

# **Gospel Basics**

Sermon Notes from a 4 Part Series

by David Cason

[www.free-grace.org](http://www.free-grace.org)

## **Introduction**

This set includes sermon notes from four messages delivered first in 1999 regarding the basics truths and implications of the Gospel.

From the very beginning of the Gospel, these truths have been under threat from without and within the church, as is evidenced in the pages of Scripture and history. Today is no exception.

The messages are both evangelistic and apologetic.

Blessings,

David Cason

[www.free-grace.org](http://www.free-grace.org)

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## What is the Gospel ?

11 July 1999

### I. Hypothetical-world

- A. **Anywhere, USA.** - Sunday morning
- B. Man on street - **John** - man with a devastated life
  - 1. Heroin addict
  - 2. Sick
  - 3. Wife/children gone
  - 4. Lost job
  - 5. Homeless - Hungry - Sick - Alone
- C. By Chance, Enters Church - **First Evangelical Church of Anytown USA**
  - 1. 30 minutes of music - emotional - heart warms, breaks, yearns
  - 2. Testimony - **A Man Like John**
    - a. **Drug addiction** - devastation of family, health, finances, all
    - b. Came to **end of rope** - nowhere to go, nothing to do
    - c. Then **met Jesus** - a friend told him of love of Christ - changed his life
    - d. Broken **marriage - restored**: Broken **family - reunited**: Broken **health - healed**: Broken **life - recovered**
    - e. This Jesus can change your life, can make everything new
  - 3. John - tears welling up - **wants this Jesus**, wants this newness, wants this change - how can he have this Jesus? He must have him!
    - a. Music starts - heart cannot bear it
    - b. "Come to the altar, come to Jesus, Invite Jesus into your heart, Don't make him wait, Don't keep him out, Not one more day"
    - c. John, now weeping uncontrollably, flies to the front, prays, invites Christ in, and is assured of his life with God forever
- D. Marvelous Story
  - 1. Yes - a marvelous story, praise God, repeated everywhere in our country, weekly, even daily - the marvelous account of a sinner being saved, coming to Christ, isn't it?
  - 2. OR, is it? Is it that, or is it tragic mockery of biblical gospel?

### II. What is the Gospel?

- A. Only **Word of God** can answer the question, and it is **not unimportant**
  - 1. Gospel is "**power** of God unto salvation"
  - 2. Believe the Gospel is the **way** to salvation
  - 3. For this Gospel, men were **willing to forsake all**, to **endure unspeakable suffering**, to **leave behind** friend, family, wealth, power, influence, importance: to **become the offscourings of the world!**
  - 4. Do we know this ? What if we went around room ? What if we asked your children ?
- B. Read Acts 2:14-40 **Peter's Pentecost Sermon**
- C. **Propositional** - First Item of Notice
  - 1. Peter's sermon is a **series of specific truths** or doctrines or facts, culminating in a conclusion that makes a demand on the hearer (we'll get to that part tonight)
  - 2. Gospel is the Good **News**: it must then be something statable, rational: not a feeling, not an emotion, not a mystical encounter, but reportable, factual, propositional statements.
  - 3. **Examples** from Peter's sermon
  - 4. **Not merely any truths**, but a specific set of truths: many things true, must be

believed before a man will accept the Gospel, or will explain the Gospel, but nonetheless are themselves not saving.

- a. **Existence** of God: His attributes of mercy, holiness, justice
- b. **Sinfulness** of man, that men ought to live righteously and fail
- c. **Need** for salvation, man's lost estate.
- d. God is **author** of salvation
- e. Men must believe these things, yet a man could believe and venture himself upon them and yet not be saved.

## II. The Gospel

A. A set of **propositional truths** concerning **Jesus Christ** (person/identity, work/ministry), and **must be specific**.

1. Called: Gospel of the **Kingdom**
2. Called: Preaching of the **Cross**
3. Called: Revelation of the **Righteousness** of God
4. All these important, but a **Summarization**, not a **exposition**

B. Gospel reveals the **true identity** of Jesus Xst

1. In brief: Jesus Xst is the eternal Son of God, the second person of the Trinity, fully equal with the Father and the Spirit; who, in the fullness of time, took to himself a true human body and soul, becoming fully man, yet without ceasing to be God: one person in two natures. This is the event we call the **Incarnation**.

2. These facts revealed in the narrative of Scripture, in the titles of Xst, and in the claims Jesus makes for himself

- a. Son of God - divinity
- b. Son of Man - humanity

3. Any "Gospel" that omits or alters one of these essential truths about the nature of Xst, is, by definition, false. There is no room for error or compromise here: this has been the testimony of the church for 2000 years:

- a. "And every spirit that **confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh** is not of God: and this is that spirit of **antichrist**, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." (1John 4:3)
- b. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. **I and my Father are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.** Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, **For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.**" (John 10:27-33)

## III. Prophetic Office (Not telling future but expounding the will of God with divine authority)

A. Xst's Prophetic office **confirmed** by:

1. **Voice of God** from Heaven

- a. Baptism
- b. Transfiguration (Luke 9:28-36)
  - (1) Moses - Law, Elijah - Prophets
  - (2) God says: "Hear Him." - Not believe, not accept, but Listen
  - (3) Heb 1:1-2

