

“The Gospel Obeyed”
Romans 15:17-19
(Preached at Trinity, December 11, 2011)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. Last week I we saw Paul exulting in the mighty work of God working through him.
Romans 15:17-18 NAU - "Therefore in Christ Jesus I have found reason for boasting in things pertaining to God. ¹⁸ For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me, resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed,"
2. “Therefore” Paul has found reason for boasting.
Paul concludes in **Verse 18** that it is because of his marvel over all that God was accomplishing that he would not speak of anything, he would have no cause for boasting except in what Christ was accomplishing through Him; that Gentiles were being brought to obedience -- *solī Deo Gloria* – To God alone be all the glory.
3. In **Verse 19** Paul states that because of his great confidence in the mighty power of God he had fully met all the demands of the Gospel.
 - a. Literally it reads “I have “made full” or “filled up” the Gospel of Christ.”
Romans 15:19 NAU - "I have fully preached the gospel of Christ."
Romans 15:19 ESV - "I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ;"
 - b. We find the same idea in **Colossians 1**
Colossians 1:25 KJV - "Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;"
Colossians 1:25 ESV - "of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known"
Colossians 1:25 NAS - "that I might fully carry out the *preaching* of the word of God,"
4. Paul was always concerned about being faithful to the Gospel.
Romans 15:20 NAS - "And thus I aspired to preach the gospel, not where Christ was *already* named" (εὐαγγελίζω)
5. This morning I want to set this most important subject before you once again – The Gospel of Christ.
There is no greater subject for contemplation. Your understanding of it is the difference between heaven or hell. Every one of us this morning should search our hearts to see if this is the Gospel we have received.
And for those who still refuse to obey the Gospel may God break your stubborn hearts this morning.
I want to accomplish two things:
First, I want to set before you once again the nature of the Gospel – what is the Gospel
Second, I want to set before you the effect of the Gospel

I. The Gospel Defined – What is the Gospel

A. Word Study

1. **Verse 19** - εὐαγγέλιον – Glad tidings, good news
2. The Gospel is good news – though most do not perceive it as such or receive it as such. They are shut against it by their blindness.
2 Corinthians 4:3-4 KJV – “But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: ⁴ In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”

B. The idea of the Gospel is seen two ways in Scripture

1. Before the death of Christ it was understood as the glad tidings of the kingdom of God soon to be set up, and subsequently also of Jesus the Messiah, the founder of this kingdom.
 - a. This was the Gospel message preached by John the Baptist
Matthew 3:1-2 - “In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, ² And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”
 - b. It was the focus of our Lord’s ministry. The first time the word is found in the Bible we find it with reference to our Lord.
Matthew 4:23 – “And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.”
 - c. It is a declaration of the fulfillment of the Covenant of Grace— God’s redemptive purpose in sending forth His Son to deliver His people from their sin.
Matthew 1:21-23 NAU - ""She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." ²² Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: ²³ "BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL," which translated means, "GOD WITH US."
2. After the death of Christ the word Gospel comprises the preaching of Jesus Christ as having suffered death on the cross to accomplish eternal salvation for His people and resurrected and exalted to the right hand of God in heaven, thence to return in majesty to consummate the kingdom of God.
 - a. This is what we see in **1 Corinthians 15**
1 Cor. 15:1-4 NAU - "Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, ² by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.³ For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,"
 - b. The Gospel is the good news of salvation through Christ

3. The Gospel is the eternal plan of God for the salvation of His elect people
2 Timothy 1:8-10 NAU - "Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with *me* in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, ⁹ who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, ¹⁰ but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,"
- C. This is the Gospel that must be preached – that Jesus Christ came, and lived a perfect life of obedience, and that He died as a perfect substitution, the atonement which satisfied God’s divine wrath, and that He was buried and rose again the third day.
1. This is the message clearly presented in God’s Word
 2. This is the only Gospel which must be preached
Galatians 1:8 NAU - "But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed!"
 3. This is the Gospel that God commands all men to receive
 - a. This is the Gospel that must be believed
 - b. This Gospel is the only hope for humanity—it is the only way of salvation
Acts 4:12 NAU - "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."
 - c. Why would you not receive so glorious a gift?

