

Romans 8:14~17

The “*gospel of Jesus Christ*” is a message that declares that God has made a way...for every single person on earth to come to himself.

The Gospel of Christ is the answer for the “*GUILTY!*”

The gospel of Christ is the answer to the “*countless number of them*” who are out there who feel that they have done too much, they’ve lived too wickedly for God to ever save them! These folks realize full well, they have transgressed the law of God, and having done so, live with guilt and a sense of unworthiness...

It is this very group that Jesus describes in Matthew 9...³⁵ And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.³⁶ But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.³⁷ Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few;³⁸ Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest.

The harvest truly is plenteous... He is making reference to the vast number of people “*out there*” who walking in “*their guilt*” who would readily respond to the message of Christ! *If only they could hear it!* If these folks could hear how God is offering them a brand new start through Christ...how they need to hear that if they will come to Christ, if they will follow him...they have a home in heaven!

The reason many walk in such hopelessness, is due largely in fact due to the “*Religious People...*” Those who “*live right*”... Those who “*look down*” on such people... That’s exactly what many of the Pharisees did in Jesus day. They boasted of their “*self-righteousness*” which came as a result of their adherence to the Law, and at the same time, condemned those who had transgressed the law. (*There’s nothing I detest more, than self-righteousness, and the condemnation of others*)

But that leads me to my second point... The gospel is a two fold message...

No one has lived too bad... through the Cross of Christ, God has made a way for all men...

Anyone, regardless of past, if they will repent, take up the cross and follow Christ, will have a home in heaven.

Because of what Christ has done...if any one under the sound of my voice, anyone who has ever heard the gospel...dies, and goes to hell, and spends eternity, separated from God...

...it will not be because God rejected them...it will be because they rejected God!

No one has lived too bad...and at the same time, None have lived good enough...through the Cross, God has condemned “*self-righteousness!*”

The Gospel does away with “*RELIGION!*”

The Gospel “*Frees the Guilty*”...and “*Condemns the Self-righteous!*”

The gospel declares that regardless of your transgressions against God...you can enter the kingdom!

The gospel declares that regardless of your “*apparent obedience*” to God through the law...you will never gain entrance to the kingdom!

ALL must come by “*Way of the Cross!*”

The “*Gospel of Christ*”, what Paul calls “*The Preaching of the Cross...*” is God’s open invitation to anyone who will receive it. Anyone who will “*follow Christ*”, anyone who go by “*way of the cross*”, enters into an intimate relationship with God Himself!

In verse 14... Paul makes statement, that would forever set the course, that would “fix” the path that all men must take to ever hope to enter the portals of heaven...

¹⁴*For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*

Another way to say that is... *Those who Follow Christ are the true children of God.*

Those who “follow Christ”, those who walk the “way of the cross”, enter into an intimate relationship with God Himself! A relationship that Paul describes so intimate, that Paul describes it as God being our “father” and we “his children!”

¹⁵*For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, **Abba, Father.***

The picture here is that of “loving submission” and not “fearful obligation...” We no longer serve God out of fear of the “repercussions”, we no longer strive to obey the Law in efforts to please God. All that has changed through our relationship with Christ!

I no longer walk in *fear of God*, in the sense of being scared of messing up... That’s not saying I don’t strive to live a life that is pleasing to God, not at all... It simply means that I do not strive to please God, out of fear of punishment, fear of judgment. I now strive to please God out of “LOVE for Him!”

People who are under the Law, are in bondage! They serve Him out of FEAR, out of OBLIGATION!

I dare say to you, that many of the people who attend church across America today, do so out of obligation... “it’s what you should do...” Some do so, to appease the “Guilt” we fill when we miss... Many are raised up, in that when it’s Sunday...you go to church. Many young people are forced to go to church every Sunday. (Now I’m not saying that’s all wrong) but, they are dragged there every time. And what often happens is, when they get old enough, at first opportunity...“their gone!”

Many have a “Fear Relationship” with God instead of a “Love Relationship...”

Illustration: My Uncle...(fear of dying in sleep...) they’re preaching is that Fear!

People who are under the Law, are in bondage! They serve Him out of FEAR, out of OBLIGATION!

¹⁵*For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, **Abba, Father.***

“Abba, Father” is a term of endearment... It’s what we would say... “Daddy, or Papa...”

We may hesitate to use such familiar English words in addressing God, but truth remains, that...

He who is *infinitely high*...is also...He that is *intimately nigh*.