2. **1st Action** of ministry (Luke 4:18-32)  
Reads Isa 61:1-2 - messianic prophecy revealing messiah as teacher
3. Astonishing **Manner of Teaching**  
Matt 5:21-22, 27-28, 33-34, 39-40, 43-44
4. Astonishing **Result of Teaching**
  - a. Matt 7:28-29 *And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were **astonished at his doctrine**: For he **taught them as one having authority**, and not as the scribes.*
  - b. Luke 4:31-32 *And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath days. And they were **astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power**.*
  - c. Matt 22: 33-34, 46 *And when the multitude heard this, they were **astonished at his doctrine**....the Pharisees had heard that he had **put the Sadducees to silence**... And **no man was able to answer him a word**, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.*
5. Jewish Theology (a confused mass of truth mixed with error)
  - a. Deut 18:15-19
  - b. Increasing realization amongst Jews that Jesus was That Prophet (John 6:46; 7:40)
  - c. All of John 7
6. Jesus Preached as Prophet in Gospel  
Acts 3:19-23 Peter preaching, cf. "Jesus loves you & has wonderful plan for your life"
7. Conclusion
  - a. Gospel rightly preached **must** include a presentation of Jesus as The Prophet, the Revealer of the will of God, to be Heard by the command of God from Heaven, to be received upon penalty of destruction.
  - b. We say with the officers of John 7:46 "Never man spake as this man."

#### IV. Priestly Office (substitution and intercession)

- A. Jesus Xst came as a **substitute for sinners**: "*This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.* (1Tim 1:15)"
  1. The Law: a covenant - blessings to righteousness; cursings to least disobedience (He that offends in one point is guilty of the entire law).
    - a. JC lived life of perfect righteousness, **actively fulfilling** the law in behalf of sinners, meriting the blessings in their behalf.
    - b. JC died the most awful death, hanging cursed on a tree, **bearing the wrath** of God against sin, the curses of the law, that their debt might be completely paid.
  2. JC - the true Israel, the Son of God
    - a. **Delivered** out of Egypt
    - b. **Tempted** in the desert, but accomplishing God's righteousness rather than rebelling
    - c. Thus **inheriting** the land, **entering into the rest** of God which they forfeited through unbelief, obtaining the **eternal inheritance** for the true people of God(Heb 4

3. JC - the true ....
  - a. **Temple** - the place of perfect holiness in which God was pleased to dwell, for God gave to him the Spirit without measure
  - b. **Priest** - offering up the sacrifice once to God, and making constant intercession
  - c. **Sacrifice** - The lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world, without spot or blemish, making propitiation for our sins once and for all through the shedding of his blood

B. The **substitutionary sufferings** of Xst began not on cross, or at trial, or at arrest, or in garden of Geth, but at the moment of his **conception**, from the moment Mary was overshadowed by the Holy Spirit: growing, accelerating in frequency and nature until the last great moment upon the cross

1. **Incarnation**: Taking of human flesh (Phil 2:8) - carrying death
2. **Birth**: Born in a manger, no room at the inn (Luke 2:7)
3. **Infancy**: Hunted by Herod (Matt 2:13), Carried away to Egypt
4. **Childhood**: Lord of Heaven subject to sinful human parents (Luke 3:51)
5. **Baptism**: Of repentance, confessing their sins!!! (Matt 3:13-15)
6. **Temptation**: 40 days (1 for each year): hungry, buffeted by Satan (Matt 4:3ff)
7. **Ministry**: From his first appearance in Galilee to the arrest in Jerusalem, no fewer than 5 unsuccessful attempts on his life (Luke 4:28-30; John 7; John 8; John 10; Matt 21, and 2 plots to kill Him (Matt 12:14; John 11).
8. **Ministry**: 3 separate occasions, his miracles attributed to the power of the **Devil** (Matt 9:34; 12:24; in Judea also)
9. **Triumphal Entry**: a kind of tragic parody
10. **Gethsemane**: a foreshadowing, a taste of the pangs of judgment
11. **Betrayal**: By his own disciple with a kiss
12. **Abandoned** of all men: **Denied** with an oath by Peter!
13. Before **Annas**: mocked, beaten
14. Before **Caiaphas**: condemned, beaten, spit in face, mocked "prophecy who smote thee"
15. Before **Pilate**; then Herod Antipas: accused, beaten, mocked, arrayed as a king
16. Before **Pilate** again: the crowd chooses a murderer rather than Xst, tumultuously threatens to riot if he is not crucified; scourged, mocked by soldiers; crown of thorns pressed on his brow; spit upon; mock worship
17. Runs the gauntlet of the **crowd** to Golgotha
18. **Crucified**: the most shameful death of all - 6 hours on the cross in agony
19. **Garments** parted; hung between two common **thieves**; rulers scoff; soldiers mocked
20. Hanging between heaven and earth; finally, **forsaken** of the Father, the wrath of God is let loose upon his soul, and he suffers the **torments** of an eternal Hell quantified in time
21. **Dead body abused**: side is pierced, unceremoniously buried in a tomb not his own, and left to rot

C. All of this: A Substitution - key point

1. The innocent and perfect Son of God suffering the shame of the world and the wrath of the Father, that sinful and wicked men might approach God as those perfect, clothed with his righteousness, acquitted of their own guilt, in a free exchange. That they might abandon their own stinking, putrid good works, their vile offerings that sicken a holy God, and take themselves to the mercy of God offered in Xst: the just for the unjust, a free gift of eternal salvation and righteousness, that God might be both just and the justifier of them that believe in Jesus.
2. Gospel proclamation must include setting forth of Jesus as the perfect substitute for

sinner: both in actively fulfilling the law of God, and in making atonement with his own blood, as a lamb without spot or blemish, fully accomplishing redemption upon the cross: calling all sinners to abandon their own righteousness, and come unto him to find life, pardon, and a spotless robe.

## V. Kingly Office

A. Jesus Xst is the **King of Kings** and the **Lord of Lords**:

1. Proclamation of Xst's unlimited reign is absolutely **essential** to the Gospel.
2. This is more at the **core** of the sermons in the Book of Acts than his Priestly work.
3. Today, totally omitted and openly denied.

