



Let The Bible Speak

## JULY 2020 NEWSLETTER

### OBEYING THE GOSPEL

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Those serious about their spiritual welfare and about their relationship with God will find it necessary to consider the answers to some significant questions:

What is the gospel?  
What does it mean to obey the gospel?  
Is it really important to obey the gospel?  
Who can obey the gospel?  
How do we obey the gospel?

Scriptures are replete with clear answers to these questions. The word gospel means "good news." The good news of the gospel message is that we can be saved and go to heaven because of what Jesus did for us. The Apostle Paul makes this message clear in writing to Christians in Rome:



*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek (Romans 1:16).*

The "good news" can be broken down into three parts. First, Jesus died on the cross; and it was not for sins He committed, for he was sinless (**2 Corinthians 5:21**). Rather, He died for our sins.

Second, Jesus' body was then taken from the cross and laid in the grave (**Isaiah 53:9; Matthew 27:57-60**). While this act does not seem like good news, we look to the third point for clarity.

Third, three days after Jesus died, He was resurrected early on the first day of the week (**Matthew 28:1-6**), thus, paving the way for us to be able to look forward to the final resurrection if we obey the gospel.

Obeying the gospel means submitting to the authority of Jesus by following His plan as

revealed in His word. Since He is the One who sacrificed Himself for us, it seems only reasonable that we follow His direction in placing ourselves under Him.

The importance of obeying the gospel seems like a moot question in view of the scriptural mandates we have for doing so:

*Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:1-4).*

This scripture sums up the answers to our first three questions. And Paul explains what the penalty is for neglecting to obey the gospel when he says God is coming "*in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ*" (**2 Thessalonians 1:8**). Of course, the ultimate good news is salvation for those who do obey.

Jesus identifies those who should obey the gospel in giving the Great Commission: "*He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned*" (**Mark 16:16**). He had already instructed His apostles to go to the entire world to preach the gospel. So, the gospel is available to every person in the world.

The scriptures also provide clarity when it comes to how we obey the gospel. Jesus Himself speaks to the method of obedience as noted above, but His apostles further clarify the process as they fulfill the Great Commission and preach to people everywhere. One of the clearest sources for learning how to obey the gospel is in the Book of Acts. A striking feature of every example of obeying the gospel is that each one ended in baptism. And, in each case, listeners were told what they needed to do before they could be baptized.

Sundays at 6:30 AM  
**THE CW33**  
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**July Topics**  
**7/5 Sermon #1254**  
Q & A: Is Baptism an Outward Sign of an Inward Grace?

**7/12 Sermon #1255**  
Looking to Jesus

**7/19 Sermon #1257**  
Q & A: Teaching Over a Man?

**7/26 Sermon #1258**  
Solitary Refinement

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A foundational element in obeying the gospel is faith. “*But without faith it is impossible to please Him... (Hebrews 11:6)*. And, faith comes by hearing the word of God (**Romans 10:17**). Faith produces a self-examination that causes us to realize we have not been living as Jesus wants us to live; thus, we change our minds about how we should live and then we change our behavior: that’s repentance (**Luke 13:3**).

Jesus makes it clear that those who want Him to confess their name before the Father must confess His name here (**Matthew 10:32-33**). The simple confession is that He is the Christ, the Son of God. These steps lead us to baptism, which is immersion in water for the remission of our sins (**Acts 2:38**). We rise up out of the water to live a new life because our sins are forgiven and we now belong to the Lord. We must obey the gospel as Jesus instructed if we want to inherit the heavenly home.

## A LOOK AT PERSONAL CONTROL

Thaddeus Young  
Canon City, CO

*“So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God” (James 1:19-20).*

The wise King Solomon declares, *“My son, hear the instruction of your father, and do not forsake the law of your mother” (Proverbs 1:8)*. Where would we be without the instruction of our parents and guardians? They provide guidance, safety, and, even though we might not enjoy it, discipline.



Adolescents often resist discipline and exhibit behavior associated with inattentiveness, hasty communication, and animosity. Thankfully, parents can teach children to curb their desire to rebel and encourage them to submit to their instruction. Much in the same way, our brother James reminds us of the instruction given by our heavenly Father. He reveals that, just as it is with our earthly parents, we must be willing to receive God’s word with submission.

First, we must be *“swift to hear” (James 1:19)*, carefully listening to make sure we pay attention and get the message correctly. James instructs all Christians to endeavor to increase their exposure to scripture; that is, they should spend every available moment hearing and learning from

God’s word. Such activity is the purest indicator of belonging to Him. God’s word produces praise, comfort, wisdom, righteousness, and deliverance (**2 Timothy 3:16-17**). Let it be said of all Christians that they are eager to study and hear God’s word often.

Second, we must be *“slow to speak” (James 1:19)*. A person cannot listen carefully if he is too busy talking, or, for that matter, too busy considering how to respond. Too many discussions are idle talk simply because individuals are focused on what they want to say instead of what others are saying (**1 Timothy 6:4**). James, conversely, teaches that when the appropriate time to speak does come, a person should carefully think about what he will say.

When a young man asked a famous Roman orator to teach him the art of public speaking, the young man continued an incessant flow of meaningless talk that allowed the teacher no opportunity to respond. When they reached the point of discussing a fee, the orator said, “Young man, I will have to charge you double.” When asked why, he explained, “Because I will have to teach you two skills: the first, how to use your tongue; and the second, how to hold it.”

