

No Greater Truth (Than the Gospel) - Part 1

by Paul Washer

Paul Washer emphasizes the unparalleled significance of the Gospel in the life of a believer, urging a deeper understanding and application of its truths.

Duration: 41:58

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, 1 Corinthians 15:1, 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

Topics: "Personal Salvation", "Gospel Preaching"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of a genuine relationship with Jesus Christ. He criticizes the shallow and ineffective preaching of the gospel in America today. The preacher urges the congregation to rely on Jesus and not on external factors such as great preaching or church activities. He shares his personal testimony of being saved by Jesus and highlights the significance of Jesus shedding his blood for our souls. The preacher also emphasizes the value of individual people and the need for the gospel to reach each person personally.

Transcript

Let's open our Bibles to 1 Corinthians chapter 15. 1 Corinthians chapter 15, verse 1. Let's stand for the reading of God's word. Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, and which also you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.

For I delivered to you, as of first importance, what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures. Let's pray. Father, I come before you in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ.

Father, I know that you both search and know the very depths of my heart and my mind. You know so much that is lacking within me, Lord. The smallness of my faith, my needy prayer life, how little I know of your word.

But it is upon the virtue and merit of your Son that I come before you this day. And I ask for his sake, and for the sake of the people that he has redeemed, that you would teach us from your word, that you would make known to us good things, that you would help us, Lord, for we need help. In Jesus' name, amen.

You may be seated. Now, I make known to you, brethren, the gospel. Now, here's something that seems quite redundant with the Apostle Paul in this passage.

Do you hear what he is saying? He says, I make known to you, brethren, the gospel. He's making known the gospel to a people who had already received the gospel. He is preaching the gospel once again to those who had already embraced the gospel.

And what does that tell us? Today in America, the gospel, not only has it been truncated, reduced down, watered down, we've also come to believe that it's one of the small truths that you learn when you enter into Christianity and then you go on to larger things. My dear friend, there is nothing further from the truth. There is no greater truth than the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And upon the gospel of Jesus Christ, your faith must be placed in order to be saved. But upon the gospel of Jesus Christ, you must build your life so that you might grow. It is the mystery of godliness and all true piety and all true conformity to the will of God comes from your understanding of the gospel.

And so often we think that we've embraced this thing when we haven't even begun. We think we've climbed Everest when we haven't even reached the foothills of the gospel. I have spent the last several years of my life in my personal studies dedicated to one thing.

Understanding, seeking to understand the gospel of Jesus Christ. Several years and over a thousand pages of notes have gone past. And I still have not even begun to understand what God has done for us in Jesus Christ.

It is a magnificent obsession and it is one that has begun on this earth, but it is one that will continue on throughout all of eternity. Do you want to know what you'll be doing in heaven? You'll be like a treasure hunter seeking out all the great things God has done for you in the person and work of his son, Jesus Christ. It is not just some theological concept or a set of rules that you can grasp and then think you've mastered.

The gospel is never mastered, but it is to master you. It is to master you. It is to be the control, the everything in your life.

And you are only going to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ to the degree that you understand what God has done in Jesus Christ. For you. Now let me draw back here for a moment.

I am a preacher. And there is a sense in which I lose touch with reality. Your reality.

It's a crime that is committed by all of us in the ministry. We'll be quick to tell you how difficult we have it. How many burdens we must bear and all sorts of things.

But oftentimes we do not have a clue of what's going on in your life. I'll go to a meeting, a small group of people praising the Lord and Bible study and everything wonderful. And then people will begin sharing their prayer requests.

You see that their lives are turmoil. A younger man might look out of the congregation and call everyone a hypocrite. A man who's been in the ministry long enough knows there's a better word.

Cosmetic. Some of you think I'm going to preach a theological treatise this morning. And in fact, I am.

And I'm going to continue it on tonight. And I expect every one of you to be here. But I want to tell you something.

