

Without Controversy

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Gospel Nuggets, West Monroe, Louisiana presents "Strength For Today." Now with our message, Missionary Evangelist, Huey Diffey.

Open your Bibles to 1 Timothy, the third chapter, verse 16. I think it has been a while since you have heard a message from this passage of Scripture. There is much truth in this one verse as there are most of them. The Scripture doesn't have a bottom. The more you read, the more you learn, the more you see and there is something about this book. During the Sunday school, Curtis brought out some fellow, probably not an intelligent fellow, speaking of the Bible said that, "He wrote fiction." He didn't believe it. Well, this is not fiction. This has a life, this book has a life and the power of God in it and one way that I know that is what I have seen it do in the lives of people and in homes. But on a more personal note, I know it has the life and power of God in it because of what it did in me and for me, and is still doing. I am still being changed. You see, repentance is not a one time thing. There is an initial act of repentance but it doesn't end with just one act. It's something we do the remainder of our lives after we're saved and I'm which I need to repent and I'm sure the Lord will show me more and I want him to and for him to give me the grace to do what I need to do. Amen.

Let us read 1 Timothy, the third chapter, verse 16.

16 And without controversy

There is not even a controversy in this passage of Scripture, this verse of Scripture.

great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

Now, we want to begin with that he was "preached unto the Gentiles." We have covered what was before that in two other messages, but we want to begin that he "preached unto the Gentiles." The word "preached" is a word, kerysso, and it means "to herald forth the truth, or to herald forth a message." In the Bible times in a village, a city, they had what was known as a public crier and he observed and watched for the news, someone

approaching the village or just some good news, he would go through the street crying out whatever the news was and that is the word used for "preached" in this passage of Scripture. I may point out that included in the meaning of the word "preached" is "publish," and we at Gospel Nuggets are trying to herald forth the Gospel by publishing it for the multitudes in the regions beyond. So all of it is in there, the preaching.

Now, in Acts, the eighth chapter, verses 5 and 6, Philip preached Christ to the Gentiles. Listen to these two verses. "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them." Now, Philip was a deacon and he was preaching. He preached and he preached Christ. He didn't just preach, but he preached a person, Christ. That's important to note. It's not a matter of being a pulpit, the thing that we want to note is that he preached Christ unto them and then there was a result of his preaching. Notice, "And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did." Now, Philip preached. That's good. That was his responsibility. He was sent to do that but, listen, the people with one accord gave heed. You see, Philip had a responsibility but the people had a responsibility to respond. Now, the word "preached" in Acts 8:5 is the same word, *kerysso*, that's in 1 Timothy 3:16.

Then in the book of Acts, Acts the tenth chapter, verse 34 and then verses 38 through 43, Peter preached Christ to the Gentiles. Listen to verse 34, "Then Peter opened his mouth," he opened his mouth. He didn't whisper. I believe that Peter went down there preaching and maybe he preached something like this, he said, "It is repent or perish, turn or burn. No middle ground with God. He takes first place or no place." Now, he did it with a broken heart but he preached. He said, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." I'm so thankful that God is no respecter of persons. I'm thankful because now I can be saved and you can be saved. There is no respect of persons.

Then in Acts, the tenth chapter beginning with verse 38, there is some important truth here that we need to get, how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power. God anointed Jesus two things: with the Holy Ghost and with power. Then there was a result and here we have the result of being filled with the Holy Spirit, and if you're filled with the Holy Spirit, you will be doing this and now we can judge if we are filled with the Holy Spirit.

He was filled "with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good." He didn't just go about but he went about doing good. Listen, he was not talking about his experience. He was not talking about his superiority to others but he was just going about doing good "and healing all that were," what? "Oppressed of the devil; for God was with him." You see, there was a spiritual healing. Now, I believe that God can heal physically. I believe that. We pray for people. I'm sick, you pray for me. Okay, I welcome it. I want it. But I want to tell you, in this country, what we need is a spiritual healing and only Jesus can do that. The best medicine for oppression is Jesus as what we have in this verse.

Now verse 39, "we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third

day," the resurrection, "and shewed him openly; Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God." Now let me pause to say they saw, Jesus was revealed to certain people to be a witness. If we will be a witness, God will reveal the Lord Jesus Christ to us out of the word of God, and if we are not interested in telling others or showing others, then God's not obligated and not interested in revealing to us the living Christ and we can come to church and just hear words and leave and that's all there is to it. But if we are interested in that which interests God, then he will reveal to us the living resurrected Christ.

They were chosen of God, the witnesses, "even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead." Now wait, he rose from the dead and after he rose, they did what? Eat and drink with him. They did eat and drink with him. The question always comes up: will we eat in heaven? Will we drink? Now, Baptists ask that question but the thing is, after he rose from the dead, they did eat and drink with him. I think that's interesting. He went about doing good, filled with the Holy Ghost, and they did eat and drink with him.

