

Identification
Of The
Believer
In The
Gospel
Of The
Grace Of God
3rd Edition

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**THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE
BELIEVER IN
THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD
INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT**

The message enclosed is written essentially as given in one of the messages that were preached at the summer conference of the Maranatha Fellowship in Medina, Ohio on July 2, 1987. Because of several requests made by various interested persons, I am herewith sending it forth with several additions and corrections. The message contained in this book is of utmost importance for our time, for we are facing one of the most terrible onslaughts of unbelief and skepticism the world has ever known. Multitudes today have embraced a "Christianity" that is as far removed from Biblical teaching as the east is from the west. This is due, for the most part, to preachers and seminaries who are failing to declare the "whole counsel of God."

It is my hope and prayer that this message will find a place in your heart as you read it...and... if you will,

please check the Scripture references as you go along, for there is nothing contained in this message that is taken out of the context in which it was written. Please note that all quotations from the Scriptures are from the King James Version of 1611., which is the standard text always used by MARANATHA BIBLE SOCIETY and its supporting membership.

THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE BELIEVER IN THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD

**"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one 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 1:16-17)**

We have all probably had a great deal of instruction in what constitutes the Gospel by now, so there really isn't a lot of need to go into any kind of detail concerning it...or is there? In the last pages of this writing I am including an article on "The Two Gospels." I have done a great deal of thinking lately about the Gospel of Christ that Paul preached, and especially in light of these two verses, for it is here that Paul (for the first time) introduces his statement from the Old Testament: "the just shall live by faith."

As I have noted from time to time, the Old Testament quotation he uses is from Habakkuk 2:4 where it actually reads: **"The just shall live by *his* faith."** Paul, under Divine inspiration left out the word "his" in the quote, for

in Paul's writings we can clearly see that whatever faith we may have is a God-given faith, thereby making it "His" faith which is imputed unto us.

In the above verses, Paul sets the tone for the entire Book of Romans, for we see (in chapter after chapter) Paul dealing with the matter of faith and what constitutes believing and saving faith.

Paul states that he was not ashamed of the *Gospel of Christ* and then proceeds to give the reason for his boldness: "*for it is the power of God unto salvation.*" An instrument of such astonishing power was actually, given by God into the hands of one man. Such is the power of this Gospel, that Paul, later on in this same Book, makes the statement: "**In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my Gospel.**" (Romans 2:16) It is incredible when you think on the fact that the God of this universe actually put into the hands of man an instrument of such authority and power, and then allows him to make the statement that at some future date *all men would actually be judged* by this same Gospel of Christ. No wonder Paul was not ashamed of it. When you consider that the Gospel "*is the power of God unto salvation,*" and that it is also a terrible instrument of

judgment, then Paul must have been overwhelmed by the fact that he to be the administrator of this great truth. One thing more needs to be said before going on:

"the gospel," "the faith" and "the truth" are practically one and the same throughout the epistles of Paul, and in most cases, they could be interchanged without destroying the meaning of the text to any degree.

THE GOSPEL DEMANDS OBEDIENCE

It is most important that we recognize the great truth: The Gospel of the grace of God demands obedience (just as "the truth" or "the faith" demands obedience), which should tell us that it is not simply a stated fact. This obedience factor is reiterated throughout Paul's epistles in one way or another. Let me cite several instances where there can be no mistaking the intent. First of all, when Paul, describing the coming of Christ, wrote the II Thessalonian letter, he stated most emphatically: **"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that *obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ*: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."**

(II Thessalonians 1:7-9) He used the same word *obey* later on in the same epistle; **"And if any man *obey not our word by this epistle*, note that man and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed."** (II Thessalonians 3:14)

In Romans 2:8, Paul stated: **"But unto them that are contentious, and do not *obey the truth*, but obey**

unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile.” In the Book of Galatians 3:1 we read: **“O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not *obey the truth*, before whose wyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?”** Even Peter, in I Peter 4:17, had this to say about the truth of the Gospel: **“For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that *obey not the gospel of God?*”** In Romans 6:16-17, we read: **“Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey: whether of sin unto death, or of *obedience unto righteousness?* But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have *obeyed* from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.”** In Romans 15:18 Paul stated: **“For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to *make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed,*”** In the next chapter we read in verses 19 and 26: **“For your *obedience* is come abroad unto all men...But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures**

**of the prophets, according to the commandment
of the everlasting God, made known to all
nations for the *obedience of faith.*"**

**HOW MEN SEE THE MINISTRY OF PAUL.
IS HIS GOSPEL FOOLISHNESS AND A
STUMBLING BLOCK AS SOME ME CLAIM?**

Paul could have spent the rest of his days glorying in the fact that he was chosen out from all mankind to be the bearer of these good tidings, and yet he looked upon himself as a simple vessel of God, molded and shaped to be the bearer of the good news of Christ's death, burial and resurrection from the dead. As I have so often pointed out before, Paul, in the eyes of the self-righteous Jew, was considered to be a total apostate, and the Gospel he preached was thought to be nothing but a *stumbling block*. What Paul preached allowed nothing of human merit, nor did it take into consideration nationality, wealth, prestige or any other thing that is to be of great value by mankind. To the Greeks, in all their conceit and passion for learning, it was deemed to be nothing but foolishness because it paid no attention to human understanding or wisdom. (I Corinthians 1:18-24) Philosophers by the dozens had come from the shores of Greece, and yet not one of them could hold a candle to the message of Paul's Gospel. Paul had no doubt about the end accomplishment of preaching the Gospel and he firmly stated that anyone who believed it would be finally

and utterly saved for all eternity. By the same token, he also knew and clearly stated that judgment would be based upon the Gospel he proclaimed. Thus we shall spend some time in this brief study in which I hope to be able to provide several blessings along the way. In order to present this truth, I have organized this material into the form that follows on the next few pages. I hope and pray that you will carefully consider these things, for they well may be the most important facts ever presented.