I know that when some of you walked in these doors this morning, you put on makeup. And I know that when you hear someone like me preaching, a lot of you are thinking, What is he doing up there? Wrangling with words and theology and theological concepts. My life is falling apart.

My husband doesn't love me anymore. My wife doesn't respect me. My children.

I don't even know them. My job. I don't even have one.

I've gained everything I thought I wanted. And now I'm the most miserable man on the face of the earth. I want you to know that the reason why I'm preaching the gospel today is because you're really going through real life.

And those things must be dealt with. There must be instruction in the full counsel of the word of God. Every problem you have here today can be answered in God's word.

But it is not just building a church or building a people on wisdom or principles. First, it must be Christ. It must be Christ.

I got here at 8.15 this morning and immediately a couple from Bombay walked in the back doors. I spent an hour and a half with them. They are not Christian.

They are Hindu. And we're going from the concept of them trying to get out of a vicious cycle of reincarnation through their own merit and virtue and me telling them they have neither merit or virtue and that it all must be found in Christ and Christ alone. But the same is for you who believe.

Yes, you have problems. Yes, you have needs. There are complex things going on in your life no one knows about.

They're addressed in Scripture and there is wisdom you need to learn and wisdom you need to obey. But at the same time, all of this must be built upon the person of Jesus Christ or it's nothing more than legalistic, self-centered principles. And you say, Brother Paul, do you think you're laying a foundation? No.

A foundation has been laid in this church. Preaching has been done here. Bricks have been put in place.

But here's the thing. I used to preach on something in my own church back in Peru. I'd preach on it for six months.

Hard. The same thing every Sunday. And then a visiting preacher would come in, preach the same thing I had been preaching.

And they'd all say to him, we've never heard anything like that before. And it doesn't demonstrate the fickleness of the people. It demonstrates that sometimes we just need to hear it from a different angle.

So I know we're adding nothing new to you today, but I will be admonishing you that we must base our lives upon the gospel of Jesus Christ. Why must I love my wife? Because Christ has died. Why must she be more important to me than the ministry? Because Christ has died.

Why must I be truthful in my dealings with other men? Because Christ has died. When my world is rocked and the very foundations, human props are pulled out. Why must I be strong? Christ has died.

Yea, he has risen again. So it is all based upon that. And that is where we must go.

So Paul was constantly, constantly like a broken record. It was constantly over and over the gospel, the gospel, the gospel, the gospel. And it is not just some abstract theological concept.

I can't stand it when I hear preachers talk about getting practical. They will talk about theological truths as though they were some pie in the sky, unrealistic thing that could affect no one's life. And then they'll move on and say, now let's get to the stuff that's really going to affect our life.

Well, you can get a lot of people in a building that way, but you can't build a church that way. You must understand the gospel and spend the rest of your life understanding that gospel. We're going to start this morning.

We won't finish this morning. We will end this evening, but it will not be the end. You will spend an eternity in this task and never find the end.

Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preach to you. Now, this one word preach, I could spend days. Let me just share with you quickly so that we can get on.

If I walk into a building, a church building, auditorium, and a man walks up to that pulpit and tells me that he just wants to share from his heart, I'm pretty much going to get up and walk out because I really don't care what's in his heart. Now, there are testimonies and all sorts of things, and I'm not going to an extreme. But what I'm trying to tell you, people of God, is the greatest need you have is preaching, preaching.

Oh, of course, you're a preacher. That's why you say that. Well, let me then finish.

Preaching is not an end. So let me humble myself before you. It is not an end.

It is a means to an end, and the end is worship and true holiness. You say, oh, just singing songs. No, worship is walking.

Worship is talking. Worship is living. Worship is loving.

Worship is dying to self and being a servant. We need preaching. But preaching without transformation is just clutter.

Preaching is probably one of the most pathetic things that's ever been contrived. Because without the power of the Holy Spirit, it's words. Words.

Without the power of the Holy Spirit, worship. Blocks of wood coming out of the mouths of men. Nothing more.

What's our need? Truth? Yes. Theology? Correct. Preaching? Absolutely.

