

# Teaching Others the Application of the Gospel

By Sean E. Harris

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**Bible Text:** Philippians 1:27

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## **Berean Baptist Church**

517 Glensford Drive  
Fayetteville, NC 28314

**Website:** [www.bereanbaptistchurch.org](http://www.bereanbaptistchurch.org)

**Online Sermons:** [www.sermonaudio.com/bereanbaptistch](http://www.sermonaudio.com/bereanbaptistch)

Yesterday in the service I told you that the Gospel, understanding the Gospel was the most important thing that we can do in this room and communicating that Gospel to boys and girls. Today, I want to pick up on that idea and go to what I would call part 2 of that and this would be the idea of teaching boys and girls, teaching moms and dads, that the Gospel not only saves you from sin but it becomes the standard whereby you live. What we do not want is our boys and girls to have the idea that the Gospel is the truth of the body of information that gets me saved. Alright, so I move from a position of being unsaved, I believe the Gospel, now I step into the realm of being saved. Now I can take this body of truth called the Gospel and I will set it up on the Gospel shelf because I am now saved and, Kevin, I don't need this body of truth because I'm saved. Now, if I encounter an unsaved boy or girl, friend, relative, then I'll go back to the Gospel shelf and I will get that truth down and I will bring it and I will share that truth with them. If they accept it, then that will be fine. If they reject it, well, that will be unfortunate. I put the Gospel truth back on the shelf and then I go back to living. When that happens, I don't get the connection between receiving the Gospel truth for my salvation and then living the Gospel truth in my progressiveness of salvation. Remember, Deb, we were talking about, "I have been saved. I am being saved. I will be saved." We're dealing with, "I am being saved," so we don't want them to get the idea that the Gospel truth is that which I believe in order to get saved and then I need to go on to more truth in order to figure out something else in the living. What I want to show you is that if you are a believer in the new covenant relationship with Jesus Christ, the Mosaic law does not direct your everyday living, the Gospel is what directs your everyday living.

Consider this idea and let's really take it and make it personal. If we had nothing but mature Christians who had been taught the Gospel from as early as possible in the way that the New Testament presents it, we could say for ourselves, "We will eliminate all employee expectation standards." We will eliminate handbooks that deal with conduct because what we would say is, "Everybody lives by the Gospel." Everybody lives by the Gospel. The Gospel is the truth that guides our conduct in every way, shape or form. The embodiment of this idea guides how I interact with my wife, my son, other teachers, other faculty, church members. The Gospel truth guides every aspect of my life.

If you'll please turn to Philippians 1 and let's look together at verse 27. Paul says it in the King James like this, "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ."

Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ. Now, that word "conversation" there is a good example of what we need to watch for when we are teaching from the King James. Obviously we love it. We think it's a great word-for-word translation. We believe that the Greek that it came from is outstanding and all that but the reality is words change. Words change so you as a teacher, you as a Bible teacher in this room whether is K-3 or whether it's our upper grades, you have to make sure that you understand the word the way Paul understood the word if you're in one of the epistles. You have to make sure you understand the word the way John understood it or whatever. So you have lots of ways of doing that. One of my favorites for you is [blueletterbible.org](http://blueletterbible.org). I would encourage every one of you because you are serious students of the word to go to that website and get familiar with it. It doesn't cost you a thing; [blueletterbible.org](http://blueletterbible.org) is completely free. You could have used [blueletterbible.org](http://blueletterbible.org) to look for that word "repent" in the book of Acts and you would have immediately searched quickly through that, saw all the instances of repent and then you could have clicked on that word to get even more information about it because all of us in this room recognize that our English Bible is not inspired. What I mean by that is it's only inspired inasmuch as it's correct. It's only inspired as much as it's correct and so it is inspired but if your understanding of the word "conversation" is "talk" in this case, then you don't get it. You've missed it. You've missed it because that's not what he's talking about. If your boys and girls walk away with "talk" from this verse, then you did not do your job as a Bible teacher that day because they didn't come away with what Paul wanted them to come away with under the inspiration of the word of God.

