

The Better Way

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SPRING CHURCH OF CHRIST

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SUNDAY

Bible Study.....9:00 a.m.
Worship.....10:00 a.m.
Afternoon Worship.....1:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study.....7:30 p.m.
(via Zoom Meetings)

ELDERS

David P. Brown
Ken Cohn
John West

DEACONS

Bret Bailey
J. D. Gunter
Eric Paluka

EVANGELIST

David P. Brown

SECRETARY

Sonya West

WHY IS THE GOSPEL, GOSPEL?

Hulen L. Jackson

Sometimes in our study of the Bible we forget that the Bible was written to man and for man and in the language he spoke. The Bible is heaven's message in man's own language, or God's thoughts in the words of man. Surely, God inspired the men who wrote it and directed them as they selected the words to express His thoughts. Yet, in doing so God had those forty men employ words commonly used and spoken and understood by men of their own generation.

Jehovah didn't coin many words in His revelation to man. Likely He did in giving the name "Christian" for the first time to the disciples in Antioch (Acts 11:26). Scholars inform us that "were called" in that verse means "divinely designated." The prophet, in Isaiah 62:2, had foretold that the new name for God's people would be spoken by the mouth of God. In some fashion He did that in Antioch. However, ordinarily in expressing His thoughts to man He did not use the language of heaven (if heaven has a language as we know it) but rather talked to man in his own language using his own terminology.

In referring to these writings to man God called them "**scriptures**." This was not a special word or newly coined word nor did it have any religious connotation at the time. Any writings of any sort would be "scriptures" in that sense. But, "**holy scriptures**" meant as used by Paul in 2 Timothy 3:15, these writings under God's directions. Then in verse 16 Paul explains that these "**holy scriptures**" are inspired of God and are profitable unto man.

Today we used the word **scriptures** only completely with a religious connotation. Another example of such use of words by Bible writers would be the word **church**. As you know it meant "congregation, assembly"; thus any called out body would be a church. Maybe that is why Christ said He would build His church, His assembly of people called out by Him and for His purpose. Church could be called a description more than a definition of God's people. The word the writers of the Bible employed was commonly used in those days. As preachers of the gospel have repeatedly pointed out, the same is true of the word **baptize** in the Greek. The man on the street in the times of Christ maybe every day used this word in reference to an immersion, a submerging, or a burial. John the Baptist, in introducing the subject to the Jews of his day styled his burial in water of them unto the remission of their sins a "**baptism**." No new word was coined.

John didn't preach and practice just any burial or baptism but a "**baptism of repentance for the remission of sins**" (Mark 1:4). His was a baptism to which people were brought, generated by and produced by their sincere repentance of their sins. The Greek grammar of this verse will plainly teach this. The one baptism of Ephesians 4:5 is not a mere burial of any sort, but rather a burial in water for the remission of sins of a true believer in Christ who is penitent of his sins and also in keeping with the other requisites. You need not be reminded, however, that in our daily conversation we have given to these words today a limited religious

definition and use. Such is not a crime when I remember the above facts about these Bible words. No better word, be assured, could have been selected to express the true thought of God or that better word would have been.

Why is the Gospel gospel? Why call it that? Would not some other word have expressed God's thought clearer? John the Baptist, Jesus Himself, and His apostles during His ministry, preached the **"gospel of the kingdom."** What did that mean and why did they use such a word or expression? When the angels announced the birth of Jesus to the shepherds in the hillside one of them said: **"Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people."** **"Good tidings"** here means "gospel." It is as clear a definition of the original as can be found in our New Testament. The birth finally of the Promised One was good news, good tidings, a message of great joy. Such was the significance or definition of the word *gospel* as often used by the writers of the Bible. It was no new word or term. They all were well acquainted with it and used it in their daily conversation. Any message of good news could be and maybe would be styled "gospel" by them.

Paul in Romans 1:16 styled it **"the gospel of Christ."** The good news about Christ; not just any good message of hope. In that sense, there could have been many gospels but only one gospel or message about Christ (Gal. 1:7-8). The **"gospel of the kingdom"** was, therefore, the message of hope that God was about to establish His kingdom among men about which those Jews had read and heard so much through the centuries. You see such a use of this term in Galatians 3:8 when reading of the gospel being preached to Abraham. In promising that great man of God that his seed would bless all nations, God was giving to him a message of good news—a gospel message. In promise, thus, the gospel of Christ was preached to Abraham.

Consider Paul's analysis of the gospel which he had preached in Corinth (1 Cor. 15:1-4). When he preached it, they received it, believed it, were saved by it, and were standing in it. This message of good tidings, gospel, which he had preached he had received beforehand. In Galatians, Paul explains that he was not taught it nor did he receive it of man or by the will of man but he received it as a revelation from God. That marks his message as a divine message of hope and good tidings. This gospel had a supernatural origin: it came from God. Paul didn't author it; God did. Paul was but an **"earthen vessel"** through whom God delivered this message of hope, gospel, to men.

In this Corinthian passage the apostle explained that he had preached the death, burial, and

resurrection of Christ. Question: why would the death, burial, and resurrection of any man be a message of good news to the Corinthians? Many had died and had been buried. Several had been resurrected from the dead even before Christ was brought forth. What made these facts about Jesus' gospel? Jesus' death itself is not gospel but His death **"according to the scriptures"** is truly a message of hope and good news. Paul is thinking here of the **"holy scripture"** foretelling these facts about the coming of Christ. Paul had not preached merely that Christ had been raised from the dead but that he had been raised **"according to the scriptures."** This one feature or aspect makes the story of Christ gospel or good tidings.