Before beginning this section I would like to add a portion of a quote from the book "Progressive Revelation," Volume I: What I do read and understand of the Gospel, is a stated fact which is to be acted upon believingly with faith that come through hearing the Word of God and this Word proclaims Christ to be resurrected from the dead according to the Scriptures. Not only is the gospel a stated fact, but it demands that we act upon it by identifying ourselves with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection to the extent that we too can say with Paul: **"I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me, and gave himself for me."** (Galatians 2:20) The gospel Paul

preached is one of hope and assurance, yet it bears a note of warning to the false professor. The fact of Christ's death, burial and resurrection can be taken as a mere intellectual attainment, for if there is *no identification of the believer with the risen Savior, there is no saving grace.*"

THE GOSPEL IS THE ONLY MEANS OF COMING TO SAVING GRACE

1. In a day such as ours when you hear such conflicting messages coming from men who ought to know better, it is best that we once again establish what the Gospel really is. Recently when I made a remark to a certain man that the biggest problem with a preacher he had mentioned was the fact that he never preached the Gospel., I got an almost violent reaction. "The very idea," he said. "Of course, he preaches the Gospel!" When I asked this fellow to tell me what the Gospel is, he didn't have the foggiest notion about it, nor do multitudes of people around this world. There are big-name evangelists who hold large crusades around the world, who never preach the Gospel. the reason is simple...*they don't know what constitutes the gospel of the Grace of God.*
2. If the Gospel that Paul preached is, as I stated, the only means of coming to saving grace, then what in the world is happening to all of these people who are making "decisions" in all of these great meetings? We sound bigoted when we say there is only one Gospel, and that it is the one Paul

preached but it must be believed in order for anyone to be saved. We sound bigoted when we insist in an actual *identification* with Jesus Christ without going through the various rites of most denominations of today. These rites include baptism, church membership, taking the Lord's Supper, performing various tasks, etc., etc., etc. And, what's more, we sound bigoted when we make the remark that most men who call themselves preachers in the world today, not only do not know what the Gospel is, most of them have never made an attempt to preach it.

3. The Gospel Paul preached is unique in all the Bible, for there was no one before him that even had a clue as to what he preached. In addition, there is no evidence that the Apostles ever preached what Paul preached, for if they had known what it was they would have said so in their writings at some point. One thing we know for certain: no one ever so much as mentioned the fact of "**Christ in you the hope of glory!**" The message of Paul was one of *identification*, and he never failed to stress the importance of the

believer being *in Christ*, and what is more important is the doctrine of Christ *in* the believer.

4. By the word *identification* I simply mean this: the believer is placed *into Christ* by the Holy Spirit of God. What is more, Christ is placed into the believer. Every man is born into this world spiritually dead. He has a live soul and a living body, but he is totally unable to communicate with God for there is nothing in him that would cause him to do so because he is dead spiritually. According to Romans 6:3-11 we are placed into the death, burial and resurrection of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit and not water, for water could never place anyone into Christ. Water baptism may identify a person with a church, but never with Christ. **“Know ye not, that so many of us were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into his death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life, For if we have been planted *together* in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:**

knowing this, that our old man *is crucified with him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” That brings us to our next point:

THE GOSPEL AND WHAT IT DOES FOR US

1. The Gospel, as I have stated so many times, is not just a *stated fact*. It is indeed the “*power of God unto salvation*.” In a very special way, God exhibits His power to save all who come to Him in faith, having believed the Gospel of the grace of God. This Gospel: [1] changes men, [2] makes new creatures out of them, [3] empowers them, [4] gives them the right to call our God “Abba, Father”, [5] makes the believer an integral part of the Church, which is His body, [6] places the believer into Christ Himself, and best of all, [7] puts Christ into the believer. Salvation through the Gospel is a wondrous act of God, and He uses, as far as I can see in the Scripture, no other method or means. A person must *hear* the Gospel, they must *believe* the Gospel and they must actively *participate* in the Gospel. The stated fact will save no one, but when the death, burial and resurrection of Christ is preached and men are admonished to enter into that very death of Christ and to reckon themselves as “dead indeed unto sin” to walk in newness of life with the power of the resurrection, then it can be said that they have experienced the “**power of God unto salvation.**” Therefore, the Gospel of the Grace of

God *enables* (through the power of the Spirit of God) those who believe to die *with* Christ, to be buried *with* Christ and to be raised from the dead *with* Christ. The Gospel of the grace of God is the most powerful element in the universe, for it does indeed change sinful men, who are avowed enemies of our Lord, into saints of God.

