

# No Other Gospel

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*Don't be fooled by another gospel.*

## Part 1

Near the end of his ministry, Paul wrote this warning to Timothy.

**For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. [2 Timothy 4:3-4]**

Paul was speaking from experience. He had seen that happen in the Corinthian and Galatian churches. To the Corinthians he wrote,

**But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ. For if someone comes to you and preaches a Jesus other than the Jesus we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the Spirit you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it easily enough. [2 Corinthians 11:3-4]**

He was even more emphatic in his letter to the Galatians.

**I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God's curse! As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let them be under God's curse! [Galatians 1:6-9]**

The Gospel is “good news”—but it is not pleasing news. People are constantly trying to revise the gospel to make it more pleasing to their itching ears.

There is just one true gospel and an infinite number of false gospels. There are so many false gospels around today that if we addressed them all, there would not be time left to talk about the true gospel. So, today we are going to concentrate on the true gospel. If you have been taught another gospel, then it isn't the true gospel.

When Jesus preached, He preached the Gospel. So, let's look at Jesus' great Sermon on the Mount, found in Matthew chapters 5, 6, and 7 to see exactly what He preached.

Jesus began his Sermon on the Mount with a passage generally referred to as the beatitudes. Blessed are the meek, blessed are the merciful, blessed are the pure in heart, and so on. As comforting as these words seem, we tend to forget that He was addressing them to people who were proud, not meek, ruthless, not merciful, and corrupted by power, not pure in heart. He began His sermon by telling them why they weren't blessed. Listen to how the Beatitudes end.

**Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.**

**You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. [Mathew 5:10-13]**

The people He was addressing weren't righteous, and weren't the salt of the Earth. But what about you? Are you being persecuted because of righteousness? Are you such a good Christian that jealous people make up stories about you to discredit you? Are you salt in their wounds? Or are you good for nothing, and will be thrown out and trampled underfoot?

Jesus' Gospel says God will bless those people who are faithful to Him, and stand up for Him in the face of persecution. But there is another gospel that itching ears want to hear, saying that you don't have to be salty. You can just lay low, avoid controversy, and that's just fine with God. That's not the Gospel Jesus preached. That's another gospel that Paul warned about.

Jesus continued His sermon by saying,

**Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven. [Matthew 5:17-20]**

That's the Gospel. Obedience to the law is required. Jesus could not say it more plainly. Just attending church, like the Pharisees did, won't cut it. There's another gospel that says we are not under the law, but under grace. That false gospel says we don't need to keep the law. That false gospel says the Ten Commandments were nailed to the cross. That wasn't what Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount.

Jesus went on to expand the commandment against murder to include hate. He expanded the commandment against adultery to include lust. He spoke against divorce, and breaking the marriage vow in particular, and other vows in general. He condemned revenge, and prideful display of generosity, long hypocritical public prayers and ostentatious fasting.

Jesus promised that if you don't engage in these sinful practices, you will have treasure in heaven, and God will take care of you on Earth. But if you do these sinful things, "you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven."

Then, in Matthew chapter 7, Jesus talks about judging. Some people take the first verse out of context to satisfy the desires of their itching ears, failing to quote the part where Jesus says,

**You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye. Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces. [Matthew 7:5-6]**

Jesus wasn't telling His listeners not to accessorize animals with jewelry. He used that example to stress the importance of judging correctly so that you can help people turn from their sins. Jesus never encouraged friends to let friends continue in sin without judging them. His clear intention was for you to help your neighbor see, and overcome, his sin.

You will need strength and discernment to do this, so Jesus continued his sermon with the assurance that God does answer prayers.

Finally, Jesus ended His Sermon on the Mount with a warning not to listen to false prophets, who would come bringing another work-free, universal salvation gospel that itching ears love to hear. Here's exactly what He said,

**“Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.**

**“Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.**

**“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’**

**“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”**

**When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law. [Matthew 7:13-29]**

The Gospel is a hard rock foundation, not soft sand. Because the Gospel is hard, it will endure. Don't build your faith on other gospels that are nothing more than soft sand. So let's take a short break now as Susan Pogge plays, “The Solid Rock.”

[music – Susan Pogge, “The Solid Rock”]

## **Part 2**

In our first segment, Paul warned Timothy that in the future Christians would turn to another gospel that itching ears would love to hear. We read portions of the letters Paul sent to the Galatians and Corinthians criticizing them for turning to another gospel than the one he preached. The gospel he preached to the

Galatians and Corinthians was the same gospel he preached to the Romans. Here's the Gospel Paul gave to the Romans.

**But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. God "will repay each person according to what they have done." To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile; but glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. For God does not show favoritism.**

**All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law. For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous. (Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts sometimes accusing them and at other times even defending them.) This will take place on the day when God judges people's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares. [Romans 2:5-16]**

That's a hard Gospel, not one that itching ears want to hear. It doesn't promise forgiveness for unrepentant sin and wanton disregard for the law. It isn't a popular gospel.