Now, I will tell you that we know that the word "conversation" in its archaic sense was a great word. It meant conduct; your way of life; your manner of life. So if we were 400 years ago, Kim, that would have been a great word and all our boys and girls would have understood that and we could have kept plowing through it but now today if you were to ask any of your students what "conversation" is, they would talk to you about talking and they would not think about the extension of that.

Kim?

Kim: I memorized a verse last year, "Let your moderation be known unto all men, the Lord is at hand," and we were, "Let your moderation....? What is this really saying?" So Joey helped us out there with the word "moderation" and that really stuck with me and with my kids in understanding what "moderation" really means.

That's right and you bring up such a great point. There's no point in memorizing Scripture if you do not understand the words that you're memorizing, okay? It's pointless. It's just like saying the Sinner's Prayer and there's no repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the mere articulation of the words that results in nothing, okay?

So in this case, "conversation" is the Greek word where we get our English word "politics" from. Politics. Politics and we wouldn't think of it in that sense. Politics. This word "politics," it is the idea of "be a citizen; behave as a citizen." In another chapter, Paul is going to tell us to recognize that our citizenship is in heaven. Our citizenship is in

heaven. That is the noun form of this very word. This is a verb. Now, if I was to ask you what "conversation" is, you would say, "conversation is a noun." Absolutely. It's a noun. This is not a noun. In Genesis 1:27, this is a verb. A verb is an action word. He is saying, "Let your action be worthy of the Gospel." Not a noun here. Not a noun. "Thy citizenship is in heaven," that's the noun, the verb form of this exact same word in the Greek is "conversation" here, "conduct; way of life," so he's telling me here in this amazing way, "Only let your way of life, manner of life, conduct, be as it becometh the gospel of Christ," so my challenge as a pastor and your challenge as the teacher and your challenge as the principal is to teach our boys and girls that the Gospel is what guides their manner of life; the Gospel is what guides their manner of life.

What we don't want is students leaving BBA and going, "I sure am glad all those rules are behind me." That's not what we want happening. We want them to begin embracing the Gospel every single day, more and more and more, so that by the time that they're in senior high, they're not thinking about rules anymore. The Gospel is what guides their manner of life. Did you have a question, Joey?

The Gospel is what guides their manner of life. We want them to recognize that they have a dual citizenship if they're born again. They have a dual citizenship and while they may be Korean citizens and may they be American citizens, we are going to talk about that a little bit but not as the primary thing. Our primary focus will be, "Hey, you have a citizenship in heaven right now. You have a seat at the Super Bowl already purchased for you. It's waiting there. Your name is on there. The ticket has already been bought and they are waiting for you. It's there. You're already there," and then you would say, "but not yet. But you're there, but not yet." So the idea is in the same way that I would say to you, "You're not acting like an American citizen," and by that I would say you're not voting, you're not paying taxes, you're not being patriotic, you're not doing your duty. Those would all be things that we would talk about if I said, "You're not being a very good citizen." A good citizen would pledge allegiance to the flag. They would put their feet together. They'd put their hand on...you see at ballgames people like this and we would say, "Where is the citizenship going in America? Where is the patriotic spirit going?" In the same way, once that boy or girl receives the Gospel as the truth that is their's personally, they have trusted in Christ, they communicate a faith in Christ, we will begin treating them like citizens of heaven and we want to teach them that their conduct is not guided by the Mosaic law, their conduct is guided by their understanding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

So the general idea of the Gospel is: God did for you what you don't deserve. Isn't it? Isn't that the general idea of the Gospel of God? That God has treated you a lot better than you ever deserved to be treated so now the way I interact with you, the way I interact with my wife, the way I interact with everyone is based on the idea that God has done for me what I did not deserve so whether I think you deserve a smile or not, you're getting a smile. Whether I think you deserve a tip or not, you're getting a tip. That means because the Gospel guides my conduct, I'm going to go out to dinner, I'm going to get my meal all messed up, the server is going to be rude and they're still going to get a good tip. They're still going to get a good tip because the Gospel is guiding my conduct. The Gospel guides

my conduct and the grace of God says, "Sean, you didn't deserve salvation. You didn't deserve a good tip. You deserve just the opposite." So I'm going to thank them. I'm going to love them. I'm going to be kind. I'm going to be patient. Now, I say all that, that's what I'm striving to be. I'm a sinner, right? I'm a sinner so I know what the objective is and I know how far I fall short but I know where I've going with that and it's not because the Mosaic law guides me, it's because the Gospel compels me to do that which I would not otherwise do.