B. Xst King not after Death, or at his Return, but at his **Incarnation !!!**

1. At **Conception**: (Luke 1:30-33) *"And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."*

2. At **Birth**: (Matt 2:1-2) *"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." And Herod sought to kill him for precisely this reason!!!*

3. In his **Early Ministry**: (John 1:47-49) *"Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel."*

4. At the **Beginning** of the **Gospel**: (Matt 3:1-2) *"In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*

5. **Jesus Ministry**: (Matt 4:23) *"And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people."*

6. **Sending** of the **Apostles**: (Matt 10:5-7) *"These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand."*

7. Jesus **entire ministry**: His message was the Kingdom!

- a. Its nature and value (parables)
- b. Its laws (sermon on the mount)
- c. Necessity of entering it
- d. The characteristics of its subjects (Beatitudes and parables)
- e. Its development and progress in the world (parables)

8. **Why** all this **true**: Because of the arrival of the King !!!

- a. Jerusalem Entry : John 12:13-15
- b. Trial before Pilate: issue was his kingship - and Pilate's pronouncement
- c. Even his tragic death is a testimony to his kingship and the nature of his kingdom

9. **Jews knew** the Messiah would be a king: their rejection of him is specifically in this regard: when he failed their **carnal expectations**, then the crowds who had followed him turned on him and cried out for his death. **Ultimate problem**: upside down kingdom



- a. Invisible - Visible
- b. Spiritual - Carnal
- c. Riches in Heaven - Riches on Earth
- d. Exaltation Later - Exaltation Now
- e. Forgiveness - Judgment
- f. Weakness, Servanthood, Forgiveness - Strength, Dominion, Revenge
- g. They didn't want a King who wore a **crowns of thorns**, and called them to follow in the **Way of the Cross**.

C. **Resurrection and Exaltation** of Xst: elements of his Kingly Office

1. **Resurrection**: Most important event in History: a man returned from the dead never to die again
  - a. Is sometimes put as **abbreviation** for the preaching of the **Gospel**
  - b. Is a **primary doctrine** in the preaching of the apostles (Acts 2:22ff) - in fact, it could be said that all of what the apostles preached culminated in this one doctrine - that Jesus was raised from the dead
  
2. As Related to **Priesthood**:
  - a. As related to his **priesthood**: the resurrection is the **final element** of Xst's **substitutionary** work in the accomplishing of redemption
 

(1 Pet 1:3) *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath **begotten** us **again** unto a lively hope by the **resurrection** of Jesus Christ from the dead"*

(Rom 4:23-25) *"Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that **raised** up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offences, and was **raised** again for our **justification**."*
  - b. In fact, this part of Xst's work is so crucial, that **without it**, Paul says there is **no salvation**:
 

(1 Cor 15:16-19) *"For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."*
  - c. Xst's resurrection is the **proof** of his **victory** over Death, Hell, Sin, and Judgment
 

(Rev 1:18) *"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."*
  
3. As related to **Kingship**
  - a. Resurrection is the **pathway** to Xst's **ascension** and **enthronement**. Xst becomes Lord of All because of his triumph over the last enemy Death
 

*"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet"* (Eph 1:19-22)

*"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under*

*the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Phil 2:9-11)*

- b. Jesus **ascends** to the right hand of the throne of God - All **power** is given unto Him
- c. Because of his conquering Death in the resurrection, he becomes the **Lord** of the **Future** - the one **worthy** to open the **seals** (Rev 5)

#### D. **Return** for Vengeance and Judgment

- a. **Coming** again - not as servant but as Judge, Jury and Executioner: righteous avenger of all wrong
- b. Not with Word of **Grace** but with Sword of **Judgement**
- c. Not with Gospel but with **Destruction**: taking vengeance in flaming fire upon all those that know not God and obey not the Gospel

*(Rev 19:11-16) “And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.”*

#### 6. Conclusion

- a. What smote Peter's hearers with fear, made them cry out, What must we do to be saved? It is the terror filled realization that they are personally guilty of the blood of the Messiah, the King of Israel - and that he has risen, and been made Lord of all and will return in judgment.
- b. (Luke 23:26-30) *“And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus. And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us.”*
- c. (Rev 6:12-17) *“And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”*

## What is Saving Faith ?

11 July 1999

### I. Introduction

#### A. Review

##### 1. This morning, examined **What is the Gospel ?**

That Jesus Xst, the eternal Son of God, became man (in the fullest sense) and so was God and man in one person with two natures: that he came as the Prophet of God, the word of God himself, revealing God, to be heard as the greatest authority, upon penalty of eternal destruction; as Priest, the perfect substitute for sinners, perfectly fulfilling the law of God, and standing in the place of sinners to receive the curse of God, that his righteousness might be imputed to sinners, and they be declared guiltless and pardoned; as King, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, raised from the dead, ascended into heaven, set down on the right hand of the throne of God, given all authority over everything that is named, and coming again to judge the world and take vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the Gospel.

#### B. Gospel **demands** a response

1. **Not** merely something **interesting** to mull over
2. Right preaching of the Gospel culminates in a **demand** or **command**, a response from the hearer
3. It so demands a response, that anyone who hears the Gospel and fails to comply with its demand **increases** his **guilt** before God - so that the **Good News** itself becomes the **savor** of **death** to those that are perishing.