His death and resurrection as well as His burial were all according to or in fulfillment of the scriptures. The resurrection of Lazarus in that sense was not according to scripture, nor the resurrection of others in Old and New Testament day. If, therefore, the prophets did not foretell of His coming, of His death, and of His resurrection, then Paul claimed about Him a falsehood here. To Paul Jesus was the promised redeemer. An angel gave to Jesus before His birth the name Jesus for the word meant "Savior" and it expressed what He would do for man. These Old Testament prophets outlined His life and mission in the world and according to these scriptures He lived and He died and He arose again. Such truth about Him made the message a message of hope. Without these truths the story of Christ is not gospel to any of them. Jesus of Nazareth was all He claimed for Himself, all that God claimed about Him, and all that the prophets in the scriptures said He would be; consequently the story of Christ is gospel, a message of divine hope and good tidings to all mankind. Reduce His life to an ordinary life, His death to just another resurrection, and you have no gospel. His divine story is good news because of what it can do for me. That makes it good news, gospel. Never man spake like that man nor has there ever been a message of good tidings like His. There is no gospel like the gospel of Christ.

When that message about Christ has been believed and obeyed and when we're standing in it as were the Corinthians, it becomes gospel, good news, to us for it saves us according to Paul. Salvation from what? From our sins. Jesus had promised that salvation in the great commission of Mark 16:15-16. Luke's record explains it to be remission of sins (Luke 24:46-47). What can wash away my sins? The gospel of Christ and only the gospel. It's no wonder, then, that this message is gospel to me. A release from the guilt of my sins; all my sins, is the yearning of a sincere penitent heart and only the good news of Christ can bring to me

(Continued on back page)

Spring Church Of Christ

Contending For The Faith Lectureship



Things Helpful To Becoming & Being A Christian

February 22, 2025

9:00 AM: *Integrity* (Psalms 26) – Jonathan West

10:00 AM: *Ahab, The Accuser* (1 Kings 16:29-33) – Jack Stephens

11:00 AM: *Courage* (Psalms 27) – Jose Gamez

LUNCH PROVIDED BY THE SPRING CONGREGATION

1:30 PM: *Kinds Of Fear* – Bruce Stulting

2:30 PM: *Let Brotherly Love Continue* (Hebrews 13:1) – Eric Paluka

3:30 PM: *OPEN FORUM* (All speakers)

LECTURESHIP DIRECTOR: David P. Brown

ELDERS: David P. Brown, Kenneth D. Cohn, John West

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that release. The gospel of Christ is gospel because it saves me from sin. All other messages of good news of all the ages cannot bring to a single sinner such a hope.

The presence of the Holy Spirit in our hearts and lives today as saved people, the blessings we enjoy every day as children of God, the fellowship with saints of God and fellowship with God Himself, the communion of the Holy Spirit, the wonderful joy of prayer and the strength we will receive therefrom, the happiness of being in His presence in worship, all these and many more are ours because the gospel of Christ is gospel. These blessings through the gospel and only the gospel make this message gospel, a message of great and grand hope. As we walk through the valley of the shadow of death we fear no evil because we know He is with us. How do we know it? The gospel tells us so. That makes the story good news. We can hold to His unchanging hand knowing that He will not allow to come our way more than we can endure but will provide a way of escape. God is faithful to this promise. Isn't such gospel to you? Where would we be and what would we be today without the gospel of Christ?

The greatest of good news is the anticipated joy of living and loving forever and forever. No one wants to "cease to be." Only Christ in His gospel gives that good news and He explains how that can be. **"Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die"** (John 11:26). No news thrills the soul of man so. Life is sweet and the thought of eternal life is our most cherished hope. He came that we might have life and might have it more abundantly. Do you want to live in the "land of fadeless day" and where "we'll never grow old" and "beyond the sunset's radiant glow"? Hear the good news through the gospel of Christ. Do you yearn for the land beyond the river where God wipes away all our tears and where sickness, sorrow, pain, and death never come? Who gives us such hope? Christ does and only Christ and He does in His gospel of good tidings. Could you think of a better word to describe the message of our Lord? Without this gospel we are still in our sins, we have no hope beyond the tomb, and in this life we are most miserable. Thank God daily that the gospel of Christ is truly gospel to the world.~ **Deceased**

THOSE TO SERVE

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2025

Announcements	Eric Paluka
Scripture Reading	Eric Paluka <i>Genesis 7:11-24</i>
Song Leader	Bret Bailey
Prayer	Steven Johnson/Andrew Paluka (AM) Eric Paluka/Joshua West (PM)
Speaker	David Brown
Lord's Table (AM) <i>(Mark 15:33-39)</i>	
Steven Johnson	Bret Bailey
Andrew Paluka	Eric Paluka
Lord's Table (PM)	
Joshua West	Stephen Cohn
Audio/Video Monitor	Joshua West
Camera/Door Monitor	Gary Blasingame

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2025

(via Zoom Meeting)

Announcements	Bret Bailey
Speaker	James Arline
Bible Class Teacher	David Brown

FOR FEBRUARY

Prepare Communion	Mercier
Lock Buildings	Blasingame
Prepare Bulletin Board	West

IN NEED OF PRAYERS

Edith Young, Cynthia Jackson, Zack Nero, Glenn Kryszak, Barbara Perkins, April McCain, Gayle Barnett, Noah & Glenda Hackworth, Tania Turcios, Robbie Kirby, Debbie Brannon, Charles & Ann Nero, Chuck & Nancy Verkist, Freda Smith, Orlinda Chumbley, and Roelf & Janice Ruffner.

TEST YOUR BIBLE KNOWLEDGE

Where was the Passover first observed after leaving Egypt?

Answer to last week's question:
Feast of The Jews; Esther 9

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- **Saturday, February 22th:** Spring *CFTF* lectureship.
- **Sunday, February 23rd:** Monthly meal
- **Tuesday, March 25th:** Ladies' Bible Class.