

INTRODUCTION

Open your Bibles to Romans 1:16-17. Rome was the greatest city of the world in Biblical times. Now you really can't say that now, because there are many great cities in the world today. New York, Tokyo, London, all are great. You really can't say there is one city that stands out in all the world today. Well, back then you could. Without a doubt it was the great city of Rome. Some people said Paul would be embarrassed to go to Rome and preach, because there he would be a laughing stock. During his time, the Roman Empire was putting Christians to death. Christians were being executed. They were accused of being cannibals. Cannibals? Well, yes, they were the group of people who talked about eating the body and drinking the blood of their founder and to those unspiritual minds in Rome that sounded like cannibalism. Some were being executed for being cannibals.

Many were being executed because they were called atheists. You say, “How could Christians be atheists?” Simple. If you could go to Rome you would have found the beautiful temple, the Pantheon, where all the different Roman gods had a little niche or a little alcove. In this building there were little shelves with alcoves and on each shelf there was an icon or a statue representing all the polytheism of the Romans. There was a god for every day of the week, there was a god for every month of the year, there was a god for every holiday, there was a god for every vocation. In addition, they had plenty of empty alcoves and when the Christians came along, the Romans said, “Hey, come on. We have room for another god. You just bring your Jesus and put him up here on the shelf with these other gods and we will accept Christianity with open arms.” But true Christians could not do that. They said, “No, Jesus is not one of *many* gods, Jesus is the *only* God. So, they refused to believe in these gods and they were killed for being atheists, and it is in this context in which Paul said, “Listen, I'm not ashamed. I'm not ashamed to come and preach the gospel.

Today we are going to talk about the gospel. You've heard about the gospel, haven't you? People say, “I like gospel music, gospel preaching, gospel press. Well, what is the gospel? Let's learn three things about the gospel from these two verses.

I. EXCITEMENT ABOUT THE GOSPEL

1. The gospel is good news!

Notice excitement about the gospel. Paul was so excited about it, he said, “I am not ashamed of it.” Let me just tell you what the word *gospel* means. The gospel is first of all “good news.” That's what it literally means. The word *gospel* literally means “good news.” Of course, our word *gospel* is an Anglo-Saxon word from *godspell*, but the Greek word that is here in the Bible that is used for the word *gospel* is the word *euaggelion*—we get our word *evangelism* from it—but it means *a good message*. Have you ever heard a eulogy at a funeral? The word *eulogy* means “good word,” *eu* for good; *logos* for word. It's the same idea here. *Euaggelion*, good message. So, the gospel is not bad news. It's good news!

I have been amazed through the years at how sometimes people leave church after a scathing, excoriating sermon about Hell or sin feeling terrible. The preacher has walked up one side of

their back and down the other side with hobnail boots on, and they just feel awful, and some say, "Oh, man, he really preached the gospel today!" because they feel so bad. There is bad news. That's what makes the good news good. But the gospel doesn't make you feel bad. It doesn't make you feel whipped. The gospel is good news that liberates you. Once you understand what the good news is, you won't walk out of here with your head bent, you'll say, "Praise God! There is a way to be delivered." I have been told (although I was not alive at the time) that when Germany surrendered in World War II, the people went out into the streets of their neighborhoods and their towns, and they shouted, "Germany has surrendered!" That was good news. A few months later when the Japanese surrendered, people again took to the streets, and all the headlines said, "Good News, the war is over!" The gospel is the same way. It is good, liberating, life-giving news.

2. The gospel is worth sharing!

That's why Paul said, "I am not ashamed. I'm going to share the gospel there in Rome." Now isn't it a shame we are so prone to share bad news? People like to be the bearer of bad tidings. Have you ever noticed people like to gossip? Not here...no...oh okay. Somebody said the theme song of gossips is the song that says, "I love to tell the story." It's sad how people are so quick to share gossip. We shouldn't be quick to share gossip, but we should be quick to share the good news. The question I have for you this morning is, "Are you excited about the gospel? Are you sharing the good news with everybody around you?" It's just our nature to share good news.