#### C. This is **not Contrary** to the **sovereignty** of God

1. People become **shackled** in their **evangelism** when embrace Calvinism (if God determines everything, then there is nothing for us to do)
  - a. **Arminianism vs. Calvinism:** not a question of what men must do, but a question over whether **dead men** have the innate power to do it, apart from a supernatural work of God
  - b. I am as sovereign grace as any one in this room, but I have **no hesitation** to **invite** men to Xst the way Jesus himself did, or to **Command** them to come to Xst, for that is their obligation before God, and if they are to be saved, they must do so: the difference is, I believe God miraculously and mysteriously determines who will!
  - c. **Hyper-Calvinism:** a serious heresy: denies that the Gospel should be preached indiscriminately; that all men should be commanded to repent and believe
    - 1) Realize his election! - as serious an error as Freewill
    - 2) **Same error as Arminianism:** God does not command what man cannot do - but I tell you that God does call, he does command, and men are the guiltier for rejecting it.

2. Xst, Apostles do not hesitate to call for a response. Remember the Gospel of the Kingdom: they went forth **preaching** the **Gospel** of the kingdom saying: **repent** for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

3. Acts 16:31 - *"Sirs, **what must** I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."*

#### D. So the **question** is **not**:

1. Does the **Gospel** demand a response ? It **does**.

2. Does the true **preaching** of the **Gospel** call on the hearers to make a response ? It **does**.

E. The question is, What response does the Gospel call on men to make, that they might be saved ?

1. **Believe**

a. *“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God”* (Eph 2:8)

b. *“Abraham **believed** God, and it was counted unto him for **righteousness**.”* (Rom 4:3)

c. *“Knowing that a man is not **justified** by the works of the law, but by the **faith** of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be **justified** by the **faith** of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be **justified**.”* (Gal 2:16)

## II. What is Saving Faith

A. We are saved by **faith**, and that **alone** - but there is a **faith** that does not **save**.

1. Luke 8:4-15

**Four** sowings: **three** believes: **one** saved

2. *“Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the **demons** also **believe**, and tremble.”* (James 2:19)

Faith of Demons - not saving

3. *“But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness. For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner. King Agrippa, **believest** thou the **prophets**? I **know** that thou **believest**.”* (Acts 26:25-27)

Faith of History - not saving

4. *“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out demons? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”* (Matt 7:21-23)

Faith of Miracles - not saving

5. Crowds following Jesus; Simon Magus

B. **True Faith = Knowledge, Assent, Trust** of Xst as he is set forth in the Gospel

1. **Knowledge**

a. The **primary facts** of the Gospel, as we delivered them this morning, or a close approximation.

b. **Muslim** man: **New** Age man; a **different Jesus**

c. The **only revelation** of Jesus is the **Word of God** - no other channel to know who Jesus is but the record of Scripture, the Gospel as contained in the Word of God.

1) If we fail to set forth these facts, **men** are **not coming** to the **Xst** of the **Scriptures**, but to the **Xst** of their own **imagination**s, and they have nothing more in common than the golden calf did with the living God.

2) If they alter the Gospel, they alter the Xst of the Gospel, and damn themselves.

- d. Scandal: modern pulpit, truncated preaching, altered their message
  - 1) A **man** may **claim belief** in Xst while **barely able to state** one **truth** about him, much less explain the Gospel he has supposedly believed
  - 2) Men are deceived: thinking themselves saved, they become two-fold over the children of hell than they were before.
- e. **BUT**, a man may know: yet not be saved
  - 1) Mars Hill: all heard, some **believed**, some **mocked**, some said, we will **hear more** of this man. (Yes, No, Indifferent)
  - 2) Man may **know**, even **study**, be able to teach to a high level: universities are full of lost men who can tell you exactly what the Bible says. But they don't believe it to be true.
- f. We must know the facts, yet knowing facts not enough!

## 2. Assent

- a. Assent: **acknowledging** the facts as **true**
- b. Man **rejects cardinal truths** of the Gospel, **rejects** the **Xst** of the Gospel.
  - 1) All professing Xtns talk of the Gospel, yet many deny the very truths we saw and learned were the Gospel.
    - virgin birth
    - deity of Xst
    - substitutionary sufferings
    - resurrection
    - Lordship of Xst
- c. BUT, men may **assent** to the **truth**, may **accept** as **historical truth**, yet not be saved, for true **faith is more** than simply **acknowledging** some historical **facts**. **Respectable** Xty of all centuries and ages, esp when Xty is prevalent.

## 3. Trust (this the real definition of faith, pistos)

- a. Pistos: translated: commit to, or **entrust** oneself to
- b. The truth - the cardinal points - must be **ventured** upon
- c. **Bridge** illustration - This why faith is called, **Coming** to Xst
- b. A man **may know**, **may assent**, w/o work of God
  - 1) No man commits himself with his whole soul with total abandon
  - 2) This the work that no man can do apart from divine grace

## E. What is it to embrace the **Gospel** with this **Faith** ?

- 1. KAT in Xst as Prophet
  - a. **Not** merely to **know** that Xst was the great prophet of God, the Word of God, perfectly revealing the will of the Father to those that heard him; not merely to **assent**...
  - b. But to **commit** oneself to Xst as the absolute revealer of truth, the divine Word of authority. To **Hear** him, to **receive** him as the one who when he speaks, he speaks undeniable truth. To receive the Word of God as the authoritative message that it is. To acknowledge Xst as your teacher, as the Word of God to you.
  - b. To claim to receive Xst as Savior, but to dent this Word, or to ignore this Word, or to misuse and abuse this Word, is to declare openly that you have never received him AT ALL.

2. KAT in Xst as Priest

- a. **Not** merely to **understand** and **acknowledge** the great exchange of the just for the unjust on the cross; not merely to acknowledge the perfection of Xst's sacrifice, or the completeness of his fulfilling of the law
- b. To **embrace** Xst as Priest is to abandon one's own righteousness, to declare from your heart its filthiness, its uselessness; to fly to Xst and the sacrifice of Xst as your only hope; to trust in him as the all-sufficient one, betaking yourself to Him as your complete Savior, as your only hope before God
- b. To **claim** to receive **Xst**, but to **exult** in your own **righteousness**, to maintain that there is any good in you before the holiness of God, to preserve some belief in the excellence of your own works; this is to **deny Xst** altogether. **Xst is not a self help** program, to take what is good in you and add to it - he offers to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him!