Jesus warned over and over again that if you preach the Gospel, you will be hated, because the Gospel is not a popular doctrine that sinful people want to hear.

**Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels." [Mark 8:34-38]**

**You will be handed over to the local councils and flogged in the synagogues. On account of me you will stand before governors and kings as witnesses to them. And the gospel must first be preached to all nations. Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit.**

**Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. Everyone will hate you because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. [Mark 13:9-13]**

**"Truly I tell you," Jesus replied, "no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age: homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—along with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life. [Mark 10:29-30]**

**[Y]ou will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. [Matthew 24:9-14]**

According to Jesus, the true Gospel will be preached with power just before the second coming. That means it is time to stop preaching other gospels that itching ears want to hear, and preach the gospel Jesus and Paul preached. Here's the Gospel Paul preached:

**I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is not of human origin. I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ. [Galatians 1:11-12]**

**I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish. That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are in Rome.**

**For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”**

**The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.**

**For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles.**

**Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.**

**Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error.**

**Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy. Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve**

**death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them. [Romans 1:14-32]**

That's a perfect description of what is happening today. Moral perversion is celebrated on award-winning TV shows and Grammy-winning songs. People who stand up for morality are mocked by the liberal news media.

Sadly, even some Protestant churches have accepted sinful practices and boast about their inclusiveness. Although they know God's righteous decree, they approve of those who openly practice sin. Those who dare to speak out against premarital sex, abortion, or homosexuality, are accused of being "not very Christian." But we have these comforting words to fall back upon.

**All this is evidence that God's judgment is right, and as a result you will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering. God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. [2 Thessalonians 1:5-9]**

**For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline. So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner. Rather, join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God. He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher. That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet this is no cause for shame, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day. [2 Timothy 1:7-12]**

That's the encouragement we need to stand up for righteousness in this wicked world.

Finally, Revelation, chapter 14, tells of angels that are sent to the world to proclaim the Gospel just before Jesus comes.

**Then I saw another angel flying in midair, and he had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth—to every nation, tribe, language and people. He said in a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water." [Revelation 14:6-6]**

Notice, it is the "eternal gospel." That is, it always was, and always will be the true Gospel. It is not the gospel for some other time. Second, the Gospel is given to all "those who live on the earth—to every nation, tribe, language, and people." It is a universal gospel. It is for us.

Finally there are two parts to the gospel. First, "the hour of his judgment has come." The gospel is a last days judgment message. Second, the angels said, "Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water." It is a creation message—not the theory of evolution.

This angel is followed in rapid succession by three more. The second one warns of the destruction of Satan and his followers. The third angel says that you must choose between Jesus and Satan, and urges you to choose Jesus. Finally, the fourth angel warns that there is not much time left, so you must choose now.

When Mark wanted to summarize Jesus' Gospel, he said,

**After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!" [Mark 1:14-15]**

Matthew confirmed what Mark said..

**From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." [Matthew 4:17]**

This is not a new doctrine. God the Father proclaimed it when He gave the Ten Commandments.

**I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments. [Exodus 20:5-6]**

Which brings us to love. What is love? Here's what Jesus said about love:

**"If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them." [John 14:15-21]**

People who love God show that love by obedience; and God gives them the power to obey the commandments through the help of the Holy Spirit. John put it this way:

**Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God. [1 John 5:1-5]**

So, for those of you who tuned in late, here's a summary of the Gospel as found in the Bible.

God created a perfect, sinless world about 6,000 years ago for the enjoyment of the human race. But sin and death entered that perfect world because of the disobedience of Adam and Eve. Consequently, God decided to recreate the world some time in the future, and populate it with people who have demonstrated their love for Him. In the Earth made new, sin will never arise again. He warned mankind through prophets. Then He sent His Son in person to explain the plan of salvation, demonstrate His love for man

by dying on the cross, and pay the penalty for man's disobedience. When Jesus was on Earth in the flesh, He warned that those who say they love God, but don't obey Him, will be destroyed. Only those who obey God will be saved.

Sinful men don't want to hear this. So, Jesus warned that those who preach this Gospel will be persecuted; but the blessing that come from preaching the Gospel far outweigh the pain of persecution.

It was foretold that other false gospels, which itching ears want to hear, will be presented by those who love the praise of men, and fear persecution.

All this has come to pass. One false gospel claims that God decided in advance who will be saved and who will be lost, and there is nothing you can do about it. Another false gospel says that God loves man so much that everyone will be saved. Some false teachers proclaim that Jesus nailed the law to the cross, and Christians no longer have to obey it. Another false gospel says all we have to do is to ask to be saved, and we will be saved. Some claim that the church can save you through the magic rite of baptism.

The truth is that Jesus is coming again to judge everyone according to what he has done. We have waited a long time for Jesus to return, and many have given up waiting for Him. But we must be like the five wise virgins who kept enough oil in their lamps so that they were ready when Jesus returned. We, too, must be ready for His return.

[music – Dave Pogge, “We’re All Here!”]