

The Truth of the Gospel

Sunday, October 13th, 1985

1 John 5:20

“And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.”

In 1 John Chapter 5:20, it says this; *“And we know that the Son of God is come and hath given us an understanding that we may know Him that is true and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and this is eternal life.”*

I'm speaking to you today on the subject: “THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL.” I want you to hear me; will you listen very carefully as I try to present some things that I believe need to be said in this day?

The Lord God can send us no greater blessing; He can send you no greater blessing for your community or your city than to send you a true preacher of the Gospel of His grace and His glory. There is no greater blessing that God can confer upon a people, than to be able to hear the Word of God declared and preached from the pulpit, from a man who knows God.

You can't tell what you don't know. To hear a man preach or to be able to hear a man preach who knows God, who is true to the Word of God, who in every message exalts the Lord Jesus Christ and preaches for the glory of God and the spiritual good of his hearers, that indeed is one of God's greatest blessings.

Do you know why it is one of God's greatest blessings? I will give you several reasons:

First of all: Men are saved through the preaching of the Word of God. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 1:21; *“It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”* Paul said again, *“I'm not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; it is the power of God unto salvation.”*

Men are saved through the preaching of the Word of God. He says over in the book of James, *“Of His own will He begat He us with the Word of Truth.”* Peter said, *“We are born again not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible seed by the Word of God.”*

So, the greatest blessing that God can give to you or to me is to send us a man preaching the Gospel because it is by the preaching of the Gospel that people are saved.

Secondly: There is true faith; *“Without faith it is impossible to please God. He that cometh to God must believe that He is and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.”* This faith comes through the hearing of the Word of God.

That is what Paul says in Romans 10:17; *“So then, faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.”* What a blessing to be able to hear it, to hear the Word of God. The Scripture says, *“Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved; how shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? How shall they hear without a preacher? How shall they preach except they be sent?”*

So, do you see what a blessing it is and what a treasure it is to be able to go and hear someone preach the Word of God, the true Word of God? Men are saved by hearing the Word of God. Faith comes through hearing the Word of God and then there is spiritual growth and maturity. All of this comes by hearing the Word of God.

In 1 Peter 2:2, the apostle said; *“As new born babes desire the sincere milk of the Word that you may grow thereby (in faith, love, meekness, gentleness, kindness, understanding and humility). All of these things are necessary for the believer.*

In Ephesians 4:11 the Scripture talks about when our Lord ascended to glory. *“He gave some apostles and some prophets and some evangelists and some pastors and teachers.”* You recognize these as being ministers of the Word of God and apostles.

Our Lord said to the apostles; *“Go preach the Gospel. Go into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature.”* The prophets, when they talked about Christ, said; *“Unto Him give all the prophets witness.”* The evangelists are evangelizers, ministers of the Gospel, pastors and teachers.

Pastors feed the flock. What do they feed the flock? The children’s bread is the Word of God. So, *“He left some apostles, prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers for the maturity of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.”*

If you are to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ, it will be through hearing the Word of God preached and taught.

Thirdly: There is comfort. Comfort comes through the preaching of the Word and hearing the Word of God. Some people down in Thessalonica were concerned about their loved ones who were dead and had been buried.

Paul said to them, *“I wouldn’t have you ignorant concerning them which sleep that you sorrow not as those who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, those that sleep will come with Him when He comes.”* He says in verse 18; *“Wherefore, comfort one another with these words.”* We comfort one another with God’s promises, His precious promises.

The words of men are a small comfort. The Word of God is a great comfort in the most severe trials. So, you comfort one another with the Word of God. If you want comfort, it will have to be through the Word.

In Isaiah 40, Christ says; *“Comfort ye, comfort ye, My people, saith the Lord. Cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished and her sins are pardoned; her iniquity is forgiven. She hath received of the Lord double from the hand of God for all her sins.”* So, that is where our comfort comes from; it comes from the Word of God.

Fourthly: There is assurance. A lot of people are troubled about assurance, doubts and fears. Assurance comes through the Word of God. He says in 1 John 5:13; *“These things are written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life and that you may believe on the name of the Son of God.”* That is why the Word is written unto you, that you might believe on Christ and that you might have confidence and assurance in Christ.