3. KAT in Xst as King

- a. **Not** merely to **acknowledge** the **truth** of his resurrection, ascension, glorification, return; or to admit of his righteous reign
- b. It is to **abandon** your own **government** of your life, to **abandon** your own **self-determination** and self-will and control; To receive him as the universal Lord that he is, receive him not as A King, but as Your King
- c. This a major problem today, but here it is: To **claim** to have **received** Xst, while **denying** his absolute **authority** in your life as well as in the world; to claim to receive Xst while **admittedly withholding** from him the right to reign in some part of your life, is to reject Xst entirely.
  - 1) Jesus doesn't need your permission to be Lord of All - he is Lord of All. And if you don't want to bow before him now and acknowledge his throne, you will later, just before you are thrust into hell forever, where you will have no doubts about his absolute sovereign power.

F. What is "Believing"

1. **Faith: inward** - its exercise cannot be reduced to a **formula**, or to some **outward action**. To do so is to **undermine** and **destroy** true faith altogether. To lead people down a false path - to hold out something as faith, or as a demonstration of faith, but is not faith at all.
  - a. **Walk an aisle** - not **coming to Xst**
  - b. Joining church, being baptized - not believing on Jesus
  - c. Sinners prayer: a man may invite Jesus into his heart and yet be totally ignorant of who Jesus is, or what he has done. That is not faith.
  - d. I cannot tell you that because you prayed a prayer or did some other thing, that you exercised saving faith. And to call that action, that mechanical action, saving faith is to deceive a man regarding the nature of faith, and potentially to into thinking he is right before God while he is yet in his sins - and that is the worst thing you can ever, ever do.
  - e. These are all outward things that anyone can do, or even be compelled to do by various psychological and social pressures: but they have never saved a single soul.
  - f. Faith is within: the outward proof of faith:
    - 1) We know that we have passed from death to life because we love the brethren
    - 2) We know that we are of God because we keep his commandments
    - 3) His Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.

## G. Gospel Appeal

## The Cost and the Consequences of True Discipleship

18 July 1999

### I. Review

#### A. What is the Gospel? - Propositional, factual message about Jesus Xst

1. That Jesus Xst, the eternal Son of God, became man (in the fullest sense) and so was **God and man in one person** with two natures.
2. That he came as the **Prophet** of God, the word of God himself, revealing God, to be heard as the greatest authority, upon penalty of eternal destruction.
3. As **Priest**, the perfect substitute for sinners, perfectly fulfilling the law of God, and standing in the place of sinners to receive the curse of God, that his righteousness might be imputed to sinners, and they be declared guiltless and pardoned.
4. As **King**, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, raised from the dead, ascended into heaven, set down on the right hand of the throne of God, given all authority over everything that is named, and coming again to judge the world and take vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the Gospel.

#### B. What is Saving Faith?

1. Knowledge, Assent, and Trust in Jesus Xst **as he is offered in the Gospel:** as Prophet, Priest, and King.
  - a. **Knowledge:** the factual message of the Gospel, apart from the knowledge of which, no man can be saved (different message = different Xst; Also, men can know, BUT...)
  - b. **Assent:** Accepting, believing these truths; acknowledging them as completely true and without mistake (Reject truths = reject Xst; Also, men can assent, BUT...)
  - c. **Trust:** Personal embrace and reliance; abandoning self-righteousness and flying to Xst as your Priest; abandoning self-government and cleaving to Xst as your King; abandoning self-wisdom and entrusting yourself to the words of Xst as Prophet.
2. **Nature of Believing:** An inward, spiritual quality: cannot be reduced to a mechanical formula or action without fundamentally changing its character

### II. The Cost and the Consequences of True Discipleship or, What is True Discipleship ?

#### A. Luke 14:25

1. Imagine the Scene
  - a. **Great Multitudes** (v. 25)
    - 1) Luke 12: so many they were **trampling** one another
    - 2) Everywhere he went, this throng: watching, listening, seeing the miracles, hearing the teaching, wondering in astonishment, gossiping: all of this energy and interest and hope!!!
  - b. I can hear it now: if moderns had been there, both **Arminians** (Campus Crusade) and **Calvinists** (Banner of Truth) alike:
    - 1) Great Revival
    - 2) Thousands saved
    - 3) God is returning his Spirit
2. **Confronted** with this **crowd**, **what** does **Jesus do?**
  1. **Does he Thank God** for this Great Revival; talk about the **thousands saved**; Praise God for the **return** of his **Spirit** so long withdrawn. No....
  2. He does: "**How to shrink a church in one easy sermon**"



3. Jesus says: "This is **not** what you think it is. I'm afraid some of you may be **mistaken**. We're not on some path to fame and riches and power. You don't know what you are talking about, you don't know what's going on here. You're ignorant. You need to know the facts of the matter, because once you know the facts, once you know what's really going on, you may not be so keen about following me anymore."

4. "If you embrace me, if you enter into my kingdom, if you believe my Gospel: it's not like what you're thinking - its going to cost you, its going to cost you everything. Everything you hold dear: family, possessions, own lives So maybe you had better count the cost, think about what you're doing, before you toss your hat in with me...."

