

83. Q. Should we speak of Baptism and the Lord's Supper as "ordinances of the Church"?
84. Q. What, fourthly, is God doing through the Church?
85. Q. What, fifthly, is God doing through the Church?
86. Q. What, sixthly, is God doing through the Church?
87. Q. What, then, is the twofold mission of the Church?
88. Q. What fundamental truth with regard to the Church should be impressed upon the minds of people of our day and age?

Lesson Forty-Six

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

Scripture Reading: Acts 2:22-36, 1 Cor. 15:1-11.

Scriptures to Memorize: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1:16). "But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema" (Gal. 1:8).

89. Q. What message is the Church commissioned to preach to all nations?
- A. The Gospel (Matt. 28:19-20, Mark 16:15-16).
90. Q. What does the word "gospel" mean?
- A. The word "gospel" means "good news" or "glad tidings."
91. Q. What is the Gospel of Christ?
- A. It is the good news about Christ and about salvation in His name.

Luke 2:10, 11—"Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people: for there is born to you

this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." Acts 4:12—"in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved." Acts 10:43—"to him bear all the prophets witness, that through his name every one that believeth on him shall receive remission of sins." Acts 8:12—"But when they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women."

92. Q. What does the Gospel of Christ include?

A. It includes (1) three facts to be believed, (2) three commands to be obeyed, and (3) three gifts to be enjoyed.

(1) Mark 1:14—"believe in the gospel." 1 Cor. 15:1-4, "Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you. . . . For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures," etc. (2) Rom. 10:16—"they did not all hearken to the glad tidings" (A. V.—"they have not all obeyed the gospel"). 2 Thess. 1:8—"rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus." That which is to be obeyed must of necessity have commands. (3) Jas. 1:17—"every good and every perfect gift is from above." Rom. 11:29—"for the gifts and the calling of God are not repented of." Eph. 4:8—"When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men."

93. Q. What are the three great facts of the Gospel?

A. The three great facts of the Gospel are the death, burial and resurrection of Christ.

1 Cor. 15:3, 4—"that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath

been raised on the third day according to the scriptures." Acts 2:23, 24, 32—"him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay: whom God raised up, having loosed the pangs of death. . . . This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses." Rom. 5:8—"while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Acts 10:39, 40—"whom also they slew, hanging him on a tree. Him God raised up the third day," etc.

94. Q. Who were the divinely appointed witnesses of these three facts of the Gospel?

A. The Apostles.

Acts 1:22, 1:8, 2:32, 10:40-41, etc. (See Questions 22-24 inclusive.)

95. Q. When were the facts of the Gospel first proclaimed as such?

A. On the day of Pentecost, A. D. 30.

(1) From Adam to Abraham, the Gospel existed in the purpose of God only. It was at first merely intimated (in the mysterious oracle of Gen. 3:15). Eph. 6:19—"the mystery of the gospel." Eph. 3:4, 5—"the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known," etc. Eph. 3:11—"the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus." (2) From Abraham to Isaiah, the Gospel existed in promise. It was preached to Abraham, we are told; but only in promise. Gal. 3:8. (3) From Isaiah to Malachi, the Gospel existed in prophecy, i. e., in the Messianic predictions of the Hebrew prophets. See Isa. 9:6-7, 53:1-9, etc. Cf. 1 Pet. 1:10-12. (4) During the personal ministry of Jesus, the Gospel was in process of preparation; hence it was called "the gospel of the kingdom" (Matt. 4:23), i. e., the good news that the kingdom of heaven was at hand (Matt. 3:2, 10:7). (5) It is obvious, however, that the facts of the Gospel could not have been proclaimed as facts prior to their actual occurrence; that is, not until after

Jesus died and was raised up from the dead. Hence we find that the Gospel was actually proclaimed for the first time, in fact, on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of our Lord. See Acts 2:22-36.

96. Q. What are the three great commands of the Gospel?

A. They are: believe on the Lord Jesus, repent, and be baptized.

(1) Acts 16:31—"Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved." Mark 16:16—"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." John 20:30-31, 14:1, etc. (2) Luke 13:3—"Except ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish." Acts 3:19—"Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out." Acts 17:30—"The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent." Acts 26:18—"to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins," etc. (3) Acts 2:38—"Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins." Cf. Mark 16:16, Matt. 28:19, Gal. 3:26-27, Rom. 6:3-4, etc.

97. Q. What are the three great gifts of God offered to man through the Gospel?

A. They are: remission of sins, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and eternal life.

(1) Acts 2:38—"Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins." Acts 10:43—"through his name every one that believeth on him shall receive remission of sins." Luke 24:47—"that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem." Eph. 2:8—"for by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God" (i. e., it is salvation that is the gift of God; cf. John 3:16). (2) John

7:39—"this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believed on him were to receive." Acts 2:38—"Repent ye, and be baptized . . . unto the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (i. e., the Holy Spirit as a gift). Rom. 5:5—"the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us." 1 Cor. 3:16—"Know ye that . . . the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" 1 Cor. 6:19—"Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, which is in you, which ye have from God?" 2 Cor. 1:22—"God, who also sealed us, and gave us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." (3) Rom. 5:21—"that, as sin reigned in death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Matt. 25:46—"these shall go away into eternal punishment; but the righteous into eternal life" (Jesus). Rom. 6:23—"the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

98. Q. What is the fundamental truth of the Gospel?
 A. The fundamental truth of the Gospel is that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

This truth was first confessed by Simon Peter (Matt. 16:16—"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God"). This is the truth which must be confessed by all who would be saved from their sins. John 20:30, 31—"Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name." Matt. 10:32, 33—"Every one therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven."