Verse 42, "And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he," Jesus, "which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead." Of the living and the dead. Now, we also learn that Jesus is the Judge. He's going to be the Judge. It's right here. He went about doing good, they did eat and drink with him, and he was ordained of God to be the Judge of the quick and dead.

Now verse 43, "To him give all the prophets witness," all the prophets in the Old Testament gave witness of the coming Mashiach, the coming Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ and here is a message that they preached in the Old Testament, "that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." That was their message.

Now, in verse 42, the word "preach" is kerysso, the same word that is in 1 Timothy 3:16. In 1 Corinthians, the first chapter, verses 23 and 24, it says, "But we preach Christ crucified." The Apostle Paul is speaking. He said, "We preach. We kerysso. We herald forth the message of the Lord Jesus Christ." The same word.

Christ was crucified, he said, "unto the Jews a stumblingblock," they couldn't get it; they stumbled over it, but "unto the Greeks it's just foolishness." Well, it wasn't to be taken seriously. It was just foolishness.

"But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." And that's where we are this morning, we believe that he is the power of God. We believe he is the wisdom of God. We believe that he is all of it and all that we need but we do need him. You see, through the preaching of men like Spurgeon and Joseph Parker in England, John Knox in Scotland, and a host of other people in Europe, those nations, there were nations that became world powers and through the preaching of the word of God in this country, people were taught to be responsible, to work hard, to trust God and in the past, now I emphasize in the past, it produced a moral fiber that

affected every area of this nation and this nation became a world power. There is something about it. Philip, Peter, Paul and the preachers of the past herald forth the Gospel, the good news, of the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. They preached the redemptive work of Jesus that is sufficient to save a world of lost sinners if only they will believe. They preached the same Christ that they preached in the Old Testament and they preached the same Christ that we preach and he is the only one whom we preach.

Listen, the Scripture says that he was believed on in the world. Believed on. "Believe" means "to receive Jesus the Savior." To believe is to receive, to receive is to believe. It means to trust one's self to Jesus for him to save. It has nothing to do with turning over a new leaf, doing better and holding out until the end, but trusting the Lord Jesus. It means to rely on Christ for salvation; to commit one's self to him so that we will be saved. You see, I know that I cannot save myself by my goodness or by my works or by being religious, therefore I commit myself to Jesus as a helpless, hopeless individual and trust him to save me. I rely 100% on Jesus to save me and keep me. That's faith. That's faith. You see, it's not him doing his part and me doing my part, he did it all. On the cross he said, "It is finished," and I submit to you this morning, that most Baptists don't know that.

Listen, they believed on him in the world. Listen to the Scripture on the word "believe." "For God so loved the world that he gave his only unique, one-of-a-kind, begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." Whosoever relies on the Lord Jesus Christ, whosoever trusts themselves to him will have everlasting life. John 3:36, "He that believeth on the Son hath," present tense, "everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." Wrath is not coming, it's already there, it's just abiding all over.

A fellow told me that treasure hunters are big liars. That I don't know. I never looked for treasure. I found Phyllis and I didn't look anymore. But a fellow was telling me, he said, "I knew there was an old house and they believed that there was money buried there." You know how it is, people always believe there's money there. They had money. You know, I believe that around here. I keep looking and stuff. But so it was Sunday, people going to church but they went to the old house. They had a shovel and one of those Geiger counters or whatever it is and they were looking for money and they found it. They pointed it out right under a block of the house. So when everybody had passed and went to church, they started digging, digging. All of a sudden, there's a big dog right there. Did I tell you this story? It's good. It's worth hearing twice. There was a big dog appeared right there ready to bite. Took the shovel out, the dog wagged his tail. Put that shovel back in there, the dog growled so vicious that you couldn't continue. So he took the shovel out, the dog wagged his tail. He did that a few times, quit and went home. Should have gone to church but went home. But a few days later, somebody else came, found the money, two shovel-fulls deeper they found the money and they dug it up and they got \$2,000.

Now, that is amazing, you know, but "He that believeth on the Son hath," present tense, "everlasting life: but he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of god

abideth on him." It's right there like the dog. It's right there. For instance, John 5:24, Jesus said, "Verily, verily," surely, surely, "I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed," present tense, "from death unto life," spiritual death unto spiritual life.

There was a group of people that came to Jesus, religious people, and they asked him, they said, "Good Master, what should we do to inherit eternal life that we might work the works of God? What can we do? We want to work the works of God. We want to be counted, what can we do?" And Jesus said this, "This is the work of God that you believe on him whom he hath sent." That you believe, not work but trust. Commit to him. And we will commit, we will work.

