

Tell Me the Old Story

Lesson Text: **Romans 1:14-16**

INTRODUCTION:

Romans 1:14-16 – “I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to wise and to unwise. So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.”

When the apostle Paul knew he had come to the end of the way, he sat down to write another letter to his dear friend Timothy, whom he had trained to preach Jesus Christ. He wanted to encourage him to be a good minister, to preach the word, to do the work of an evangelist and to fulfill his ministry. To do that, certain things would be necessary, one of which he mentions in **2 Timothy 2:15**, verse fifteen. "Study," he said, "to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

That's good teaching for all Christians, whether then or now. Regardless how long we've been Christians or, as in my case, it doesn't matter how long one has been preaching, if he is going to handle aright the word of God, he must keep on studying it. When a person gets to feeling he knows all there is to be known on a given subject, he begins his descent down the western

slope. That's true about the word of God, too. That's why we continue our Bible studies in search of the Lord's way. I was amazed recently when I was listening to a sermon tape a friend gave me in which the minister was encouraging his congregation not to study the Bible; it would merely confuse them. I must admit that I'm confused, I must admit, when someone writes me and says, the Bible, and of course Bible study, are unimportant because they are "walking in the Spirit," or they are "walking in the will of Jesus." How can a person be walking in the spirit or in the will of God, apart from the Holy Spirit's revelation of the Lord's will in the word of God?

These biblical doctrines are good news. How it has happened that they suddenly became bad news to the modern church, is a question that troubles me no little. There is a widespread and growing disdain for "doctrine" among professed disciples of Jesus. It appears that some view "doctrine" as "legalism" and opposed to, or in conflict with grace and love and liberty in Jesus. Actually, "doctrine" means "teaching," and the biblical doctrines on grace and love and freedom in Christ, are some of the great good-news doctrines we're talking about. In fact, a person can't know these things apart from "doctrine." So, do tell me the old, old story.

The expression "gospel of Christ" as we read it in our text a moment ago, is found eleven times in the Scriptures. And Mark opens his biography of Jesus saying, "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." So that brings to twelve the number of times we see the good news message of the New Testament focusing on the Son of God. Well, He is the central figure of it all.

The Jewish prophets had for centuries foretold the coming of the Messiah, and the people looked for His arrival with great joy and anticipation. And "When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman" ([Galatians 4:4](#)). Two of the four inspired narratives of the life of Jesus begin with the story of His birth to the virgin Mary. They are Matthew and Luke, and while John doesn't give it in detail as they do, his opening sentence strongly affirms the incarnation of the Word, the Son of God, who was made flesh and dwelt among us.

Tell me the old, old story that Jesus came! Even the angels sang when the Son of God became the Son of man. It is utterly impossible to detail all the good news about Jesus Christ in so short a time as we have. So, I'm going to talk about four comprehensive aspects of it.

FIRST, THE OLD, OLD STORY OF CHRIST IS GREAT

NEWS BECAUSE SALVATION IS IN HIS NAME. It's no mere coincidence that He was given the name "Jesus." It was divinely chosen for Him. "Jesus" was not a real common name among the Jewish people, but it was used, most often in its Hebrew form, "Joshua." There are only about eight people so named in the Old Testament and maybe four or five in the New Testament. Our Lord was often called "Jesus of Nazareth" to distinguish Him from the others.

In the Hebrew "Jesus" and "save" are from the same root. Joseph was told by an angel of God, ". . . You shall call his name Jesus: for he will save his people from their sins" (**Matthew 1:21**). Mary was also told by the angel Gabriel to name her child "Jesus" for the same reason (Luke 1:31). He was sent to save, to liberate people. So when Peter and John were questioned by the Jewish counsel about healing a lame man at the gate Beautiful, they hastened to say, "Let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. This is the stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone. Nor is there salvation in any other for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (**Acts 4:10-12**).

TELL ME THE OLD, OLD STORY THAT JESUS IS SAVIOR!

Saving us from what? Just briefly, He didn't come to save us from sickness. Oh yes, He healed many people during His earthly ministry, but that was not what He came to do. His mission was far more noble and lasting than that.

Did He come to save us from poverty? Say, that would be good news if it were so. But, that wasn't it either. He cared for the poor and taught His disciples to do so, but the story of Jesus Christ is better news than earthly riches.

He came to save us from sin and sin's wages. That should be great

news to every person in the whole, wide world today, because all of us have sinned. There is none righteous; no not one (Rom. 3:9-10). He came, not only to deliver us from the addiction to sin of whatever nature it may be, but also to take away the guilt and stand us justified (just as if it never happened) before God. That should be good news because God imposed the death sentence on sin. He said "The soul that sins, it will die" (**Ezekiel 18:20**).

