

FAMILY BIBLE HOUR

23 April 2017

“What is the Gospel?”

Lesson 9: The Power of the Gospel

“I think the gospel would have [an] overwhelming effect on us if we took the time to stop and really think about it. How long has it been since you looked up from the earthly details of life and came face to face with the Grand Canyon of what God has done for us in the gospel—his unfathomable grace in forgiving people who have rebelled against him, his breathtaking plan to send his Son to suffer and die in their place, to establish the throne of the resurrected Jesus over a kingdom of perfect righteousness, and to bring those who are saved and redeemed by his blood into a new heavens and a new earth where sin and evil will forever be conquered!” (Greg Gilbert)

Over the past eight FBH sessions, we have considered the four major elements of any gospel presentation (the nature of God the creator, the nature of man the sinner, the nature of Jesus the Saviour, and the call for sinners to repent and believe the gospel), as well as the nature of the kingdom of God as it relates to the gospel and the need for Christians to keep the cross central. As we bring this study to a close, we need to consider one more matter: the practical results that flow from a grasp of the power of the gospel. There are at least five that we must consider.

Why Do We Overlook the Power of the Gospel?

1. Before we look at five practical ways in which a healthy understanding of the gospel will affect us, take some time to ask, why do we so frequently and so easily overlook the power of the gospel? Why is the power and the vastness of the gospel so often crowded out of our hearts and minds?

Five Practical Results of the Power of the Gospel

2. The gospel is good news, but it is news that demands a response. It demands a response from both believers and unbelievers, albeit a different response in each case. We will now spend some time discussing five necessary responses to the gospel message.

a) Unbeliever: Repent and Believe!

If you have sat through these discussions as an unbeliever, there is really only one response that is called for Repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ! Recognise your spiritual bankruptcy, acknowledge your complete inability to save yourself, and come to Jesus as your only hope of forgiveness and salvation. Speak to your FBH teacher or one of the elders if you need to discuss this matter further.

b) Believer: Rest and Rejoice!

The gospel is the message of salvation accomplished through the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. In light of the gospel message, how should you respond to temptations to think that salvation in Christ is fleeting?

Christians are sometimes tempted to think that salvation lies in their own hands. They will rarely admit this, but they often gauge their standing before God by the right kind of fruit, a consistent devotional life, or fastidious church attendance. These things are good, but why are they not a healthy gauge of one’s standing before God?

“If you are a Christian, then the cross of Jesus stands like a mountain of granite across your life, immovably testifying to God’s love for you and his determination to bring you safely into his presence.” (Greg Gilbert)

c) Believer: Love Christ’s People!

If you are persuaded that you are included in God’s promises only because of what Jesus Christ has done for you, what does that say about the brother or sister who annoys you?

If you are convinced that Jesus Christ save you even when you did not deserve it, how ought you to respond to those who offend you?

d) Believer: Speak the Gospel to the World!

Read Luke 24:46–48. Are any of Jesus’ disciples exempt from bearing witness to his saving purposes to the nations?

Do you feel inadequate to the task of being God’s witness? Why do you think God has chosen frail, weak human beings as his ambassadors with the most glorious message in the world? Why should our inadequacy not frighten us into inaction?

e) Believer: Long for Him!

Ought Christians to long for the return of the Lord Jesus Christ? If Jesus longed for his disciples to be where he is (John 17:24), is it wrong for us to long for the same?

Is there a danger that a wrong type of longing might drive us to faithlessness in the gospel commission? If so, how so? How can we avoid such faithlessness?