn't teach ethics and lifestyle apart from the finished work. When he wanted his people to behave in a certain manner, he didn't merely issue edicts and pronouncements, he employed his apostolic understanding and brought them back to the Gospel.

For Paul, there was no question that changed lives came by the power of God unto salvation---the Gospel of Christ!

Take another example, when Paul wanted believers to learn not to please themselves, he again brought them back to the Gospel: he taught, *"--Let every one of us please his*

*neighbour for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, the reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me"* (Romans 15:1-3).

In addition, when Paul wanted the church to be welcoming and friendly he tells them, "*Receive one another as Christ also received us to the glory of God"* (Romans 15:7). Paul here reminds his readers that as Christ received us, we should receive each other. But how did Christ receive us? He received us on terms of pure gospel grace. It was grace alone and not our righteousness that motivated Him. He didn't wait for us to straighten up, rather he received us apart from our performance. And that is how we are to receive each other. He does not bring us to the law saying, "We need to receive one another for you know that is the right thing and you need to do the right thing now you are saved." No! He once more brings us, back to the gospel to empower us to live the Gospel lifestyle. That's authentic New Testament ministry!

And that 's the Gospel Truth!