

Romans 16:17-27

My Gospel

- In his closing words, Paul's pastoral instincts come out. While the issues addressed here are not the only concerns of a shepherd, they are very important.
- Paul sees his Gospel as a very important treasure of the church that must be protected.
- **The Gospel of the Kingdom preached by Jesus and the Gospel of the Cross preached by Paul had different emphasis.**

| <i>The Gospel of the Kingdom</i> | <i>The Gospel as a mystery</i> |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Preached by Jesus to the Jews | Preached by Paul to the world |
| Jesus is presented as Ruler (Lord) | Jesus is presented as Redeemer Lord |
| Faithfulness and repentance are central | Faith is central |
| The Gospels | The Epistles |
| Before the Cross | After the Cross |
| Mark 1:14-15 | I Cor.15:1-4 |
| Matt.6:15 | Eph.4:32 |

1. The Gospel must be protected.

“¹⁷ Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them. ¹⁸ For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting. ¹⁹ For the report of your obedience has reached to all; therefore I am rejoicing over you, but I want you to be wise in what is good, and innocent in what is evil. ²⁰ And the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.

- Teachers who would challenge Paul's emphasis on grace were expected.
- Paul instructs the church to turn from the false teachers. He does not suggest that they be debated or corrected.
- Paul sees two types of challenges.
 1. the persuasive style of the false teachers - they appeal to the heart,
 2. the lack of watchfulness on the part of those who are giving them ear.
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 1. They are deeply committed like slaves to a master.
 2. They are preoccupied with this life. The material appetites are most important.
 3. They may make their victims feel special and wanted. Style is more important to them than reason.
 4. It is interesting to note that Paul sees the "hearts" being led astray not the "minds." This suggests that the deception is more subjectively seductive.
 5. Paul believes that the false teachers are tools of Satan. If we are wise, we will ground ourselves in the truth of grace in Christ and have nothing to do with false doctrine.
 6. From this passage we may be able to identify a number of things that would protect us from the pitfalls of false teaching.
 - a. Embrace Paul's emphasis on grace.
 - b. Center faith on the death and resurrection of Christ.
 - c. Live under grace not law.
 - d. Strive to reconcile ethnic groups in Christ as well as slave & free, male & female, etc. Embrace the righteousness that is through faith in Jesus as well as the faithfulness that is the fruit of justification.
 7. Paul's teaching is the core of Christian doctrine. Almost every cultic group avoids Paul's letters.
 8. False teachers will often win people with style rather than reason. Smooth words and a loving community can be seductive, especially to those who long for acceptance.
 9. Tell tale signs of self-serving motives can give away the false teacher.

2. The Gospel is centered in the grace of Jesus.

The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

²¹ Timothy my fellow worker greets you, and {so do} Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen. ²² I, Tertius, who write this letter, greet you in the Lord. ²³ Gaius, host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer greets you, and Quartus, the brother. ²⁴ [The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.]

- **Paul's appeal to grace in his blessing is not simply a polite expression but it is loaded with meaningfulness when we reflect back on what he is saying in this letter.**
- **There are no cults built upon the grace that is in Jesus. This is the domain of the true Gospel.** Few cult groups build their theology on Paul's

writings. They more often appeal to select portions of the Gospels or the Old Testament.

3. The Gospel leads to the obedience of faith.

²⁵ Now to Him who is able to establish you according to **my gospel** and the preaching of **Jesus Christ**, according to **the revelation of the mystery** which has been kept secret for long ages past, ²⁶ but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, {leading} to **obedience of faith**; ²⁷ to the only wise God, **through Jesus Christ**, be the glory forever. Amen.”

- **How does Paul see the believer being established in the faith?**
 1. "According to my gospel" suggests a strong emphasis on Paul's emphasis.
 2. "The preaching of Jesus Christ" suggests a strong emphasis on the centrality of Jesus - especially his death and resurrection.
 3. Paul's reference to "the revelation of the mystery" suggests a strong emphasis on the grace that removed the obstacle of the Law and included the Gentiles as a part of one body with the Jews.
 4. The kind of obedience that the Gospel demanded was "faith." (1:8 with 16:19; 10:16b; 11:23. 11:30,31)
- **All Scripture is written for us but not to us or about us.**



- **What is the authentic Gospel message for our world today?**

| Repentance from all sin | Repentance from dead works |
|---|---|
| <p><i>Salvation</i></p> <p>Regeneration Justification Sanctification Holiness Faith Faithfulness</p> | <p><i>Salvation</i></p> <p>Justification by faith</p> <p><i>leading to</i></p> <p>Sanctification Holiness Faithfulness</p> |

Paul's Gospel