

The Old Paths

Volume 12, Issue 9

May 1, 2005

“The Certified Gospel”

Jarrod Jacobs

“**I** marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ” (Gal. 1:6-12).

When Paul wrote the Galatians, he said, “But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ” (Gal. 1:11-12). What does “certify” mean? “Certify even in older English, is to assure or attest, which is too strong for the phrase, ‘to make known or declare.’ ... A formula often used by Paul to call attention to what he is about to say.” (Vincent’s Word Studies of the New Testa-

ment, Vol. III, p. 87, 38-39). Paul was attesting, or assuring the Galatians of some things about the gospel. Let us study Galatians 1:6-12, and see what Paul was saying about the gospel.

The Certified Gospel Is Not After Man (Gal. 1:11).

In other words, the Gospel of Christ did not originate with man. The gospel came from God. Jesus declares this when He calls the gospel God’s word (Jn. 17:17; Lk. 8:11). Some may ask how I can be certain that the Bible came from God, and not man. It is because of declarations such as the one found in II Peter 1:20-21. Peter said, “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” Paul said, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (II Tim. 3:16-17). Any “gospel” that does not originate with God is not the Certified Gospel!

The Certified Gospel Is A God-Pleasing Gospel (Gal. 1:10).

Seeing that the gospel belongs to God, we should please God in the preaching of it! Tragically, many today wish to please men in their

preaching. Paul said, “if I do that, I am not the servant of Christ” (Gal. 1:10).

Throughout the Bible, it is apparent that God told His people how to please Him, and they were expected to obey. God spoke to Moses and told him that man was not to bow down to any gods, or idols. They were to serve God only. (Ex. 20:1-7). In Joshua 1:7-9, God tells Joshua what he must do to be prosperous. Notice that success came when he was obedient to God, and did not turn away. Solomon said that the whole duty of man is to, “fear God and keep His commandments” (Ecc. 12:13-14).

Turning to the New Testament, we see that God still expects His people to obey Him (Acts 10:34-35). In fact, Jesus declares that He obeyed God in all things (Matt. 26:39, 42, 44; Jn. 12:50; Heb. 10:7, 9). Let us follow His example (I Pet. 2:21)! The Apostles said plainly, “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29).

How can we please God today? We do it by obeying and teaching others the truth about salvation. We must show others that God expects them to hear the words of Jesus (Matt. 17:5), to believe that Jesus is the Son of God (Jn. 8:32), repent of their sins (Lk. 13:3), confess their faith in Christ (Matt. 10:32), and be baptized (Mk. 16:16). Some may not like to hear this, but we are not here to please man! We please God by proclaiming that there is only one true church, that Christ is the head of it, and that it belongs to Him -- the church of Christ! (Matt. 16:18; Rom. 16:16; Col. 1:18). Some may not appreciate this truth, but we are not here to please man! We also please God by teaching others what the mission of the church is. The mission of the church is:

evangelism (I Thess. 1:8), edification (I Cor. 14:26), and benevolence toward needy saints (Acts 11:27-30). The mission of the church is spiritual in nature, and not physical (Rom. 14:17). Those that deviate from this plan are not pleasing God! Who are we going to please, God or men?

The Certified Gospel Is A Revealed Gospel (Gal. 1:12).

From the definition of the word "certify", we know Paul was going to make some things "known," or "attest" that certain things were true. In other words, he would be revealing some things that these Christians did not know. Throughout all of this, he would be pointing them to God who was revealing these things (II Tim. 3:16-17).

When we think about the gospel, and its importance, we see that God has revealed all the things that we need to know in order to live a God-pleasing life, and go to Heaven when this life is over. We read where Peter said, "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness" (II Pet. 1:2-3). "All things that pertain ..." includes all the words we need for instruction, learning, and discipline in this life. Jude declares, "it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). In other words, today we have all that God intends for us to know about the gospel. He is not revealing any new information to us. The gospel has been revealed to us in its entirety.

The Certified Gospel Is The Only Gospel (Gal. 1:6-7).

Some try to pervert the gospel, but it does no good. The gospel is here for all to read and obey. Jesus said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matt. 24:35). David wrote, "For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven" (Psa. 119:89).

A perverted gospel only causes the one true gospel to shine even more! With man, and his perverted gospel, there are contradictions, and other errors. Not so with the Certified Gospel!

The Certified Gospel provides us with something solid. The word is settled in Heaven (Psa. 119:89). The author is not man, but God (II Pet. 1:20-21).

A perverted gospel troubles people and ultimately removes people from God. In contrast, the Certified Gospel gives hope and strength and courage to people. The Certified Gospel provides a plan of salvation. The Certified Gospel shows that only in Jesus is there salvation (Acts 4:12; Jn. 14:6). Truly, the Certified Gospel is a great thing! Do you believe, and have you obeyed the Certified Gospel?

THE EMPTY SEAT

Empty pews cannot talk, but many times their silent sermons drown out the sermon preached from the pulpit. They tell of failure, lack of interest, lack of confidence and indifference.

An empty seat is a spiritual loss, the magnitude of which we are unable to estimate. The man next door might have come with you if you had asked him. He might have sat in that empty seat and heard the gospel. But the seat was empty.

--Selected
(The South End Expounder, May 1993)

Mark Your Calendars!

The Jacobs-Holland debate on apostasy will take place on May 27-28 in Millwood, KY.

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Wednesday Evening Bible Study _____ **7:00 pm**

Our call-in radio program is on **WBIO, FM 94.7**, Sunday afternoon from 12:30-1:00 pm. **Call: 683-9246 (WBIO)** with your Bible question.

Preacher/Editor: Jarrod Jacobs
Elders: Paul Dubois & Jeff Lankford
Phone: (270) 683-5386

Website address: www.southside-churchofchrist.com (Updated weekly!)