2. The Gospel gives us assurance. When we have taken God at His Word, and have entered into an agreement with Jesus Christ, there is nothing in this world that can take away the assurance we feel in our heart. We *know* Whom we have believed, and we are persuaded that Christ is able to keep that which we have committed unto Him against the day when **“God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to (Paul’s) gospel.”** (Romans 2:16) The comfort we derive from having our fears taken away is beyond description. “Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine...Oh what a foretaste of glory Divine” wrote the song writer, and there isn’t one of us who knows the Lord that could not sing this from the very depths of our redeemed hearts.
3. In the preceding sub-section I made the statement that man comes into this world with a living soul and

body, but he is dead spiritually. Every man is a trichotomy, that is: he is made up of three parts. In Genesis 2:7 we read of God creating man: **“And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground (his body) and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life (his spirit) and man became a living soul.”** In the transgression, man died spiritually, but his soul and body lived on. Adam was told in the day he would eat of the tree he would die, yet he lived on in the flesh. Something (his spirit) in him died, yet he was alive soul and body. From that time on all men are brought into this world dead spiritually. When men are made new “creatures in Christ” according to II Corinthians 5:17, they once again are a trichotomy as is seen in II Thessalonians 5:23, where Paul wrote: **“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray your whole *spirit* and *soul* and *body* be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”** Please allow me to explain a very remarkable truth to those of you who have never heard this. When a person is saved, or regenerated, their dead spirit is transported *immediately* into heavenly places. Their dead spirit is now alive in glory while the Spirit of the living Christ replaces the

dead spirit. This explains the meaning of Paul's statement in Romans 8:9: **“Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of (His) righteousness.”** This, then, is the meaning of verse 16: **“The Spirit (of Christ in us) itself beareth witness with our spirit (which has been raised up in heavenly places) that we are children of God.”** This is also the meaning of Colossians 3:1-3 where Paul refers to our already being raised from the dead: **“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”**

THE GOSPEL AND WHAT IT WILL DO FOR OTHERS

1. I think we sometimes forget that the same Gospel that saved our souls and made us into new creatures in Christ is the only element in the universe that can do the same for others. I have had numbers of people ask me, “What is the best way to reach my husband?” or, “What would you recommend as a good method to reach my children?” or “What would you do if your wife is unsaved?” I know it sounds simplistic, and almost trite, but we have to go back to basics. There is only one powerful element left in this world that can do these things: *The Gospel*.
2. The Gospel also makes life easier for those unsaved people who are associated with saved people. The world is a better place because of the Gospel, so think what it will be in the future when there is no Gospel being preached. We are already experiencing the complete decay of morals in our land. Homosexuality is rampant, the institution of marriage is no longer sacred. Drunkenness and dope addiction have just about taken out our youth, and there is no end in sight. Literally thousands of teenagers take their own lives because of frustration and anxiety. It is going to

get much worse, and I am of the firm persuasion that unless there is a revival of Gospel preaching we are going to see a complete breakdown of all principles that have made us a great nation. We are no longer merely “immoral,” for we have become totally “amoral,” and the values that were once precious to our forefathers are now completely forsaken.

3. The Gospel is, as far as I know, the only force in the universe that can bring harmony and order out of chaos. Man, in his natural state, is spiritually insane, for unless he is governed by a power greater than himself he has no hope, either in this world or the world to come. Many around us are beneficiaries of the Gospel of Christ whether they believe it or not. We cannot live in a world such as ours without bearing an influence upon others. We may not always see it or understand it, but that influence is there just the same. All men are influenced by the gospel in one way or another, so that brings us to the next part of our study:

THE GOSPEL AND DIVINE ACCEPTANCE

1. Most all of the human race is religious, that is they worship a “god” of some form or fashion and almost all of mankind has embraced a hope of everlasting life. Rank unbelievers have stated that they hope they are going to “go to heaven” when they die. This simply means that most men have a selfish desire to have some kind of a relationship with the “god” of their imagination, who is certainly *not the God of the Bible*.
2. Let it be known that there is no Divine acceptance unless the Gospel of the grace of God is preached, believed and acted upon. There are many who think that a person is “sincere” and regardless of what they believe they will one day find acceptance with God. Again...this is not so. If the Bible is what I believe it to be, THE WORD OF GOD, then there is no way to find acceptance with our God apart from the Gospel of the grace of God. Multitudes of people today are called by the name “Christian,” all because they have attached themselves to some group by the same name, yet they are farther away from the Truth now than they were before they were duped into believing that they had all of their accounts settled in

heavenly places by a pseudo-gospel that has failed to change them.

3. Paul stated that his Gospel **“is the power of God unto salvation,”** and any other, therefore, is not to be compared with it in any sense of the word. Men cannot be accepted into the presence of Almighty God unless they August Presence through the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.
4. That there is *another Gospel* cannot be denied, for even in the days of Paul there were those who were preaching something else. Read the words of Galatians 1:6-12: **“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.” This *other gospel* was a *perversion* of the Gospel Paul proclaimed, and it would be well for all of us to understand that if this was so in the very first days of the infant church on this earth, what must be the case at this present moment? We must also note one other thing about the preceding passage: those who preach this *other gospel* are pronounced *accursed*, or as it is stated in the Greek, *anathema*. This phrase literally means: *Let him be damned*.

THE GOSPEL AND DIVINE JUDGEMENT

1. Paul, in Romans 2, states that there is coming a day when the *secrets* of men shall be judged by the Gospel he preached. These secrets are the innermost thoughts of their minds and the conscience they have developed without having come into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ through the Gospel of the grace of God. God is going to hold all mankind liable for what they did with Christ and what they thought about the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Even if men have not heard the Gospel, they will also be held accountable, but how much more accountable will the men be who have failed to proclaim this precious truth of the Gospel of the Grace of God.
2. I don't have any idea how terrible the judgment of God is going to be, for there has never been anything to compare it with since written history began, but I am of firm conviction that we are going to see a cataclysmic judgment that will cause the entire universe to tremble and shake. Whatever else is true in the Bible, the coming judgment is a terrible force to be reckoned with. All the prophets spoke of it, Jesus Christ made ample reference to the subject, and all of

the Apostles were in accord as to the fact of a coming judgment. I don't know just *when* this will take place, for all Paul says is “**in the day when God shall judge,**” and he doesn't go into any more detail. All I know is this...divine judgment is going to be based upon the *TRUTH* as it is found in the Word of God, and especially according to the Gospel of the grace of God preached by Paul.

