



Our Commitment to Learn and to Live the Message of the Gospel

Romans 16:25-27

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Why do Christians Need the Gospel?

Christians often assume that the message of the Gospel is something they need to hear only at the beginning of their Christian life, as if the purpose of the Gospel is only to get them started in their relationship with God. But the more you read the New Testament, the more it becomes clear that this is not the case. The message of the Gospel is actually the key element in every aspect of the Christian life, throughout the whole of the Christian life. The message of the Gospel is what gets us started, to be sure, but it is also what keeps us going. We don't start with the truth of the Gospel and then go on to some higher truth. Instead, we start with the truth of the Gospel and then spend our whole Christian life growing deeper and stronger in the truth of the Gospel.

Romans 1:16 tells us that the Gospel is the power of God for salvation for all who believe. But what does the word salvation mean? Does it mean being forgiven and accepted by God? Of Course! But it means much more than this. Our salvation includes our spiritual growth in Christ. It includes our transformation to become more like Christ. It includes our putting off sin and being used of God for righteousness in this world. It includes our inclusion in the church, the Body of Christ; and the gifts of the Holy Spirit at work in us so that we can serve Christ, His church, and His mission. The message of the Gospel is the power of God at work to do every single one of these things in our lives! This is the whole point of the Book of Romans. The way Paul begins and ends Romans shows this. See Romans 1:1-5 & 1:16-17 & 16:25-27. Note especially Romans 16:25 – “Now to Him who is able to strengthen you (establish you), according to my Gospel...The point is...you and I need the Gospel! We need to become so rooted in the message of the Gospel that it strengthens, empowers, and establishes us in every aspect of our Christian faith and life. There is an important outcome of this. It is a three-part pattern:

- 1) The message of the Gospel leads us into
- 2) The fellowship of the Gospel, which leads us to do
- 3) The work of the Gospel – as believers united in Christ to work together for Christ.

But What IS The Gospel?

The Gospel is the radical message of what God has accomplished for us through Jesus Christ.

The Gospel is:

- A message with a clear central focus - Jesus Christ: Both who He is and what he has done; His life, death, and resurrection.
- A message that is a summary – It summarizes the key points of the story of redemption as revealed in the whole Bible, Genesis to Revelation.
- A message that is personal – It is what God has accomplished “for us through Christ”, each of us!
- A message that is powerful – It is the power of God for every dimension of salvation in lives.

So, What Does It Mean To “Learn and Live” the Gospel?

Each of these points about the Gospel show what it means to “learn and live” the message of the Gospel.

It means that you will receive your Christian life as a gift of God's grace, because the Gospel is first and foremost about what God has done for you through Christ, not what you do for God.

It means that you will become more Christ focused in your life. The truth of who Christ is, what He has accomplished for you, His living presence with you now, and His ongoing mission; all of this will radically impact your faith, your worship, your thinking, your choices, your relationships.

It means you will learn the key points of the story of redemption as revealed in the Bible and fulfilled in Christ. You will learn them deeply; learn how each one relates to the details of your own life experience, circumstances, relationships and ministry to others.

It means you will respond to Christ and the Gospel personally, with heart and mind and let it impact every dimension of who you are.

It means that you will look at others through the lens of the Gospel as well. Applying the truth of the Gospel not just to your own life, but extending it to others in Gospel centered ministry in the Body of Christ and Gospel centered witness in the world.

To learn and to live the message of the Gospel – this is our first and our highest commitment at River West Church!