

Living In The Present “BUT NOW”

Message # 1

WHERE DO YOU STAND ?

Have you ever heard someone say, “I won’t stand for that!”?

Well, here’s what you’d better stand FOR the good news of Christ’s D.B.R.

That’s what we call His Death, Burial, and Resurrection.

We’ll Begin With A Study of SALVATION

1 Cor 15:1-4 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel (Paul declared it)

which I preached unto you, (Paul preached it)

which also ye have received, (The Corinthians received it)

and wherein ye stand; (They were standing in it)

2 By which also ye are saved, (They were saved by the gospel that Paul preached)

if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

Salvation is not conditional --- in fact, it’s eternal --- BUT ---

You must always know --- that is, remember --- what saves you.

Otherwise, don’t be deceived into thinking you are saved

if you don’t recall how to be saved!

If asked the question, “What must one believe to be saved?”

and you don’t say something about the blood, or the cross, or the death, of Jesus

then you don’t know that faith in His blood is what saves you

and whatever you’re trusting in to take you to Heaven --- is worthless!)

3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received,
how that [Christ died for our sins](#) according to the scriptures;

4 And that [he was buried](#),
and that [he rose again the third day](#) according to the scriptures:

There it is --- plain and simple --- in a nutshell.

THAT --- and that alone --- is the gospel by which you are saved.

Anything else is just vain religious belief.

The most important thing is to present a CLEAR gospel.

When you want to see God's power demonstrated

don't look for signs and miracles

instead look to the cross-work of Christ:

1 Cor 1:18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

When you want to see God's love demonstrated

don't look at your bank account, physical health or sickness, or life's circumstances

instead look to the cross-work of Christ:

Rom 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Sin brings death. It always has. It always will.

Ezek 18:4 Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine:

the soul that sinneth, it shall die.

Rom 6:23 For the wages of sin is death;
but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

God's offer of everlasting life is a gift.

- You can't earn it. Duh it's free.
- You can't lose it. Duh it's eternal.

Eph 2:8,9 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

God wrote His definition of faith in the Bible:

Heb 11:1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

God even tells us where to get faith:

Rom 10:17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Salvation is God's present to mankind. He bought and paid for it with His own blood.

Anyone who wants it can have it. All you got'ta do is believe it, and its yours.

Rom 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

God doesn't want anyone to die and go to Hell. In fact, just the opposite is true.

God wants everyone to be saved and understand the truth. That's His will.

We don't have to search for it

by laying out a fleece like Gideon did in Judges 6:36-40,

or going ahead through green lights or getting stopped on red ones:

1 Tim 2:3-7 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of **God our Saviour**;
4 **Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.**

5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

(This next verse is unique to Paul's writings
in the 'But Now' age Paul is the 'due-time' testifier.)

6 Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. (Matt 20:28 and Mark 10:45 say that Jesus' gave His life a ransom for MANY that's Israel --- not ALL us Gentiles.)

7 Whereunto (Here's where we find that information) I (Paul) am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity. (That is, in Paul's epistles)

Yes, God publicized His will through Paul:

Eph 1:9 **Having made known unto us the mystery of his will**, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:

This next passage repeatedly expresses what God's work is in the world today:

Eph 3:1-12 For this cause **I Paul**, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,
2 If ye have heard of the **dispensation of the grace of God which is given me** to you-ward:

3 How that **by revelation he made known unto me the mystery**; (as I wrote afore in few words,

4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand **my knowledge in the mystery of Christ**)

5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, **as it is now revealed** unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;

6 That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body (**uniquely Paul's terminology**), and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:

7 Whereof I (Paul) was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me (Paul) by the effectual working of his power.

8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

9 And **to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery**, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

10 To the intent that **now** unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places (**the angels are listening**) might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God (**we should boldly speak so others can hear**),

11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:

12 In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

In Times Past, the law demanded obedience to obtain God's righteousness:

Deut 6:25 And **it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments** before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us.

Even though God gave His law specifically to the nation Israel ...

its effect spread to everyone:

Rom 3:19-22 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

(Because no one can keep the law 100% perfectly, 100% of the time. James 2:10 teaches that just one sin just one time ... makes a person 100% guilty.)

20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. (That's how we know what sin is by the law.)

(The words 'But Now' indicate a CHANGE has taken place something's DIFFERENT now.)

21 **But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested**, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ (it's by His faith -- He was faithful to go to the cross and die for our sins.)

- unto all (it is UNLIMITED -- available to all)
- and upon all them that believe (it is LIMITED --- to those who believe it):

for there is no difference: (Salvation -- righteousness -- did go to Israel first (In John 4:22, we read, "Salvation is of the Jews.")

But Now it doesn't have to go to Israel first anymore, because they lost their favored nation status with God, and now He counts them among the nations -- no different than Gentiles.)