3. Very few men today preach on the coming judgment, and virtually no one ever mentions *why there is going to be a judgment in the first place*. I really do not think that many men understand that the Gospel of the grace of God is the basis for coming judgment, for if they did they would at least try to find out what that Gospel is and would start making an effort to preach it. Surely Roman 2:16 is in the Bible for all men to see and to come to some sort of an understanding about what is said.
4. In the very first part of this book I made note of the passage from II Thessalonians 1:7-9, and I would like to comment on this thought. From studying the Scriptures over these many years, I have come to see and understand that the next event on the calendar of Almighty God is the *appearing* of Jesus Christ.

According to Paul, there are basically two kinds of people who are going to be judged at this coming event: **“them that know not god”** and those other who **“obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.”** On the one hand, you have a vast multitude who do not know who the Lord is, and who have, perhaps, never made any attempt to find out if there really is a God after all. This will include the atheist, the agnostic and countless members of churches who have taken an outward form of *religion* without any recognizance of Christ Jesus as Lord and Savior. The other group are those who have made a profession of faith in Christ and who, from all outward appearances, are *Christian*, and yet they have never heard nor understood the matter of identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection from the dead. In this passage, we must note that these people are going to be **“punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.”** In a day such as ours, when men refuse to believe that there is such a thing as hell, it would be well to remember these words, for here Paul is not referring to any such place as *hell* but is stating the fact that there are multitudes who do not

know God and there are many others who have had **“a form of godliness but who have denied the power thereof”** who are going to be punished with everlasting destruction. Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the Sermon on the Mount, made the following statement, and it would be well that we took this most seriously, especially in a day such as ours when the preaching of many gives out the idea that salvation is a product of man’s free will: **“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter in the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, *I never knew you depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*”** (Matthew 7:21-23)

There can be no doubt about these words, for these people, to whom Christ was referring, were apparently orthodox in that they boasted of prophesying, casting our devils and doing wonderful works...all *in the name of Christ*. And yet they were never *known by Him*, even though they had made a boastful profession of *knowing Him*. Consider carefully the need for being

identified with Christ through the Gospel of the grace of God, for it is not something to be taken lightly if there is any concern over our eternal state before a Holy and Righteous God with Whom we must deal, both here and in eternity.

On the following pages, I have included another message which was preached in the same conference as the one you have just read. It has a great deal of bearing upon the previous message and I thought, therefore, to add it to this brief effort. I trust you will study it out, look up the Scriptures used and will see for yourself the importance of the preaching of the cross of Christ. I trust you will also come to realize that this matter of *identification* is of the utmost importance

CHRIST CRUCIFIED, THE CORE OF THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE

“And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the *power of God*.” I Corinthians 2:1-5)

When the Corinthian church had demonstrated that it had departed, to a degree, from the purity of the Gospel of Christ that Paul had preached, he wrote back to them to remind them that he had come to them with fear and trembling and had preached nothing but the crucified Christ unto them. The simplicity of the Gospel he preached had been lost in the trappings of a religious system that had made a mockery of much that Paul had taught and preached. They became ambitious for gifts and signs and had begun to quarrel about who was attached to whom. There were various sects within the church, some of Peter, some of Paul, while some were given over to

Apollos and others bragged that they followed no man but were attached to Christ only. The sectarian spirit began in the early churches and has continued to this day along the same lines.

It is in this epistle that Paul endeavors to show them the folly of such a course and that, while Apollos, Peter and Paul were all servants of God, he was totally opposed to such division and sectarianism.

In the very beginning of this letter he stated he was thankful to God that he had baptized so few of them, and that he had not been sent to perform this rite as a called Apostle of the crucified, risen and ascended Christ. He also informed them that he had never once tried to exercise any control over any of them, his sole design being that of preaching Christ and Him crucified. The very language he used shows his forcefulness...**”For I *determined* not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified...”** In chapter one Paul made the statement: **“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is *the power of God.*”** If we take the last four words of that verse and compare them to the last four words of chapter 2:5, we can see that Paul considered the preaching of the cross as *the power of God.*

This is borne out in his statement in Romans 1:16-17, where we read: **“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is *the power of God* unto salvation to every one 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.**”**

Sometimes we get so involved in a very complex system of theology which causes us to argue some point or another and we often forget the central theme of Christianity. The subject of Paul’s declaration was always “Christ crucified.” We can go to the Galatian letter and find Paul saying: **“God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world, For *in Christ Jesus* neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.”** (Galatians 6:14-15). In the Ephesian letter, we see Paul’s emphasis upon this very theme: **or He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinance; for to make himself twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might**

**reconcile both unto God in *one body by the cross*,
having slain the enmity thereby...”** (Ephesians 2:14-16)

In Philippians he wrote: **“Brethren, be followers
together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye
have us for an ensample. (For many walk, of whom I
have told you often, and now tell you even weeping,
that they are enemies of *the cross of Christ*: whose end
is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose
glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)”**

(Philippians 3:17-19) He continues the thought of the
cross in Colossians: **“And, having made peace through
the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things to
himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth,
or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime
alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works,
yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh
through death (of the cross), to present you holy and
unblameable and unreprouable in his sight...”**

(Colossians 1:20-22) Even in the Hebrews epistle, Paul
brings this same theme into play: **“Wherefore seeing we
also are compassed about with so great a cloud of
witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin
which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with
patience the race that is set before us, looking unto**

Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured *the cross*, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (Hebrews 12:1-2)

While today’s preachers mention the cross in passing, or even at times make a great deal of comment on it, they miss the significance of the cross as Paul saw it throughout his epistles. I have often said that the cross of Christ is not a mere emblem or a flag around which we rally, but it is where life begins, for it is in Galatians 2:20 where Paul drives this point home so effectually: **“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”** The death of Christ on the cross is where we all received our immersion in death and life: **“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this, that our**

old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin, for he that is dead is freed from sin...”