The context of James’ epistle reveals that many early Christians were accustomed to teaching whatever came to their minds; as well, they were proud and given to criticizing (**James 3:14; 4:1-2, 11; 5:9**). These things should not be so. Speaking for and about the master is something precious and should not be taken lightly.

Third, we must be *“slow to wrath” (James 1:19)*. Wrath (anger) is a natural emotion, yet a dangerous one. Here James refers to anger as a deep resentment that smolders and is often unknown to anyone else, save the Lord. James speaks of anger as a response to a truth from God’s word that displeases, exposes a sin, or contradicts one’s personal beliefs. Such behavior does damage to one’s spiritual well-being. Instead of loving and working together, parties fight about and resent God’s truth (**Galatians 4:16**). Personal anger can never serve the cause of Christ. It does not allow for what is right before God—only what is against God.

Any person seeking to improve his or her life as a Christian would be wise to heed James’ advice. These three truths are a revelation for our life if we are willing to submit to this instruction. And yet submission to these words is not easy. The temptation to rebel against it is ever present. Yet, James reminds us that the very same word has a regenerating power: It teaches us that, through discipline, it will transform us into the righteous children our Father wants us to be (**Hebrews 12:3-11**).



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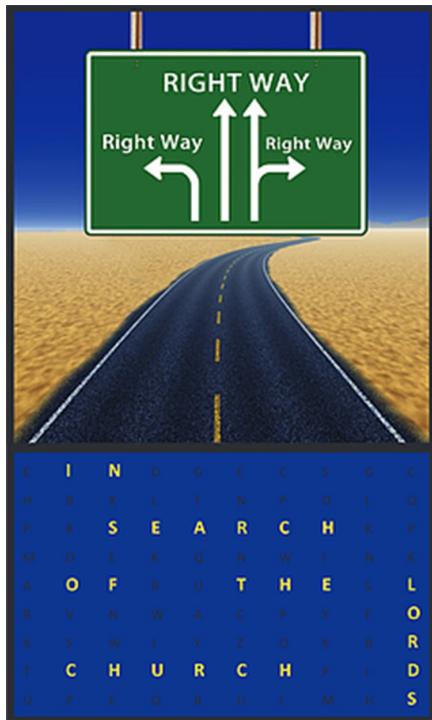
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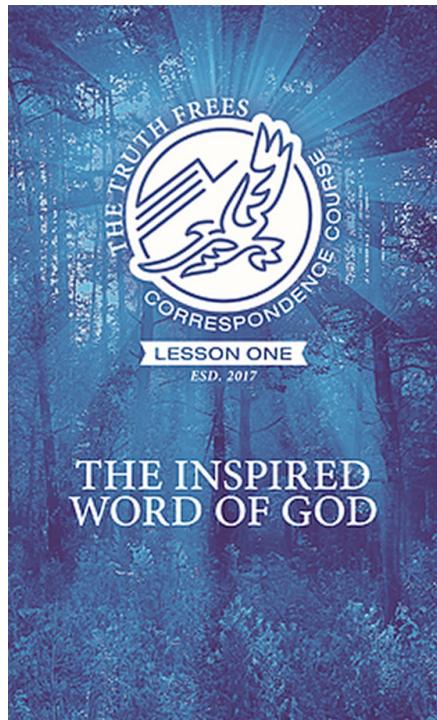
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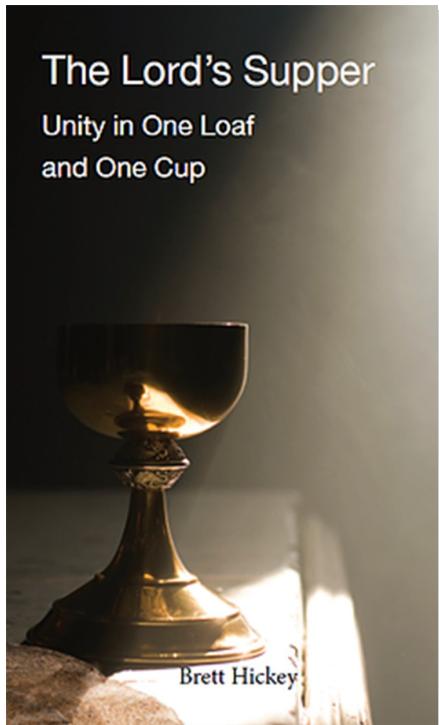
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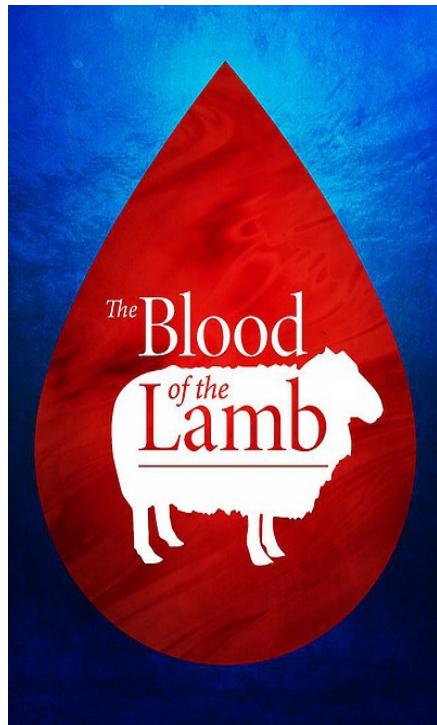
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