

## 1 21 18 The Gospel

### Invocation

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Romans 5:6-8 Christ died for the ungodly. **7** For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. **8** But God showed his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

John 4:23-24 True worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeks such to worship him. **24** God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth.

### Responsive Reading

### The Gospel

It is my understanding that John the Baptist was put into the Mamertine Prison. It was made of holes chiseled straight down into a solid rock, deep enough that the prisoner couldn't climb out and then they put a heavy grate on top of the hole. The hole was small enough that he couldn't lay down. The prisoner had to stand in his own bodies waist and that of whoever had been in there before him. It would have been like standing in an outhouse continually and there was no way to get away from it. It would have been easy to get discouraged. John may have wondered why Jesus didn't come to his rescue, after all Jesus was all powerful. John had preached that Jesus would clean the threshing floor with fire. As close as John was to Jesus, he didn't understand Jesus mission. John even made the comment, "Behold the Lamb of God", which implies that Jesus would be sacrificed like a lamb. The Bible is not clear as to why John sent his disciples to Jesus, it was either that John was discouraged or that he wanted his disciples to see what Jesus was doing and that they should follow Jesus after he was gone. I'm inclined to think that it was for his disciple's benefit. We find the story in Luke and also here in:

Matt 11:2-6 Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, **3** And said unto him, Are you he that should come, or do we look for another? **4** Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which you do hear and see: **5** The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. **6** And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

Here, Jesus is listing the incredible things that He was doing and the most important is last on the list, preaching the gospel to the poor. Everything else has to do with helping people with their life here on the earth but preaching the gospel is helping them with their eternal life. James 2:5 Has not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he has promised to them that love him? The poor in this world have to depend on God for their food and necessities of life.

Jesus said that He preached the gospel to the poor. The word gospel means good news. The good news is that even though we have sinned and deserve to die, Jesus died in our place and if we accept His sacrifice in our place, we can go free from our death sentence and live eternally with Him as his children in a wonderful place. Truly, if you really comprehend what is going on here, it is very very good news. God the Creator of the Universe, loves you and wants you to be His children. This is incredible. He was even willing to be born as a man, live a life of poverty and die a very very painful death to show us how much He loves us and to give us this incredible offer.

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Think about this, Jesus died for evil people. He did this so they could become good people. It is His way to make us over so we are good and not evil. All of God's children come out of the pool of evil people.

Rom All, have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

Psalms 8:4 What is man, that you are mindful of him? and the son of man, that you visit him?

In all of God's vast creation, men don't seem like much, just a few specks here and there.

Acts 17:28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being.

What is man? The Spirit of God is in us all. He is the life force that keeps us all functioning. We are part of Him, even in our fallen state. This is why God loves the world. God is allowing this situation to exist to create a way to get rid of sin forever. Everyone who has been here in the middle of this mess won't ever want it to happen again and if sin ever shows up again, God will have the right to eliminate it and everyone will understand why.

The problem is simple. When Adam fell, we took on a nature that has sin in it. An evil, destructive part that can't exist eternally without causing pain and sorrow and suffering. God's plan of salvation can help separate us from that destructive nature.

Mankind is not only the solution to the sin problem but we will be God's loving children for eternity.

Last week I had an opportunity to give out some big boxes of food, the people were very happy and appreciative but to give the gospel is much much more because it is a far bigger gift and we get to do this.

Mark 16:15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every being.

This is our job. Go hand out the good news. It is a free gift to those who are sincere.

1 Sam 16:7 For *the Lord* sees not as man sees; for man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.

John 4:23-24 True worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeks such to worship him. **24** God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth.

John 1:12-13 But as many as received him, to them he gave power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name:

**13** Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

God loves the sinner but knows that the sin has to go. If we let Him take care of the sin, we can live with Him eternally but if we hang on to sin, we can't have life with Him. God loves you and wants you in Heaven forever. His commandment to us is that we should love Him with all our heart and soul and strength and mind and why not? Look what He has done for us.

Jer 29:11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

In closing

The word gospel means good news. The good news is that though we are sinners and sinners can't go to Heaven, Jesus has created a way so we can become new and inherit eternal life and live with Him as His children forever.

When Jesus listed the things that He was doing for men, healing all kinds of disease and raising the dead, He included preaching the gospel to the poor. This is offering them eternal life as His children. Jesus is no respecter of persons, everyone may be His children if we accept Him.

We are the ones who get the opportunity to share the gospel with others.

God wants us to go to the whole world with this good news.

He wants us all to be in Heaven with Him.

Jer 29:11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.