Twenty years ago this month, Cindy and I were living in a little central Alabama town, our first church out of seminary. She was very pregnant at the time. She woke me up in the middle of the night, and said, "I think it's time", so we got in the car and we drove 30 miles in 15 minutes. She was encouraging me—if you know what I mean—as we were driving there. We had gone through this prepared childbirth thing, Lamaze, and I was supposed to be in there in the delivery room, scrubbed up with my surgical outfit on coaching her so it was not *her* giving birth, you understand, it was *us* giving birth. Well, we drove up there to the emergency room and I let her out and went to park the car. By the time I parked the car and came in and scrubbed up and put on my surgical outfit and walked into the delivery room, she had the gall to go ahead and have that baby without me. I mean, fellows, we don't understand how they do that, but she just had the baby. Suddenly, I forgot all about what I was supposed to do, and everything I had learned. I got so excited I went out into the hall where the grandparents were waiting and I said, "It's a girl!" It was good news and I wanted to share it. I went back to our little pastorium we were living in, and I made a big sign and nailed it to the mailbox. "IT'S A GIRL!!" Now, you know what I'm talking about. There have been times you've had things happen in your life you want to share. Well, the gospel is the same way. You ought to want to be sharing it with other people.

I read something this week, and honestly, I don't know whether it is true or not, but I did read it. I read that if you draw a white circle around a goose, the goose will not leave the white chalk circle. Now, some of you can experiment and check it out and let me know, but that's what I read. True or false? I'll tell you something that *is* true: I know thousands of Christians who will not leave the circle of the fellowship of their church to talk about Jesus and the gospel. They will talk about the Bible and about Jesus, and about God when they are here in church and their Sunday School class or discipleship group, but I'll tell you where the gospel needs to be shared is

out there in the world. Kids, it needs to be shared at school. It needs to be shared on college campuses. It needs to be shared in the business place, in the hospitals. That's where the gospel is worth sharing, out there where people need to hear the good news.

Preachers love to talk about the great old evangelist, Dwight L. Moody. You hear all these sermon illustrations about him. Sometimes we forget Dwight L. Moody was never an ordained minister. He was never a pastor. He was just a shoe salesman who was born again, and got so excited about it, he never got over it, and he went everywhere sharing the good news. He became an evangelist although he was never ordained. He was a big man with a big, full beard. We would call him obese today, but he had a booming voice and he could fill up all of these halls. Dwight was an uneducated, uncouth man. It was said, "He murdered the Queen's English." In fact, in 1870, he went to London and he was speaking in front of a huge crowd of educated, sophisticated English people and he started his address this way with poor grammar: "Don't never think that God don't love you, for he do!" He just went on talking about Jesus. Some people were offended by his lack of correct grammar. After one of these meetings a sophisticated, dignified woman English woman came up to Dwight and said, "Mr. Moody, you ought to be ashamed of yourself!" and he hung his head, and he said "Ma'am, you're right. I am ashamed of myself, but I am not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ." That man "shook" two continents for Jesus Christ. I can say the same thing. I am ashamed of the way I act sometimes, and I am ashamed of the way I live sometimes, but I am not ashamed of the gospel. What about you? Are you excited about the gospel?

II. THE EFFECT OF THE GOSPEL

1. The gospel has power from God

Keep reading, verse 16 of Romans 1. "I am not ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of God unto salvation." What Paul is saying here is the gospel has power. He says the power is from God, it is not man's power. Man did not originate this gospel story, it came from God. Rome understood power. Rome was the center of military power. The greatest army of the world was based in Rome. It was the center of governmental power. The Roman Senate was the pinnacle of human power, the Caesars lived there. It was the height of cultural power, because Rome was the center of the Greek Hellenized culture throughout the world. So, they understood power, but that was human power. Paul says, "I am not ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of God" It is a supernatural kind of power. I like that word power in the Bible. It comes from the Greek word *dunamis*. We get the words *dynamite* and *dynamo* from it. If you saw somebody walking around with a stick of dynamite and it was lit, you would say, "Something's about to happen," and you would clear out because dynamite is explosive; it's dangerous. Well, that's the word used for the gospel. The gospel is exciting, it is explosive! Anytime the gospel is shared, something's going to happen because it's power from God.