So, men are saved by the preaching of the Gospel. That is why that a preacher of the Gospel is such a great gift, a blessed gift from God; *“faith cometh by hearing the Word of God”* along with comfort, spiritual growth, and assurance. If you have a faithful pastor and a faithful minister of the Gospel, give thanks to God. Praise God for that man who feeds the sheep.

If you do not have a faithful minister of the Word of God then it would be profitable for you to do all that you can to get under the ministry of one. If you hear from God you will hear through His Word and it will come to you through the lips of a man.

“There was a man sent from God whose name was John.” God has given His preachers, teachers, witnesses and missionaries to *“feed the sheep.”*

Fifthly: The greatest gift of God and blessing is to have a faithful, true, Christ-honoring, Bible-believing, God-glorifying minister of the Word. Wouldn’t you say that the greatest judgment which God would cause to fall upon a people is to be left in the care of a blind, covetous, compromising preacher?

What a sad, sad, position, to be led by those who are blind. Our Lord said, *“If the blind lead the blind, they will both fall in the ditch.”* No prophet cried out against false preachers quite like Jeremiah. When you read Jeremiah’s words about false preachers, false prophets and teachers, you will think that it was written yesterday.

I want you to take your Bible and open it to the book of Jeremiah. Listen to Jeremiah describe and condemn false preachers. In Jeremiah 6:13, he says that these false preachers are covetous and greedy. Listen to him; *“From the least of them to the greatest of them, every one of them is given to covetousness and greed from the prophet to the priest; everyone deals falsely.”*

They deal falsely because they are covetous men. When the apostle Paul left the elders at Ephesus he made this very definite by saying, *“I coveted no man’s silver and gold. I haven’t sought it or begged for it or tried to get it in anyway.”* He preached for the glory of God and God met His needs. False preachers are covetous, greedy, men.

In Jeremiah 6:14, he says, these false preachers give false assurance to religious people. He said in verse 14, *“They cry peace, peace, when there is no peace.”* They preach everyone into Heaven. They inform people that they are saved.

They say you are saved if you do this and you do that and the other. They will say, “Shake my hand and you are saved;” “quote the sinner’s prayer and you are saved.” They inform people that they are saved.

You can’t tell a man that he is saved; only God can save a sinner and only God can give assurance of salvation or confidence in Christ. These men, these false prophets that Jeremiah is talking about were covetous, greedy, men and they give people false assurance.

These men keep saying, *“Peace, peace, peace; you are all right; you are going to Heaven, when there is no peace.”* This peace is a fake peace, a fictitious peace, a piece of fantasy, not the peace of God.

Sixthly: In Jeremiah 14:13 he says; These preachers deny the wrath of God. Today it is all love and no wrath. It is all love and no judgment. It is all love and no condemnation. Is that not what we are hearing today?

Jeremiah said in Chapter 14:13, *“O Lord God; behold the prophets say to the people, you shall not see the sword; you shall not have famine.”* Men say today, “God is love; there is nothing to fear; God is too good to send a man to hell.”

The prophets kept telling them that they had nothing to fear, that there would be no famine, no judgment, no wrath and no sword. *“O Lord God,”* he said. They deceived the people. Then he said, *“These false preachers were not sent of God.”*

In Jeremiah 13 he said, *“O Lord God; these men deny your wrath and deny judgment and deny justice.”* God answered and said in Jeremiah 14; *“These prophets prophesy lies in my name. I did not send them. Neither have I commanded them; neither have I even spoken to them.”* You will always hear men say, “God said this to me.” God said, *“I didn’t even speak to you.”*

Seventh: These false preachers preach their dreams and visions. They do not preach the Word of God; they preach their dreams and visions, the very same thing that Jeremiah is condemning in his day. There is nothing new under the sun, it is just a circle.

Jeremiah says, “They are covetous; they give false assurance and false peace to their false converts.” He said, “They deny the wrath of God; they were not sent of God.” Then He says, “They preach their dreams and visions.” Does this sound familiar?

