



# LANDER, WYOMING *church of Christ*

## THE GOSPEL

Did you know that God knows that we cannot live perfect lives? Because God knew we could not live without sinning, He planned before the creation of the world the offering of Jesus Christ for the sins of all men. He planned that Jesus would save us from eternal condemnation. When the time came for God to reveal His salvation for man, He sent Jesus into the world<sup>1</sup>. All of us know that we cannot save ourselves by perfect obedience to law or earning heaven through good works. Realizing that we cannot live perfect lives should motivate sincere people to search for the means by which God seeks to save people from their sin. God has given to us this means. It is called grace. His grace was revealed on the cross through Jesus<sup>2</sup>. When we realize our inability to save ourselves, we seek grace. God is the creator of all things<sup>3</sup>. He created man in the beginning. Since God created man, this gives Him the right to give moral laws to man by which we must live. Since God is the creator, He also has the right to demand obedience from man. Everyone has sinned against God's law<sup>4</sup>. In fact, if one says he has not sinned, God says that he is a liar<sup>5</sup>. Therefore, each one of us must recognize and repent of our sins<sup>6</sup>. Before we die, we must obey what God wants us to do to fulfill our obligations to establish a covenant of grace with Him.

**A. Sin is transgression against God's law.** 1 John 3:4 teaches that we sin against God by voluntarily breaking His law. We do so by not doing what God has told us to do in His word. We also sin by doing what God has told us not to do in His word<sup>7</sup>. Everyone, therefore, has sinned.

**B. Sin is neglecting to do that which is right.** James 4:17 teaches that we sin when we do not do those principles of good that are defined in the Bible<sup>8</sup>. If our conscience is directed by God's word to do good, then we sin if we fail to do what we know is good<sup>9</sup>.

**C. Sin separates us from God.** Isaiah 59:1,2 teaches that sin spiritually separates us from God. Therefore, when we think of sin we must think about being separated from God who can give us eternal life. We must think about being forever separated from our Creator<sup>10</sup>. Everyone, therefore, must be reconciled to God.

**D. The result of separation from God is death.** Romans 6:23 teaches that the result of sin against God's will is separation from God. The result of separation from God, is spiritual death. One is spiritually dead because his sin has separated him from God who gives eternal life. The final payment for sin that is in our lives, therefore, will be the destruction of the second death, which is our final separation from God for eternity<sup>11</sup>.

**E. The result of sin is spiritual death.** Romans 5:12 teaches that when one walks in sin, he is separated from God, and thus, spiritually dead. As the representative of the human race, Adam was the first to introduce sin into the world. Everyone since Adam suffers from spiritual death because everyone has individually sinned against God. Spiritual death, therefore, is man's first and greatest problem. The gospel is the only solution to this problem.

**F. Sin brought physical death into the world.** 1 Corinthians 15:20-22 teaches that when Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden, he was separated from the Tree of Life. He thus had to physically die.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, all of us have to suffer the consequences of Adam's sin because we cannot now partake of the Tree of Life.<sup>13</sup> Physical death, therefore, is man's second greatest problem.

**G. Jesus revealed the gospel.** Mark 1:14,15 states that Jesus preached the gospel. The word "gospel" means good news. The good news is Jesus' coming to solve both our spiritual death problem and our physical death problem. However, Jesus asks us to first learn of Him,<sup>14</sup> and then believe the good news (the gospel)<sup>15</sup>.

## **H. Jesus is coming again.**

2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 teaches that Jesus is coming again at the end of time! When He comes, He will punish with everlasting destruction those who do not obey the gospel.<sup>16</sup> It is necessary, therefore, that everyone “obey the good news” (the gospel) in order to escape the coming destruction when Jesus comes. If one must obey the gospel, then there are two questions that must be asked and answered. “What is the gospel (good news)?” and “How can one obey the gospel?”

## **I. The gospel is an event of history.**

1 Corinthians 15:1,2 teaches that the gospel was declared and preached to men. It was received by receptive and repentant hearts. Obedient believers base their emotional and spiritual well being on the historical fact that the gospel event actually happened. We are saved by the gospel if we continue to believe the word of God that communicates to us the historical fact of the gospel event.

**Now what is the gospel?** 1 Corinthians 15:3,4 gives a simple definition of the heart of the gospel. The gospel is the historical event of Jesus’ death for our sins and His resurrection for our hope of eternal life. Jesus, therefore, died in order to bring us back to God<sup>17</sup>. He made it possible for us to draw near to God.<sup>18</sup> It is for this reason that the gospel is good news!

**J. One obeys the gospel by immersion in water.** Romans 6:3-6 explains how to obey the gospel. In Romans 6:3 Paul declared that one comes “into Christ” by immersion (baptism). Verses 4 & 5 explain that we are buried with Jesus by immersion into water. We are then resurrected with Jesus out of the “tomb” of water. However, verse 6 explains that before one can obey the gospel by immersion into water, he must first be crucified with Jesus. In other words, one must repent of sins before he or she is baptized for remission of sins.<sup>19</sup> As an example, people in the first century ...

1. ... heard the good news (Mt 13:9; Jn 5:24,25; 6:45; 8:47).
2. ... believed the good news (Mk 1:14,15; Jn 3:16; 8:24; 20:30,31).
3. ... repented of sin (Lk 13:3; At 2:38; 3:19; 2 Pt 3:9).
4. ... gave their lives as a living confession (Mt 10:32,33; Rm 10:9,10).
5. ... obeyed the gospel by immersion (baptism) into the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus (Mk 16:15,16; Jn 3:3-5; At 2:38; 22:16; 1 Pt 3:21).

by Roger E. Dickson

References: 1. Galatians 4:4; Ephesians 3:3-5, 2. Titus 2:11, 3. Genesis 1:1,26,27, 4. Romans 3:10,23, 5. 1 John 1:8-10, 6. Acts 3:19; James 4:1-9; 2 Peter 3:9, 7. Romans 8:12-14; Ephesians 2:1-3; 1 John 2:14-16, 8. Galatians 6:10, 9. Matthew 25:41-46, 10. Matthew 7:21-23; 25:41, 11. Matthew 10:28; John 5:28,29; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9, 12. Genesis 3:22-24, 13. Hebrews 9:27, 14. John 6:45, 15. Mark 16:16; John 3:16; 8:24, 16. 1 Peter 4:17, 17. 2 Corinthians 5:18-21, 18. Ephesians 2:11-13, 19. Acts 2:38; 3:19