(Romans 6:3-7)

**IDENTIFICATION OF THE BELIVER
WITH CHRIST IS THE MISSING FACTOR IN
TODAY'S GOSPEL**

It is the *identification* factor that is missing in much of today's preaching. Paul saw the cross as an actual instrument of death for every believer, and he said in many places and many ways, that life could not begin until the *cross of Christ* was part of our actual experience. Because all types and emblems of the ancient Hebrew economy all pointed to the death of Christ on the cross, Paul (as a learned Jew) knew from the very beginning that the starting point of all revelation would have to be this event of the cross. Not only that, but Paul was the first one to understand...and (it is possible that he was the *only one* that knew), that the cross was the focal point of everyone's actual experience as a new creature in Christ. The great theme of "**CHRIST DIED FOR OUR SINS**" was thundered out by early preachers with such force and power that multitudes fell under the power of the cross. Read the preaching of the Puritan ministers of the Gospel as well as that of the Reformers, and you will find that they preached the cross with great power and authority.

THE REASON FOR THE CROSS

1. We know, from a study of the Old Testament that God has a hatred for sin. All of the sacrifices of the old economy were merely types and shadows of what transpired when Christ died on the cross. God placed such a high price on sin that without the shedding of blood there was no remission. (Hebrews 9:22) Yet Paul also brought out the fact that the shedding of blood of lambs, goats, etc., could not accomplish what Christ did when He died upon the cross of Calvary. (See Hebrews 9-10)
2. The death of Christ states two things without contradiction: (1) it shews the value of the death of Christ and (2) it shews the terrible consequences of man having sinned. That God could find no other substitute in all the universe tells us that He placed the highest possible price upon man's transgressions. The consequence of sin is eternal damnation and absolute separation from the God Who created man in the first place. The great theme of *justification* could not be a reality without the cross. The glorious truth of *sanctification* would be a farce if it were not for the cross. All of the grand Gospel truths that Paul

preached were founded upon and rooted in the
CROSS OF CHRIST.

3. If we had the Bible without the cross, the infinite love and mercy of God would be unknown to us. God hates sin, and yet he so loved the sinner that He gave His only begotten Son to save sinners to the uttermost, and, at the same time, in the grand eternal design of redemption, has provided a way for His very nature to be satisfied and yet not compromise the principle of **“the soul that sinneth shall die!”** How great the gift of eternal life! How terrible the price that was paid! Who can compare the glory of God to the infamy of man’s sin? Contrast heaven and earth, then try to bring the two together without the cross of Christ. It is impossible, yet God did so in the eternal ages when it was planned and executed by the Holy Trinity of the Godhead in perfect agreement in the high tribunal when it was determined that the Son of God would one day die in such an ignominious manner upon the cross of Calvary.
4. The mind of man is offended by the cross, and the Jew stumbled at that preaching. There is nothing as foolish as the preaching of the cross, and all who preach it are to be counted as fools. To all who

believe it there is nothing but mockery. Paul was named as a madman for having preached the cross, for he wrote **“For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God, or whether we be sober, it is for your cause...”** (II Corinthians 5:13) Before a king, Paul heard these words: **“Much learning hath made thee mad...”** yet Paul knew what he was doing, and as far as I know he never departed from it for a moment. It cost Paul his life to preach the cross, and even to the very last, he was telling all who would listen that Christ died at Calvary.

5. Nothing is so offensive to learned and educated people as being told that the only way to salvation is by way of death of one who was considered a malefactor. The very death of Christ was held in suspicion by those righteous people who thought they had found favor with Almighty God because they were not guilty of some major crime. Even so today do we find people scoffing at the idea that 2,000 years ago a rather obscure Jew by the name of Jesus of Nazareth dies as a common criminal outside the walls of Jerusalem, and that through His death they can find peace in their hearts by believing that it was for them He died. Even in many of the hymn books of today

we find that men have removed what they consider to be offensive references to the blood, the cross and man's total dependency upon the death of Christ in his salvation. Emphasis is increasingly made upon the human experience, rather than the Divine aspects of salvation by means of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

THE REASONABLENESS OF THE CROSS

1. What else could Paul have preached? Many men had died on the cross in his lifetime, for this was a common practice of the Romans, and wherever there was a seat of authority the countryside would be littered with the corpses of people hanging on the Roman cross. What made the cross of Christ so necessary in preaching is the fact that Paul knew beyond shadow of doubt that Christ did not just die and enter into the grave forever. Paul knew Him in resurrection, therefore it follows that the most reasonable facet of his preaching would be the crucifixion with the following proof of His resurrection. If men don't follow the example of Paul as is commanded in the Word of God, they will downplay the crucifixion and the resurrection which followed.
2. The fact that Paul suffered such persecution was also reasonable, for the crucified life is one of extreme hardship. He was a living example of what he proclaimed as the truth, for not only was Christ crucified, so was Paul. (Galatians 2:20) The preaching of the cross might be unreasonable to the carnal mind

of man, but to those of the redeemed it is a most reasonable proposition.

