

# PREACH THE GOSPEL

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The command of Christ, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15), is an essential and permanent feature of Christianity. A nineteenth century preacher named Robert Milligan gave three reasons why this is so in his *Scheme Of Redemption* (pp. 362, 363).

**One**, “from the nature and necessities of the case.” God is willing to save all who call on him, but “how shall they hear without a preacher?” (Romans 10:13, 14). To set preaching aside “is virtually to say that God has abandoned his purpose to save mankind.”

**Two**, “from the fact that the church has been constituted the pillar and support of the truth” (I Timothy 3:15). The church must radiate the light of truth by preaching the gospel (Isaiah 60:1-3).”

**Three**, “this important truth is also frequently taught and variously set forth and illustrated in the prophetic writings. (Daniel 12:3, Revelation 14:6, 7).”

The word translated “preach the gospel” is from the Greek *evangelidzo* and appears also in Luke 4:18, 9:6 and Romans 1:15. It deals with making known the good message. It carries the idea of declaring (Revelation 10:7), bringing good tidings (Luke 2:10; I Thessalonians 3:6), and preaching (Revelation 14:6). Eight additional Greek words which occur in many passages help the disciple to develop a correct concept of “preaching the gospel.” They are:

*apologia*—answer or defend (I Peter 3:15; Phillipians 1:7, 16)

*dialegomai*—preach, reason with, dispute (Acts 20:7; 17:2, 17)

*didasko*—teach (Matthew 28:19)

*elegko*—persuade, convict, reprove, rebuke (Titus 1:9; John 8:9; II Timothy 4:2; Titus 1:13)

*katangelo*—declare, show, preach, teach (Acts 17:23; 16:17; 4:2; 16:21)

*kerusso*—proclaim, publish, preach (Luke 12:3; Mark 1:45; Matthew 4:17)

*laleo*—speak, talk, preach (I Corinthians 14:3; Mark 2:2)

*parresiazomai*—speak boldly, preach boldly (Acts 14:3; 9:27).

The written word will not publish itself. Able men of sterling character are needed who will defend and preach the gospel. The preaching of the cross is the power of God (I Corinthians 1:18). Even as Paul wrote further, “For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching [the thing preached] to save them that believe” (I Corinthians 1:21). As Paul came to the close of his life as a gospel preacher, by the inspiration of God he gave this solemn charge to Timothy, “Preach the word; be instant [or urgent] in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables” (II Timothy 4:2-4).

A sampling from various preachers across the country would reveal a wide range of basic content in their sermons. Many preachers find audiences who feel a good balance, and acceptable variety in sermons are those which focus in on political, social, economic and academic concerns. These people look to the man in the pulpit as a highly educated, well informed spokesman for God whose job it is to advise the congregation regarding secular matters. Certainly the Bible may be preached in these churches, but some think a steady diet of lessons from that one book would be a too narrow type of preaching to really benefit modern man in his fast-paced, ever-changing lifestyle. Where these trends in modern preaching are strong the Biblical concept of gospel preaching has paled into insignificance. Religion for people in today’s world is not preaching orientated but rather entertainment and service orientated.

What is gospel preaching? Robert Milligan answers negatively and positively in his book *Scheme Of Redemption*. “It does not consist in preaching one’s self.” Milligan’s opinion was, “The preacher should, if possible, never appear in his own discourse. . . .It does not consist in the defense and advocacy of any party views and measures. . . .It does not consist in the defense and demonstration of any system of science, literature, or philosophy. . . .It does consist simply in preaching Jesus Christ and him crucified” (pp. 364-366). The apostle Paul wrote, “But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks

foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God” (I Corinthians 1:23, 24). Paul felt it his duty to preach the gospel. In First Corinthians he went on to write, “For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: For necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!” (I Corinthians 9:16).

The difference between gospel preaching and the type of preaching described earlier in this article is so great that eternity alone will tell it. An increasing amount of gospel preaching will be heard when men feel as indebted to the task as was the apostle to the Gentiles. He wrote, “I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith” (Romans 1:14-17). When all men stand before God the world having passed away and with it every social, political, economic and academic concern, pray that more will have been hearing gospel preaching than are hearing it today.