Let's look at a few examples of this. Turn over to Matthew 18 for another example of the application of the Gospel. The application of the Gospel. Our veterans with us know that this is one of my favorite preaching texts for this and so let me just share it with all our new teachers. Beginning in verse 23 of Matthew 18, the Apostle Matthew writes, "Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt." That's us, folks. That is us, okay? Make sure that you understand that's me and that's you. My debt has been forgiven so based on that, now let's see what happens next.

"But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence." Go back, please, with me and look. We had ten thousand talents, we have one hundred pence. Do you see the difference there? Ten thousand talents, one hundred pence. "But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest." That is a failure to apply the Gospel. That's what that is. That is a failure to apply the Gospel, okay? Don Adams loaned me \$10,000 to pay for braces for my son. We had an agreement that I was going to pay him back. I failed to pay him back and the Adams in their graciousness forgave the debt and the next day you see me with my hand on Joey's throat saying, "Remember that buck that I gave you for that Sprite? I want my money back." That's it. That's the illustration. Make sure you understand it. In black and white, that's the illustration. And oftentimes what you will find is the thing that you will deal the most with with our students is unforgiveness. Their unwillingness to forgive each other and this works its way up in the grades, the higher the grades, the more it's there. The higher the grades, the more it's there. You can get three year olds and four year olds and they get in a wicked fight and they're best friends in a matter of seconds, okay? You let a junior high kid say something about another junior high kid on Facebook and, my goodness, you've got a major problem on your hands. Drama out the wazoo. Okay?

Do you know what it is? It's a failure to apply the Gospel. It's a failure. We're not going to go to them and say, "Don't you know the Bible says you're supposed to do that?" and all of a sudden the Bible becomes this legislative, you know, you use it over your head, bang it over your head. No, no, no, that's not what we want them to think. We want them

to think like, "What has God done for you in Christ Jesus? So then what should your appropriate response be to others?" That's how we want them to think. We're not going to take the Bible and turn it into an instrument of correction so that we're just whipping into the Bible every time we turn around and we're quoting Scriptures at them and throwing them in their faces and it's just a series of verses and verses. We want them to begin to think differently. We want them to change their thinking. Paul says, "I want you to conduct yourself so that your conduct is worthy of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I want you to conduct yourself as though you are citizens of a kingdom that you're not already there."

Would you turn over to Ephesians 5? Verse 25, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." Gospel. Gospel. Do you know what a Gospel centered marriage is? A Gospel centered marriage is when Joey K. recognizes what Christ has done for him and that vertical recognizing of what Christ has done for him is poured out in his love towards Candace. That's a Gospel centered marriage. A Gospel centered marriage is that when Candace recognizes that what Christ has done for her gets returned to Joey in love. That's a Gospel centered marriage. That's a way of saying, "Lord, I have no way of paying back what you did for me. I can't do it. It's impossible. I can't go to where you are. I can't transfer a check to where you are. I can't visit you. But I can love my wife the way you love me." I'm not going to give you, Joey, "Do these five things or these seven things." I'm going to say to you, "My friend, focus on loving your wife the way Christ loved the church."

Let the Gospel guide your daily relationships. Let the Gospel guide your marriage. Let the Gospel guide your time. Let the Gospel guide your every aspect of your life. Constantly remind yourself what Christ has done for you. Constantly remind yourself of what Christ has done for you and allow that to determine to the best of your ability how you should respond and, teachers, we're not going to respond right all the time. We are sinners. We're going to come to school with a headache. We're going to come to school frustrated. We're going to come to school exasperated. We are going to come to school on any different degree. We are not robots. We are sinners saved by grace so when we fall short of the standard, let's remind our students that we need the Gospel just like they need the Gospel, that we're sinners just they are sinners. We have attitude problems just like they have attitude problems. We have a rough day just like they're having a rough day and, "I need you to forgive me. I need you to forgive me. Would you please forgive me? I am sorry that I was rude, insensitive. That's not the way Christ treats me and I need you to forgive me." That level of transparency will take you to a different level with your students.