99. Q. What is the most fundamental fact of the Gospel?
 A. The most fundamental fact of the Gospel is that

God raised His Son Jesus Christ from the dead.

(1) Matt. 16:18—"I also say unto thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church: and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." The rock upon which the Church is built, is the truth, first voiced by Peter (Matt. 16:16), that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Had Jesus gone into the grave and not come forth, the gates of Hades (the grave) would have prevailed against the truth that He is the Christ, the Son of the living God. But the fact that He did come forth from the grave, that God raised Him up, that death had no dominion over Him, is the final and positive proof that He was all that He claimed to be—the Christ, the Son of the living God. Rom. 1:4—"who was declared to be the Son of God with power . . . by the resurrection from the dead; even Jesus Christ our Lord." Acts 2:24—"whom God raised up, having loosed the pangs of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." Cf. Acts 2:32-36. (2) Thus the fundamental truth of the Gospel rests upon the fundamental fact of the Gospel. Rom. 10:9-10—"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

100. Q. **What is the fundamental requirement of the Gospel?**

A. **The fundamental requirement of the Gospel is obedience to Christ.**

Matt. 17:5—"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." John 15:14—"Ye are my friends, if ye do the things which I command you." John 14:15—"If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments." Heb. 5:9—"he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation." Cf. Matt. 7:24-27.

101. Q. What is the most fundamental gift or reward of the Gospel?

A. The most fundamental gift or reward of the Gospel is eternal life.

2 Tim. 1:9, 10—"our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." John 17:3—"This is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ." John 3:36—"He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; but he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." 1 John 5:12—"He that hath the Son hath the life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life." Cf. John 3:16, 2 Pet. 1:11.

102. Q. By what various designations is the Gospel described in the New Testament Scriptures?

A. By various designations which indicate its divine origin, content and design.

It is called "the gospel" (Rom. 1:16); "the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (Mark 1:1); "the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24); "the gospel of God" (Rom. 1:1); "the gospel of his Son" (Rom. 1:9); "the gospel of Christ" (1 Cor. 9:12, Gal. 1:7); "the gospel of the glory of Christ" (2 Cor. 4:4); "the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation" (Eph. 1:13); and "eternal good tidings" (Rev. 14:6).

103. Q. What does God do through the Gospel?

A. Through the Gospel He calls men to remission of sins and eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

2 Thess. 2:13-14, "But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, for that God chose you from the beginning unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto he called you through our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."

104. Q. What does Paul say about the Gospel?

A. He says that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth (Rom. 1:16).

(1) Note that is not a power, nor one of the powers, but the power of God unto salvation. (2) Cf. 1 Cor. 1:21—"it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe."

105. Q. Why is the Gospel the power of God unto salvation?

A. It is the power of God unto salvation because the Holy Spirit is in it and operates through it.

(1) The Holy Spirit exerts His influences and powers through the Gospel, to convict sinners and to sanctify Christians. The principle of spiritual life embodied in the Gospel is the presence and power of the Spirit therein; hence, we are exhorted to receive with meekness the implanted word which is able to save our souls (Jas. 1:21).

(2) The presence and power of the Holy Spirit in the Bible sets it apart from all other books; distinguishes Scripture from all other literature. The presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church sets it apart from all human institutions. The presence of the Holy Spirit in the Gospel distinguishes it from all human messages and systems. Let us therefore thank God for the glad tidings.

"Publish glad tidings, tidings of peace,
Tidings of Jesus, redemption and release."

106. Q. How may we enjoy the wonderful gifts of God that are offered to us through the Gospel?

A. We may enjoy them by believing the facts of the Gospel, by obeying the commands of the Gospel, and by continuing steadfastly in all the exercises and appointments of Christian faith, worship and practice.

2 Pet. 1:10, 11—"Wherefore, brethren, give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never stumble; for thus shall be richly supplied unto you the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." Rev. 2:7—"To him that overcometh, to him will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God." Rev. 2:11—"He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." Let us therefore cherish the Gospel of Christ, and devote ourselves zealously to its proclamation; for we are told that "they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan. 12:3).

"Should all the forms which men devise
 Attack my faith with treacherous art,
 I'd call them vanity and lies,
 And bind the gospel to my heart."

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON FORTY-SIX

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90. Q. What does the word "gospel" mean?
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92. Q. What does the Gospel of Christ include?
93. Q. What are the three great facts of the Gospel?
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Lesson Forty-Seven

THE PROPHETIC OFFICE OF CHRIST

Scripture Reading: John 4:15-26, 14:1-10; Acts 3:19-26.

Scriptures to Memorize: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him" (John 1:18). "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30). "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9). "God . . . hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son" (Heb. 1:1-2).

107. Q. What was the name given to the Son of God to indicate the nature and design of His work in the world?

A. The name Jesus.

"Jesus" means "Savior." This name was given by Divine authorization. Matt. 1:21—"Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins" (the words of the Annunciating Angel, to Joseph).

108. Q. What is His official title?