

The Gospel Helps Us

Introduction

Philippians 3:8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and **count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ**

- 2. Paul described the gospel of Christ as something immensely valuable, something worth giving up everything else for.**
- 3. The gospel is presented as the ultimate answer to people's problems. We offer the gospel to others as help with whatever their problems might be.**
Matthew 11:28-30
- 4. This is acceptable as long as we understand two things:**
 - A. What the problems are that the gospel addresses.**
 - B. What it is that the gospel does about these problems.**

What Our Problems Are

1. Most people would report struggling with problems in four areas — a small number would add the fifth.
 - A. Problems in the world: **Our situation is difficult.**
 - B. Pain in the heart: **We hurt emotionally.**
 - C. Sin in behavior: **We do wrong things.**
 - D. Sin in the heart: **We act from wrong motives.**
 - E. Broken relationship with God: **We don't know or worship God as deeply as we wish.**

2. The gospel addresses these and offers some help — but it reverses the order of priority!
 - A. **Help in knowing God. We can know Him more deeply**
Philippians 3:8

John 17:3 And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

- B. **Help with our inner heart. We can act from better motives**

Proverbs 4:23 Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life.

Romans 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

- C. **Help with our behavior. We can live more holy lives**
Colossians 2:6; 3:5-7,12-14
 - D. **Help with our feelings. We can have more peace**
John 16:33
 - E. **Help with our external circumstances. We can influence others for good**
Matthew 5:13-16

What Our Priorities Ought to Be

1. **We need to be concerned about problems with the gospel's sense of priority.**
 - A. **The devil tempts us to be chiefly concerned about the things that actually matter the least.**
 - B. **Our level of problem-solving concern and energy needs to reflect a Biblical sense of what our most serious problems are.**
 - C. **We need to work on our problems in a "sequence" that reflects Biblical truth. **Some examples:****
 - 1) **We should see working on our inner heart as the key to improving our outward behavior**

Romans 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

- 2) **We should see working on ourselves as the key to working on others**

Matthew 7:5 Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

- 3) **We should see the knowledge of God as the key to literally everything else**

Philippians 3:8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ

- a. **The challenge in life is to maintain **a sense of priority** that is based on **reality**, as reflected in **Biblical truth**. Keep God as the focal point!
Ecclesiastes 12:13-14**
 - b. **If we lose sight of what the real priorities are, we will become people like the Pharisees
Matthew 23:23-28**
 - c. **Regardless of any other consideration, our principal concern ought to be the **love of God** and the **love of others**
Matthew 22:37-40**
2. **In our efforts to draw others to the gospel, we need to be careful what “appeal” we make.**
- A. **The modern religious world seems obsessed with church growth based on catering to people’s “felt needs.”**
 - 1) **The “social” gospel.**
 - 2) **The “health and wealth” gospel.**
 - 3) **The “feel good” gospel.**
 - 4) **The “church growth” gospel.**
 - B. **We cannot buy into this thinking!**
 - 1) **We can’t attract people with the promise that the gospel will “fix” their family problems, their emotional struggles, etc.**
 - C. **We must demand **“practical” “God centered”** preaching.**
 - 1) **Rather than trying to tailor our approach to what we think people are “interested in,” we should be looking for those who are looking **for GOD**.**

Heaven is Where Perfection is Promised

1. **The gospel does not promise complete satisfaction in this life in any of the five areas we listed earlier.**
 - A. **What the gospel does promise is **the hope of heaven**: full fellowship with God for eternity.**
 - B. **Does it also offer some help in this life? Yes, definitely. Significant help? Yes, the very best in the world.**
Mark 10:29-31
 - C. **Our concern and priority ought to decrease as we move from knowing God to improving our external circumstances.**
2. **God has not promised to fix this world, but to destroy this one and give us another.**
2 Peter 3:10-13
 - A. **Living perfectly in this world did not protect even God's Son from **difficult circumstances** and **emotional pain**.**
 - 1) **Even though He had perfect knowledge of God and was perfect in His inner motives and outward actions, Jesus still suffered the hardship of outward circumstances and He still felt the pain of inward agony.**
John 11:35 — "Jesus Wept"
 - 2) **If we expect loving God to mean that He will keep our hearts from being broken, we are expected more than was possible **in this world** even for the Lord Himself!**

- B. Even with respect to the blessings that God can give, we are warned to be careful about what we want God to give us most.**

John 6:26-27 You seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life”

- 3. What ought to draw us to the gospel is the promise of beginning to know God in this life and the promise of living with Him in eternity after this life**

Revelation 22:4 They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads.

- A. God whets our appetite now; the banquet comes later**

Matthew 5:6-8 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God.

- 4. Knowing God is what the Bible is all about**
Jeremiah 9:23-24

- A. This is where the greatest progress is possible in this life.**

- 1) This is the key to whatever progress is possible in all the other areas.**
- 2) This must be our main attraction, our main interest in the gospel.**
- 3) This must be our “center,” the source of our peace.**

- B. This is the thing that is worth giving up the whole world for!**

Philippians 3:7-11

Conclusion

1. **If asked, what would you say Christianity is “all about”?**
 - A. **Feeling better? Being a happier person? Having a more wrinkle-free life in this world?**
 - B. **Or knowing and worshiping Christ in the hope of heaven?**
2. **Being with God in eternity is what Christianity is all about.**
1 Peter 1:3-12
 - A. **Do we know God? The gospel invites us to;**

Ephesians 3:19 know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

- B. **Are we in a relationship with God where we can worship Him in spirit and in truth?**

John 4:23 But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.

3. **Jesus died that we might have life:**

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

- B. **We need to see that being a Christian doesn't keep bad things from happening and doesn't take away our pain when they do happen.**

- 1) **If we will yield — in utter trust — to life as God defines it, we will have life and have it more abundantly - John 10:10.**

Hebrews 11:6