In Jeremiah 23:25, our Lord says; *“I have heard what the false prophets say; they prophesy lies in my name.”* God says of them, *“They speak a vision of their own imagination. Let them tell their dreams but he that hath my Word; let him preach my Word faithfully.”* In Jeremiah 23: 25 through 30 it says, *“Behold; I am against them that preach false dreams. I am against them that preach false dreams and cause my people to err by their lies and by their lightness (and their frivolity and their over familiarity) with a Holy God.”*

My friends; will you listen to me, someone better listen; the whole thing, the whole religious world is moving toward a precipice of God Almighty’s eternal wrath. This is vanity and a so-called lightness of dreams and visions and religious fiction.

God says that *“They are prophesying lies and are telling their dreams and visions.”* He is saying, *“I did not send them; I did not speak to them and I haven’t given them a message; they do not preach My Word.”*

Here is the sad note in Jeremiah 5:31; these false prophets preach error and the Lord says, *“The people love it. The false prophets prophesy falsely and the people love to have it*

so.” They flock after them, crowd their auditoriums, clap, cheer and entertain. Christ said, *“I come in My Father’s name and you receive me not. Let another come in his own name and him you will receive.”*

The Master came to this earth and this world spit in His face and nailed Him to a cross. Why did they do that? It wasn’t because of what He did; they had no objection to Him feeding the poor. They had no objection to Him clothing the naked, healing the sick or raising the dead.

These people said, *“We are not stoning you because of a good work;”* they hated Him for what He said. There was a division because of what He said. If a preacher can just preach without saying anything, he can avoid divisions, just so he doesn’t tell the truth about God.

That is what I am going to tell you about now. What should we do and what shall we do? This is a perfect picture of our day with the covetous prophets and greedy prophets. These prophets and preachers are giving false assurance to religious people.

Preachers are denying the wrath of God; they say, “God loves you; I love you and everybody loves you.” It is like we are in a sea of love. There will be no sword; there will be no famine, judgment, or condemnation. They are not sent of God. They preach their dreams and visions and God said that the people would like it.

I have a message for those who have ears to hear. God said, *“He that hath ears to hear; let him hear.”* My friends; hear with discernment; hear with attention; hear with interest and hear for eternity. The Lord has spoken and He speaks today. *“He has never left Himself without a witness.”*

Let me give you four or five things:

First of all: The faith of the Gospel and the truth of the Gospel in the Scripture says; *“The Son of God hath come and give us an understanding.”* I want an understanding. I don’t particularly want a following, bank account, or riches of this world. I want an understanding.

That faith of the Gospel arises from a right knowledge of God. Who is God? God is not who you think He is. God is who He says He is. Everyone can’t make up his own God; that is imagination or images; images come from imagination. *“Thy shalt not make unto thee a graven image.”* God is who He says He is.

In John 17:3 our Lord said this; *“This is life eternal that they might know Thee, the only true God, Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent. No man knoweth the Father but the Son and He to whom the Son will reveal Him.”*

Men by nature do not know God. God says, *“My ways are not your ways; my thoughts are not your thoughts. The natural man receiveth not the things of God.”* God must be revealed. You don’t know God by nature; He must be revealed.

No man knows God; He is incomprehensible; *“It is higher than the heavens, what can you know? It is deeper than hell; what can you tell?”* The riches of God’s greatness are deeper than the sea. God must be revealed in His majesty and in His sovereignty, His holiness, His justice, His mercy and in His love.

“How shall they call on Him of whom they have never heard?” It is worse to have a false god than no god at all because when you have a false god and a false refuge it is more difficult to dig yourself out. You have to destroy your refuge and kill your god before man can preach the true God.

Secondly: The truth of the Gospel arises from an understanding of the fall of Adam and its consequences. *“God made man upright,”* the Scripture says. *“He sought out many inventions.”* God made man in His own image but man fell.