But Jesus came and **1 Timothy 2:6** says He "gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." And **2 Corinthians 5:21** says, God "made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." And **Romans 5:6-8** says, "For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love towards us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Jesus loved us and washed us from our sins with His own blood (Rev. 1:5). So, it's a good news story of Christ that we preach --and what great news it is!

Tell me the old, old, story again and again because He, not only saves people from their sins, He **ALSO BRINGS THOSE SAVED PEOPLE OF ALL RACES AND TONGUES TOGETHER INTO ONE BODY, WHICH HE CALLS HIS CHURCH IN MATTHEW 16:18, IN WHICH THEY HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH ONE ANOTHER AND WITH THE FATHER** (I John 1:3). Yes, tell me that again. They are

living stones in an holy temple, fitly framed together for an habitation of God through the Spirit, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone (Eph. 2:19-22). They constitute the family of God, in which Jesus Christ is their older brother (Rom. 8:14-17). They are blessed with the noble mission of taking this good news message to the rest of the world (Eph. 3:10-11). Yes, oh yes, tell me **ALL** that again.

TELL ME THE OLD, OLD STORY OF JESUS AND HIS LOVE, ALSO, BECAUSE THE SAVED PERSON ENJOYS A NEW LIFE IN JESUS. The apostle Paul explained to the Christians at Rome that when they were baptized, they were baptized into Jesus Christ (Rom. 6:3). "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (**2 Corinthians 5:17**). Ah yes, tell me that story again, would you! When a person is baptized into Jesus Christ, He is raised to "walk in newness of life" (**Romans 6:4**). That's a glad message. There's nothing mystical or magical about it. But because of Jesus Christ we can start over.

TELL ME THE OLD OLD STORY THAT JESUS TEACHES US THE BEST WAY TO LIVE THAT HUMANKIND HAS EVER DISCOVERED. HE SAW PEOPLE HATING AND KILLING ONE ANOTHER AND HE TAUGHT A BETTER WAY. His way is to "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you" (**Matthew 5:44**). He saw people committing adultery (all forms of illicit sex) and He taught a

better way. His way is to not even think about it. Don't even look at a person with lust (Matthew 5:28). He saw people divorcing their spouses for every cause and He taught a better way. He said in **Matthew 19:9** , “And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.” He saw dishonesty and deceit running rampant among the people with whom He lived and He taught a better way. He said, "Let your communication be, Yes, yes; No, no" (**Mathew 5:37**). He saw unbridled greed destroying the community of men, and He introduced a better way. He said, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses" (**Luke 12:15**). He saw vanity and pride in places of position and power and He introduced a better way. He said, "Whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave" (**Matthew 20:27**). Yes, tell me the way He teaches us to live with one another. He offers us a workable solution to the problem of violence and crime and lust and greed that prevails so strongly in our society. Oh, how I'm glad we can tell the old, old story of Jesus Christ to every state in the nation today and encourage people to become involved with Jesus Christ.

TELL ME THE OLD, OLD STORY OF UNSEEN THINGS ABOVE, BECAUSE JESUS CHRIST "has abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (**2 Timothy 1:10**). In Him only

do we have any hope of life beyond the grave. “For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.” (1 Thessalonians 4:14-17).

Having established as undeniable fact, the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, Paul brings his masterful treatise on the resurrection to a resounding close. He says in 1 Corinthians 15:51-58 – “Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed -- in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?" The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable,

always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”

My friend, are you a Christian? If not, why on this earth aren't you? What good reason could you possibly have for not believing in Jesus Christ, turning from your sinful lifestyle in repentance and being baptized into Jesus today? If we can assist you, please call or write us at once.

In the passage we read at the outset of this program (Romans 1:14-16), the apostle Paul declared himself a debtor to all men, Jews and Gentiles, to the wise and to the unwise to preach this gospel to them. We share that debt with him. My brothers and sisters in God's family, the church, we simply must get this message into every home in this nation --and the world. "So, as much as in me is," as he said, "I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also." I share that determination with Paul. Then he said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." The gospel of Jesus Christ is the only power or access people have to (1) salvation, (2) fellowship in the family of God, (3) the new life in Jesus, and (4) the hope of life beyond the grave. What are we waiting for? Let's shout this old, old story from every radio and television tower in America and by satellite to the whole world.

God's Plan for Man's Salvation