

GOOD NEWS

A Collection of Sermons

by

Sam Jones and Sam Small

Copyright © 1836

SERMON FOURTEEN

EPHESIANS 1:13

(Afternoon Services at the First Baptist Church)

Mr. Small said: I will call your attention, this afternoon, to the thirteenth verse of the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians:

“In whom ye also trusted after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom, also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy spirit of promise.”

And the ideas that I want to take up this afternoon are embraced in those two last clauses, **“After that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy spirit of promise.”**

We live in an age in which many an assault is made upon the gospel. We live in an age that may be called, without doing violence to the truth, the most impious known. I repeat, the most impious age, because of the subtle assaults made on the gospel. The gospel is as we read it in the acts of Christ’s ministry and in His sufferings as he went about and ministered among the people. The gospel is, in that declaration, the sublimest that came down from the cross, telling us in his last agony that the plan of salvation had been sealed. But there was another act necessary to complete the salvation, and that was the resurrection. It is, therefore, the gospel as it is in Jesus Christ that we are to preach, and the people are to receive. It is everything that is outside of that gospel that men and women are to abjure. It is a gospel of godliness, and its purpose is to teach men to live godly lives. And the most godly lives are those that

EXEMPLIFY THIS GOSPEL

It is a gospel which is a key to all the mysteries of earth.

Some of these mysteries we cannot understand, because we have not yet learned to handle the gospel of Jesus Christ so as to unlock them. But we have been taught by those who have attained to more of holiness than we have how to unlock the gospel of a holy life. And there is no man who cannot conform himself to this gospel, and to a godly life. No man knows that better than the newly converted man. Standing here, just a little over the line, I look back and I wonder why I did not sooner apprehend this gospel, and why I did not sooner lead a godly life. And I don’t know why people around me don’t live a godly life.

Of course, when I sit down and study it out, I can see why they don't. The man who is living a godly life has apprehended the immutability of the gospel. A man may live on a moral plane and he may go up to the gates of heaven with a godly man, but there will be a separation there. The man who has lived a godly life has the key and the passport to enter the gates, and the other man has not, and he can't get in. And right on that line are some of the strongest assaults that are being made upon the gospel. Men are formulating these moral theories and leading others to believe that there is

NO MYSTERY

In the gospel.

They teach men that there is nothing beyond the grave; that when they die that's all there is to it. And they lead a moral life because it is the proper and decent thing to do, and not because the gospel commands it.

I have been greatly pleased with the sarcastic reply of the lady in a Washington salon to a young man who argued very ingeniously to prove that there was no immortality, and no life beyond the grave. When he had finished and asked her what she thought of his position, she said: "I think you have argued very eloquently for an hour to prove yourself no better than a beast."

If he is arguing for a higher plane of existence, the gospel furnishes it, but if he is arguing to overthrow the immortality of the soul, the combined philosophy of man will not suffice. Plato and Socrates, Aristotle and Zeno saw their philosophies crumble because men could not satisfy their souls with what they taught. This gospel is intended to satisfy the eternal longings of eternal souls, and it does it, when it is preached in its purity and integrity. Millions of souls are existing in the eternal world because of their belief in this gospel, and millions more will believe and will go up to join the blood-washed throng.

The truth that Jesus Christ proclaimed from that day to this has run through all lines

OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE

Only to clinch the truth of this fact.

There is not in the world to-day any doctrine that has in it the conservation of the energies of the world like the gospel.

Confucianism is not now confined to its original bounds, because Christianity has run upon it, and upon Buddhism, and they are being swallowed up and driven back by this gospel.

All of the rapid means of communication in the world, all the systems of education, and the means of lifting up men, — all these have been drawn upon, — and to-day are yielding their power to the progress of this gospel.

Architecture, the arts, the daily newspapers, can all be levied upon and commanded in the interests of Christianity, and they obey. There were times in the world when this couldn't be done. And men may wonder now that it can be done. But whatever power God needs for the propagation of this gospel he is going to command. It is as much the power of God that the newspapers publish column after column and page after page of the word of God, as it is that the flowers bloom and the sun shines. How is it that Jesus Christ's life and teachings survive in the hearts of men, while men who had more advantages than he, and who were great, while he, a mere lad, was confounding the money-changers in the temple, have left

NO CREED OR GOSPEL

Why isn't there an Alexandrian gospel in the world?

Wasn't he a great leader of men? Wasn't he a great conqueror, and didn't he have abundance of wealth and splendor? Why didn't all these powers of wealth give us a gospel that will lead us to him instead of Jesus Christ? Because Alexander was only a man and he died a drunkard. Why didn't the conquest of Napoleon Bonaparte supersede the gospel? Why did not he, when thus manifesting his power and marking out the geography of a continent, why didn't he mark out something that men could live for? He was only human, and he died an outcast.

Jesus Christ was divinely compassionate, divinely just. He has exhibited for 1800 years the divinity that was in him, and his gospel has exhibited that power. It came into the world announcing its purpose. It was glory to God, and peace on earth, good will to men. It is to-day as it was at first, the

GOSPEL OF SALVATION

It is working to-day to that end.

And wherever it has been preached to sinful men, it has vindicated itself, and so it will vindicate itself. It vindicates itself from the fact that it is the gospel of Jesus Christ, and we need only to preach it as the Gospel of Christ to men who are in their sins, to attract them to it, and thus we have God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost working in it to save men's souls. And when a man obeys the promptings of the Holy Spirit, it only leads him to Christ, and nowhere else.

Why to Christ? Because he came to be a propitiation for us. He came into the world to save us, and the system he was working out became the gospel of salvation. And when we see the awful account of sin and wrong-doing charged up against us, it seems to reach up to the courts of heaven. But long as it is, there is One who, from the tree, writes across that bill "Paid." And it is paid, when we let him take it up and cancel it. And that long bill, so awful before, turns into a panorama of loveliness leading up to the throne. May God bless you, and may you let Jesus Christ pay your debt.

~ end of book ~