John 8:24, Jesus said, "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." If you believe not. It doesn't say if you didn't work, it said if you believe not. Now, I'm not minimizing working and doing. We could use a little of it around here. But I want to tell you, that's not how we are saved. We are saved by trusting, committing to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Acts 10:43, "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever," that's all inclusive. Hey, that means you. That means me. "Whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." Did you know that the best in society can be saved such as Nicodemus? Nicodemus came to Jesus, a good man. People loved him. He was a moral man, a wealthy man. He was what everybody in society would like to be. But he came to Jesus one night. I don't know why he came at night but he came and Jesus said, "You must be born again." You see, the best in society can be saved and go to heaven but that if they're going to heaven, they must be born again. Just being morally good doesn't save a person.

Listen, the worst in society can be saved such as the woman at the well. Why, that poor miserable thing had been willingly used and abused by society. She didn't have any character. She does not any peace, any joy, or any hope. She is just a shell, that's all that she is, but then she met Jesus. She met Jesus and her eternal destiny changed and her life on earth changed. I believe she left that well skipping like a little child. Now, that old ache down in the heart was finally met, it was gone. The guilt was gone and she was free.

Listen, did you know that murderers can be saved? Listen, Moses was saved and he killed a man. Now, he did it, I think, to revenge those Egyptians beating up on that Jew but he killed him nevertheless and had to flee. And then David, listen, David, a man after God's own heart. Don't you ever think that you won't do something. Listen, David, the man after God's own heart premeditated how he could have that man killed and did but he's in heaven today. I'll tell you, a murderer can be saved.

Listen, thieves can be saved. I hope they can. We need to have a revival meeting. Let's put up a tent up there in Washington, DC. Listen, the thief on the cross was saved.

A demon possessed person can be saved. Mary Magdalene out of whom Jesus cast seven devils was saved. Then the demoniac of Gadara, just full of demons and Jesus cast them out. There were so many demons in that person and they asked if he was going to cast them out, not to leave them without a body but to send them into that herd of swine and that's what Jesus did. He cast them out, they went into the herd of swine, the swine ran over the cliff into the sea and drowned. That's how violent they were. But the demons didn't drown. They were looking for another body. You be careful where you go, what you do and to the music to which you listen.

Listen, the Apostle Peter was preaching and he said, "But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved even as they," they in the Old Testament. Jesus bore our sin in his own body and we can believe or trust or rely on him and be saved.

Listen, our Scripture says that he was "received up into glory." Received up into glory. Mark 16:19, "So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God." The disciples walking on the road to Emmaus and they are talking about the previous events that had happened: Jesus was crucified, he was buried and so on. One came and walked by the side of them and began to talk with them, asked them what they were talking about and they said, "Haven't you heard? Are you a stranger here? That they crucified this man and buried him and say he rose again?" And Jesus went along for a while and then he revealed himself to them.

Now listen, while he talked with them, listen, while he talked with them, he was received up into heaven. He's talking with them and all of a sudden he goes up into heaven and he sat on the right hand of God. That's what he did and that's where he is this morning. Do you know why he's there? He is there for you and for me, making intercession for us. He came down here to buy us out of the slave market of sin and he has gone back to heaven to represent us before the heavenly Father.

But he was received and Jesus being received into glory means he had completed his redemptive work for us. He completed his redemptive work for us. If he had not completed it, the Father would not have received him. It means his work was accepted by the heavenly Father. God accepted the work Jesus did, now we must accept that work. Listen, being received into glory means, hey, there is no work for us to do. He did it all. All this, "If you'll be saved you'll work," there will be plenty to do but not to be saved. We'll work because of who we are, not to become. Jesus is the resurrected Christ who was received up into glory and the free salvation that he provided is sufficient to save a world of lost sinners.

Listen, after they saw the resurrected Christ, they saw him resurrected, going into glory and Luke the 24th chapter, beginning with verse 51, it says, "And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven." Now remember, they were walking down the road. They just had their eyes opened and now he goes up into heaven. There is a lot happening with those people but after they saw the resurrected Christ, I want to emphasize this, have you ever seen the resurrected Christ? I know we've

heard about Jesus all of our lives, we know about him but have we ever seen the resurrected Christ? You see him in the word. God reveals him from the word. You see, sometimes we never get past the surface but it's here.

After they saw the resurrected Christ, they did five things. Here's what they did. 1. "they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy." Joy. You see the resurrected Christ, it will put joy in the heart. It may not change the circumstances but it will change the heart. 3. "And were continually in the temple." Listen, you couldn't keep them out of church. They continually were in the temple. 4. They were "praising God." Not each other, but praising God. And they were, "blessing God." Listen, they did these five things and they had great joy, continually went to church and praised God. Jesus was received up into glory. Now listen, if we will trust him to save us now, he will take us to glory and we will be with him in that beautiful place forever.