But let me sum it all up for you. God. We need God.

I used to teach young preachers. In order to preach, you've got to preach with the power of God on your life. Now I tell them, in order to tie your shoes, you have to have the power of God on your life.

And so he says, I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you. There's a real sense in which mass evangelism is an oxymoron, like jumbo shrimp. Mass evangelism.

What does that mean? God saves a mass of people? No, God saves individuals. My only hope here today is that the Holy Spirit can take one message and apply it to many different people with many different needs. People are not numbers.

They have different color eyes, different color skin, and they all bleed when they get cut. People are not numbers. Whenever we think about something big, that the Lord might send a thunderbolt from heaven and destroy the whole lot of us.

We don't think about mass, we think about people. We don't think about anything else. We don't miss the forest for the trees.

It is my prayer that the gospel of Jesus Christ, that the words that are spoken here today, that the worship arrives to each and every one of you as individuals, preaching to you, eye to eye, to you. I most certainly want you to know I am not a prophet or the son of the prophet, and I do not know what's going on in your heart or the needs you have. But there is a God here today who does.

Call upon him, but be ready to respond in obedience when he answers. He says, which I preach to you, which also you received. I don't have to rant and rave here this morning about how truncated and impotent the gospel that is being preached, the so-called gospel that is being preached in America today truly is.

We have so many people, you know, we're always wanting to talk about people outside of ourselves. But I almost think it's appropriate to hear physician heal thyself. If I were to dismiss this church and go out into this entire state, if you were to go back to my state and just start walking around and start bumping into people, visiting houses, you know what you would find? Almost everybody in America has prayed to receive the gospel, but very, very, very few of them are actually truly Christian.

We have taken one of the most beautiful passages in the world, this gospel which you receive and turned it into nothing more than some sort of ecclesiastical creedal system, some kind of religious loop that you jump through in order to get to heaven. We primarily do it to our children. I'll give you an example.

Get a bunch of children together, say, how many of you want to go to heaven? Have you ever seen a child raise their hand and say, why, no, I'd rather go to hell. How many of you children want to go to heaven? They'll raise their hand and then you ask them the next question. Well, would you like to ask Jesus to come into your heart? Well, of course.

And so they do. And we turn them into two full sons of hell. What does it mean to receive Jesus? Does it mean to repeat a prayer? Is that what it truly means just to repeat a prayer? I know one evangelist who actually did this.

He said the man came forward. He said, do you want to receive Jesus? He said, yeah, well, I guess. And he said, well, then call out to the Lord.

And he said, well, I really don't know how to do that. He said, well, then, you know, repeat these words after me. He says, well, I feel comfortable.

I feel uncomfortable saying these things out loud. And I said, well, just say them quietly. And he goes, well, still, I just, you know, I just don't like what you got going here.

And then just said, I tell you what, I'll say the words. And if these words mean anything to you, squeeze my hand. So the power of God has been so reduced that all he can get out of a man in the work of regeneration is a tightening of the fist.

Now, my dear friend, we do not need to look any farther than our own lives. We don't need to go jumping out here condemning everybody else. Let's look at us.

What does it mean to receive Jesus? It's a scandal. That's what it means. It means to eat his flesh and drink his blood.

It means to take him in. You receive him as the very substance of your life. He is not an accessory.

He is not a part of your life. He is not a thing you do. He is your life.

Now, how does that apply to you? Be honest. You go buy a fine piece of clothing, a dress or some sort of thing. And then you go out and immediately you're looking for accessories.

Shoes and belts and buckles. Bags to put things in. I want you to know, if I were to write what I see, I would have to say that that is the relationship many people have, so-called professors of faith.

The relationship they have with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is like an accessory. And let me just step back for a moment. For those of you, you dear saints, listen to me.

If you wondered about the trials in your life, well, let me just let you know that the purpose of them is to cut away everything in your life so that Jesus does become your life. And it's worth it. Renoir is my favorite painter.