Paul also told the Galatian saints the same basic thing:

Gal 2:16 Knowing that **a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ**, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Now we are justified • not by works --- BUT ---
 • by His faith, • by our faith, • by His blood, and • by His grace:

Rom 5:1 Therefore being **justified by faith**, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

Rom 5:9 Much more then, being now **justified by his blood**, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

Titus 3:7 That being **justified by his grace**, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Next, We'll Study About Being STABLISHED

To be 'stablish' means

to set fast, confirm, strengthen, settle; to turn resolutely in a certain direction.

God (through Paul) told us 3 specific ways we are stablished.

1) by Paul's gospel

2) by Jesus being preached --- not in His earthly ministry, when He served in His flesh but by the way Paul preached Him by the previously secret information God gave Paul

3) by the selection of God's word which now every nation should obey

Rom 16:25-27 Now to him that is of power to **stablish you according to MY (Paul's) gospel**, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, **according to the revelation of the mystery**, which was kept secret since the world began,

26 **But now is made manifest,**

and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:

27 To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

It is God's desire for us to be firmly settled in the truth of right division so we won't be ashamed:

1 Thess 3:12-13 And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you:

13 To the end he may **stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness** before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

God wants us established How? Unblameable!

How can that be done? By staying in Paul's message!

Col 1:21-23 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled
22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:

23 **IF ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel,** which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; **whereof I Paul am made a minister;**

If you follow Paul then you won't be corrected for bad doctrine --- at the judgment.

If you don't stay with Paul then you will be ashamed for your confusion.

You won't be lost but you will be embarrassed if you don't rightly divide:

2 Tim 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, (how do you avoid being ashamed?) rightly dividing the word of truth.

.... Which brings us to our third topic **JUDGMENT**

Even though God never put the Gentiles under the law

never-the-less He DID give each person a moral sense of right and wrong.

Everyone automatically KNOWS -- deep inside of them -- for example, that it is wrong to steal or murder:

Rom 2:14-16 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law,
do by nature the things contained in the law,
these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:
15 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts,
their conscience also bearing witness,
and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)
16 In the day when **God shall JUDGE the secrets of men by Jesus Christ**
according to MY (Paul's) gospel.

Jesus Christ will be the Judge the rule-book is Paul's mystery revelation.

Did you work for that?

At the judgment, you'll be sure to get exactly what you deserve

based individually on your own service:

1 Cor 3:8-15 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and **every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.**

Since we're working with God on HIS project we better follow HIS blueprint:

9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

God selected PAUL to be the chief architect.

10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me (Paul),

as a wise **masterbuilder**,

I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon.

But let **EVERY man (not just preachers)** take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

Be careful to frame your structure on the way Paul preached Christ

--- according to the revelation of the mystery --- not after His earthly ministry to Israel):

11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

You won't be judged for your SINS (Jesus paid for them on the cross)

You WILL be judged for your MINISTRY. Did you / do you -- labor in Paul's message?

If you don't

you've wasted time, effort, money, resources, materials,

by constructing bad doctrine that will burn up:

12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what SORT it is.

14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

Paul preached Jesus Christ after He was risen and glorified -- not after His earthly ministry, as recorded in the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John:

2 Cor 5:16 Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.

The 4 gospel accounts of Jesus' earthly life are under the law:

Gal 4:4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

So if you follow in the footsteps of Jesus while He lived on earth then you're under the law

and we read in Paul's writings --- that we're not under the law now:

Rom 6:14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

To be sincere, but wrong is still wrong.

Israel had that problem. Many professing Christians have it today

because they FAIL to recognize Paul's unique apostleship and message.

Rom 10:2-4 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

Our work is going to be judged

by the Lord Jesus Christ on His throne

at an appointed time

in theFuture Ages to Come.

2 Cor 5:6-10 Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

8 We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

9 Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

As a side note, verse 9 'puts to sleep' the issue of 'soul sleep' for the believer

Let's read it again:

2 Cor 5:9 Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

We labour that is, we're still working --- alive or dead ---

because, whether we're still here on earth in our fleshly, physical bodies ---

or whether we're present with the Lord in Heaven ---

we want our works, when judged on Judgment Day, to be good ones.

Rom 14:8-13 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

9 For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living. (That woudn't make much sense if the dead were unconscious.)

10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for **we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.**

11 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

12 So then **every one of us shall give account of himself to God.**

(With that in mind, here's a good place to start):

13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

If we do what we know to do right, we'll have the satisfaction of a job well done.

We won't be ashamed of our labor.

Gal 6:4 But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

God is the only One to appraise or evaluate other people's work ---

we ought to judge their DOCTRINE and encourage or challenge people about that:

Rom 14:4 Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

Don't get too big for your britches though:

1 Cor 10:12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

Just go do what YOU should do (give out the gospel and the mystery)

and don't police anyone else:

1 Thess 4:11 And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;

In closing, judgment is sure

so you be sure your efforts are not mis-spent on unsound doctrine:

2 Tim 4:1 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

2 Tim 4:7,8 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

This is David Dowell, saying, "Think about it!"