

The Gospel is Only Good News To A Needy Man

Paul Washer | illbehonest.com

What is the gospel? It's good news. It's very good news. But it's only very good news to a terrified man. It's only very good news to a needy man. You see, what you need to understand... Let me put it this way. Just to cut straight to the chase. Let me tell you the most terrifying thing that I can possibly tell you. The most terrifying truth that I can speak to you. Are you ready? Here it is. The most terrifying thing I can tell a man, a woman, a child is this: God is good.

I said that a few years ago over in Europe when I was preaching; secular university. I said "If you want to get down to it, the most terrifying news for man is this: God is good!" And someone kind of laughed and said basically: "And what's the problem with that?" The problem with that is you're not good.

Now... What does a good God do with someone like you? That's the greatest theological and philosophical problem in the scriptures. God is good, and that is terrifying. A hardened criminal working for some crime organization, if before he goes to court he is told that the judge is corrupt he is full of joy. The most terrifying thing you can tell that criminal is the judge is not corrupt, he's good. And see this is the greatest problem of mankind.

The greatest problem of mankind is God is good! Don't you see that? Because you're not! And therein lies the problem with modern day evangelical preaching. No one tells you who God really is! They just speak in clichés. You see the other preachers can tell you God is good and you walk out feeling like you're totally released from any responsibility. I want to tell you that God is good and you ought to be terrified because you are not good!

And there's the second half of the problem. No one's telling you what that means either. What does it mean that you're not good? How non-good or un-good are you? Let me put it this way: if you reject Christ, then the moment you take your first step through the gates of hell, the only thing you will hear is all of creation standing to its feet and applauding and praising God because God has rid the earth of you. That's how not good you are. You say, "But my sin, I'm not that big of a sinner." Adam sinned once and threw the entire universe into total chaos and condemnation. You do not understand who this God is. He really is good; you are not. He really is love; you are the very opposite of that. So, how can he let evil, loveless people into fellowship with him? Why can't He simply forgive? Because he's just.

You see, you were grown up in a culture where there is no justice. There's no pastor writing books like 'Lex Rex' - The Law of the King. There's no one speaking about justice biblically. You see, God is just and the greatest theological problem in the Bible is this: If God is just He cannot forgive you. You hear me? If He's just He cannot forgive you. Unless first His justice is satisfied. And that is what happened on the cross. This is why the cross is everything! It is absolutely everything! On that tree, the only Servant that Yahweh has ever had hung there. A perfect man. And the sins of God's people were cast upon Him. And all the wrath, God's holy

hatred for evil, for sin, for the wicked, everything that should fall down upon your head throughout all of eternity fell down upon the head of God's only beloved Son!

Every Easter Sunday I hear people preach about, you know, nails and spears and crowns of thorns and go through the medical examiners' interpretation of the cross and all that is important, it had to be a bloody death, but what they don't understand is they haven't preached the gospel. You are not saved, if you're saved, because the Romans beat up Jesus. If you're saved it's because His own Father crushed Him under the full force of His wrath! Because someone had to pay for you! It was Him!

People tell me, they say, "Well, you're going to preach the gospel tonight?" "Yes." "But we understand that." "No, you don't." If Iain Murray was here right now; if I could raise Jonathan Edwards from the dead; if Charles Spurgeon were to walk through the door, they would not profess to know the gospel in its fullness. And yet we've reduced the gospel down to four spiritual laws or five things God wants you to know and you all think you know it. You will spend an eternity studying the gospel and you will not even have reached the foothills of the glory of the thing. It's the gospel! God reconciling the world to Himself! God being just and not simply being able to turn his back or look over sin! God who must deal with the sin of his people, He must satisfy His justice in order to appease His wrath! and He does that by the death of His only Son having suffered the wrath of God! And on the third day rising again from the dead! And that resurrection did not make Him the Son of God, but it was God's public declaration of several things.

First of all, this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased (Romans 1). Then you make your way over to Romans 4. What does it mean? That resurrection was God's sign that He had accepted Christ's death as atonement for the sins of His people, whereby they could be justified. Then Peter tells all the outraged leaders of the Jewish nation: "This resurrection from the dead proves that this Jesus whom you crucified is both Lord and Christ." [Acts 2:36] And the apostolic proclamation, the invitation for you to come to Christ, is not: "Would you like to pray this prayer and ask Jesus to come in?" The apostolic proclamation is this: God commands all men everywhere to repent and believe the gospel. [Acts 17:30]

And preachers will tell me "Well if you just tell them that and if you don't give them something to do then how will you know that they are saved?" "Because their life will change!" I can go to most people in every tavern around this place tonight, and some of them really good church members, I can go there and ask them "Are you saved?" and they will say "Yes." I can go to most Southern Baptist colleges where the kids are beer bonging and go "Are you saved?" and they'll say "Most certainly we are!" Why? Because one time some preacher who should not be preaching the gospel led them in a sinner's prayer and pronounced over them that they were converted. Dealt with their soul possibly two or three minutes. No, my dear friend, no. You are saved by repenting of your sins. You are saved by believing the gospel. And the evidence that you have repented unto salvation and that you have believed unto salvation is that you continue repenting and continue believing.