I love the French Impressionist. I believe that's the last stand we have in art before we start seeing the corruption of man's heart coming through. Renoir, I love his paintings.

I love Monet actually more than Renoir, but I love Renoir. You want to know why? Because he tied the paintbrushes to his hands. His arthritis was so bad, he tied the paintbrushes to his hands.

And when they asked him, why do you paint? He said, the beauty is worth it. Sufferings and trials and everything else. Are they to be shunned and abhorred as a work of the devil? No, they're to be embraced.

Kiss the hand that strikes you. The pain is worth the beauty it will produce. The image of Jesus Christ carved out in your life.

And he says, which also you received to take him in. He is not divided up. He is not a principle that can be learned in parts.

To take him in. Christ, holistically, Lord, Savior, prophet, priest, king, life itself. I preach to you, which also you receive in which also you stand.

You stand upon Christ or you stand not at all. Upon what are you standing? That would be my question for you. I spoke with that couple this morning over and over and over again.

I almost wrote like a broken record. I stand upon the virtue and merit of my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I stand upon him.

He's everything. He's the only thing. Outside of him, I have nothing.

And outside of him, I would have no part with God. And outside of him, I would have no righteousness. Nothing in my hands I bring simply to the cross of Jesus Christ, who I claim.

It is Christ and Christ alone. Which also you stand. Stand not only with regard to the salvation of your souls.

But stand with regard to your piety. Your daily life. Your decisions.

Stand upon this one thing. I have been writing an article that I have to do bi-monthly. One of my favorite things to talk about is that the Christian believes or stands and lives between two days.

The day that Christ hung before men. The day that all men will stand before Christ. Every thought, word, and deed of your life should be measured by that statement.

Which is both a blessing and a terrifying warning. Stand upon him and his work. But also he is the foundation for your convictions.

It does not matter where my decisions take me. It only matters that they are made in accordance with the will of God. Upon what do you stand? In what do you walk? Don't cover up.

Brother. Sister, don't cover up. Don't pull the sheets over your head and don't put on more makeup.

Because personally, I don't care what you have done or what you have become. There is enough evil in my own heart to sustain an entire fallen world. The only thing that you need to realize is this.

No matter where you are at right now. If you will turn. And you will be broken.

And you will confess. And you will call upon the name. There will be healing.

And I can assure you there will be no judgment. At least not from this preacher nor the men that I have come to know while I have been here. Your greatest problem is sitting where you are at.

And not opening up to Christ. And his gospel. I am not talking to lost people.

I am talking to believers. We are on a road and it is a road to conformity to the image of Christ. Some of you have so many problems.

So many of you are doing so many things. Have so much confusion. So much fog.

And you are so afraid to let anybody know. So you walk in this church and you have got paint all over your face. Well, it is not going to get any better.

This is a place of healing. Remember this. Judgment is not for sinners.

It is for sinners who will not repent. Who will not open. Who will not be broken.

This gospel. It is good news. Sometimes my wife.

I need her almost always when I am preaching. Because she sits on the front and she warns me about how mean my face looks. She knows that it is just passion.

She knows it is concern. But at the same time she says, Paul, they do not know you like I know you. They think you are mad.

Brothers and sisters, this is not dress rehearsal. There is no dress rehearsal. This is life and death.

This is your life. Your wife's life. Your children's life.

Your friends. Your family. This is everything.

And Christianity has got to be real. And it gets real when we begin to acknowledge our need of the gospel of Jesus Christ. I was preaching one time down in Peru.

A lady stood up right after the meeting. It was the most pathetic sermon. The lady stood up in the congregation.

And she said this. She screamed it out. She said, I came here to hear the great man of God.

And I see nothing. I have heard nothing. This is the most pitiful sermon I have ever heard.

And I look back and I said, Madam, what did you expect out of a man? What point am I trying to make? The point I am trying to make is this. There is only one teacher here. There is only one Christ.

There is only one Father. And there is only one prophet. And there is only one spiritual person really in this room right now.

