

“What Is the Gospel: Part 3”

Review: We saw that there are many things that a person needs to know before he knows enough to be saved. It is not enough for a person to hear, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved,” since there are so many false ideas of what that means. What I would like to do this morning is to begin going through the teachings of the Bible which are essential to the Gospel, so that we might better understand them and be better equipped to teach others what they need to know to be saved.

- I. The best place to start is where the Bible starts: with the Creation of man. God created us, and therefore He has the right to tell us what He wants us to do.
 - A. We will want to begin with who this God is who made us.
 1. Why is it important for us to be able to explain who God is?
 - a. Because of all the false ideas of God. I don’t want to focus too much on this, because if we know the truth, we will be able to recognize and counteract the counterfeits. But it is still useful to know the false teaching of some of the cults, so that we won’t be fooled by them, if we run into them.
 - b. What do the Jehovah’s witnesses believe about God?
 - (i) They believe that He is the almighty God, but that He is only one person.
 - (ii) What do they believe about Christ? He is not God, but is the Son of God. He is not omoousioj with the Father, but omoiousioj. He is not the same substance with the Father, but of a similar substance with the Father.
 - (iii) What do they believe about the Holy Spirit? He is not a person, but an impersonal force. He is the power of God.
 - (iv) Is this the God of the Bible? No. This god is only one person, not three. Jesus is not this god, but a creature.
 - c. What do the Mormons believe about God?
 - (i) They believe that God was once a man, just like us. He was faithful to the plan of the god who created him, and became a god himself. They teach, “As man is, god once was. As god is, man may become.
 - (ii) They believe that Jesus is also god, but He is a separate god.
 - (iii) And they believe that the Holy Spirit is god, but is a god without a body: a personage of spirit.
 - (iv) Is this the God of the Bible? No. They actually have three gods that have to do this world. There are innumerable other gods which don’t have to do with this world. They are polytheistic.
 - d. Are those who believe in these gods saved? No. If you don’t have the right God, you cannot have the right Christ or the right plan of salvation.
 - e. Is it possible for someone not to understand the right doctrine of God and be saved? Yes. But he cannot believe a false one and be saved. Also, he must accept the truth concerning the true God when he hears it.
 2. What is important then to know about this true God?

- a. That He is the only true God.
- (i) Isaiah 44:8 'Do not tremble and do not be afraid; Have I not long since announced it to you and declared it? And you are My witnesses. Is there any God besides Me, Or is there any *other* Rock? I know of none.' "
 - (ii) Isaiah 44:6 "Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel And his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: 'I am the first and I am the last, And there is no God besides Me.'"
 - (iii) Isaiah 45:5-6 "I am the LORD, and there is no other; Besides Me there is no God. I will gird you, though you have not known Me; That men may know from the rising to the setting of the sun That there is no one besides Me. I am the LORD, and there is no other."
 - (iv) Deu. 4:33-35 "Has *any* people heard the voice of God speaking from the midst of the fire, as you have heard *it*, and survived? Or has a god tried to go to take for himself a nation from within *another* nation by trials, by signs and wonders and by war and by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm and by great terrors, as the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? To you it was shown that you might know that the LORD, He is God; there is no other besides Him."
 - (v) Deuteronomy 32:39 'See now that I, I am He, And there is no god besides Me; It is I who put to death and give life. I have wounded, and it is I who heal; And there is no one who can deliver from My hand.'
 - (vi) The Bible is monotheistic. It recognizes only one God. If anyone believes otherwise, he cannot be saved.
- b. This God is three persons.
- (i) The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are all God.
 - (ii) The Father is God.
 - (a) Romans 15:5-6, "Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus; that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."
 - (b) 2 Corinthians 1:3-4, "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort; who comforts us in all our affliction so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God."
 - (c) You will get very little debate on this issue.
 - (iii) The Son is God.
 - (a) John 1:1-2 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God."
 - (b) John 20:28 Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"
 - (c) John 10:30 "I and the Father are one."
 - (d) Acts 20:28 "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood."

- (e) Philippians 2:6-11 “Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”
- (f) 1 John 5:20 And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding, in order that we might know Him who is true, and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.
- (g) See also Hebrews 1:8-13.

(iv) The Holy Spirit is God.