3. Not only was the preaching of the cross reasonable, Paul concluded that he could preach nothing contrary to that event. There was to be no mixture of human effort and God's eternal purpose. There could be no compromise, for to do so would make the cross of Christ without effect. All creed and forms known to man would have to be superseded and overthrown. However popular and regardless of how widely man's religion is patronized, there can be no getting around the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. How few there are today who even mention this, and yet, as I said before, it is the very core of the principle message of Christianity.
4. The cross was reasonable in that there is no other way for mankind to find grace in the sight of God. All New Testament doctrines have their basis in the cross of Christ. All blessings and privileges stem from this. All that Christ taught and acted out in His life on earth pointed to the cross. This, then, was Paul's universal theme. To rich and poor alike, to the high and mighty to the lowest slave, to the intelligent and to the illiterate, to high officials and the downtrodden

peasant, to the religious and the non-religious, to the old and to the young, to all men without distinction, Paul preached Christ and Him crucified. It was the only reasonable thing he could do.

**PAUL VINDICATED HIS OFFICE OF
APOSTLE BY THE PREACHING OF THE
CROSS**

1. As the ambassador for Christ, Paul had his work cut out for him. He was a living witness of a living Christ. The great work to which he was called was always on his mind. At one time Paul studied under the greatest of living teachers, yet he never again sought out the seats of learning. He did not get sidetracked into the study of science, nor did he collect great books. He lived in a land of antiquity, for the land of Israel was home of one of the oldest races upon the earth, yet it meant nothing to him as he went about with the proclamation of the great message of the cross of his risen Lord.
2. Any man today who claims to be a preacher of the Gospel of Christ had better follow the teachings of Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, and yet we listen in vain to even hear this great truth mentioned. our Lord didn't just die to make men happy, or make them rich, or to enable them to speak in tongues, nor did He die to enable men to live like kings and enjoy great wealth at the expense of others. The very existence of our Lord on this earth was one of denial of self, and

that was true of his servant Paul as well. The fact remains: He died to save them from out of their sins. The crucified life of the true believer is not one of ease or extreme joy and elation, it is one of suffering and sorrow. Paul knew there would be no saving of souls unless he preached what he had been told to preach. I wonder if men even so much as think of this today, for men have never been, nor will they ever be, saved by anything other than the message that Paul preached with such fervor. He knew that nothing would bring glory to Christ, his personal Savior, like preaching the central fact of all history. Men may scoff and sneer at this preaching, but it never deterred Paul. Listen to what he wrote to the church at Corinth: **“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.”** Paul knew where the power of God was, and he never deviated from the course that ultimately brought him to his death in Rome.

3. Paul never taught that men should be brought into subjection to some church or ecclesiastical authority. He knew that the cross itself was the means that God would use to break the sinner and cause him to bow down to the Almighty. Rules and regulations can be

obeyed until kingdom come, and yet no one will ever conform to the image of Christ. It is the crucifixion that brings men into the new creature state that Christ designed in His plan of redemption. You cannot change the message. You cannot improve upon it, and regardless how clever men may be in finding ways to move the emotions of men, in the final analysis nothing will change men like the preaching of the *Cross of Christ*. While many seem to be very successful and are able to draw huge multitudes that will flock to hear them as they stand and put forth their orations, in the end all they have done, or will have appeared to have done, will come tumbling down and they will be proven to be “blind leaders of the blind”...just that, and nothing more.

**IS THERE DANGER IN REPETITION?
CAN THIS TRUTH BE OVEREMPHASIZED?**

I know that I have brought messages on this theme time and again, and I would suspect that if a catalog were made of all that I have preached since I began over 30 years ago, I would appear to be very repetitious, and yet I cannot help myself. The importance of this message cannot be overemphasized. I believe Paul was also repetitious and that it may seem that he appeared to be harping on a one stringed instrument. The times in which we live are crucial, for never has there been so much going on with so little results. I am more convinced than ever that God isn't looking for better or more clever methods. He already has the only one that will work. God is not looking for vast multitudes, for Christ Himself even turned His back on them while on earth. Paul never sought the multitudes, for understood that what he preached was a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to the Gentiles. Paul thoroughly understood that God had a people chosen out for his Name and he was more than determined to find them by preaching the one and only thing that would cause them to hear and understand that the message was for them alone and not for the rest of the world.

**THE PREACHING OF THE CROSS
THE ANSWER TO THE PROBLEMS
THAT FACE US**

When sin is no longer called sin, and millions of unborn babies are slain in the womb of a fornicating woman, and when drunkenness and dope addiction is rampant, and when we see multitudes dying as a result of homosexually transmitted disease, and when we see more and bigger multitudes flocking to hear apostate preachers proclaiming something that is far from the Word of God, then it is time for us to stand up for the central truth of all of God's Word.

The preaching of the cross of Christ, which is the *power of God* unto salvation, is absolutely essential. Nothing else will work, for *if* all the other things that are going on around us are being accepted by the God of this universe, then the Bible is nothing but a collection of stories (as some believe) and we have nothing upon which we can build our faith. If, on the other hand, what is being preached is part of the *strong delusion* (II Thessalonians 2:7-12) that is coming upon us, and has been sent by the hand of God, then we are right in taking our stand against these who fail to lift up the crucified, buried and resurrected Christ of the Bible. Let us never

depart from *Christ Crucified* as the core and main substance of our message and our personal faith.

IDENTIFICATION WITH THE CROSS OF CHRIST

There can be no mistaking it, the cross is of the utmost importance in the life of every believer. When we first begin our walk with the Lord, our initial step is toward the cross. We begin and end our lives upon the cross of Christ, and all of us should be able to proclaim with Paul: **“But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.*”** (Galatians 6:14-15)

Does the cross of Christ mean anything to you? Have you become identified with Jesus Christ by means of the crucifixion and resurrection? Have *you* died with Christ and have you been raised up *with Him in heavenly places*?

