

Old Gospel vs New Gospel

by J.I. Packer

J.I. Packer contrasts the old gospel's emphasis on personal repentance and reliance on Christ with the new gospel's simplified approach to faith.

Scripture: Matthew 11:28, Mark 6:31, 1 Corinthians 16:18, Hebrews 13:8, 1 Peter 4:14, Revelation 6:11

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Spiritual Rest"

Description

The preacher delves into the meaning of 'rest' (anapauo) in the Bible, highlighting its significance in providing relief, refreshment, and intermission from toil. This rest can be physical, as seen in gaining relief from busyness, or spiritual, such as finding peace and comfort in Christ. The sermon emphasizes the rest believers can experience in the presence of the Holy Spirit, who helps them in times of suffering and persecution, giving them strength, endurance, and victory over evil. Through various Bible verses, the preacher illustrates how God's rest is available to those who trust in Him, even in the face of death or trials.

Transcript

. . . This phrase carries with it the wrong associations. It suggests voting a person into office--an act in which the candidate plays no part beyond offering himself for election, and everything then being settled by the voter's independent choice. But we do not vote God's Son into office as our Savior, nor does He remain passive while preachers campaign on His behalf, whipping up support for His cause. We ought not to think of evangelism as a kind of electioneering. And then, on the other hand, this phrase obscures the very thing that is essential in repentance and faith--the denying of self in a personal approach to Christ. It is not at all obvious that deciding for Christ is the same as coming to Him and resting on Him and turning from sin and self-effort; it sounds like something much less, and is accordingly calculated to instill defective notions of what the gospel really requires of sinners. It is not a very apt phrase from any point of view.

To the question: what must I do to be saved? the old gospel replies: believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. to the further question: what does it mean to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ? its reply is: it means knowing oneself to be a sinner, and Christ to have died for sinners; abandoning all self-righteousness and self-confidence, and casting oneself wholly upon Him for pardon and peace; and exchanging one's natural enmity and rebellion against God for a spirit of grateful submission to the will of Christ through the renewing of one's heart by the Holy Spirit. and to the further question still: how am I to go about believing

on Christ and repenting, if I have no natural ability to do these things? it answers: look to Christ, speak to Christ, cry to Christ, just as you are; confess your sin, your impenitence, your unbelief, and cast yourself on His mercy; ask him to give you a new heart, working in you true repentance and firm faith; ask Him to take away your evil heart of unbelief and to write His law within you, that you may never henceforth stray from Him. Turn to Him and trust Him as best you can, and pray for grace to turn and trust more thoroughly; use the means of grace expectantly, looking to Christ to draw near to you as you seek to draw near to Him; watch, pray, read and hear God's Word, worship and commune with God's people, and so continue till you know in yourself beyond doubt that you are indeed a changed being, a penitent believer, and the new heart which you desired has been put within you. The emphasis in this advice is on the need to call upon Christ directly, as the very first step.

. . . It is to feel your need of Him--so do not postpone actin till you think you are better, but honestly confess your badness and give yourself up here and now to a the Christ who alone can make you better; and wait on Him till His light rises in your soul, as Scripture promises that it shall do. Anything less than this direct dealing with Christ is disobedience of the gospel. Such is the exercise of spirit to which the old evangel summons its hearers. "I believe--help Thou my unbelief": this must become their cry.

. . . The preaching of the new gospel is often described as the task of "bringing men to Christ"--as if only men move, while Christ stands still. But the task of preaching the old gospel could more properly be described as bringing Christ to men. . . the mighty Savior whom they proclaim is buy doing His work through their words, visiting sinners with salvation, awakening them to faith, drawing them in mercy to Himself (Introductory Essay to John Owen's The Death of Christ in the Death of Christ, pp. 27-29).

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/ji-packer/old-gospel-vs-new-gospel/>

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