

Are We Preaching “Another” Gospel: A 31-Day Journey toward Rediscovering the Gospel of the Grace of God

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Day 29

TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES

As this work has been penned, there has been a keen awareness of my audience as one with a variety of understandings on this topic. I know that there are those among you who simply needed to read what you already knew and believed. For you, this book has been another confirmation among many others of what God has already been teaching you.

Others have read these pages as a means of rediscovering that the gospel really is *good* news, and it has set you free once again—free to believe that what Jesus did for us is as wonderfully and beautifully true as He proclaimed it to be. We join Paul and pray that you will continue in His grace and become fully established in it!

If you are like we were, though, you might still be skeptical, and we don't blame you. It is right and necessary to “prove all things and hold fast to that which is good.” We ask you to dig deeper into what Jesus accomplished *for* us. Don't listen only to those who are currently preaching against “grace extremists” and who refer to their teachings as “hyper-grace,” and don't be turned away by some “grace” teachers who have veered off into heresy. Keep reading other authors on this topic, such as the ones we recommend at the end of this book. We pray for you to see it, for your eyes to be reopened to how amazingly bountiful His grace is.

Along the way, we have encountered those who strongly oppose what we are teaching. We have been viewed as the very enemies of God who are “watering down the gospel.” As Paul persecuted the early church, feeling that he was doing the will of God and protecting what He believed, even today, there are those among the church who consider the gospel of God's grace as described in these pages to be heresy, plain and simple. These will criticize the message of God's grace. They will go out of their way to defame and even to destroy these truths (and those who proclaim them), thinking they are doing God's service. If this describes you, we pray that God will reveal His true gospel to you on your way to Damascus. We forgive you and love you in Jesus name.

It's also apparent that this book hasn't been written in a private space where only those who minister and teach in the church may gather. Alongside us as I write and you read, I have been keenly aware of God's sheep listening on; those to whom we've been called to serve. Each week,

they get up and go to church, laying aside their need for a full day off or their desire to take the family on an outing. They come, some out of tradition, some out of guilt, and most with a strong desire that something that is said this week will give them hope.

What do most of them hear? “God is good. You are not. Ask for forgiveness. Do better. Do more. Go and sin no more.” Imagine the horrid impact of hearing this week after week, year after year after year! This endless formula of pointing out what is wrong with people and then prescribing a formula for future success based on law defines precisely what it means to preach “another” gospel. Yes, we were born again by the Spirit, but now we have to perfect *ourselves*? This is not only bad news, instead of good news; it is heresy.

Shall we not instead share with the sheep what JESUS has done for them, how He has set them free—how much He loves them, and of how much He wants to give them? *These are* the glad tidings of good things. We *are* righteous. We *are* holy, blameless, and without reproach. We *are* dearly beloved children of the living God. We *are* joint heirs with Christ. We *are* free from sin because we are under grace, not law. We *have* eternal life. God is not mad at us. He loves us. He is in us, and we are in Him; perfectly close. Nothing, even and especially not our sin, can separate us from His love.

**The Christian life is NOT about what we do.
It’s about what HE did.
He started it, and HE will complete it.**

What I am about to write is difficult because we know many pastors and have tremendous respect for them and their labor of love. With all of their hearts, they are endeavoring to give you the truth, but no matter how much you love and trust them, no matter how noble and sincere your teachers may be, you have a responsibility to “prove all things and hold fast to that which is good”. We also loved and trusted our pastors to teach the truth. We would have never challenged them because we loved and respected them so dearly. Later, we ourselves began preaching another gospel, so we say these things with deep compassion.

But it is important, dearly beloved sons and daughters of God, to ask this question: **are you** hearing and believing and even beginning to teach “another” gospel?

It isn’t “touching God’s anointed” to disagree with what you are taught or to have opinions about how your pastors treat the sheep. You aren’t out of “unity” if you speak what is true, for our unity is based on the *faith*, not on agreeing. Just because your pastor has gone to Bible college and has multiple degrees does not mean he is more qualified to understand the gospel than you.

Perhaps you've heard, as we have, the false analogy that no one would try to tell his surgeon how to do surgery, so why would you question your pastor, who has more knowledge and training than you? Yet, wouldn't you challenge even your surgeon if he proposed removing one of your vital organs? Consider this: your pastor *isn't* a surgeon, and you aren't his patient. You are both children of God, both anointed, and both capable of understanding the gospel of the grace of God.

The time of pastoral intimidation is over. The church is not a theocracy! It's a group of people who have joined together to believe in Jesus and love each other. Yes, God appoints overseers within the body of Christ, but there is one head of the church, and His name is Jesus. The rest of us are His beloved body, and we are working **together**, each of us doing what we are called to do, submitting to one another in love.

Some of us will be prophets, evangelists, apostles, pastors, and teachers who will **serve** the body to build it up. Others will have other gifts named in Scripture. However, not one of us is ever to lord it over another. The church is not a hierarchy, but we are one body of Christ.

Paul warned the sheep about the teachers in Galatia who were teaching them "another" gospel, and I am cautioning you. It's important to hold tightly to the truth. May God open your eyes and use you to help those who teach you to understand. May God give you confidence to speak the truth in love. Speaking the truth in love is about ministering.

Ephesians 4:11-16

*And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, ¹³ till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; ¹⁴ that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, ¹⁵ but, **speaking the truth in love**, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.*