

KINGS NORTON BAPTIST CHURCH

Sunday 3rd April 2022 10 am

My Gospel The church at Philippi - Partnership in the gospel

Welcome to all

Opening Scripture From Psalm 5

Hymn MP 33 And can it be that I should gain

Scripture Ps 92 (page 600)

Prayer

Children's talk The Key

Chorus MP 633 Thank you

Jesus

Safe families UK

Notices Fellowship lunch, Coffee morning, Invites for Easter

Leaflets to be distributed

Prayer- time

Reading Philippians 1:3-12 (p.1178)

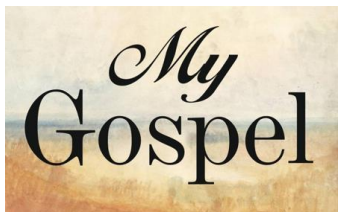
Hymn MP 770 Will you anchor hold in the storms of life

Sermon *My Gospel*

Hymn MP 744 I've a story to tell to the nations

Closing Prayer:

Close _____



Welcome and pray

- The Cupbearer to Pharaoh was in prison, Joseph was also there. When he had a dream and Joseph interpreted it for him he was set free and restated to his position. However he soon forgot about what Joseph had done for him.
- Has someone helped you? lent you money? Got you out of a fix? Maybe even saved your life? Should you forget them? No.
- Like Stephen Rees - a man with a grateful heart. He was saved from drowning in a freezing river having jumped from a bridge and knocked himself out. A boy of 12 Ethan Hutchings who grabbed him by the ankles and pulled him to the side of the river and saved him. Stephens said: "he is a hero", I want to thank everyone who helped.
- How much more serious it is when we forget what the Lord has done. Yet it is easy to do so.

So it is with Christians and the gospel.

The gospel is the means for setting us free and bringing us to eternal life with God, the most wonderful of all things that could happen to anyone.

The question is how will I now view the gospel? **Will I leave it behind as someone discarding the ticket that has allowed them into a venue, "Now I am in I no longer need this".** Or will I cherish the gospel and make it known to as many as possible that they too may enter?

Today as we continue with Paul's letter we look at the gospel x2. What was the attitude of the Christians at Philippi to the gospel that saved them?

Here comes the gospel

The church in Philippi came into being when Paul and his companions arrived over the water from Turkey's Asia Minor. There was no church there, and few Jews, so no Synagogue. When the Sabbath came Paul went down to the river to meet with some who had gathered to worship the one true God. However, it was worship based on ignorance. They did not know the way of peace with God through Jesus Christ. They had not heard of Jesus and were trying to live in God's favour through the keeping of His law, something they could not do, - did not do.

When Paul arrived he brought the Good news of Jesus, the gospel, x2

All they had known was the message of God's law. It was a simple message, it was essentially, "here is the law - 'keep it'" x2

They now heard from Paul's lips the gospel, the message of Jesus and this gospel of God's Grace. God's grace is God's favour. Because of who Jesus

is, and what He did - now there is freely given the favour of God to all who believe. This was shockingly different from what they know.

As Paul spoke to those gathered we read in Acts 16:14 **One of those listening was a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, who was a worshipper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message.**

From that time on she came to know the wonders of eternal life through Jesus. Her sins were forgiven, she had entered the Kingdom of God. Soon there were others, and from that day the church in Philippi was born.

✚ **Note: they had come to faith through the preaching of the gospel.**

It is this message alone, and through Christ alone, that any man or woman, boy or girl can be saved, brought close to God, and freed from the Judgment to come.

It is the gospel that can translate a person from being separate from God and under His curse for our failure to live as we should – to being brought into his eternal favour and adoptions as sons and daughters of God.

No wonder they loved the gospel. x2

- You would love the one who gave you the key to the treasure, you would cherish the directions that lead you find it.
- Like Stephen Rees earlier.

But let's stop for a moment and ask "What is the gospel?"

A word of Anglo-Saxon origin, and meaning "God's spell," i.e., word of God, or rather, "good spell," i.e., good news. It is the rendering of the Greek 'evangelion', i.e., "good message." hence the word evangelical. We are an evangelical church in that we are a gospel church.

- ✚ BEC / Oak Tree church "A gospel family among Bournville people"
- ✚ BCM's strapline is "Proclaiming the gospel, helping the needy"

The word Gospel sometimes stands for the record of the life of our Lord Mr 1:1, and embraces all His teachings Ac 20:24. But the word "gospel" now particularly describes this message of "Good news".

