

THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST

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**MORE TO BELIEVING THAN WE BELIEVE**

**TRUE GOSPEL, REAL DISCIPLES**

From that time on Jesus began to preach,

“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.”

MATTHEW 4.17-22

*Jesus speaking to his disciples after his resurrection—*

He told them,

“This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”

LUKE 24.46

*On the Day of Pentecost, the birth of the Church—*

Peter replied,

“Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

ACTS 2.38

*The second apostolic presentation of the gospel—*

“Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, and that He may send the Christ, who has been appointed for you—even Jesus.”

ACTS 3.19-20

*The Apostle Paul to the Greek intellectuals in Athens—*

“In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now He commands all people everywhere to repent. For He has set a day when He will judge the world by the Man [whom] He has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead.”

ACTS 17.30-31

*The Apostle Paul counting his testimony to government officials—*

‘I (Jesus) am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.’ “So then, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven. First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and then to the Gentiles, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and demonstrate their repentance by their deeds.

## THE GOSPEL'S FIRST WORD

*“Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps He will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart.”*

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, 8.22

- ▶ *“repent” (metanoeo): meta: change of place or condition  
noeo: to exercise the mind, think, comprehend  
(epistrepho): epi: upon; strepho: turn quite around, reverse;  
to convert unto (e.g. Acts 3.19; 14.15)*

*A change of mindset and actions—a conversion; Biblically, it involves sorrow over one’s sinfulness and a true change of heart and life.*

- ▶ Conversion is not, however, merely a human decision or an intellectual enlightenment—it is a work of God.

*Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.*

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN 1.12

- ▶ When Biblical truth is proclaimed, the Holy Spirit is present to convict a person of sin and guilt, to reveal righteousness through Jesus Christ, and to bring awareness of judgment (John 16.8-10; Acts 2.37).
- ▶ The Word of God imparts faith and the ability to believe and a person is presented with an *epi* moment—an opportunity to act.

## THE WONDERFULLY SIMPLISTIC GOSPEL

*If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.*

THE LETTER TO THE ROMANS, 10.9-10

- ▶ **Admit that you are a sinner** (*awareness of guilt in the transgression of God’s nature and law, true sorrow for sin and self-will*)
- ▶ **Believe that Jesus died to pay the penalty for your sins** (*as the sinless Son of God only his atoning death could obtain forgiveness*)
- ▶ **Confess your faith in Jesus Christ** (*your trust in Him as the one who is “the Way, the Truth, and the Life”—a commitment to follow and serve him as the Lord of your life*)

From that time on Jesus began to preach,

“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.”

As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” At once they left their nets and followed him. Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

MATTHEW 4.17-22



Cheap grace is the grace we bestow on ourselves. Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, Communion without confession . . . Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate.”



Grace is represented as the Church's inexhaustible treasury, from which she showers blessings with generous hands, without asking questions or fixing limits. Grace without price; grace without cost! The essence of grace, we suppose, is that the account has been paid in advance; and, because it has been paid, everything can be had for nothing.

Once when Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him, he asked them, “Who do the crowds say I am?”

They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life.”

“But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”

Peter answered, “The Christ of God.”

LUKE 9.18-20

Jesus strictly warned them not to tell this to anyone. And he said, “The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.” Then he said to them all: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it.

LUKE 9.21-24



Costly grace is the treasure hidden in the field; for the sake of it a man will go and sell all that he has. It is the pearl of great price to buy which the merchant will sell all his goods. It is the kingly rule of Christ, for whose sake a man will pluck out the eye which causes him to stumble; it is the call of Jesus Christ at which the disciple leaves his nets and follows him.”

As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, “I will follow you wherever you go.” Jesus replied, “Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.”

He said to another man, “Follow me.” But he replied, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.” Jesus said to him, “Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God.”

Still another said, “I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say goodbye to my family.”

Jesus replied, “No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.”

LUKE 9.57-62



Such grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ. It is costly because it costs a man his life, and it is grace because it gives a man the only true life. It is costly because it condemns sin, and grace because it justifies the sinner. Above all, it is costly because it cost God the life of his Son: ‘ye were bought at a price,’ and what has cost God much cannot be cheap for us.”



*But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.*

THE LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS, 3.7-9, 13-14

“The only man who has a right to say that he is justified by grace alone is the man who has left all to follow Christ.”

The gospel is God's free—and costly—gift through Jesus Christ. It calls us in repentance to leave all and turn in conversion to follow him because he alone is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. It calls us to confess him as Lord and live his life, his way, his truth.