THE TWO GOSPELS

There seems to be quite a bit of misunderstanding about the differences between the “gospel” as it is found in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John and the one Paul preached in his writings. In the “great commission” of Matthew 28, the disciples were commanded by the Lord to go into all the world and preach “whatsoever I have commanded you.” Reading through the four gospels, it is difficult to find out exactly what they were to preach. We know that the “gospel of the kingdom” of the four gospels had as a base the good news that the Messiah had been born of a virgin and was among them as the Promised One of Israel. What He did and what He said was of utmost importance, for a new era had been born but the law of Israel was still in effect.

Jesus Christ as the Messiah taught strict obedience to the law of Moses and furthermore He instructed His disciples to do the same. In addition, what our Lord taught were moral principles and ethics. The commandments are few and far between and pertained primarily to the twelve He had chosen.

Therefore, the gospel in these four books was based upon the law. The sacrifices of the temple were still going on, the priesthood was still in force and the

Sanhedrin was operating as the ruling body. Israel was still identified as a nation and the rituals, holy days and ceremonies were in effect. In other words, the message of the gospel of the kingdom had to do with these things that pertained only to one nation and no others. The “go ye into the world” was to be an extension of what they were observing in the land of Israel, but the Gospel of the Grace of God was not yet in effect, and that message was the “gospel” revealed to Paul which he preached at a later date under different circumstances.

WHAT THE DISCIPLES COULD NOT HAVE PREACHED

While the Messiah was still among them and had not yet been crucified and risen again, they could not have preached those events as part of their message. Many read into the Scriptures some things that had not yet been revealed. To say that what Paul preached and what the others preached were the same is to make a grievous error. A certain preacher who was on our board of directors at Maranatha Youth Ranch had a discussion with one in our fellowship and this man said that they all preached the same thing but had different mission fields.

It was recognized later on that Paul was to preach one message while Peter and the others had another topic altogether. This we know from Galatians 2:7: **“But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of uncircumcision was committed unto, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles.”** The gospel of uncircumcision was for the Jews only, and had to do with the principles and practices of that nation. Peter was a strict observer of these things and his experience on the housetop of Simon the tanner in

Acts 10 proves beyond doubt that Peter was not to be persuaded to change his views on the dietary laws of Israel. He even told the heavenly messenger that he had never eaten anything that is common or unclean. It is not said whether or not Peter did what he was commanded as far as I know he remained the same in his view on that subject.

While the Messiah was yet alive, it was impossible for them to preach the resurrection, for even after Christ was risen they doubted it and were yet to be persuaded. Part of what they were to preach is found in Matthew 10:5-23 and I don't find this being rescinded in any other place. **“These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as you go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils; freely ye have received, freely give. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass for your purses. Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves; for the workman is worthy of his meat. And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is**

worthy: and there abide till you go thence. And when you come into an house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrhah in the day of judgment, than for that city. Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. But beware of men; for they will deliver you up to the counsels, and they will scourge you in their synagogues: And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child; and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be

saved. But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another; for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of man be come.”

Apparently, the foregoing was part of the “all things I have commanded you” but there are other things as well. In fact, it is difficult to isolate exactly what the gospel of the kingdom pertains to, whereas the “gospel of the Grace of God” which was preached by Paul is identifiable and simple to understand. Peter and the others were definitely commanded to go not into the way of the Gentiles, whereas it was Paul’s commission to do exactly the opposite.

EXAMINING THE GOSPEL THAT WAS PREACHED BY PAUL

When Paul wrote “be ye followers of me” he never intended that we should worship him or place him in the same category as the Lord Jesus Christ. What he meant was simply to follow what he wrote and communicated to those to whom he wrote his letters. It ought to be quite clear that this man was given the task of writing half of the letters of the entire New Testament, and he himself said that what he wrote were the commandments of the Lord. We do not follow Paul as a man but what he wrote comprises the entirety of what is to be lived and practiced as the Christian walk.

We follow his directions because they are all we have. If we were to remove his teachings from the Bible we would have no concept of the life of a true believer. We wouldn't know what comprises salvation, we would have no idea of our attitudes or what our conduct should be. There would be no appreciation of the sacrifice of our Lord, we would be in the dark as to the Church, which is His body and there would be no “gospel of the grace of God.” In addition, there would be no comprehension of identification as we see it revealed in all of Paul's writings.

The law would still be the criteria, circumcision would still be in force, baptism by immersion would still be practiced and the death, burial and resurrection of Christ would have virtually no meaning without Paul's gospel. He referred to what he taught and preached as "my gospel." (Romans 2:16) No one else dared make this claim, nor did anyone do so in any place in the Word of God.

I received a letter from an individual who took me to task and inferred I had become a Paul worshipper. This is not true, for I don't know of anyone who would dare to make such a claim. If he thinks this is the case, he obviously has only a mental concept, for this has never been the theme of our teaching, nor will it ever be. Of course, we place great emphasis upon the writings and teachings of Paul, but are we not instructed to do so? When Paul said "**be ye followers of me**" he never intended that we should elevate him to a position that never sought nor warranted. I love Paul because I find in him a man who was totally committed to following the Lord Jesus Christ and to the day he died he never deviated from his course. He kept the faith in One to Whom he had committed himself, being confident that He was able to keep him safe from start to finish.