I mentioned the Law earlier, the message of the Law is opposite to the message of the Gospel as Martin Luther indicates, "in the law nothing else is meant than God's word and command, directing what to do - and what not to do, that is it, it is simply 'obey it'! x2

But the gospel is not about what you do, it does not command you to do anything, It is not a 'pull your socks up' or try and be righteous message. No, in the gospel is announced the offering of free forgiveness of sin - and free eternal salvation. Here we do nothing, but only receive, like a child, what is offered through the word." The gospel, then, is If I can paraphrase Melancthon, Martin Luther's friend "The gospel is the free remission of sins for Christ's sake. "

It announces a gift from God. It is the pronouncement of sins fully forgiven. It declares the sinner reconciled to God and their adoption to sonship.

The gospel is not only the message of salvation, but also the instrument, x2 through which the Holy Spirit works, the power of God. Ro 1:16

It is not a rule – it is about a person Jesus Christ, who he is, and what he did.

It is known in Scripture as the:

1. "the gospel of the grace of God" Ac 20:24
2. "the gospel of the kingdom" Mt 4:23
3. "the gospel of Christ" Ro 1:16
4. "the gospel of peace" Eph 6:15
5. "the gospel of salvation" Eph 1:13
6. "the gospel of God," Ro 1:1; 1Th 2:2,9; 1Ti 1:11.
7. "the everlasting gospel," Re 14:6
8. "the glorious gospel," 2Co 4:4 1Ti 1:11
9. "the gospel of Christ" Mr 1:1; Ro 1:16; 15:19; 1Co 9:12,18; Ga 1:7

It is the gospel of Christ: He is the subject of it, He is the object of it, and He is the life of it. It was preached by Jesus and by his followers ever since.

Now they were saved through the gospel - what was their attitude to it?

Paul has some good things to say "I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy Why?

... because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, 1:3-5

Now partnership can mean many different things.

You can partner with someone in business but how much involvement this entails varies considerably, you can fully committed or you can be inactive, an inactive partner, even a 'sleeping' partner.

So if I ask you “do you partner with the gospel?” most here would say “yes”. You might say: “I agree with the gospel” or even “I like the gospel” but what do you mean?

My next door neighbour likes football, he loves his football, and has done so all his life – but it has been from his armchair. He doesn't play.

Does your ‘partnering’ with the Gospel? mean you ‘join in’ with it?

That is a little more telling. I hear the gospel spoken from some here. But there are a number in the room from whose lips I have never heard the gospel, never, and I suspect you have never spoken the gospel to anyone.

That is not to partner with the gospel, and frankly I would doubt you even believe it – or know it – if you did - you would tell it to others.

However, the church in Philippi joined with it – they actively joined with it.

Paul used the word ‘partnership’. In the Greek it is the word ‘Koinonia’ which means fellowship or community.

This word is used of fellowship with God’s Son, with the Holy Spirit, and the Christian fellowship we have one with another.

- Donald Davis called his house Koinonia and had a sign outside with it on. And it was a house of fellowship, many of us experienced it as such. He would go out of his way to show his partnership with you in the Lord, taking you out, sharing his house, sharing his time and sharing his lunch. Time with him always ended in prayer.

Koinonia’ is also used of fellowship or communion as in the Lord’s Supper. Κοινωνία has to do with ‘association’ or with ‘things we have in common’. The Lord’s table is where the fellowship of Christians is expressed, our communion with the Father and His Son in the Holy Spirit. Koinonia is also about the welfare of God’s people, and the maintenance of the truth.

Let me remind you; This is the simple work of the church: To proclaim the Lordship of Christ and call sinners to repentance. I.e. the gospel. **That’s it!**

- One missionary in Japan (Rod Thomas, Chris’ brother) said “please pray for us to be more effective disciple-makers, productive harvesters and more skilled fishers of men. Contrary to what is often said, we are not sent just to be faithful, but to gather in the elect.”

Paul commends the church in Philippi because their partnership in the gospel means for them partnership in Gospel work.

The ‘Gospel’ is a recurring theme in this as other letters.

It is here in v5 **Gospel partnership**, v7 Paul is saying whatever I am going through whether in **chains and defending and confirming the gospel**, **all of you share in God’s grace with me.**

Paul v12 wants them to know that his being banged up in prison **has really served to WHAT? advance the gospel**. And that he is there for WHAT? the **defence of the gospel**. 1:16 . How should they be? 1:27 **Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in one spirit, - contending as one man for the faith of the gospel.**

He gives the example of Timothy in 2:22 **you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel.**

But not it is not just certain people, this wasn’t just church leaders but everyone 4:3 speaking of **Euodia and Syntyche - women who have contended at my side - in the cause of the gospel.**

Whatever happened to Paul they stood with him – even though he was some distance away, they even sent their pastor Epaphroditus to him to help. (2:25)

And then he reminds them of those early days Php 4:15 **you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel**, how they faithfully gave when no one else did.