2. The gospel has power to save everyone

He goes on to say, "The gospel has power to save everyone" because he says, "it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes." Let's talk about that word "saved" for a moment. We just kind of throw it around in Christianity. What if I were to sit down with you,

one on one, over a cup of coffee, or a coke, and I looked you in the eye, and I said, "Tell me, are you saved? Have you been saved?" What would your response be?" Some of you would say without hesitation, "Absolutely, I've been saved." Others of you would say, "I don't know." Others of you would say, "I don't know what you mean when you say *saved*." I'll never forget, a man I asked that question of years ago. I said, "Sir, are you saved?" He laughed, and he said, "Well, I'm not saved the way that you think I ought to be, but I am saved the way that I think I ought to be saved," meaning he had come up with his own idea of salvation. It's not my idea of salvation, and it's not your idea of salvation, it's what the Bible says about salvation.

Some people say, "Let's not use that word 'saved.' It's old fashioned. It's too religious." I kind of like it. If someone was in a fire, about to lose their life and a fireman went in to rescue them, they say, "I was saved." If you're in a shipwreck and you're floating out into the water and somebody comes along with a lifeboat and they pull you out of the water, you say, "I was saved." If you are in a swimming pool and you are drowning and the lifeguard jumps in and pulls you out, you say, "I was saved." Well, every one of us has been at one time, and some still are, lost in sin. When Jesus comes and rescues us, that's what has happened. We've been saved. That's a good Bible word. The Philippian jailer who was about to commit suicide, because he was at the end of his rope, turned to Paul, and said, "Sir, what must I do to be saved? Tell me." I'm so glad Paul, being a deep theologian did not say, "Well, can we come up with a word other than saved. That's religious jargon" No, Paul said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved. (Acts 16:30-31)

What does it mean to be saved? Salvation has three tenses: I have been saved; I am being saved; and one day I will be saved. Watch this! I have been saved from the penalty of sin. You know what the penalty of my sin is—hell, eternal separation from God. I have been saved from the penalty of sin. I have been saved, past tense. I am being saved right now day by day from the power of sin. That doesn't mean I'm sinless, but I do sin less than I used to. It means I am growing in Christ. That's called being saved from the power of sin. But, one day I'm going to die and I will go to a place where there won't even be the existence of sin, in Heaven. That's when I will be saved from even the presence of sin. I have been saved from the penalty of sin, that's what the Romans call justification; I am being saved from the power of sin, that's sanctification, and one day I am going to be saved from even the presence of sin, and the Bible calls that glorification. That's what the gospel has power to do. It has the power to save you.

a. The gospel has power to save the Jews

b. The gospel has power to save the Gentiles

Then, Paul mentions two groups of people. Look at verse 16. He says the gospel has power first of all to save the Jew, and then he says it has power to save the Gentile. Now why would he make that distinction? It's because some people still thought the gospel was for Jewish people only, for the Israelites, and the first Christians were Jews. Those of you who know your history know for about the first one hundred years, Christianity was considered a branch of Judaism. Today, there is Orthodox Judaism, Reformed Judaism and a couple of other branches, and for the first hundred years of Christianity, there were Christian Jews. It was not until the Council of Jamnia right before the turn of the first century that the Jewish Rabbis themselves made it illegal, according to Jewish law, to be a Jew in good standing and to be a Christian.

Christianity never rejected the Jews; Judaism rejected Christianity. Paul is saying the gospel was delivered to Jewish people first, and I thank God for the Jewish people who have accepted Christ in the past, and who are accepting Christ today. There are many Jews who are born again. In fact, are you ready for this? There is a higher percentage of Jewish Christians on the face of the planet today than the percentage of Gentile Christians. That's just a fact. That's simply because there is a lot larger number of Gentiles on the planet. What Paul is saying here is that the gospel was delivered first to Jews. Jesus Christ was a Jew. I love Jewish people. I tell people my best friend is a Jewish carpenter. Jesus was the king of the Jews; he was prophesied by Jewish prophets, he came to the nation of Israel to deliver the good news, but it also says in John 1:11 that Jesus came into his own (meaning the Jews) and his own received him not. People always want to know, "Pastor, can a Jew go to heaven?" The answer to that is, "Absolutely! A Jewish person can go to heaven by putting their faith in Jesus Christ." You say, "No, no, no. That's not what I am talking about. Can a Jewish person go to heaven without Jesus Christ?" Now, listen to my answer. I've thought about it and I want you to hear exactly what I am about to say. Can a Jewish person go to heaven without Jesus? "Yes, if they keep all of their life perfectly the law of the Jews." I promise you. Any Jewish person born a Jew, raised in the Jewish faith, and all of their life they keep the Jewish law, yes, they will go to heaven without Jesus. Chances are, there is nobody like that. I've never met anybody like that, have you? I don't think there has ever been anyone like that. Oh yes, there was one Jewish man who lived for 33 and a third years and he kept the Jewish law perfectly. You know what? That Jew never had to be born again. He didn't. He was accepted by God.