And his name is Jesus Christ. And there is only one message that is going to heal. And it is the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And that is where it needs to go. And that is where we need to go. In which also you stand.

Verse 2. By which also you are saved. One of the saddest things in contemporary. It is better to call it churchianity than Christianity.

But one of the saddest commentaries on churchianity in America. Is that salvation seems like it is, well, it is no longer enough. We want more.

People, countless numbers of people. Following preachers who promised them everything from perfect healing. To society's utopia.

To a Mercedes Benz. If you come to Jesus, he will fix this. If you come to Jesus, he will fix that.

If you come to Jesus, he will give you a better life. When did salvation stop being enough? When you come to Jesus, he will save your soul from eternal condemnation. Is that not enough? If you come to Jesus, he will make known to you the father.

Is that not enough? Now, in all these years of walking with my God and your God. He has given so many good things to me. He has been so kind.

I serve a generous master. I serve a kind, kind master. But at the same time, I was saved 22 years ago.

At the University of Texas. I'm drunk. A selfish, egotistical, the worst of the worst.

Jesus saved me. If he were to cast me down to the lowest part of the earth. If he were to take away everything that I would consider to be mine.

If I had arms left, should they not be raised in water shopping? Because this one thing I know, the son of God has shed his own blood for my soul. And that is enough. What should you tell people? Let me tell you this.

I am so tired of hearing churches brag about themselves. Come to our church. Why? We have the best preaching.

We have the best worship. You realize what we're saying has nothing to do with it. Come to Jesus.

And if you want a fellowship, come here. The drawing card is not the building. The drawing card is not the church.

The drawing card is not the activity. And the drawing card is not the preaching. It's Jesus Christ.

His presence working among us. Changing us. And not just changing us here when we have makeup on.

Changing us in the very center of our homes. The very core of our being. The drawing card is Jesus.

And he be lifted up. He will draw. Amen.

Damn. Don't be confused about that passage. Some will be drawn just to throw more rocks and nail more nails.

But others will be drawn unto salvation itself. Oh, what a wonderful and terrible task is ours. He says, by which also you are saved if you hold fast the word which I preached to you.

Conditional clause. If that little nasty preposition I won't remove, it's there. Look what it's saying.

You are saved if. If you hold fast, the logical opposite of that is what you are not saved. If you do not hold fast, you do not hold fast.

You're not saved. Now, what is he teaching a falling away from grace? That a man can actually be regenerated by the power of God, more power being manifested there than possibly the very creation of the universe, that a man can be regenerated and then lose his salvation. Not at all.

What he's teaching is this. You fall away. You're demonstrating.

You never were. And that's another thing that we must deal with in this preaching of the gospel. As I said before, it's not like an inoculation or a flu shot.

You take that and then, bam, you're in. No, my friend. If you have truly repented of your sins, you will continue repenting until today and you will continue repenting until your last day.

And if you have truly believed the gospel of Jesus Christ, you will continue believing that same gospel until you're called home to glory, because he who began a good work will finish it. But if you begin on the path, no matter how well or how long, and turn away from the basic tenets and ethic of Christianity and walk in a path contrary to the will of God, it just might be evidence that you never knew him. And even worse, that he never knew you.

He says, if you hold fast to the word which I preached to you, unless you believe in vain. I was confronted this morning with the same thing I'm often confronted with in university dialogue. It's a postmodern mindset.

You say, oh, well, what do I need to know about that? You know a lot about it because, well, you're influenced by it and you don't even know it. The postmodern mindset was simply this. Well, you know, you have found peace, Brother Paul, and that's good for you.

I said, no, it's not. And they said, well, what do you mean? In order for something to be true philosophically and theologically, in order for something to be true, it must be universally true. And I said, listen, the same thing I told a young man several years ago at a university came up to me and he was furious.

Young man, Jewish man. He was just furious with me. He said, I believe the Jews are right.

I believe the Christians are right and I believe the Muslims are right. And I looked at him. I said, young man, that's logical absurdity.