Yes as it says in v5 **partnership in the gospel - from the first day until now.**

Sometimes you go to the doctor for a physical health check. - Do a spiritual health check! – Do you have the same love for Christ as you did when you were first saved? Are you as grateful for the Gospel now as you were then?

How can we come to faith through the gospel and then leave it on the shelf?

They had seen the wonder and power of the Gospel and made it their own.

We talk of really committing to something when we take ownership of it.

- For example Tim who is the building Deacon doesn’t think “I will just help someone else out when I can” No he takes the responsibility on himself. He owns it. So Ina takes hold of her new responsibility. Zaynab has a special responsibility to follow in Joyce’s faithful shoes. Yes there are special responsibilities, but the gospel is everyone’s responsibility!

Paul refers to the Gospel not only as ‘the’ gospel or ‘God’s’ gospel by ‘my’ gospel He calls it **my gospel** in Ro 2:16, In Ro 16:25 he says: **Now to him who is able to establish you by my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ,**

Paul says to Timothy: **Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my gospel,** 2Ti 2:8

The gospel is everyone believer's responsibility – every follower of Jesus should say it is 'my' Gospel! x2 **Can you do you say its 'my gospel'**

That makes us all gospel carriers, I don't mean we drive around with it in the boot of the car like those ubiquitous golf clubs that never see the light of day. No it is in our hand and used like a sword to slay the souls of those around for Christ.

Christians who do not speak out the gospel and let their swords rust in their scabbards and crawl into heaven like cowards - If I can quote Spurgeon - not only dishonour their master but also remain weak in faith.

Be active in the gospel and you will become strong in the faith – and confident in the faith. Paul said to Philemon: “ **I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ.**” 1:6

✚ **Are you active – and strong? - Or inactive and weak?**

It is very sad that when I talk of taking out the gospel I am often met with silence.

Feeling fearful? Come with me! Feeling you lack energy, He will give it. He will.

Being active gospel carriers is the way to grow as a Christian. To be obedient in this area, to stand for him before others is the way to know the Lord better -. As Jesus said "**Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven.** Mt 10:32

✚ **Then we will be filled with more of God.** x2

There is nothing more revealing than to hear how someone prays. Be active in the gospel and there will be no more 'little prayers', I thank you for being with me, I know I'm saved, etc

No. That person's prayers will be filled with the great things of God and his revealed glories.

One sign found in those who neglect the Gospel - is that they lack assurance

Hence their prayers. It seems from what Paul goes on to say that there were some in the church like that. He has to remind them of something the Holy Spirit normally reminds us of - **being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.**

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Finally - verses 9-11 are a prayer, Paul's prayer for them. Although they had partnered in the gospel, were some distracted by others things? It seems there is something of a challenge for them here. **And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best** in other words that you will see clearly to get your priorities right!

and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ - to the glory and praise of God

When Paul thought of the Christians at Philippi his heart was filled with joy. He thanked God for them, - and he was joyful when he prayed for them -

On 25th May 1796 the Birmingham to Worcester canal at the back of the building was opened as far as Kings Norton. The canal tunnel was opened the following year, - and the whole canal completed in 1815.

It is interesting that with this new opening up to the south of the city - men and women from a church in the centre of Birmingham travelled out to Kings Norton, maybe along the canal path behind the chapel. As the canal extended south maybe they had been thinking about the opportunities for the Lord's Kingdom to extend into new territory. Did they think 'there will soon be pubs along the canal what about churches' Did they pray "Lord will you start a gospel work in Kings Norton". They continued to pray and no doubt visit, a number felt the Lord burden their hearts for a work here. Yes we will make the long journey for the Lord and his work. The date was 1822, - 200 year ago.

When they arrived this chapel was just part of a row of houses. The closest venue they could find was in the pub known as the Navigation Inn just up the road. They agreed to hire an upstairs room and meet.

■ I remember we did something similar in Woodgate Valley years ago, started a VCF Valley Christian Fellowship and met in the pub on the estate. That wasn't to last for a number of reasons.

But here in KN the church grew and the result: this Chapel. What did those at the sending church think of the newly formed church here? Through the gospel and the prayers of God's people, they had seen the Lord start the work. Local folk had come to faith and the church here was birthed. Did they pray with thanksgiving and Joy? We trust so.

What of today? Would those from Canon Street Memorial have reason to rejoice that we are continuing to be a gospel church – and is now are a gospel church. Let us have a gospel heart and give our time and energy to this great task. The Lord who says **Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.** Ga 6:9 **END**

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