

# The Word of Life Messenger

*“Holding forth the word of life” Phil. 2:16*

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## ***THE GOSPEL***

*(Part II: Continued from July paper)*

The gospel is also called THE GOSPEL OF GRACE (Acts 20:24). We could never earn or merit salvation. We are sinners and deserve to be judged, condemned and punished by a Holy God. But salvation is “not by works of righteousness which we have done” (Titus 3:5). We have no righteousness, but God gives righteousness freely to all who will believe the gospel. It is of faith that it might be by grace. This grace of salvation is free to all who believe the gospel. Works won’t save us, baptism won’t save us, connections can’t help us, only the grace of God can save us. The believing sinner is given Christ’s righteousness, so that He stands before God just as accepted as God’s own Son. The believer’s sins are blotted out and he is clothed in the perfect righteousness of Christ. Marvelous, infinite, matchless grace!

It is the GOSPEL OF OUR SALVATION (Eph. 1:13). The gospel brings deliverance from the guilt and penalty of sin. It is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes (Rom. 1:16). It brings deliverance from the power of sin and one day it will bring deliverance from even the presence of sin. Now are we the children of God and have passed from death unto life. We are no longer under condemnation, but have full spiritual life in Christ. This truly is good news. The gospel is the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Thank you Lord for saving my soul,

Thank you for making me whole,  
Thank you for giving to me

Thy great salvation so full and free.

It is also called the GOSPEL OF PEACE (Rom. 10:15; Eph. 6:15), because it is the only message which can bring peace between God and man. God’s holiness demanded that sin be punished but God was in Christ reconciling us to Him. Christ made peace through the blood of His cross (Col. 1:20). The penalty for sin was not set aside, but fully fell upon our representative, the Lord Jesus Christ. This peace comes to us when one accepts and appropriates the good news of the gospel by faith (Rom. 5:1).

It is also called the GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM (Matt. 4:23; 9:35), because it is the only basis on which one may be born again and enter the Kingdom of God and one day share in the reign of Christ. Except a man be born again he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. The gospel reminds us that the same Jesus who was crucified, arose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and is coming in great power to reign over this world. One day every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. The kingdoms of this earth shall be the kingdoms of our Lord.

It is called the EVERLASTING GOSPEL (Rev. 14:6), because God through the gospel brings eternal salvation. It is based on an eternal covenant through Christ’s blood

(Heb. 13:29). To all who receive it, the gospel brings eternal salvation (Isa. 45:17), eternal life (John 5:24), eternal love (Jer. 31:33), eternal joy (Isa. 61:7), eternal peace (Isa. 9:7), eternal pleasure (Psalm 16:11), eternal righteousness (Psalm 119:142), and eternal consolation (II Thess. 2:16). The Gospel never loses its value, never loses its significance, and never loses its power. Its benefits will flow to us for all eternity.

In light of the events of recent days how we should recognize anew the importance of preaching the gospel. Paul said “Woe is me if I preach not the gospel of Christ.” Paul also says the gospel is “the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth” (Rom. 1:16) and “it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save those who believe. And what are we to believe? The gospel! In I Corinthians Paul declares I deliver unto you that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, was buried and rose again the third day according to the scriptures.” He who was dead, was buried, has risen and is alive forever more. Surely, we must be in the last days and this is the only message that will change and transform lives, that will give them a future and a hope, for it is truly the gospel of our salvation (Eph. 1:13). Preach the gospel! Love the gospel! Support the gospel! Share the gospel!

~ Larry Windham

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# *THE HEART OF MAN*

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From the teaching of the Bible, the heart is the inward being of man. It stands for man's entire mental and moral activity. The heart is the hidden person. 1 Peter 3:4 speaks of the "hidden man of the heart." The heart expresses grief, joy, desires, thoughts, etc. Paul said in Romans 10:1: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be save." When we speak of the heart in this article, we are not talking about the physical blood pump in man, but rather the innermost being of man. The Bible speaks of the heart in several ways. May we consider some of them.

The first account we read of in the Bible concerning the heart is that of an evil heart. "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his was only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5). This verse indicates the thinking of man or his mind in relation to the heart. The natural, evil heart of man is deceitful. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9). The natural depraved heart of man is far from God and will result in false worship. Notice the words of Jesus as He spoke concerning the scribes and pharisees. "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15:8,9). The heart of man is not only evil, deceitful, depraved and far from God, but it is also defiled. "But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart, and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adultries, forni-

cation, thefts, false witness, blasphemies" (Matt. 15:18,19). Paul describes the heart as foolish and darkened" in Romans 1:21. Oh, may we see from God's Word the depraved, sinful heart of man.

When the lost sinner is saved by the grace of God, we receive a new heart or life. I never tell the lost sinner to give God your heart. God does not want our old sinful heart, but rather He gives us a new life that comes from God when we believe in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. We cannot give God anything in order to be saved, but He gives eternal life to the believing sinner. Proverbs 23:26 reads: "My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways." Only born again "sons" can give God anything. We must receive from God before we can give as His children in obedience to Him.