He said, what do you mean? I said, here are the possibilities. Christianity is right and the other two are wrong. Are one of the other two are right and Christianity and the other are wrong or they're all wrong.

But it is impossible that all can be right because all say absolutely other things. They say other things. So many people are believing today in vain.

So many silly things. Now, it's not to be angry about. It's not even to fight about, and it's not going to be changed through some political maneuvering or intolerance.

The gospel does not move in those areas. The gospel moves by the power of God through our sacrificial love, even for our enemies. But the thing about it is there is standing up with gentleness and mercy, standing up and seeking to correct those who are wrong, that God might grant them repentance.

My dear friend, Jesus Christ, as you've probably heard, the Cambridge scholar, the scholar C.S. Lewis, he's either a lord or he's a lunatic or he's a liar. But don't patronize me to say you believe Jesus is a good man, but you don't believe in his uniqueness. You see, what we're doing here today is either true or we're the most pathetic people on the face of the earth.

When I stand in front of a university, sometimes I look at them and I said, look, I stand before you like a sheep before shears, like a lamb led to slaughter. If I stand up in front of that university and I say, I am a seeker of the truth, they'll all applaud me. And then if I turn around and say, and I found it, they'll boo me off the platform.

But here, what must you do? You must take a stand in love, in mercy, in gentleness, in this pagan society and say, Jesus is the universal truth. He is the absolute truth. Today, when I go around to different places, sometimes in very large churches, the passage in Ezekiel 13 comes to my mind about building a wall that

looks really, really good.

But when the wind or enemy or even a fox brushes up against it, it falls. And then the people say, where is your wall? If this church is held together by great preaching, what happens when there's no great preaching? This church is held together by this corporate worship. What happens if it's taken away? This church is held up by all its activities.

What happens when there are no activities? This group of believers here must be held up by Jesus Christ and a passionate, real, vital relationship with him. That was the introduction to my sermon this morning. I'm sorry, I didn't even get on to part one.

Church, yesterday I was nine. Today, I'm 42 and tomorrow I'll be 90. I don't have time to play games.

You don't either. What's going to happen with you? What's going to happen with your life? You need to give yourself to seeking Christ. I go to so many churches and they'll ask me.

I had a phone call yesterday from a church in Alabama that has problems and such. Can you give us any advice? No one ever takes my advice. I don't know why they call me.

I said, what you need to do is all of you need to get together and spend an entire day in prayer and fasting together. Seek the Lord. Okay, but what else? God has helped you for many, many years.

He's helped you to a man who has preached the word of God to you in this transition. And from now on, you're going to need Christ like you have never needed him before. And that's as a collective church.

But as individuals, you know, don't you? You know that what I'm saying is true. There are so many parts in your life that are not whole. So many things wrong.

You came in here today. You couldn't even worship. You know I'm talking to some of you.

You're almost mad at anybody who would. Why? Because your life is so broken and so messed up and so many problems and everything else. You say, what's the use? You walk in here and someone says, well, God bless you, brother.

And you say, God bless you, brother. And you walk off this. Why did I even say that? Jesus really is the answer.

It's not a cliché. He really is the answer. You call out to him.

You cry out to him and keep crying out until he moves on your behalf. So brother Paul, don't you believe in the sovereignty of God? I believe in the sovereignty of God to such a degree to offend most of you. But I'm not a philosopher.

I'm a theologian. And there's a truth in the Bible that says God is absolutely sovereign and absolutely everything. And there's not a maverick molecule in the universe.

You have not because you ask not. Ask him to help you. Your life can be more than it is, Christian.

It can be more than it is. Man, your marriage can be more than it is. Everything can be abundantly more than what you can even believe or ask.

I pray and turn the service over to the pastors. Father, help us, Lord. Help your people with the great promise that brings us joy.

In Jesus' name, amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/13/SID13574.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/paul-washer/no-greater-truth-than-the-gospel-part-1/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net