- (a) Acts 5:3-4 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back *some* of the price of the land? "While it remained *unsold*, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men, but to God."
- (b) He is also called by the names of God, does the works of God, is personal, etc.

(v) Are there any groups that claim to be Christians that deny this teaching of the Trinity?

- (a) Jehovah's Witnesses.
- (b) Mormons.
- (c) United Pentecostals.
- (d) Apostolic Church.
- (e) Old Armstrongism.

B. It is also important to know that this God created us and what the implications of this are.

1. God created man. Man did not create God.

a. God created all things.

- (i) Genesis 1:1 “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”
- (ii) John 1:3 “All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.”
- (iii) This is important to recognize, for if God created all things, then He is Lord of all things.

b. God also created man.

- (i) Genesis 1:26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds

of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

(ii) Isaiah 64:8 But now, O LORD, Thou art our Father, We are the clay, and Thou our potter; And all of us are the work of Thy hand.

2. Because God created man, He has the right to tell him what to do.
 - a. Man belongs to God, since He made him.
 - b. The psalmist writes, "Know that the LORD Himself is God; It is He who has made us, and we are His" (100:3).
 - c. Therefore, He has the right to command us.

3. What was the rule that God gave to man to keep?
 - a. That rule was the ten commandments.
 - (i) It is the law which God wrote upon their hearts.
 - (a) Romans 2:14-16 For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, 15 in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness, and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them, 16 on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus."
 - (b) Where else could this law have come from? After the Fall? By itself?
 - (ii) It is the same law that was later written on the tablets of stone and given on Mount Sinai.
 - b. The keeping of the original commandment given to Adam not to eat of the tree actually included obedience to all of these commandments. When he broke that commandment, he broke all of them.
 - (i) The commandment was: Genesis 2:16-17 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die." He didn't keep this commandment, but broke it.
 - (ii) James writes, "For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one *point*, he has become guilty of all" (2:10).
 - (iii) But did the breaking of this commandment cause Adam to break all Ten? Yes. Listen to this quote from the classic work *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*: (NB: Evangelista = a Minister of the Gospel. Nomologista = a Prattler of the Law.)
 Nom. But, sir, methinks it is a strange thing that so small an offence, as eating of the forbidden fruit seems to be, should plunge the whole of mankind into such a gulf of misery.
 Evan. Though at first glance it seems to be a small offence, yet, if we look more wistfully upon the matter it will appear to be an exceeding great offence; for thereby intolerable injury was done unto God; as, *first*, His

dominion and authority in his holy command was violated. *Secondly*, His justice, truth, and power, in his most righteous threatenings, were despised. *Thirdly*, His most pure and perfect image, wherein man was created in righteousness and true holiness, was utterly defaced. *Fourthly*, His glory, which, by an active service, the creature should have brought to him, was lost and despoiled. Nay, how could there be a greater sin committed than that, when Adam, at that one clap, broke all the ten commandments?

Nom. Did he break all the ten commandments, say you? Sir, I beseech you show me wherein.

- Evan. 1. He chose himself another God when he followed the devil.
 2. He idolized and deified his own belly; as the apostle's phrase is, "He made his belly his God."
 3. He took the name of God in vain, when he believed him not.
 4. He kept not the rest and estate wherein God had set him.
 5. He dishonoured his Father who was in heaven; and therefore his days were not prolonged in that land which the Lord his God had given him.
 6. He massacred himself and all his posterity.
 7. From Eve he was a virgin, but in eyes and mind he committed spiritual fornication.
 8. He stole, like Achan, that which God had set aside not to be meddled with; and this his stealth is that which troubles all Israel,—the whole world.
 9. He bare witness against God, when he believed the witness of the devil before him.
 10. He coveted an evil covetousness, like Amnon, which cost him his life, (2 Sam 13), and all his progeny. Now, whosoever considers what a nest of evils here were committed at one blow, must needs, with Musculus, see our case to be such, that we are compelled every way to commend the justice of God, and to condemn the sin of our first parents, saying, concerning all mankind, as the prophet Hosea does concerning Israel, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself," (Hosea 3:9).

- (iv) God made man and therefore has the right to tell him what to do. But man did not keep God's commandment, but broke it and fell away from Him. Next week, we will look at the condition into which the Fall brought man.