The gospel needs to be shared with Jewish people. The leading Jewish Rabbis in America today who read the New Testament (they don't believe what we believe) we hold to be our source of authority, say, "Yes, you Christians are correct in taking the gospel to Jewish people because according to your own scriptures Jewish people need to be saved." Even Jewish Rabbis admit that. Some people want to say, "Well, they're good people. They believe in God. Can't they go to heaven without Jesus?" If you say that, you'd have to also say if that's true of the Jews, then anybody out there who just believes that there is a God would go to heaven. If Jewish people are saved without Jesus, why do you think Paul says, "My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved." He didn't say, "I thank God they are already saved." He said, "I pray that they will be saved." (Romans 10:1)

For many years, Otis Brady was our Southern Baptist missionary in Belize. Some of you, like me, have been there and stayed in his home. Otis Brady lived on the beachfront of the bay down there near Belize City. An oil company transferred a wonderful couple there that lived beside the Bradys. It was a Jewish family: young husband, wife and three precious children who had been raised in Judaism. Well, in Belize, Americans try to stick together, so the Bradys invited the family over and they became close friends. Of course, the Bradys started sharing with this Jewish family what they believed about Jesus. The Jewish family who practiced Judaism, they listened with respect and said, "No, that's not what we believe, that's not our heritage." and they kept on being friends. The Bradys did not condemn them. They didn't act like they were some unclean people. They just loved them, and they were just great friends. They did a lot of things together. One Christmas Otis said they invited them over to celebrate Christmas with them, and he said "We're going to have a devotional, will you participate?" and this Jewish family said, "Sure,"

because they were good friends. Otis said, “I’ll let you read your scripture in the Old Testament prophecies about the birth of Jesus and then I will read the New Testament fulfillment about the Messiah. And they did, but still that Jewish family did not become Christians. But they loved the Bradys, and the Bradys loved them. Well, the oil company transferred the family back to Philadelphia and the Bradys did not hear from them for a while until one day they received a letter. The family was so excited about what happened they couldn’t even wait until they opened the mail. They had written on the envelope, “We have found the Messiah! Jesus, Yashua ha Messiah.” That couple became such a fantastic, zealous, Christian family, they have since moved to Israel. They are in Israel today, and they are part of an active, forceful messianic movement happening in the nation of Israel today.

God is not through with the nation of Israel. Hear me now! The fact that this week they celebrated fifty years of being a nation is a miracle from God. Three whole chapters in Romans, chapters 9, 10, and 11, are all about the Jewish people, and how God is not through with the nation of Israel, but individual Jewish people like the apostle Paul himself must find Jesus Christ. The gospel is power to save everyone, Jews and all the rest of us.

III. THE EXPLANATION OF THE GOSPEL

Look at verse 17. This is where Paul explains what the gospel is. “In the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed. A righteousness that is by faith from first to last.” It really means from faith unto faith. “Just as it is written:” and here is that quotation...“The righteous will live by faith.” Now, here is how he explains the gospel.

Righteousness means “right standing before God”

Let me tell you what the word “righteousness” means. This is a key word in this entire book. Righteousness means right standing before God. Here is God in all of His absolute holiness and purity, and if you want to have a relationship with him and want to be able to stand before him (I’m not talking about in heaven only, I’m talking about right now) you must be righteous. How many of you right now would raise your hand and say, “Pastor, I am righteous? Let me see your hands. You know, more of you are learning and that’s good. Next question, how many of you believe you are going to go to heaven when you die? Let me see your hands. We have a real problem here, folks. This is only about the fourth or fifth time I have done this. You are going to learn one of these days. If you raised your hand, and said you were righteous, good for you. If you did not raise your hand to say you are righteous, but you said you are going to heaven when you die, something’s wrong, because for you to go to heaven when you die, you have to have a right standing before God. I did not ask you “Are you self-righteous,” I asked you “Are you righteous?” In other words, has God declared you righteous? If you know Jesus Christ personally, and have accepted Jesus Christ into your life, I promise you, you have right standing before God and God looks at you, and says, “You are righteous.” Let’s try it one more time. How many of you are righteous? Let me see your hands. All right, great! That’s only the fifth or sixth time I have had to do that. One of these days I am going to do that, and you are going to say, “Yes, I know. I have figured it out!”

