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MINISTRIES

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What is the Gospel? Understanding ALL of the Gospel: Part 5

In Part 4 of this teaching series, we examined Paul’s teaching on the mystery of the gospel, which contains some interesting aspects of the gospel you may not have considered before. In this final part of the What is the Gospel series, we will examine how repentance is related to the gospel of the kingdom and the eternal gospel.

The Gospel of the Kingdom

The gospel as preached by John the Baptist is stated in Matthew:

Matthew 3:1-2

In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Matthew 3:7-12

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father,’ for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

“I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

The main thrust of John's message is a call to repentance.

Why?

What does repentance have to do with the gospel?

Recalling the gospel message as preached in Deuteronomy 30 gives us the connection.

The gospel as proclaimed by Moses is to forsake all false worship, including idolatry and wrong living, and to obey the commandments of the Lord.

This is a very good definition of "repentance."

Thus, repentance is changing one's mind and doing an "about face" in your living experience.

Repentance means to "stop doing wrong and start doing right."

Repentance has always been an integral part of the gospel message whenever and wherever it is preached.

Christ's gospel message features repentance:

Matthew 4:17

From that time Jesus [Yeshua] began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Matthew 4:23

And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people.

Mark records it this way:

Mark 1:14-15

Now after John was arrested, Jesus [Yeshua] came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

Mark calls this message of repentance "*the gospel of God.*"

But Matthew calls this same message, "*the gospel of the kingdom.*"

These are the same gospel.

The gospel of God is the gospel of the kingdom and it consists of a message to repent of sin.

What did Yeshua mean when he said, "the time is fulfilled"?

This, too, is part of the gospel of the kingdom.

Bear in mind that the appointed times of Leviticus 23 tell the story of the gospel in picture or "shadow" form.

The appointed times tell the whole story of the death, burial, and resurrection of the Messiah, his anointing as high priest, and his return in the clouds to gather his own, judge the world and establish his reign on earth.

This is the aspect of the "*gospel*" that the Messiah is referring to when he says that "*the time is fulfilled.*"

He had come to accomplish those things that the Spring appointed times foreshadowed.

Repentance is also an integral part of Peter's gospel proclamation.

When preaching on the day of Shavuot (Pentecost), he instructs the crowd gathered there.

Acts 2:38-39

And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ [Messiah Yeshua] for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself."

And in his discourse from Solomon's Porch following the healing, Peter says,

Acts 3:18-19

But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled. Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out,

Repentance has to be the first step in one's walk with God.

Paul says God loved us and the Messiah died for us "while we were yet sinners" (Romans 5:8). So while he DOES seem to accept us where we are in a sense...he just refuses to leave us there. God's love accepts us where we are, but he loves us too much to leave us there. Repentance is the first step in leaving our old life behind and following Messiah.

Therefore, whoever comes to God to be cleansed from his sin must first repent of his sin.

He must change his mind and abandon sinfulness.

When we make that choice to desire, trust, and have faith in YHWH, then we enter into his eternal plan that includes resurrection, making us eternally incorruptible forever...removing us from sin forever.

One must believe the Word of God to be true, and want to practice the Word of God...meaning having a desire to practice truth.

Repentance means turning away from sin and turning to right living.

Baptism follows repentance because it is symbolic of one's cleansing from sin.

This is why baptism always immediately follows repentance.

So, Peter's gospel call is to "repent and be baptized."

Paul's gospel also always includes repentance as its first and necessary component.

While preaching in Athens, Paul concludes:

Acts 17:30-31

The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

This is Paul's gospel: Repent because the Messiah has authenticated his work by rising from the dead.

Before King Agrippa, Paul again explains his gospel.

His message to Jews and Gentiles alike is to, first of all, repent.

This involves turning away from sin and turning to righteous living, by the keeping of the commandments:

Acts 26:19-20

Therefore, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but declared first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout all the region of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds in keeping with their repentance.

The deeds consistent with repentance is, no doubt, a reference to obedience to the commandments as part of the covenant.

In his letter to the Romans, Paul includes, as he always does, the initial act of repentance, which is the first step in fellowship with God:

Romans 2:4

Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?

The kindness of God draws us to himself and convinces us of the need to repent—to turn from sin and to the good works of the commandments.

The Great Commission

The "Great Commission," as Yeshua's final instructions to his disciples, are often called the primary mission of believers. It contains the same gospel message which we have been seeing from the full spectrum of Scripture.

Matthew records the more popular and familiar version of these final instructions:

Matthew 28:18-20

And Jesus [Yeshua] came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

The primary commandment here, as anyone who knows a little Greek grammar can tell you, is to make disciples.

Unfortunately, this little point of "making disciples" seems to get lost in all of the so called "evangelism" that goes on today.

What do we mean?

The common experience among Christians has shown over and over again that Christianity places a great deal of emphasis on "getting people saved"—but spends little time actually making disciples.

It certainly seems that the commandment of our Messiah is to "make disciples" not "get people saved"!

What does it take to make disciples?

This is answered in the rest of the "commission" given to Yeshua's disciples.