The man evidently thinks by following Paul we cannot follow Christ, and yet it is through the Pauline epistles that we are instructed to do this without reservation. No one I know fails to follow Christ, but how do we follow Him? Do we follow His teaching to the exclusion of Paul's writings, or do we follow Him as a result of the teachings of Paul? I love my Lord, not only because of who He is, but also because of what He did on my behalf. I would never have understood the magnitude of Christ's death, burial and resurrection if I had not learned it from the pen of our beloved brother Paul. Because the man who wrote this letter assumed that we cannot follow both Paul and Christ, he came to some wrong conclusions, one of which is that we place Paul above the word he preached. This again is not so, for Paul was only an instrument and what he wrote was of Divine inspiration. what he wrote and preached was given to him and him alone. He was unique in so many aspects that it would be next to impossible to list them all.

The gospel Paul preached was like no other and instead of upholding the law as the criterion for living our lives, Paul spoke of the Word of God and the Holy Spirit as the moving force in framing our conduct. Am I to put down Paul or am I to hold him up as our example? Is

there another person to whom I can look for guidance, or is Paul the only one?

While our Lord is the highest and holies example of manhood that ever lived, can I truthfully say that I am like Him in any aspect whatsoever? He never sinned, He never questioned His duty with his Father, He never shirked from responsibility, nor did He show fear in the face of adversity. He was persecuted and ultimately died, not as a transgressor but because He dared to live above and beyond the expectation of mankind.

ARE THERE REALLY TWO GOSPELS?

There can be no question about the existence of two different and diverse gospels. On the one hand, we have what is commonly known as the “gospel of the kingdom.” This gospel was preached for a period of time during the life of the Messiah before His death and shortly thereafter until it was replaced by the next gospel. Unfortunately, there is a semblance of this kingdom gospel still being preached, for there are those today I refer to as “kingdom builders” who still talk of sitting down in the kingdom with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who continue to practice water baptism and put believers under the law of Moses and who dare to ignore the message Paul preached. Remember that the word “gospel” simply means good news. What the good news was and what was preached about it needs to come from an understanding of who preached what and when they preached.

After Acts closed we begin reading the writings of Paul in particular and what he had to say was diametrically different from what was preached before he came on the scene. In reading the message of Peter on the day known as Pentecost, we find nothing that compares

with what was later revealed to Paul. The same is true of some of the teachings of our Lord.

I would like to take the Sermon on the Mount as a prime example of what I am saying. In Matthew 5:1-12 we find the word “blessed” being used and a number of different people are called thus. For instance: the poor in spirit have a promise of the kingdom of heaven, mourners shall be comforted, the meek shall inherit the earth, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness shall be filled, the merciful shall obtain mercy, the pure in heart shall see God, peacemakers shall be called the children of God, those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake shall obtain the kingdom of God, if men revile and persecute us and say all manner of evil against us for Christ’s sake we are to rejoice for great is our reward in heaven. While I have to believe these things are true and have a definite place in the Scriptures, they certainly do not correspond to what Paul said later on. We don’t obtain the kingdom of heaven according to the gospel of the grace of God, but we are members of the Church which is His body and a different set of promises are ours by faith.

The entire Pentecostal healing movement today is based upon certain teachings and information gathered from the four gospels and certain parts of Acts. As a

matter of fact, much of what I heard from these people is taken from Mark 16:14-18 where it reads: **“Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen. And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be save; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils: they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and the shall recover.”**

When our Lord told His disciples in this passage to into all the world to preach the gospel, what gospel was He referring to? It couldn't have been the gospel that Paul called “my gospel” for that was yet in the future. So, what comprised the gospel that our Lord commanded them to preach?

When a comparison is made with some of Paul's writings you will find that none of these things are so. Paul told us he was not sent to baptize but to preach the gospel. However, he did take up a serpent without harm,

he did have the ability to heal, he did lay hands on the sick and he did speak with other tongues, etc., but he did not make this a part of his message nor did he tell others to do these things as he did. In addition, all of these things ceased in due time and were no longer a part of the ministry of Paul and those with whom he had fellowship. Sickness and disease were not overcome by means of miracles, tongues no longer had a part in the economy and most of all, the message changed completely.

To say there is no difference in the 4-Gospels and in Paul's writings is to show one's ignorance of the Scriptures. To say that Paul is worshipped and has taken the place of our Lord is also ignorance of the truth, for it is simply not true. To give our brother his rightful place is an obligation we all have, for without his writings and his life to follow, we would have nothing upon which we can base our life as a Christian. Life as we know it would not exist, for it is due to Paul that we can frame and practice the Christian life, and without his teaching there would be no Christianity as we now know it. Let us be most careful that we give credit where credit is due and honor to whom honor is due. The Lord Jesus Christ will always be the Son of God and it is through His shed blood that we have redemption. Salvation would be unknown if it were

not for His sacrifice on Calvary, but it is Paul who makes these events relevant and necessary to our redemption.

“If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are *the commandments of the Lord.*”

1 Corinthians 14:37

“For I speak to you Gentiles, Inasmuch as I am the *apostles of the Gentiles*, I magnify mine office.”

Romans 11:13

“That I should be *the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles* ministering the Gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.”

Romans 15:16

“According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, *I have laid the foundation*, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.”

I Corinthians 3:10

“Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me *first* Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a *pattern* to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.”

I Timothy 1:16

“Wherefore I beseech you, *be ye followers of me.*”

I Corinthians 4:16

“*Be ye followers of me*, even as I also am of Jesus Christ.”

I Corinthians 11:1

“Brethren, *be followers together of me*, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.”

Philippians 3:17

In all of these verses the personal pronouns I and Me refer to the Apostle Paul and are part of Paul’s Gospel, so study very carefully this verse from ROMANS 2:16:

“In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to *my gospel.*”