There's one more thing. Now listen in this verse of Scripture but I would just like for us to think our Lord Jesus Christ is coming again. Now he ascended, went back and is seated at the right hand of the Father, he is there until the Father gives him leave to come back for us. Jesus said, "In my Father's house are many mansions, if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." That's been a couple of thousand years now. He spoke this world into existence, the universe, in some six days and he created man, and I believe that's six literal 24 hour days. And the world is beautiful. It's under a curse at the present time but it still has a beauty here. What is that? What will that be like? He's been working on it for 2,000 years, an infinite mind, unlimited power, unlimited resources that he is preparing that place for you, of all people, you. Half has never been told. It's never been told. We cannot fathom that.

But he said, "If I go and prepare and place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am, there you may be also." Yes, he's coming and when he comes it will be a personal return. 1 Thessalonians 4:16, "For the Lord himself," not another, not an angel or angels but the Lord himself, "shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." But, you see, he is coming with a shout. That means, "Wake up!" With the voice of the archangel and the trump of God means to assemble.

We're going to wake up and assemble and it will be a literal and visible return. It will be a personal return but it will be a visible return. Acts 1:11, as Jesus ascended, the men standing in white apparel were watching and Jesus was talking with these disciples and all of a sudden he started up and there they were just dumbfounded. That's French translated out of the Greek. But they didn't know what to say or what to do. I'm sure a mouth was open, eyes wide. He's going up but those dressed in white apparel said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven?" Why stand ye gazing in the heaven, "this same Jesus," not another but the same one, "which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." He's coming in like manner as he went up. Now, I don't think that's necessarily the rapture, I think

that's the revelation but he's coming. 1 John 3:2, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know," we know from the word of God, "that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." A visible return. He's coming. Listen to Revelation 1:7, "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him," that's the Jews, "and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen." He's coming. It's visible. That's the revelation of the Lord Jesus.

Now, he's coming in power. Matthew 24:30, "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." No one can deny his power when he comes.

Listen, he's coming in glory. He is coming in glory. Now, he is not coming as an humble, submissive, suffering servant. He came that way the first time but the next time he's coming in power and he's coming in glory. Listen to the same Scripture for the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Matthew 24:30, "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Great glory.

Do you know what's amazing to me that the book of Revelation points out? That he's coming, coming with believers, clouds of believers, with all the angels as we'll see in a moment. He is coming and yet man on earth, unredeemed man turns to fight against him. And he's coming and all of that power, all of the glory of the heavens are ablaze with his glory, and yet man....listen, there's something about human nature that you and I don't understand. Listen, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory." He's coming glory to sit upon the throne of glory, the throne that was established by David. But he will come and sit upon it. He's coming with his angels. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory." The holy angels coming with him.

Now listen, he's coming quickly. The Bible does not say that he is coming soon. It never says that. The Bible says he's coming quickly, in other words, when he comes, it's going to be quick and no time to get ready. Now, that doesn't mean that he isn't coming soon. We say that and we believe it because of what we see on the world scene. It was brought out in the opening assembly this morning, the Jewish people are in the land and they have received flack ever since they've been in the land and they're still being opposed but it's building, the momentum is building against them and that has to happen for him to come for us and then to come with us.

So there are many things to that we believe we're living in the closing days of this age but the point we're making is: the Bible doesn't say he's coming soon. Listen to what the Bible says, Revelation 22:7, "Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book." Revelation 22:12, "And, behold, I come quickly;

and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." He's coming quickly. Revelation 22:20, "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." He's coming quickly. When he comes, it's going to be quick. There will not be time to get ready. No time to say, "Lord, I'm sorry."

He's coming unexpectedly. Matthew 24:50, "The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of." Luke 21:34-35, "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it," shall the return of the Lord, "come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth." Listen, it will come unexpectedly but until he comes, we need to be watching for him. We need to be waiting for him. We need to be willing for him to come and the way that we become willing for him to come is to get involved in his work and feel the pressure of the demonic forces in this life and then you'll want some relief. You'll want him to come. Then the worshipping. We should be worshipping and we should be witnessing until he comes.

Listen, "without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." Thank God he's coming again and we believe in our lifetime, amen? Amen. We're on the threshold of it as we look on the world scene, as we read the word of God. We see it all falling into place for him to come.

Let's stand with our heads bowed. Our concern this morning while we still have time, is that you will come to Christ and be saved. Oh, listen, let go and let God. Don't hesitate. You're on the threshold of salvation. You're at the place where you can come and be saved. He's calling you. Christians are praying for you. You're in the place where you can come in simple child-like faith and receive Christ as your Savior. If you will do that, if you will come to him, he will come into your heart and give you eternal life, write your name in the Lamb's book of life and you will leave this place a new person but you have to come. Christian, as we are living in the closing days of this age, let us mean business for God. Let us be faithful, faithful to him that was faithful for us.

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