### III. Cost of Discipleship - Luke 14:25-33

#### A. Enlisting with Jesus = joining the military

1. **Free**: no fee, don't pay anything, BUT
2. You **give up** self-government, self-rule, become a man under authority.
3. You ship out, train, do as you are told, with no chance of leaving, or only under threat of **severe penalty**.
4. Under certain circumstances, you may be sent to far away foreign lands, ordered to **kill**, or to **die** yourself.
5. **Enlistment is free**: but there are **Costs** and **Consequences** for doing so: The man who doesn't consider them before he enlists is a **fool**: just as the man in Luke 14:28-32.
6. So what does it cost to follow Xst...?

#### B. Forsake all other Relationships (v.26)

1. Why does Jesus say this? **Hyperbole**: Jesus is **not** commanding you to **hate** one another. This would be contrary to the law of God.
2. This statement is based on the doctrine taught in Matt. 10, where Jesus discusses the **result of the Gospel being preached**:
  - a. *"And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."* (Matt 10:21-22)
  - b. **"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me."** (Matt 10:34-37)

3. Ah Family, such a **wholesome** thing: Family Ties are the **strongest** ties: blood, marriage

a. God designed it this way: **natural affection**. Men will do virtually **anything** for their families, their children, their spouses. Kill for them, die for them, sacrifice all for them. Some of the **greatest deeds** recorded among men have been in this regard.

b. This comes with a **price**, doesn't it? When someone within the family disrupts this unity, they are **more** than an **enemy**, they are a **traitor**.

1) Do you know? **Orthodox Jew** - funeral

2) Do you know? A **mixed marriage** - A house with **no** Xtns is happier than a house with **one** Xtn.

3) Some countries, **Islam**, a man's **own** family will **kill** him for converting...

4. **Some** of you **know** exactly what I am talking about, by **experience**....parents, brother, sister, children, wife husband. You know the pain, the sorrow, the affliction.
  - a. There is **no absolute promise** that the coming of the Gospel, or any man's embracing of the Gospel, will be a **healer of family** relations. In fact, Jesus teaches expressly the opposite. He has not come to bring peace, he says, but a sword.
  - b. Gospel, in actual practice, is **NOT** the **healer** of society's divisions, curer of the world's ills.
  
5. Some may think, "How sad, glad it doesn't apply to me. My whole family is converted." If that's what you think, you haven't even begun to understand the **Cost**.
  - a. Would you choose Xst if they were going to **kill** your **children**, or your **wife** or **husband**?
    - 1) **Not hypothetical**: Former Soviet Union, Sudan, Islamic nations
    - 2) Xst says, "Deny me before men, Deny you before my Father in Heaven."
  
6. **You enter the kingdom alone**....not with spouse, child, or parent
  - a. "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mark 8:37)
  - b. Some men trade their souls for their families - an eternal mistake.

### C. Forsake all Possessions (v. 33)

1. Verb form of "**apostasy**"!!! (to abandon, turn away completely). That is the relationship a man must have towards his possessions in order to enter the kingdom!
  - a. **Xst's knew this by experience**: *"And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."* (Luke 4:5-8 2)
  - b. **Moses knew by experience**: *"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward."* (Heb 11:24-26)
  - c. **Disciples knew by experience**:
    - 1) **Peter, James, John**: (Luke 5:11) *"And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him."*
    - 2) **Matthew**: (Luke 5:27-28) *"And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me. And he left all, rose up, and followed him."*
  
2. The lesson here is simple: **possessions keep men from God**.
  - a. The problem is fundamental: For the most part, the **road to riches** is a road **paved with sin**. So either a man must **abandon God** to **walk** that **road**, or, having walked it, he must **abandon** his **accumulated riches** to **walk** with **God**.
  - b. *"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."* (Matt 6:24) - But many have tried....

3. Primary Lesson of Xst: **Man's decisions are governed by the state of his heart**
  - a. Xst asks, "*Why do men have **anxiety**?*" *Because they lay up **treasures** for themselves on **Earth** (thief steals, moth eats, rust destroys), for "Where your **treasure** is, there will your **heart** be also"* (Matt 6:19-21) And if a man's heart is in his treasures, and his treasures are on earth, how will he respond to Xst?
  - b. **Answer:** Matt. 19:16-24
  
4. This is real, today:
  - a. Some are called to abandon all **immediately** to follow Xst. (inheritance, etc.)
  - b. Some, more like our **example** of the children **above**.  
*"But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions....For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the **spoiling** of your **goods**, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance."* (Heb 10:32ff)
  
  - c. Something more **insidious**, more **gradual** - the daily compromises.
    - 1) In business: compromise Xst to advance, or gain
    - 2) Absent from instruction, to work a little more, for a little more money
    - 3) Gradual accumulation of wealth, and the cares that come with it
    - 4) Remember the third sowing: not sudden apostasy, but a gradual choking; stealing nutrients, shading sun, until the plant is dead....
  
5. "*For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?*" (Mark 8:36)

### C. Embrace the Way of the Cross (v. 26, 27)

1. Cross is **instrument of shame** and **death**: To embrace the cross is to embrace shame, submit to death. It is, as Xst says, **to hate one's own life**.  
*"And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it."* (Mark 8:34-35)
  
2. Xst is teaching that for a man to **follow him**, he must not only **forsake** family and friends, houses and lands, he must be prepared to **embrace** a way of suffering, of shame, of persecution, that may even culminate in the **sacrifice** of his **own** life.  
 Interestingly, the apostolic writers consider this to be obvious, self-evident:  
*"Beloved, **think it not strange** concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you"* (1Pet 4:12)
  
- b. Why? They **understood** the **nature** of the **world**.
  - 1) The **world** as we know it, in spite of its wars and murders, is a place of **unity**: united under **one** government, with **one** purpose, with **one** Prince.
    - a) What happens if one nation is invaded by another on its home soil: divisions are put aside, WAR is declared.
    - b) This is precisely what has happened.
      - i. Kingdom of God has invaded, and all the power of death and hell and Satan has been unleashed, united in one evil purpose: an all out war to destroy the work of God.

ii. "And we know that we are of God, and **the whole world lieth in wickedness.**" (1John 5:19)

c. This has been the case since the **beginning of Man**:

- 1) The serpent in the **Garden**
- 2) The **seed** of the woman and the seed of the serpent throughout time
- 3) The **prototype**: Cain and Abel

*"In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were **evil**, and his brother's **righteous. Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.**" (1John 3:10-13)*

- 4) The more **righteous** you are, the more **godly**, the more **Xstlike** - the **more** you will be vilified, hated, persecuted, hounded unto death.