A believing heart is necessary in salvation. "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Romans 10:9,10).

When the lost sinner is saved, God opens the heart. "And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul" (Acts 16:14). The Scripture in Revelation 3:20 does NOT teach that Jesus is standing at the heart's door waiting to come in when we open, in order to be saved. May we examine this verse: "Behold I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and I will sup with

him, and he with me" (Rev. 3:20). First, notice that the heart is not even mentioned in this verse. Second, the Lord is NOT speaking to the lost sinner in this verse but rather to the lukewarm church at Laodicea. The word "sup" in this verse indicates fellowship between the Lord and His people in the church. Jesus must be preached in the church as the only way of salvation or He will not be in the midst of the church, but rather on the outside of the door of the church. "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20).

As true believers, our hearts need to be established in the things of God. "Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace..." (Heb. 13:9). According to Hebrews 10:22, we are to "draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith." Then we can have untroubled hearts in a troubled world. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me" (John 14:1). The church at Antioch had "purpose of heart" that "they would cleave unto the Lord" (Acts 11:23).

We read in Luke 24 of the risen Saviour speaking to some with a "slow" heart. "Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:25-27). When a person has a slow heart physically, many times they are given a pacemaker to speed up the heart. We, as God's children, do not need a pacemaker because we have a peace-

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# MISSIONS

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Our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, has commissioned His local churches to preach the gospel to the lost. Jesus said in Mark 16:15, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." This is a divine imperative.

Since the gospel means "good tidings," we see in II Kings 7:1-11 some lepers bearing good tidings to a besieged and famine stricken city of Samaria. The Syrian army had surrounded the city and there was great famine as seen in II Kings 6:24-29.

The besieged city is a picture of the spiritual condition of the lost people of the world. They are besieged by Satan and sin and there is a famine in their lives. They have not received Jesus Christ as Saviour, who is "the bread of life" and the "water of life."

We notice in II Kings 7:3-5 that there are four lepers sitting at the

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## THE HEART OF MAN

*(Continued from Page 2)*

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maker, the Lord Jesus Christ, who has shed His blood on the cross of Calvary and was buried and raised from the dead. "And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself..." (Col. 1:20). When we come to believe in Him, we should be like those in Luke 24:31, when "their eyes were opened, And they knew him." After Jesus "vanished out of their sight, they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" (Luke 24:32). May we not have slow hearts but burning hearts as we look into the scriptures and behold our wonderful Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

~ Gladwin Carpenter

gate of the city of Samaria. Leprosy means to "smile down" and lepers were also declared to be "unclean." Lepers were to be separated from the people, they were to dwell alone or in a colony. Read Lev. 13:44-46.

What a pitiful condition. This pictures the pitiful condition of the lost person. Because of sin he is separated (alone) from God and unclean before God. The sinner needs to be reconciled to God. He needs to be washed in the blood of Jesus, which alone can atone for sin.

The lepers, too, were hungry, so they decided to go out to the Syrians and maybe they would have mercy upon them and spare them and give them some food and raiment.

II Kings 7:5,6 shows how God intervened for these helpless, unclean lepers and not for them only but also made provision for the impoverished people of the city of Samaria. We notice that even before they arrived that the enemy had been dispersed and there were provisions for the receiving. All of their needs had been provided for by the grace and power of the Lord, II Kings 7:7,8.

At first the lepers were going to keep all this bounty for themselves, but verse 9 says, "We do not well: this day is a day of good things, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household." Verse 11 says, "And he called the porters, and they told it to the king's house within."

The apostle Paul says in II Cor. 5:18-20 that God has appointed us ambassadors for Christ and that we have been given the ministry of reconciliation: that we are to preach the good news or the gospel to all

the world. We who have been born again have the obligation and privilege of telling the lost that God has provided a Saviour, that Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God has paid sins penalty for the world. We can do this by word of mouth, by the printed page of sermons or gospel tracts and by supporting missionaries with our prayers and financial gifts. Beloved, if we do not do this, "WE DO NOT WELL..."

Dear reader, are you a believer in Jesus Christ as your Saviour? In II Kings 7:1 we hear the prophet of God, Elisha, declaring the word of the Lord. He said that there would be food in the gate of Samaria tomorrow. In verse 2 we read about one of the king's servants unbelief and how Elisha told him that because of his unbelief, that he would see the food, but would not eat any of it. In verses 16-20 we see the fulfillment of this prophecy.

We see from this the penalty for the sin of unbelief, for failing to believe the word of God. Dear reader, your failure to believe the gospel; that Jesus Christ died for YOUR SINS according to the Old Testament Scriptures and that He was buried and that on the third day He arose again according to the Scriptures, you too will die in your sins or perish. Why? Because of unbelief. I beg you to listen to God's Word for "faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." "For by GRACE are you saved through FAITH and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are HIS workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:8-10).

~ John E. Gray, Jr.

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# Notice

The Northeast and North Central MS Baptist Bible Conferences do not have a meeting place for September, 2009.

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“Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

*II Peter 1:2-4*

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