

The Complete Message Jesus Christ Brought

To allow the gospel message to be limited to the fact that Jesus Christ died for our sins according to scripture, actually makes it something it is not.

1 Corinthians 15:1-8 [New King James] *“Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.”*

That Jesus Christ the very Word of God, [**John 1:1-5, 10-12**].

Who, being God, was without sin, [**2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15**] is very good news indeed.

Hebrews 1:1-3 [New King James] *“God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,”*

That Jesus Christ, now from His exalted position, mediates grace to all believers, is very heartening news to all believers who are burdened with sin.

But to limit the Christian message, [the message Jesus Christ brought from God the Father] to this one truth, is to rob it of much of its meaning and to create misunderstanding among those who hear the resulting preaching.

The fact is that the New Testament message embraces a great deal more than an offer of free pardon.

For this message to be rightly understood we have to add the preaching of John the Baptist who prepared a people for the arrival of their Saviour, a message of repentance.

Luke 3:1-16 [New King James] *“Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, while Annas and Caiaphas were high priests, the word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, saying: ‘The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the LORD; make His paths straight. Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill brought low; the crooked places shall be made straight and the rough ways smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’” Then he said to the multitudes that came out to be baptized by him, ‘Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, “We have Abraham as our father.” For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. And even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.’ So the people asked him, saying, ‘What shall we do then?’ He answered and said to them, ‘He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise.’ Then tax collectors also came to be baptised, and said to him, ‘Teacher, what shall*

we do?’ And he said to them, ‘Collect no more than what is appointed for you.’ Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, ‘And what shall we do?’ So he said to them, ‘Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages.’ Now as the people were in expectation, and all reasoned in their hearts about John, whether he was the Christ or not, John answered, saying to all, ‘I indeed baptise you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire.’”

Note that personal change and action was needed for the people to be ready to receive their Saviour as the very Lamb of God, whose sacrificial blood would be a substitute for their own deserved eternal death.

We have an Old Testament rehearsal of this act of mercy in the sacrifice of the Passover Lamb. When its blood smeared on the door posts of their home would cause the death angel to pass over that house without killing the firstborn of that family, [Exodus 12:1-14]. **Note it was at a time God’s people were preparing to come out of Egypt, [which is symbolic of sin.]**

Note also this is a day we are to remember every year throughout all our generations, to be kept for ever, [verse 14].

The fuller message tells us we have to have faith in what God the Father has done through Jesus Christ His Son but to also deny ungodliness and any unworthy lusts that pervade the society in which we live, [1 John 2:15-17].

Romans 12:1 [NIV] *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship.”*

The word translated “bodies” is the Greek word “soma,” meaning whole life, physical body, mind and “human spirit,” [Job 32:8; 1 Corinthians 2:11; Proverbs 20:27].

Only then can our salvation progress as the Holy Spirit begins to re-educate us away from the ways of the society in which we live, [Romans 12:2].

1 Peter 1:13-21 [New King James] *“Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; **but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, ‘Be holy, for I am holy.’** And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one’s work, **conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear;** knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.”*

The goal set before all who have been freed from their deserved eternal death, [Romans 6:23] is to become holy even as God is Holy.

That can only happen in an atmosphere of alarm which is the meaning of the Greek word translated “fear,” that is “phōbōs.”

The only way we can become holy is to spend time in the presence of the Holy Spirit so that the “fruits” of that relationship will become ours.

Galatians 5:22-25 [New King James] *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”*

Each of these fruits are a characteristic of the Holy Creator God we worship.

To offer a sinner the gift of salvation based only upon the work of Jesus Christ, while at the same time allowing them to retain the idea that the gift carries with it no moral implications can do that person untold injury where it hurts the most, their spiritual and eternal future.

Many evangelical teachers insist that grace is free, which is true, for we cannot earn it by “works,” but we are reminded that we are to “grow” within this freedom from the penalty of our sins.

2 Peter 3:17-18 [New King James] *“You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; **but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.** To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.”*

The Greek word translated “grace” is “charis” which is the result of divine influence on our heart. These are the very holy characteristics of the God we worship, that we have already read in **Galatians 5:22-25**.

To remit a person’s past sins without transforming their present lifestyle is a violation of moral sincerity of heart and mind to which our Creator God will have no part.

1 Peter 3:15-16 [New King James] *“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defence to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.”*

We must be ready to preach by our changed lives and if necessary in words the true hope we have in the future through our Saviour and present Lord and Master, with meekness and fear.

Remember the apostles introduced themselves in their writings as “servants” of Jesus Christ. The Greek word used was “*dūolōs*” meaning bond slave with **no** personal rights only responsibilities towards their Master, Jesus Christ, [**Romans 1:1; James 1:1; 2 Peter 1:1; Jude 1; Revelation 1:1**].

The same word is used for all the fellowship of true Christians in the Christian Church, “purchased” in the way a bond slave would be purchased in Roman times, [**Acts 20:28**].