A disciple is made by first "baptizing" him and then by "teaching" him to obey God's law.

Still not clear?

Let's break it down to its fundamentals.

Baptizing is what is done to people who have repented of their sins and have chosen to walk in the footsteps of Christ.

1 John 2:5-6

but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

Baptism, remember, is the symbolic act which expresses one's change of mind—that one has forsaken his lifestyle of transgressing God's ways, and has chosen to walk in obedience to the commandments.

John also says that in:

1 John 2:3-4

And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

When the one becoming a disciple makes this choice, the next step is to find out all about the commandments which he is instructed to obey.

In Matthew 28:20 we see Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) commissioned his followers to make disciples by "teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you"

It is amazing how many overlook this "minor" point in the commission.

Our Messiah has commanded us to "(1) teach them (2) to observe everything I have commanded you."

So let's go over these two things in detail so that we are actually doing what was commanded in the Messiah's "Great Commission."

First, a disciple must be taught.

The substance, we think everyone would agree to, is the Scriptures.

We must teach or else the follower won't know what exactly he is supposed to follow.

Second, we must teach people to obey or "to observe."

This is at the very core of walking out our "faith."

Faithfulness to Christ is evidence as obedience to him.

John puts it this way:

1 John 1:6

If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

We are told to observe "everything."

He does not give us the option of picking and choosing which things we want to obey.

We are told to observe "everything."

That would include the whole Law of God, the Torah, everything Moses wrote, and consequently, everything Yeshua practiced as truth and as our example.

Obedying everything Yeshua taught would be everything that Yeshua taught and practiced.

What did Yeshua teach and practice?

He taught and practiced what Moses wrote as the Law of God.

"His commandments" are what we are taught to obey.

Just what are his commandments?

Let's answer this by finding out which commandments Messiah Yeshua has commanded.

Fair enough?

God is One, and Yeshua stated that he only commanded and taught what the Father taught.

John 14:10

Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works.

John 12:49

For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak.

We cannot pick and choose what the Father taught, it is all written down.

Yeshua himself had taught his disciples:

Matthew 5:17-19

Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Yeshua clearly explained to his disciples that he was not doing away with the commandments written at Sinai...

In fact, he emphasizes the need to teach these very same commandments down to the last detail and includes the "very least" of the commandments given at Sinai.

Those who unknowingly teach otherwise will be called "least" in his kingdom (See our teaching "[*The Least, Greatest, and Defiant*](#)" for more on that subject).

The Great Commission, then, is Messiah's charge to his followers to "make disciples" for him by baptizing the repentant ones and teaching them to obey all the commandments of the Lord.

The true disciple will always desire to forsake transgressing the Law of God and desire to walk in full obedience to all the Law and commandments God gave at Sinai.

The Eternal Gospel

The designation "eternal gospel" is found in the book of Revelation:

Revelation 14:6-7

Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an **eternal gospel** to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people. And he said with a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water."

The eternal gospel is here detailed as consisting of two components: fearing God and worshipping the Creator.

Given that this gospel proclamation is "eternal," his message is one which has always and will always be proclaimed—including during the present age.

The message of fearing God and worshipping the Creator must be for Yeshua's disciples also, because it is "eternal."

What does the teaching about "fearing God" consist of?

We find the command to fear God scattered throughout the Torah.

To fear God means to respect his ability to do the good things he promises and to do the bad things he has promised toward the disobedient.

Fear of the Lord springs from the knowledge of his will and the understanding that he will do what he says.

A human father is feared by his children if he sets the rules and boundaries, establishes punishment for breaking the boundaries, and then carries out the punishment for when they are broken.

The same goes with our heavenly Father.

Fear of God means adjusting our behavior in light of the real sense of consequences for our lifestyle choices.

So when we read of "fearing God" in the Law, it is accompanied with instruction about obedience to the rules:

Leviticus 19:14

You shall not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind, but you shall fear your God: I am the Lord [YHWH].

Leviticus 19:32

“You shall stand up before the gray head and honor the face of an old man, and you shall fear your God: I am the Lord [YHWH].

Leviticus 25:17,18

You shall not wrong one another, but you shall fear your God, for I am the Lord [YHWH] your God. “Therefore you shall do my statutes and keep my rules and perform them, and then you will dwell in the land securely.

Fear of God means to obey his instructions in light of the fact that there is blessing in it for you when you do obey but punishment if you don't.

This point is brought home in the section we covered about the promised blessings toward those who obey the commandments of the Covenant, and the curses towards those who disobey the commandments:

Deuteronomy 28:58-59

“If you are not careful to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name, the Lord [YHWH] your God, then the Lord [YHWH] will bring on you and your offspring extraordinary afflictions, afflictions severe and lasting, and sicknesses grievous and lasting.

Here, refusing to fear YHWH is clearly equated with refusing to obey all the words of this instruction.

To fear is to obey.

What, then, does it mean to "*worship the one who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water*"?

Again, "worship" is defined by the instructions of the first four of the Ten Commandments.

We are commanded not to have other gods, not to carve or form an image or idol so that we may use it in our worship of him.