II. The Effect of the Gospel

Romans 15:18 NAU - "For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me, resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed,"

- A. The Gospel must be received, believed and obeyed
Mark 16:15-16 NAU - "And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. ¹⁶ "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned."
1. Saving faith requires “belief”
 The Philippian Jailer:
Acts 16:31 NAS - "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your household."
Romans 10:9 NAS - "that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved;"
 2. Saving faith requires trusting in the atoning sacrifice of Christ – that it is fully sufficient to satisfy God’s demand for justice – that Jesus suffered in my place and all of the penalty for my sin has been paid in full.

3. The Bible presents that Gospel as that which must obeyed
2 Thessalonians 1:7-8 NAU - "when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, ⁸ dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus."
1 Peter 4:17 NAU - "For *it is* time for judgment to begin with the household of God; and if *it begins* with us first, what *will be* the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?"
- B. What does it mean that the Gospel must also be obeyed?
1. To obey the Gospel is to receive it, for the Gospel itself commands belief. Paul described in **Chapter 1** the obedience of faith.
Romans 1:5 NAU - " through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake,"
 Lost person, God commands you to turn from your sin and believe the Gospel. You must obey the demands of the Gospel to turn from your sin and trust Christ.
 2. But Gospel obedience points to something more. It points to a full submission to the work of Christ and a full surrender of ourselves to Christ.
John Gill – “The Gospel was sent among the Gentiles who had been brought up in blindness and ignorance to make them obedient to Christ; by being made willing to be saved by him, renouncing their own works and disclaiming all other ways of salvation; and to submit to his righteousness for their justification before God; to rely on his precious blood for pardon and cleansing; by embracing the Gospel and the doctrines of it, and professing it publically; by embracing Christ as King and owning him as such, subjecting to his ordinances and obeying his commands in faith and fear and from love to him.”
This is obedience to the Gospel.
 3. Humanly speaking, how do you know if the Gospel has truly been received? By the demonstration of the inward transformation inseparable from the Gospel – love and obedience to Christ.
 This is the demonstration of the Spirit’s power that Paul was boasting of
Rom 15:17-18 NAU - "Therefore in Christ Jesus I have found reason for boasting in things pertaining to God. ¹⁸ For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me, resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed,"
 4. To obey the Gospel points not only to receiving the Gospel but submitting to its demands. The Gospel demands bowing before Christ as Lord
 The Gospel brings life changing power by the power of the Holy Spirit
Romans 15:18 NAU - "resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed,
1 Thes 1:5-7 NAU - "for our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. ⁶ You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit, ⁷ so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia."

Romans 1:16 NAU - "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."

C. Notice Paul says, "resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles "

1. The Gentiles were largely given over to the worst forms of idolatry and immorality.

1 Cor. 6:9-11 NAU - "Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor *the* covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God."

2. By receiving the Gospel the Gentiles were willing to leave their former way of life.

3. The Gospel preached today that doesn't make demands is a false Gospel. A person that claims to be a Christian while maintaining their former life is a false Christian.

1 Corinthians 15:1-2 NAU - "Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, ² by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain."

Conclusion:

1. The goal of the Gospel is reconciliation with God—to present a holy people unto God. Our goal in the Gospel is to bring sinners to obedience. Our great pursuit is holiness—both in ourselves and in others.

a. Remember, in **Verse 16** Paul described his labor as that of a priest presenting the Gentiles to God, holy and sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:16 NAU - "to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, ministering as a priest the gospel of God, so that *my* offering of the Gentiles may become acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit."

b. This must be the personal pursuit of every Christian

Romans 12:1 NAU - "Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is* your spiritual service of worship."

3. May our constant prayer be, "O God, bless your Gospel powerfully through me."