3. It **must** be this way - it is like a law of nature

*"The **disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?"** (Matt 10:24-25)*

4. And, it is a **necessary repetition**, the **imitation** of Xst: if we are to **go** where he **went**, we must **walk** the road he **walked**

*"It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: **If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us: If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.**" (2Tim 2:11-13)*

5. What **kind** of **Sufferings** ?

a. **Not** primarily the **sufferings** that **all men share** as humans (sickness, loss, sorrow)

b. Sufferings on **account** of our **identification** with **Xst**; and our **walking** in his path of **righteousness**

1) **Speak evil** (1Pet 4:3): *"For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you"*

2) **Political/Religious opposition** (Matt 10:16-18)

3) **Family** (Matt 10:21, 34-36)

4) **Call you Devil** (Matt 10:25)

5) **Kill** (Matt 10:28)

D. What **motivates** a **man** to do this ?

1. **Not...**

- a. ...seeing a miracle (multitudes)
- b. ...emotional fervor of some religious excitement (multitudes)
- c. ...physical healing, being fed bread (multitudes)
- d. ...even religious instruction (multitudes)

2. *“From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. [Jesus had just given them another hard saying] Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, **Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.**”* (John 6:66-69)

## No Other Gospel

18 July 1999

### I. Gal 1:6-10

#### A. Introduction

1. **Galatian** church **received** the **Gospel** directly from **Paul** (Acts 16, approx. AD 50)
2. Almost **immediately** (epistle in same year), Paul obtained a report that the **Galatian** church was **plagued** by serious **doctrinal** error: that they had, literally, "**turned away**" to another gospel.
3. Though the **apostolic church** was **filled** with **problems** (this was no glorious age of perfection, as even a cursory reading of the book of Acts and the epistles attests), the **speed** of their apostasy was **astonishing** even to **Paul**.
4. How did Paul **respond**:

a. Does he advocate **toleration** for this "new" view:

- 1) "We all just need to accept one another as we are."
- 2) "We need to affirm each others beliefs."

b. Does he say, "Well, we're all Xtns after all: what's important is we all love Jesus."

c. Does he say, "Doctrine divides, let's not talk about that." "Let's just get in the Spirit."

B. **No**: he writes them a letter in which, in these verses, he makes **three** crucial points.

1. **Turning** from the true **Gospel**, from the Gospel as Paul **delivered** it, is the same as **turning** from **God** and Xst (v. 6)

a. This would seem to be a **proud** and **boastful** statement: but we must remember that Paul **received** his Gospel from Xst himself by **direct revelation**.

b. But why can he say that turning from this Gospel is turning from Xst ?

- 1) **Change** the **message** of the Gospel, we **reveal** a **different Xst**, for the message of the Gospel is the revelation of the true Xst.
- 2) If we **reveal** a **different Xst**, then men are **following** and **believing** on a **different Xst**, who lacks the power and promises of the true Xst.
- 3) So to **turn** to a **different Gospel** message, Paul says, is to **turn** to a **different God**, and a different **Saviour**, and a different **salvation**: which, as he puts it, "is **not another**", because **no other** one **exists!**

c. Already, we see the **seriousness** with which Paul approaches this issue: not a matter of theological discussion - a **matter** of **eternal salvation!**

d. **Surprising** - the strength of Paul's statement, given the **religious confusion** of his time. Like today, there were many, many different teachings regarding what the Gospel was, many different errors.

1) Deny that **Jesus** is the Xst (orthodox Jew)

*"Who is a liar but he that **denieth** that **Jesus** is the **Christ**? He is antichrist, that **denieth** the Father and the Son."* (1John 2:22)

2) Deny the **Humanity** of Xst - Xst was angel or spirit being (gnostic)

*"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that **Jesus** Christ is come in the **flesh**. This is a deceiver and an antichrist."* (2John 1:7)

- 3) Deny the **divinity** of Xst - greatest of created beings (Liberalism, New Age)
- 4) Deny **salvation by faith alone** - Judiazers (RCC)

- i. *"But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to **circumcise** them, and to command them to **keep the law of Moses**."* (Acts 15:5)
- ii. *"Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have **troubled** you with words, **subverting** your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment."* (Acts 15:24)

- 5) Deny the **Resurrection** of Xst

*"Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is **no resurrection** of the dead?"* (1Cor 15:12)

- 6) **Resurrection** is **past** already

*"But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and **overthrow the faith** of some."* (2Tim 2:16-18)

- 7) **Deny progressive sanctification** (cults)

*"Let us continue in sin, that grace may abound"* (Rom 6)

e. In spite of **host** of views, **ease** of confusion, Paul says, **embrace a different message is embracing a different Xst!**

2. **Altering** the gospel is not acceptable: it is "**perverting**" the Gospel of Xst (v. 7)

- a. We don't get to each have our "**take**" on the Gospel, our **individual** idea of what the Gospel is. It is not a matter for **debate**, or **discussion**.

- b. The Gospel **is** what it **is**; It is a **certain** message, a **certain** declaration of truth. **Changing** it is not an **option**.