According to the Scriptures, man fell and when he did he died; that is the word used all the way through the Scriptures. He was dead in sin; he was *“dead in trespasses and sin. By one man sin entered the world and death by sin.”*

What kind of death? Physical death follows, but how is it that Adam lived 800 years after he died? He died spiritually; *“So death passed upon all men. In Adam all died. By the disobedience of one many were made sinners.”* Our Lord said, *“I’m not come to call the righteous but sinners; go learn what that means.”*

Do you know what the word sinner means? Do you know what a sinner is? A sin is a nature, a principle, an inward problem. We keep talking about the fruit of sin and we are missing the root of sin; that is where we are and what are by nature, dead in sin. *“We love darkness rather than light.”*

Thirdly: The truth of the Gospel arises from an understanding and *“the Son of God is come and hath given us an understanding”* of the person and work of Christ. My friends; do you understand anything at all about the person and work of Jesus Christ the Lord?

Listen; *“God hath appointed a day in which He is going to judge the world by that man Jesus Christ whom you crucified.”*

“He will judge the world in righteousness by that man;” do you know that man? Do you know anything about Him, His person, His work, His attributes or His glory and what He did? Why did He do it? Who is He? Where is He now?

God is going to judge the world by that man and I need to get acquainted with that man. The Law of God is unchanging; it must be obeyed perfectly. *“Therefore, by the deeds of the Law, shall no flesh be justified in God’s sight.”*

We are talking about the justice of God, the Law of God, which demands the death of all sinners, that Law is unchanging. God’s justice, like His Law is unchanging. That justice must be satisfied. The Scripture says, *“The soul that sinneth shall surely die. God will by no means clear the guilty.”*

Therefore, if God is to have a holy people to populate a holy Heaven, a new heaven and a new earth, then He is going to have to save and redeem them in a way which is consistent with His holiness, His character, and His attributes.

God cannot be God and then change to something else in order to save. He says, *“I am a Just God and a Saviour.”* He has to be just and the justifier. This is what Christ came to do. In 1 Timothy 1:15 it says; *“This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.”* He came to save sinners. *“He came to seek and to save the lost.”*

How did He do it? By Christ’s holy life in the flesh, the Scripture says; *“He was born of woman, made of a woman, made under the Law. He was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin.”* By that perfect, holy Law, as our Representative, as our Federal Head, as our Redeemer, He imputed to us a perfect righteousness because He kept it *“in every jot and tittle.”*

He represented His covenant people. *“He who knew no sin was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”* By His atoning death, He put away all of our transgressions. *“By Himself, He purged our sins.”*

Christ was a representative person like Adam was; *“In Adam we die and in Christ we are made alive.”* By man came sin and by man came forgiveness and mercy. *“By one man’s disobedience we were made sinners; by the obedience of Christ we were made righteous.”*

All who are in Adam died in Adam. All who are in Christ are made alive in Christ. He did for us what we couldn't do, all which God commanded of us. He is our Representative, our Redeemer. By faith in Him these blessings become ours. *"He that believeth on the Son hath life."*

Now, the truth of the Gospel produces a well-grounded hope of our interest in God's mercy in Christ. This is what I mean, *"We are accepted in the beloved."* It is not by what we have done but by what He did. *"We are accepted in the beloved."*

He came down here. He was born of a woman and lived on this earth under the civil law. He lived under the law of the home, the moral Law, the Levitical Law, and every Law of God. He kept it perfectly.

All who are in Him, believe on Him, and trust in Him, His righteousness is theirs. He went to the cross and literally, *"bore our sins in His body on the tree."*

He was buried as our scapegoat and rose as our Justifier; ascended into Heaven as our Mediator and *"we are accepted in Him. Christ is in you that is the hope of glory."* Romans 8:1 says; *"There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ."* Romans 5:1 says; *"Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God."*

Paul summed it up this way: *"I know whom I have believed and I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him against that day."* I know Him. I know who He is and what He did and why He did it and where He is now.

"I am persuaded that He is able to save to the uttermost them that come to God by Him." He is able to do all that He promised. He is able to keep you from falling. He is able to present you faultless, unblameable, and unreprouvable, in His glorious presence. He is able to raise these vile bodies from a corrupt tomb, a grave, and make them just like His glorious body.

He is able, what a blessing to hear the Gospel and believe it!