1. God’s righteousness is humanly impossible

Let me teach you four things Paul teaches us about righteousness. Number one God's righteousness is humanly impossible. That's why when I asked while ago, "Are you righteous?" some of you were thinking, humanly speaking, no, I am not. Look at what the Bible says in Isaiah 64:6. "All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags." We all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind, our sins sweep us away. Now, you say, "All those bad things I've done, all those bad thoughts I have had, yes, those are filthy rags before God." That's not what it says. It didn't say the bad things you have done. It says the righteous things you and I have done. Those are like filthy rags before God.

Some people think they are going to go to heaven by doing good deeds, by acting righteously. I asked a retired lady in our church the other day how she was feeling. "Oh, I feel so great today." She said, "I led two Boy Scouts across the street." Some of you think you are going to heaven by helping little old ladies across the street, or by feeding the poor, or clothing the naked. You think you are going to go to heaven by doing all these good things. No, God's righteousness is humanly impossible. The very best thing I have ever done in my flesh compared to God's holiness and purity, looks like dirty, filthy, stinking rags before God. It's all a matter of comparison.

"Can the Ethiopian change his skin? Or the leopard his spots? Neither can you do good who are accustomed to doing evil." (Jeremiah 13:23) An Ethiopian is a black man, and the Bible says an Ethiopian can't change his skin. Of course that was before Michael Jackson, cosmetic surgery and all that stuff. It says a black man can't change his skin and a white man can't change his. A red man can't change his; a leopard can't change his spots. What it is saying is as much as we would sometimes like to change ourselves, we do not have the *power* to change ourselves. When you realize you have a problem, you say, "You know what, I have a problem, so I'm going to just change. I'm going to get better." That's the biggest fallacy of our age today. People think they can improve themselves on their own. You go down to the bookstores and look at all the self-help books. Go ahead. The Bible says you can't really change yourself. You can want to change, but you can't change yourself any easier than a black man can change his skin or a leopard can change his spots. God says, "You cannot do good." Let me put it another way.

Every week in our church there is probably a member who has bypass surgery. You go to the doctor, and he finds the arteries surrounding your heart muscle have become occluded or blocked by plaque. The blood flow is disturbed. Isn't it amazing, even miraculous, that you can go into the hospital, and they can open your chest, divert your blood, take some other veins and bypass the arteries in your heart so the blockage is not there? Then, they start your heart, sew you back up, and in a few weeks, you are not good as new, in fact, you are better than you were before you went in. That is amazing to me! For you to try to change yourself morally or spiritually would be just like somebody saying "I have a heart problem. Just give me the scalpel, give me that chest saw and I will do the surgery myself." You say, "No way! Because I don't know how to do that kind of surgery." Well, I have news for you. If the most gifted cardiovascular surgeon on earth needed heart surgery, he would never for a moment entertain the thought of doing it himself. He realizes he cannot perform surgery on himself. You have to admit you cannot fix yourself. You cannot save yourself. You cannot be good by yourself. So, the first thing you have to understand is God's righteousness is humanly impossible.

2. God’s righteousness was a gift paid for by Jesus

2 Corinthians 21 says, “God made him [Jesus] who had no sin to be sin for us so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” Let me explain. Here is God in his holiness and righteousness and purity, and here we are in our sinfulness, our inability to be righteous before God. That’s the bad news. The good news is, “For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, Jesus, to be a mediator between man and God” He’s the only one who could do that. Because Jesus was all man, he reached out to our humanity. Jesus was all God, he reached out to God’s divinity, and when Jesus died on the cross, you know what was happening? This sinless man took upon himself every sin I will ever commit, every sin you will ever commit, every sin every rapist and serial murderer will ever commit, he took upon himself. That’s not all that happened because God took the righteousness that was Jesus and placed it upon all of us who are willing to receive it. You talk about a good deal! A good swap! A good trade! Your sin for the righteousness of Jesus. My friend, that’s the greatest news I could ever share with you. Now, you see when God looks at you, he doesn’t look at your sinfulness, he looks at you through the filter of the blood of Jesus, the righteousness of Jesus. God looks at you, and he says, “You, my child, are as righteous as Jesus was.” You say, “Well, now does that happen automatically to everybody on earth?” No. That’s the next statement about God’s righteousness.

