



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

July 16, 2023

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Elders:

Kendall Bear
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Don Chandler

Deacons:

Larry Brackett
Aaron Evans
Larry Hill
Steve McCreary

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Service Times:

Sunday

Bible Study 10 am
Worship Service 10:45 am
Worship Service 6 pm

Wednesday

Bible Study 7 pm

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Find True Power

People often look in the wrong place to find real power.

Sometimes, folks look for power in the teachings of human beings. We humans are sometimes amazing. But when it comes to true power we suddenly find ourselves unable to do very much.

The teachings of Confucius are great, but are not divinely inspired and cannot provide salvation. The writings of John Locke influenced the writing of the Declaration of Independence and the creation of the new government of the United States, but Locke believed we can only know those things we experience through our senses.

Soren Kierkegaard, the great Danish philosopher, was a great writer and thinker, but Kierkegaard believed man must take a leap of faith into the unknown. The Bible teaches faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. There is no “leap”.

Politicians like to demonstrate their power in elective office and sometimes the people are the ones to suffer. One of the lessons of humans and political power is that, although they may mean well, their use of power leaves something to be desired, doesn't it?

When humans seek true power to change their lives and prepare themselves for heaven, there is only one source. The Bible has the powerful word of God which is able to “*which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified*” (**Acts 20:32**).

When desiring the knowledge of salvation, that power is available only through the word of God (**Romans 1:16**). Sure, there are people who appear on television and ask us to believe their wondrous “works.” It seems these men can do almost anything, but they alone do not have the power to save souls. That power rests supremely with the word of God. James wrote, “*Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls,*” (**James 1:21**).

It is the word of God that can save us, and nothing man can offer. Belief and obedience to the word of God has always been necessary for men to be saved.

John Henson
Grand Blanc church of Christ
Grand Blanc, MI

Five Things the Gospel Cannot Do

The gospel is the power of God unto salvation. Man's true hope of going to heaven through Jesus is revealed in the gospel. Yet there are some things the gospel cannot do.

The gospel cannot save a person who is determined to live in rebellion against God. The gospel has the power to make believers and save obedient believers (**Romans 1:16–17**), but it cannot save those who will not repent of their past sins and submit to God's word.

The gospel cannot help a troubled marriage as long as both spouses refuse to hear and heed what the gospel says. The New Testament has specific, helpful instructions for every wife and every husband (**Ephesians 5:22–33**). When such teaching is carried out properly, marriages will not only survive, they will also bloom. But as long as neither spouse is willing to do things God's way, the gospel cannot help their situation.

The gospel cannot do the work of the church. The gospel does not preach itself (Mark 16:15). The gospel itself cannot feed the needy. God's gospel can motivate Christians to be compassionate, but His children must step up and share their bounty. The gospel contains complete instructions that can strengthen and equip the church, but the gospel itself cannot take what Christians have learned and teach it to others so that they too can teach (**2 Timothy 2:2**).

The gospel cannot serve as a substitute for prayer. The same Savior that tells us to preach the gospel also tells us to pray (**Luke 18:1**). The Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write that the gospel is God's power unto salvation (**Romans 1:16**), but He also led that same apostle to pray for opportunities to preach the gospel (**Colossians 4:2–3**). We live the gospel, teach the gospel, and defend the gospel, but we still bring our petitions and thanksgiving before our heavenly Father in prayer (**Philippians 4:6–7**). The gospel is great, but it cannot take away the need to pray.

The gospel cannot take the place of faith. *“We have the gospel. What else could we need?”* It is true that faith comes by hearing God's word (**Romans 10:17**). It is equally true that the word of God can build us up and give us an inheritance among the sanctified (**Acts 20:32**). However, we must not be deceived into thinking, *“Hey, we have the gospel, so why do we need to have faith?”*

Faith is man's proper response to the gospel message. The faith that pleases God is the faith that acts by love (**Galatians 5:6**). There is no benefit or consolation in having several copies of the Bible in our house if we are not going to put its teaching to use in our lives. It is still true that *“without faith it is impossible to please”* God (**Hebrews 11:6**) and *“the just shall live by faith”* (**Hebrews 10:38**).

I am so thankful that precious people taught me the gospel. I thank God for the power of the gospel to change people's lives and people's eternal destiny. But there are some things that even the gospel of the Lord Jesus cannot do.

Roger Campbell