

The Four Basic Facts Of The Gospel



Foundations (Day 79)
by Derek Prince

So far we have considered faith in the widest and most general sense as related to all the statements and promises of God in the Bible. However, there is one part of the Bible's message which is of the greatest importance because it decides the eternal destiny of every human soul. This part is called "the gospel," and it reveals the way of salvation from sin and its consequences.

Very often people think of "the gospel" as something of a vague and emotional nature which is impossible to explain in a rational way. Even in the preaching of "the gospel" there is often so much emphasis on an emotional response that the impression is created that the whole of salvation consists of an emotional experience.

Yet this is incorrect and misleading. The actual gospel message, as stated in the Bible, consists of definite facts, and salvation consists of knowing, believing and acting on these facts.

What are these facts which constitute the gospel? For an answer to this question we may turn to two passages in the writings of Paul: Romans 4:24-25 and 1 Corinthians 15:1-4.

In Romans 4 Paul analyses the main features of the faith of Abraham and sets forth Abraham's faith as an example to be followed by all Christian believers. He points out that according to the Old Testament Scriptures Abraham was not justified before God by his works, but that his faith was imputed to him for righteousness. Then in verses 23-25 Paul directly applies this example of Abraham to us as believers in Christ, for he says:

> "Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered up because of our offences, and was raised because of our justification."

The gospel, as here stated by Paul, contains three definite facts:

1. Jesus was delivered to the punishment of death for

our offences.
2. God raised Jesus up again from the dead.
3. If we believe this record of the death and resurrection of Jesus on our behalf, we shall be justified or accepted as righteous before God.

In 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 Paul reminds the Christians at Corinth of the gospel message which he had preached to them and through which they had been saved, and he again sets forth for them the basic facts of the message.

> "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." (1 Cor. 15:1-4)

Again we see that the gospel consists of three definite facts:

1. Christ died for our sins.
2. He was buried.
3. He rose again the third day.

Paul also emphasises that the first and most authoritative of all testimonies to the truth of these facts is not the testimony of the men who were eyewitnesses of Christ's death and resurrection, but the testimony of the Old Testament Scriptures, which had prophetically foreshown these events hundreds of years before they actually took place. The testimony of contemporary eyewitnesses is only mentioned later as supporting that of the Old Testament Scriptures.

If we set side by side the teaching of these two passages from Paul's epistles – Romans 4:24-25 and 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 – it is possible to determine the basic facts which constitute the gospel.

These facts all centre exclusively in the Person of Christ Himself – not in His earthly life and teaching, but in His death and resurrection.

Here are the four basic facts:

1. Christ was delivered by God the Father to the punishment of death on account of our sins.
2. Christ was buried.
3. God raised Him from the dead on the third day.
4. Righteousness is received from God through believing these facts.

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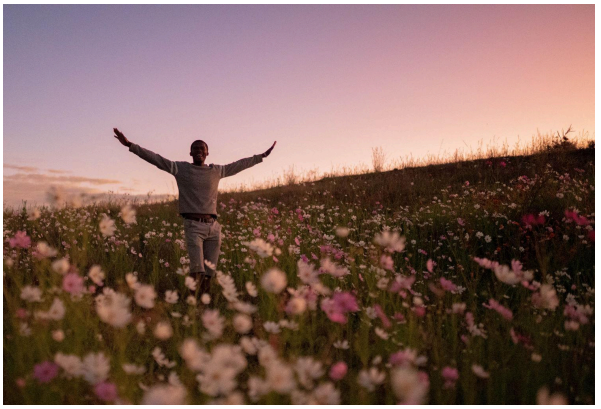

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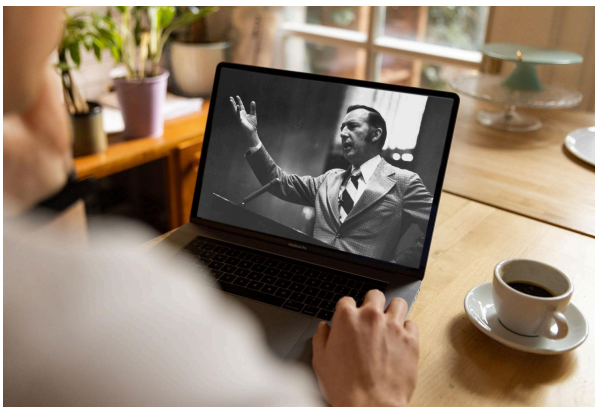

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