We are commanded not to minimize or devalue his name, meaning his authority.

We are commanded to set-apart the seventh day unto him.

In performing these four commandments, we are worshipping God in truth.

To worship simply means to bring ourselves low. This is because we cannot raise up the Most High. He is already the Most High. All we can do is make ourselves lower, in humble obedience to his authority.

The expression, "worship the one who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water" (Revelation 14:6-7) has a special connection to the commandment about the Sabbath.

In Exodus 20:11 we see that the fourth commandment says to set apart the seventh day because in six days YHWH made the heavens and the earth and the sea and all that is in them, and he rested on the seventh day; therefore YHWH blessed the Sabbath day and sanctified it.

Worshipping the One who made the heaven and earth and the sea can only properly be done by setting apart the seventh day as a Sabbath unto him, because the very act of doing this calls to mind that he is the One who "[made heaven and earth and the sea](#)" in six days.

The "Eternal Gospel" is evidently a call to obey the eternal commandments of God.

On the day after man was created, God gave him the seventh day to be set apart as a day of rest.

This convention is proclaimed eternally.

The seventh day will always be the day God calls his people to stop working and to rest with him.

Christ will do so during his reign on earth.

And believers today SHOULD be compliant with this commandment to rest on the 7th day as well.

For more on that, see our teaching "[Hebrews 4: In His Rest Now or Later](#)"

Conclusion

The gospel includes the "death, burial and resurrection of Christ." But it is much more than that. The Scriptures have always been proclaiming the gospel.

The gospel is the good news that God is doing a work of redemption, to buy back sinners and draw them to himself.

Abraham proclaimed the gospel by showing that "*the righteous one will live by faithfulness.*"

Abraham obeyed the instructions of YHWH and was the example of faithfulness to all who will follow in his footsteps.

And even the Gentiles will be brought into covenant relationship with the Messiah by walking as Abraham did. And remember, the promise to Abraham included his offspring "blessing all nations"?

The Law of Moses proclaimed the gospel by explaining that the Word of the commandments is near you, in your heart and in your mouth.

It is not difficult to reach or attain. If one will seek to obey all the commandments that YHWH has instructed, there will be life and peace and blessing.

But even those who refuse to obey and who will be subsequently scattered throughout the earth will have descendants who will repent and return to the Lord in obedience to the instructions of Scripture.

Moses also proclaimed the gospel in shadow form by giving the appointed times of worship, which depict the work of redemption which Christ is performing.

His death and resurrection, enthronement as high priest, and his return on the clouds to fulfill the promises, bring judgment on all, and establish his reign of righteousness on earth.

Both John the Baptist and Yeshua proclaimed a message of repentance from sinful habits and subsequent obedience to the written commandments of Scripture as the way of attaining life.

Christ emphasized that he had come to explain and carry out the commandments of the Law.

Christ also said he came for the lost sheep of the house of Israel, revealing the solution for the mystery of the gospel through his death and resurrection, as taught by Paul.

The apostle Paul proclaimed the gospel, emphasizing the need to bring about the obedience of faithfulness among all the Gentiles.

Peter and John, likewise, emphasize that a proper relationship with God is evidenced by compliance with the commandments.

This is the eternal gospel. It's the gospel that Moses and all the prophets taught, the gospel that Yeshua preached, and the very same gospel that Paul and the rest of the followers of Yeshua taught—that the Messiah's work of redemption has provided everlasting forgiveness and pardon for sin for all who will turn from that sin (repent) and have a desire to walk in the righteous

commandments of the Lord. It's only by YHWH's grace that he made a way for the salvation of humanity. The gospel message includes us being saved by grace through our faith.

As fellow brothers and sisters in Messiah, we urge you to take all of this very seriously, since these things are relating to our awesome God YHWH, who deserves every bit of our attention and our sincere desire to understand his Word and his ways.

Test everything we have said to Scripture. Never take a man's word for truth, but test it to the only established truth we have, God's Word.

This is what we are accountable to at the end of the race.

Show yourself approved, and study the Scriptures. Have an answer for every question asked of you.

Be a witness.

Contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.

Seek out his ways and his ancient path.

Test your heart and ensure that it desires God's ways and not the ways of the world, doctrines of men, or the traditions of our fathers.

As Yeshua stated, we can do many things in God's name, but if we were not doing it out of pure love and obedience to him, then it matters not.

In fact, our heart can still be so far from him, that he could state, *'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'* (Matthew 7:23)

It is our faith in Yeshua that matters. However if there is no evidence of faith in your life that is demonstrated by a sincere interest in the keeping of God's commandments, then begin asking yourself why you do not trust God's ways as truth and the way we should live.

We need to humble ourselves and seek truth in the place where truth is written.

We cannot pretend to invent truth, but only have it delivered to us through his Word.

You have now studied the whole gospel as presented by the whole Bible.

We hope that this teaching has blessed you, and remember, continue to test everything.

Shalom.

We pray you have been blessed by this teaching. Remember, continue to test everything. Shalom! For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at www.testeverything.net

Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.

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