But wait a minute, turn over to Titus 2 lest you think that all I'm talking about is just giving them a pass because that's not what I'm talking about. In fact, giving them the pass may often be the very worst thing that you could do for them because God will not give them a pass outside of Jesus Christ. So look at the Gospel from a different verse with me, please. Look at the Gospel from Titus 2:11, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." Hey folks, the grace is intangible. Grace can't be seen. So when he says "the grace of God has appeared to all men," who is that? That is Jesus

Christ. Jesus Christ, Kevin, is the walking, talking, breathing grace of God. That is who has appeared bringing salvation. The Gospel is God. The Gospel is God is the Gospel. The Gospel has appeared to us, bringing to us salvation so we look at that and we say, "Ah, the Gospel, the grace of God, the forgiveness of God."

So now, what is this Gospel supposed to do for us? It is supposed to teach us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. So the Gospel is not about giving every student a free pass, the Gospel is all about informing them how the Gospel is supposed to guide their everyday conduct. So if they come stumbling into the classroom, disruptive and late, they are not applying the Gospel because the application of the Gospel says, "I will come in on time. I will not be a disruption in this class because I care about you more than myself."

Now, that's deep. They're not going to get that right away. They're not going to just get that right away. That's not going to just fix a problem but if all you do is hand out a demerit or a detention and you don't pull it back to the "O" of offense, then really all we are is just a private school. They're going to have to be disciplined. I'm not suggesting to you that everybody gets a pass but even in the discipline, I'm going to use this as an opportunity to remind them of a simple truth which is: Christ loved us therefore we love others and loving others means that you don't come stumbling late and disruptive. That you don't make yourself the priority.

However, what is the flip side of that? The flip side of that is to recognize sometimes I'm late. Sometimes I'm not always on time. Sometimes I'm always not prepared. It's difficult as a pastor to hear about a teacher who doesn't tolerate tardiness in her room but she comes in late every time to church. It's difficult to see that because what you say to yourself is there is a double standard.

"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." There are kind of two brands of fundamentalism. Brand number one of fundamentalism is a whole bunch of rules. Just rule after rule after rule. Brand number two where I want us to be is we believe in the fundamentals of the faith but the Gospel is what guides our conduct, not a whole bunch of rules. I don't want to have to give you a series of rules. I don't want to have to be looking to legislate the conduct of the teachers. I don't want to have to tell you you can't go to these movies and you can't go to these movies and determine when your bedtime is. That's ridiculous. But I remember that brand of fundamentalism because I was here. I dated my wife under that brand of fundamentalism. They told us everything: when we could date; how far we could date; whether we could ride in a car together. Everything. Our entire lives were managed by rules, rules, rules and I was so guilty of thinking that the Gospel is what I got down on Thursday nights when I was going soul winning and then once I got done going soul winning I could put the Gospel back on the shelf until Saturday when I was going again and I didn't understand that Paul is telling me, "Sean, apply the Gospel every single day to every single scenario as much as possible by the grace of God." Are you getting it? The Gospel doesn't mean that all we have is a pass, a pass, a pass. If you do that, you're setting your students up for failure. You're setting your

students up for failure because God will not give them a pass outside of Jesus Christ so be careful.

Alright, what are your questions?

Deb: Many people say they really weren't saved if they fall away or they didn't really mean it. What is your thought on that?