The picture here is that of those who follow Christ enter into an intimate relationship with God! One so intimate, that God becomes as a Father to us.

This is vital to understand what Paul is saying here... We are no longer under a “legalistic” relationship with God. We no longer have to walk in “fear” in that of being afraid of God. I no longer walk in “Fear” of what God is going to do to me if I mess up! I no longer view him as the great and dreadful Judge... who will execute judgment on those who cross the line... Rather now I see Him as a loving Father, one that will most certainly correct me if I do wrong, but even then, I know, that he does it out of love for me and not out of wrath!

Listen, it is “*this Spirit*” that bears witness with my spirit that I am his Child... Do you see that? The reason that I have full assurance, the hope that I have in Christ, the security that I have in my salvation, stems from “*Seeing God as my Father!*”

Like I just said, I no longer view him as the great and dreadful Judge... who will execute judgment on those who cross the line... Rather now I see Him as a loving Father... And if I see God as my Father... then that makes me a Son...

That’s what Paul is saying here... He’s writing to his Jewish brethren who are struggling with Paul’s teaching on the removal of the Law. A struggle that many have. By taking away the Law, aren’t you taking away God’s righteous standard that men are to live too? Paul are you saying that we can live how we want too and it’s ok with God?

NO... God forbid... Anyone who conforms to the Law, serves out of obligation and fear! Paul is saying, that through Christ our hearts are changed! We no longer need a law to serve God.

Through Christ, our hearts are now changed, in the sense that we see God as our Father! Now instead of obligation and fear, we now serve God out of the love we have for Him!

In verse 15~16, Paul says... ¹⁵For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. ¹⁶The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

I have FULL ASSURANCE that I belong to God, that when I leave this world, I have a home in glory...not because of living to a set of rules, or some standard... What gives me the assurance is the way I see God. I see God as my Father...and somehow through the cross, God has placed within me a deep love for Him. He is my joy, He is what I long for, I enjoy His things...I love my “*daddy*...”

Of all the different metaphors used in scripture to describe God...there is none that compares to that of a “*Father*” unto his children...

In Luke 11, when Jesus was asked by his disciples, to teach them how to pray, its interesting to note how the Lord Jesus instructed them to approach the God of the universe...

“**Our Father which art in heaven...**” In that same passage...continuing to teach them “how to pray,” in verse 5, Jesus speaks a hypothetical situation to help them understand...

(Vs 5~8) He first uses the scenario of approaching one of their friends for a need...

(Vs 8~10) ...so ask the Father! Tell him what you need!

(Vs 11~12) He uses the scenario of a child asking his father for some food...

And the thrust of that scenario is, Don’t you freely give them what they ask for? Isn’t it your good pleasure to give them the things they need?

(Vs 13) ¹³**If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?**

If you give your children what they ask for and need...How much more will God!

So many today are concerned with the words they say, and how they say them... When Jesus simply taught us to go to our Father, and tell Him what we need!

In Luke 15, in what we refer to as the story of the “*Prodigal Son*”, a story about a *Father’s* love for his lost son... In that story, Jesus portrays God as the Father of that son...

Over and over, Jesus portrays God as the *Loving Father* of his children...

In verse 17, Paul tells us what we receive when we “pick-up” the Cross...

Anyone who truly follow Christ, soon finds out, that it is a very difficult path. It is the way of suffering...

¹²Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. ¹³For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

Anyone who truly follow Christ, soon finds out, that it is a very difficult path. It is the way of suffering...

To follow Christ, is to take up a Cross...and to crucify my desires, my ambitions, my will...yielding my life to God as a living sacrifice to His will and ways...

But...Paul says...it will be worth it after all...

In essence, that's exactly what Paul says in verse 17...“It will be worth it after all!”

Sure its hard, sure the way is tough...**but keep in mind the promise of God...**

^{17b}...if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together...

All who “*Carry a Cross*” in this life...will “*Wear a Crown*” in the life to come!

All who come by way of the Cross, will “*Inherit the Kingdom of God!*”

¹⁷And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ...

Paul exhorts the brethren in Rome to stay steadfast! To not look back to the Law any longer... But to continue to follow Christ... Even though it is a hard way, even though it is a way of suffering... it is the way that leads to God! And all who walk this way, by “*Way of the Cross*” will be the ones to inherit the kingdom of God... All the suffering, all the sacrifice, all that we endure here will be worth it after all!