

## IS OUR GOSPEL the GOSPEL?

by Keith Green

I believe with all my heart that Jesus would be ashamed of most of the "gospel" messages and sermons that are being preached today, mainly because they lack almost every major point He Himself preached on. (Mark 8:38; Rom. 1:16; II Tim. 1:8) How dare we try to change the Gospel. We remove most of its vital parts, and replace them with artificial limbs of our own. (Gal. 1:6-7)

Isn't Jesus the master evangelist? Shouldn't we judge our evangelism by His example?<sup>3</sup> Was His message anything like what we're hearing today? It is my intention to try to briefly cover in Section 1 each of the major parts of the Gospel that have been "surgically" removed in most of today's preaching...

### The Removed Parts Of The Gospel

The Blood of Jesus. It's a fact that the very word blood scares people. It's also a fact that the blood of Christ scares the devil, because it is the only cleansing agent for a sin-sick soul.<sup>4</sup> Can you imagine what the preaching and writings of Paul would have been like, if he had been as squeamish in proclaiming the magnificent power and beauty of the blood of Jesus as our generation of preachers are? What we have now is a bloodless gospel!

Today, people are afraid to think and preachers are afraid to make them. The whole concept of Jesus being the Passover Lamb of the Old Testament<sup>5</sup> has been lost - "It takes too much time and thought to explain," you will hear some say. (Heb. 5:11-14) "We need to simplify the Gospel so that we can reach the masses." Oh, what logic! Remove the blood from the preaching of the Gospel, and you remove the power to conquer the devil for the souls of men!

The Cross of Jesus. Paul said, "I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." (I Cor. 2:2) Nowadays it's "Jesus Christ and what He can do for you!" You cannot have more exact opposites than the Bible's Christ-centered Gospel,<sup>6</sup> and our modern, cross-less, me-centered gospel.

Today, if anyone preaches self-denial as a condition of discipleship, you can hear the comments afterwards: "old-fashioned," "harsh," "legalistic." I dare say that our Lord would have as much trouble finding acceptance among our preachers as He had among the religious leaders of His own day.

Here's what A.W. Tozer says about the cross...

"The cross is the most revolutionary thing ever to appear among men. The cross of Roman times knew no compromise, it never made concessions. It won all its arguments by killing its opponent and silencing him for good. It spared not Christ, but slew Him the same as the rest. He was alive when they hung Him on that cross. and completely dead when they took Him off of it. That was the cross the first time it appeared in Christian history.

"With perfect knowledge of all this, Christ said, 'If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself take up his cross and follow Me.' So the cross not only brought Christ's life to an end, it also ends the

first life, the old life of every one of His true followers...this and nothing less is true Christianity. We must do something about the cross, and there's only one of two things we can do - flee it or die upon it!"

The Threat and Terrors of Hell, and the Guilt of Sinners. We often hear people say, "I'm tired of hell-fire and brimstone preaching!" "Well," I often reply, "when was the last time you heard any?" It is true, very few people preach on hell anymore - it is no longer in vogue. We shouldn't scare the poor sinners, no, that wouldn't do. They're just unfortunate, misguided souls, right? Wrong! The Bible clearly shows that they are rebels who have robbed and dishonored the living God, infinitely offending Him.<sup>7</sup> They have no right to look at themselves in any other light.

But we, smart as we are, have decided to help God along. He doesn't understand our generation as well as we do. The things Jesus emphasized in His preaching were all right for the Jews, but our generation needs a more gentle, loving tone. "Tell 'em about heaven!" We talk about heaven, about the "rewards of being born-again," but we completely neglect the other side of the "two-edged sword." (Heb. 4:12) What right do we have to remove things from the Gospel that Jesus Himself gave great place to in His own preaching?...

~Source-

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