3. God’s righteousness must be accepted by faith

It doesn’t happen arbitrarily or automatically. It happens intentionally by an act of your will and my will when we receive the act Jesus did for us. I love what Paul writes here in Philippians 3:9. He is still talking about righteousness. He says, “And to 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, and is by faith.” Now, all that means is you’ve just got to believe you are righteous before God. You have to believe Jesus died for you to take your sins away. You’ll never feel it, you’ll never comprehend it, you’ll never understand it—you must accept it by faith. “It is faith unto faith.” (Romans 1:17)

Let me try to simplify it for you. January 16, 1953. That’s the day I was born. My mother told me the doctor in Ruston, Louisiana delivered me. She said the doctor held me up by my heels and whacked me on my bottom. She said when he did that, I started breathing, and I let out a scream that could be heard from one side of Louisiana to the other. Did you know from that day to this, I have been living in this atmosphere, breath by breath? Do you have that picture? March 11, 1961, First Baptist Church of Florala, Alabama, I was a child, I received Jesus Christ by faith. I received the gift of righteousness. Did you know that from that day to this I have been living faith by faith? Faith is not just something that saves you back when. You say, “Well, I believed in Jesus back when I was saved.” No, you’d better be believing in Jesus day by day, moment by moment, just like you breathe.

4. God’s righteousness results in right living

It is not earned by right living, but it is a result *of* right living. In other words, you don't do good and be good to earn God's favor, but once you have been declared righteous before God, you will act righteously, and that's what 1 John 3 is all about. Read it sometime for yourself.

CONCLUSION

Let me just finish by telling you what salvation really is, and how it is an unmerited gift from God. We have a problem. Your problem and my problem is that we were all born in sin. It is as if we are in a deep, dark, slimy, stinking pit in quicksand, and we are all sinking. In this pit there is a hideous, poisonous serpent, the penalty of our sinful condition waiting to strike us dead at any moment. So, here we are. An optimist comes by and looks at you, and says, "Cheer up. There are worse pits than that!" A pessimist comes along and shakes his head. The pessimist says, "You know that's what life is, one pit after another, and then you die. There is nothing you can do about it." A scientist comes along and looks at you and says, "You know what, I could analyze how you got in that pit to start with. An engineer comes along and says, "You know what, I could design a much better pit than the one you are in right now." An animal rights activist comes along and says, "Shame on you for bothering that poor snake." A managed health care professional comes along and says, "Sorry, your pit is not on our approved list." A lawyer comes along and says, "You look like you were injured when you fell into that unsafe pit. Let me help you get all the damages you have coming to you." A group of Japanese tourists come by and see you in there and say, "Oh, there's the man in the pit. Stand there and let me get your picture." A headbanger comes along (if you don't know what a headbanger is, ask your teenage kid) and says, "Whoa! Dude! Some pit!" Your mother comes along and says, "I told you you'd get your clothes dirty in that pit." A preacher comes along and says, "There are three reasons why you should never fall in pits. They are dirty, they are dark and they are dangerous." But, you are still in that pit and Jesus Christ comes along, and with love and tenderness, he climbs down into the pit and lifts you up. He saves you! And then he takes himself the bite, the penalty of sin.

From sinking sand, he lifted me
With tender hand, he lifted me
From shades of night to cleansed light
Oh, praise his name, he lifted me.

That is what salvation is all about!

OUTLINE

I. EXCITEMENT ABOUT THE GOSPEL

The Gospel is:

1. Good News!
2. Worth sharing!

II. THE EFFECT OF THE GOSPEL

The Gospel has power:

1. From God
2. To save everyone
 - a. Jews
 - b. Gentiles

III. THE EXPLANATION OF THE GOSPEL

Righteousness means "right standing before God"

God's Righteousness:

1. Is humanly impossible

All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away. *Isaiah 64:6*

2. Was a gift paid for by Jesus

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. *2 Corinthians 5:21*

3. Must be accepted by faith

...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 and is by faith. *Philippians 3:9*

4. Results in right living

No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him. Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. He who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. *1 John 3:6-7*



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For the Joy...
Pastor David Dykes