- 1) To **alter** the Gospel message is thus to "**pervert**" it.

- 2) This is a very strong word: it means "to take something and to **turn** it into its **total opposite**."

- i. The moon was "turned" into blood. (Acts)

- ii. Laughter was "turned" into grief. (Elsewhere)

- 3) When you **change** the gospel, you, by definition, create something **diametrically opposed** to it.

- c. The Gospel is not to be **fashioned** according to the **listeners**, **twisted** and **adjusted** to ensure a **favorable** reception, but delivered as received.

3. Those who come with an **altered Gospel** are not to be **embraced** or **tolerated**. They are "**troublers**" of the church. Paul says, "Let them be **accused**." (v.8-9)

- a. The presence of **false** teachers is no **new** phenomenon:

- 1) **Then**: *"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many **false prophets** are gone out into the*

world.” (1John 4:1)

2) In **OT**: “*But there were **false prophets** also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.*” (2Pet 2:1)

3) **Future**: “*For there shall arise false Christs, and **false prophets**, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.*” (Matt 24:24)

b. The **difference** is in the **response**, **Then**:

- 1) Called “**troublers**” of the church
- 2) Called “**antichrists**”
- 3) They “**subvert your souls**”
- 4) Called “**deceivers**”
- 5) They “**overthrow your faith**”

d. And, **Now**

- 1) **Toleration**
- 2) **Anti-doctrinal**
- 3) Mustn't **criticize** anyone's teachings
- 4) Can't even raise the issue in many churches, or among many Xtns: Some even teach that you should go to **any** local “Bible-believing” church, and your job is to “**minister**”, so it doesn't really matter if the **theology** and practice is totally hostile to the Word of God.

c. Part of **problem**: People can accept that such persons exist, but based on the descriptions, these must be pretty obvious **bad** guys, right?

- 1) In some cases, **Yes**: their ungodly lives attest to their wicked doctrines
- 2) In many cases, **No**: Why are they called “wolves in **sheep's** clothing”?
- 3) They “**creep** in unawares.”
- 4) If possible, “they would **deceive** the very elect.”
- 5) “*For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.*” (2Cor 11:13-15)

d. They don't **look** like **villains**: they look like godly, upright, respectable men; great teachers, ministries, doing such good for the kingdom; so pious, love Jesus so much. Might be on the radio or TV. Might have a large following, run large well-respected organizations. Might even have many real Xtn's involved in what they are doing and promoting.

e. What does Paul say about these perverters of the Gospel: “Let them be **accursed**.”

- 1) Literally, “**anathema**” - a religious term, meaning “**devoted** to eternal **destruction** by God.”
- 2) Long history of OT usage (explain), and is a type of Eternal Punishment
  - i. Unmistakable in meaning
  - ii. It is phrased as a command or a wish: “Let them be damned by God.”



4. How serious an issue is this, then?
  - a. Does it really matter what **church** you go to?
  - b. Does it really matter **whose instruction** you are under?
  - c. Does it really matter if maybe they aren't **quite right** on the Gospel, but, After all he's a **really nice** man?
  - d. What do you think **Paul** would say?

## II. Fatal Flaws of the **Modern Gospel** - Modern Evangelicalism's **Terminal** Condition

### A. Omits, alters, or denies portions of the **Gospel message**

1. **Barely** identifies Xst
2. **Denies** his prophetic and kingly office
3. **Alters** his priestly office to be a hopeless saviour
4. Perhaps not as **dramatic** as some of the heresies above, but only because we are so **used** to it. The apostles would **not** have **regarded** as **Gospel** a message which **omitted** or **denied** one of Xst's major offices!
5. If that is the **regular** case with a ministry: what opinion would Paul have of it?

### B. Errors regarding the **Nature** and **Exercise** of Saving **Faith**

1. Makes **faith** to be mere **assent**
2. Converts the **exercise** of **faith** into a **formula**, an **action**, thus destroying true faith
3. No one has ever been saved by inviting Jesus into their heart, or praying the sinner's prayer; not one single person.

### C. **False** Views of **Discipleship**

1. Worst manifestation: **Health/Wealth** gospel (if you don't have it, you lack faith!)
2. Second worse: **Man** with the **Gold** ring (by implication)
3. These views almost **completely** lack any concept of the **self-denial** and **suffering** that Xst spoke of this morning: and thus can only be considered as **perversions hostile** to the truth.
4. More insidious: **Success** in life (this is found everywhere-Bible is a manual for successful living). The problem is, of course, this is partly true. But this view says:
  - a. Biblical **principles** lead to **success** in life:
    - i. In business, or on the job (Proverbs),
    - ii. At home, in marriage and children (Ephesians),
    - iii. Health and well-being (Dietary laws, and other Jewish regimens)
    - iv. Whatever your problem is, the biblical principle will give you success.
  - b. In fact, it will give you success without respect to religion: they're universals, like the law of gravity: hat goes up, must come down.
  - b. Ultimately, this is no different than those who followed Jesus for the sake of bread!

### D. **Applications**

1. Personally **know** and **embrace** the truth of the Gospel: get it into you where you understand the Gospel and its leading doctrines, so that you can see and understand when it's being denied or twisted or abused.
2. Grant no religious **acknowledgement** or **endorsement**; Do not **patronize** or **sit under** their teachings; don't stay there, because you're being "**blessed**", or it "**helps**" you!

*"If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither speak to greet him: For he that speaks to greet him is **partaker** of his evil deeds."* (2John 1:10-11)

3. Be a **Berean-Try the Spirits**: Just because seems holy or nice is not enough, doesn't mean anything. Just because Scripture is used doesn't mean anything. Paul said: *"if I or an angel from heaven bring any other gospel, let him be accursed!"*