Okay, Deb, I think that one of the most difficult things to determine is whether someone was born again and they're struggling through their walk with Christ or whether they made a false profession of faith and they're not born again. We've got the parable of the four soils, only one of the four actually produces fruit. We've got Matthew 7, "Many on that day will say to me, Lord, Lord, did we not do these, this, this, this, in thy name? And he will say to me, Depart from me, I never knew you." So for me to assess whether that person was born again or not is almost impossible. It's just beyond difficulty in determining are we dealing with a genuine conversion and we see some amount of fruit and then for the trials of life, it was just amazing and they just fell or are we dealing with a false profession of faith and there was religious outpourings, if you will, and then the true heart which wasn't converted manifested itself and they lived an ungodly life.

Turn to 1 John 2:19 to help me answer your question. Look at this verse with me. Sometimes you will hear perseverance of the saints mocked as a Calvinistic doctrine. That is ridiculous. The problem with that abrupt statement like that is John writes, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us." So 1 John 2:19, "They went out from us," so there was a time that they were with us. They were part of this thing that we call the assembly but they were not of us. They were not of us so he says, "They looked like it here but they went. They were not of us." Why? "For if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued." There needs to be some perseverance. There needs to be some perseverance. "He which has begun a good work in you will perform that work until the day of his coming," Philippians 1:6. There needs to be some perseverance but I'm not the judge of that. There is one Judge and he is kind. He is merciful. He is gracious. He is loving. He is forgiving.

Kim: Can we say, "Woe unto us as teachers" if we cause them to stumble in their persevering?

Well, I think we all know what James says to us in this room, that any of us who step up to the plate and say, "I'm going to teach the word of God," are held to an incredibly high standard. An incredibly high standard. There is not the same level of accountability for teaching algebra as there is for teaching the word of God. You will not stand before Christ at the Judgment Seat for your inability to get it right on geometric figures but any time somebody stands in a pulpit of sorts and says, "This is the word of the Lord," it's huge. It's huge. "This is the word of the Lord."

So I go all the way back to our original point: context, context, context, context because that's going to help me get it right. That's going to help me get it right is studying the context. In this church, we never, ever say, "This is what I want to preach about, now let me go and find Scripture to support it." We never say that. The question that's always asked in the hallways where the pastors hang out is, "What text are you preaching from? What text are you preaching from?" Not, "What's your topic?" "What text are you preaching from?" It's called text driven preaching. Text driven and some of you may not have had text driven preaching for the last several years. Text driven preaching is where the text forces the interpretation, not the theological agenda of the speaker. There is a difference and all say they use the text but all are not text driven. Okay?

Any other questions before we go to lunch? Kevin?

Kevin: What exactly do you mean by the perseverance of the saints? I've heard that phrase but I don't totally understand what that means.

The idea that saints are people who are born again and they do persevere in the faith. They don't fall away. They don't lose their salvation. They don't apostatize. They don't throw the towel in. They are God's and he enables them to persevere. We don't have a scenario like our free-will Baptist brethren who believe that you can lose your salvation. We don't have a scenario where we believe that you can pray this prayer and you're saved and there is no need to show any fruit because you said these words and so therefore you are saved. Saved people persevere in the faith. It doesn't mean that they all persevere the same way. It doesn't mean that we can measure that perseverance but we would always admonish them, "Persevere." That's why in an earlier discussion I said, "Trust Jesus today. Trust Jesus tomorrow. Trust Jesus next week. Don't ever stop trusting Jesus." Because the whole idea is I'm not going back to, "When did you put your faith in Christ?" I want to know what are you believing in right now? Right now? Because if I put my faith in Christ then my faith is still in Christ and my faith will remain in Christ. It's not going to change. Again, having said that, let me – careful, I'm not saying we don't have doubts; I'm not saying we don't have bad days; I'm not saying we can't get mad at God for some period of time, okay? We had a godly man here, he was a member of this church, a born again man but he lost his child to drowning experience and it drove him away from God for years but do you know what? He came back to God. He came back to God. He persevered in the end.

Anyone else? So we're going to do our very best to teach ourselves how the Gospel guides our conduct and then as we're teaching ourselves how the Gospel guides our conduct, we're going to help others that we get to mentor, that we get to coach, that we get to teach. We're going to help them determine how the Gospel guides their conduct.