

# The Gospel Of Christ.

Col 1:5 - 8

## INTRODUCTION

III - Story of the Gospel's power to change lives – **John Newton**

*At the age of 11 years John Newton was beginning his seafaring days in 1736. John had been born into a catholic home, was tutored in Christian things but did not have a living knowledge of Christ. So much so that by the time he was 18 yrs, he had turned out to be a foul mouthed, fornicating, tough militant atheist.*

*For the next 4 yrs, his life was one of Naval service – a commission he did not enjoy and twice deserted, only to be caught and returned to ship, demoted from Middleshipsman to a sailor, flogged and held in chains while at port. His own father was in naval service and this brought great shame on the family, but he was bailed out both times, using his fathers influence.*

*After 4 yrs of Naval service he quit, and joined a Slaver ship, transporting slaves from the West African Coast to the West Indies. John loved this life, especially the rowdiness as compared to Naval life AND the fact that the sailors had first say on raping the female slaves that were brought naked on board and held in the ships hold. So much so that the male sailors would drool as they rowdily picked the ones they wanted and booked. This John loved.*

*But this life led John down to the pig sty, he himself abandoned the slaver and was soon a slave, held on an island, working his way*

*out of his enslavement. Once again his father intervned and bought his freedom, and sent a trade ship to pick him up. This they did, but the ship owners regretted it almost instantly as John proved to be foulmouthed and an outright rabid, blasphemous atheist.*

*On one such trip on this trade ship, they were caught in a storm, 10<sup>th</sup> March 1748. The ship was violently tossed around and damaged by the storm, and it seemed sure it would break up. In the middle of this storm, John found himself crying out to the God he did not believe in as he was not ready to meet his maker, and there giving his life to Christ.*

*The ship survived and John was soon promoted to a 2<sup>nd</sup> in Command on a slaver. But the life on the high seas caused him to slowly but surely go back to the old life, especially that of raping the female slaves. But the gospel was in his heart and over the next 6 yrs, his consciences about this and slavery grew to the point where he finally resigned his commission.*

*John lived to become a great songwriter, an evangelist, a pastor and an influence to many, including the likes of William Wilberforce.*

This is the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ! Paul, in Vs 5 – 8 talks about this gospel, and in this section tells us 5 aspect of the gospel of Christ

## 1. IT IS THE GOSPEL OF TRUTH

4 things come to mind about it's being the Gospel of truth :-

- Firstly, it is the Gospel of truth because it sets us free (Jn 8: 32 – “You will know the truth and the truth will set you free”)

### III - Story of Bentley Ackley

*Ps 40: 2, 3 He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. <sup>3</sup> He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear and put their trust in the LORD.*

*Father and son stumbled into the Keswick Mission in 1905*

*Father: It is not I in need, but my son. He is killing us and killing himself, and within a year both he and his mother will be dead.*

*Sept 3, 1906 Anniversary letter*

*Dear Brother Rawl,*

*One year ago today I was living a life of the most miserable character – down and out. I had sacrificed the friendship of my best friends, secured a position and failed to start, spent the days in drunkenness and in a generally deplorable sight. My good coat I had exchanged for a cheaper one, my shoes were bad, & altogether I was miserable.*

*I made up my mind that if I went down to Keswick, it would be a fight with sin to the finish. Of-course I could do nothing by myself, but God's help enabled me to know the victory and thru his longsuffering kindness and*

*love I was given the opportunity to show whether I meant business or not.*

*You know what the result has been. October 13<sup>th</sup> Friday in the Chapel. I asked God to make me clean and take out the desire for rum and other sins. He did it, & from that moment to this I have never once wanted to indulge in the habit again, & with it went so much of self & other desires that my heart today overflows with gratitude, and my constant prayer is that I may have more love for him.*

*Today I hold a good position at work, feel well physically, and am holding fast to the faith, standing in the freedom wherewith Christ has set me free.*

*Bentley Ackley.*

*Bentley in time became a accomplished pianist, playing for the famous Billy Sunday crusades.*

*Gal 5:1 It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.*

- Secondly, it is the Gospel of truth because it reflects the character of our God who is the God of truth.
- Thirdly, it is the Gospel of truth because it helps us see ourselves - the gospel is like a mirror
- Finally, It is the Gospel of truth because it tells us the future –  
Matthew 24 – the end times  
Rev – the judgement

## 2. IT IS THE GOSPEL UNIVERSAL

III - Story of my trip to remote India

Because of its scope

- **Geographically** today – there are 2.1 billion people who call themselves Christians – a full 1/3 of the worlds population.
- **Ethnically** - The beauty of the Chapel
- **World-wide Family** – The letter I got from France
- **Culturally** – The Gospel enters the very deepest crevices of culture, transforming it from inside out (Comp Setup program).

## 3. IT IS THE GOSPEL OF FRUIT

- **Changes societies** – England during the French Revolution (John Wesley)

*The French Revolution:*

*France was in the grasp of a despotic King, and a queen who controlled the throne, but who was totally out of touch with the masses. It is she of the infamous quotation that , when told that the people were hungry because they had no bread, replied and said “If they have no bread, then let them eat cakes”.*

*These were the days of Feudal France at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. King Louis 16 was in charge, but his government was totally corrupt. The economy was non functional, the majority of people were desperately poor, the taxes were high, and the wealthy flaunted their wealth openly.*

*Finally the people revolted, and did away with the ruling class. For 25 yrs France was ungovernable due to riots and mob uprisings. Many were executed, over 40,000 sent to the Guillotine.*

*At this time that France was going thru this upheval, England was no different . . .except that in that time a man of God was born.*

The Story of John Wesley . . .

- **Changes people** – III - Story of Steve Lane

*Steve’s story began in a happy family life, but at the age of 8 yrs, his life crumbled when his father and mother divorced. This they did because his mother had gotten into an affair with the local church pastor, the same pastor that had led Steve to say a prayer of confession in Sunday school.*

*After their divorce, Steve’s mother married this pastor, but as though that was not enough, one day as Steve was rammaging thru his parents bedroom in the absence of his parents, he found a stack of pornographic magazines under his stepfather bed. His enslavement to slavery began then. He hated his parents who were living a lie, seeming to be happy, godly people on the outside, but reading thru pictures of naked women in the confines of the home. He assumed that this hypocracy was normal christianity, and so he hated christians.*

*His downward spiral away from God drew him further and further so that at the age of 17, in a haze of drugs, and a desparately wicked life,. . .*

- **Changed you and I**

## 4. IT IS THE GOSPEL OF GRACE

### III - Story of Paul

I Cor 15:1, 2; 9 - 11 *For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.<sup>10</sup> But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them -- yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.<sup>11</sup> Whether, then, it was I or they, this is what we preach, and this is what you believed.*

Gal 1:11 - 16 <sup>1</sup> *I want you to know, brothers, that the gospel I preached is not something that man made up.<sup>12</sup> I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.*

<sup>13</sup> *For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely I persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it.<sup>14</sup> I was advancing in Judaism beyond many Jews of my own age and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers.<sup>15</sup> But when God, who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace, was pleased<sup>16</sup> to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles,*

- It preaches forgiveness
- It gives a second chance and new beginning

## 5. IT IS THE GOSPEL HUMANLY TRANSMITTED

### III - Story

- It uses human agents – Col – Epaphras – Paul – Ananias – Apostles – Jesus . . .
- It commissions you and I

## CONCLUSION

*Rom 1:16 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.*