

# NOT NEGOTIABLE

## The Gospel's Power

- Today, I continue the series NOT NEGOTIABLE.
- On the website [progressivechristianity.org](http://progressivechristianity.org), there is dropdown menu called *The 8 Points of Progressive Christianity*. Let me refer to a couple:
  - 1) We believe that following the path and teachings of Jesus can lead to an awareness and experience of the Sacred and the Oneness and Unity of all life.
  - 2) We affirm that the teachings of Jesus provide but one of the many ways to experience the Sacredness and Oneness of life, and that we can draw from diverse sources of wisdom on our spiritual journey.
  - 3) We seek community that is inclusive of ALL people, including but not limited to conventional Christians and questioning skeptics, believers and agnostics, women and men, those of all sexual orientations and gender identities and those of all classes and abilities.
  - 5) We find grace in the search for understanding and **believe there is more value in questioning than in absolutes.**
- Sounds harmless right? Sounds kind, and compassionate and inclusive.
- But there is no doctrinal belief about sin and Salvation, heaven and hell. Is Jesus the divine son of God? What about His death and resurrection?
- What about Jesus' claim to be the only way to God? What are we to do with that? The Sacred and the Oneness and Unity of all life, is that Salvation? Is that heaven? If questioning has more value than absolutes, what truth claims can we trust? What can we believe in?
- See, progressive Christianity offers no answers, only more questions and more doubt, confusion and distortion. In an attempt to be inclusive, nonconfrontational, not judgmental, it offers no guidelines or guardrails, no boundaries, and no cautions.
- In their book One Faith No Longer, authors George Yancy and Ashlee Quosigk write, "...after examining the data, we argue that the divide between theologically progressive and conservative Christians is so great that one can realistically think of them as completely different religious groups."
- IOW, progressive Christianity is no Christianity at all. This series called NOT NEGOTIABLE, is a Biblical response to the current crisis of the rise from within of the true enemy of the Church of Jesus Christ.
- There is a huge difference between *Denominational Differences* and *Doctrinal Defects*. We can agree to disagree over minor Denominational Differences, but we must break fellowship over major Doctrinal Defects. There are just some beliefs that are NOT NEGOTIABLE. Let look at one this morning.

TEXT: 1 Corinthians 15:1-5, Galatians 1:6-12

Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve... this is what we preach, and this is what you believed.

**Gal. 1:6-12** ¶ I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God’s curse! As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let them be under God’s curse!

Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ.

I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is not of human origin. I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.

INTRO: Today’s title, *The Gospel’s Power*.

1. Last week we examined the first non-negotiable The Bible’s Authority. We concluded that every word of The Word is God’s Word.
  - We saw that the sole authority for our faith and the final authority for our conduct is the Word of God, the inspired Scriptures.
  - We affirmed that God gave the inspiration, Jesus is the incarnation, the HS gives the illumination and we make the application.
2. Today, we turn our attention to the 2<sup>nd</sup> belief that is NOT NEGOTIABLE.
  - In our text today, Paul says that the Gospel is NOT NEGOTIABLE.
  - To change the Gospel is to desert the Gospel.
  - A changed Gospel is no Gospel at all.
3. Over the next few moments, I’ll try to answer three questions about the Gospel. [email: “writing so fast smoke was rising from my fingers”]

## I. What Is the Gospel?

1. What the Gospel is **NOT!** – I believe that often we learn what it is by first seeing what it is not. Some things the Gospel is NOT.
  - **The Whole Bible** - The Gospel is found in the Bible, but it is not simply the Bible. The whole Bible is the Word of God, but it isn’t the Gospel, but the Bible contains the Gospel.
  - **Belief In God** - Some people believe that they are “sharing the Gospel” by pushing belief in God. That’s a good place to start, but belief in God is NOT the result to the Gospel. The devil and his demons believe in God and they will spend forever in hell.
  - **Moral Teaching** - Morality is good but it’s not the Gospel. Islam teaches moralism. Jehovah’s Witness teaches moralism. Buddhism is a moralist religion (Karma). Moralism produces better behavior - the Gospel produces total transformation.
  - **Good Advice** - The Gospel is *Good News* **NOT** good advice. Advice is often something we share to help out. “Here, take this, it’ll help. Not feeling well? Try God!” Listen, the Gospel isn’t some advice, it’s THE answer. The GOSPEL! It’s not a suggestion it’s the solution.

## 2. What the Gospel **IS!** – Paul tells us in the text several things...

- The Gospel is of first importance.

**1Cor. 15:3** ¶ For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance...

- In fact, there is nothing more important in all the Scripture than the Gospel.

- The Gospel is from God not mankind.

**Gal. 1:11,12** ¶ I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is not of human origin. I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.

- The Gospel is God's story of Salvation, not ours to change.

- The Gospel is prophesied in the Old Testament.

**Rom. 1:2** the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures

- It's not new, it's not novel, it has always been God's plan.

- The Gospel is the good news of Salvation.

**1Cor. 15:2** By this gospel you are saved...

**Rom. 1:16** ¶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes

- The Gospel is the substitutionary death of Jesus.

### 1) Jesus died as my substitute

**Is. 53:4,5** Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him

- God is just and so, sin cannot go unpunished.

Progressive Christianity sees Jesus' substitutionary death as cosmic child abuse.

- Let me ask you a question, if there was any other way to heaven than through the death of Jesus, why would God the Father allow Jesus to suffer, be tortured and die?

### 1) Jesus died as payment for my sin - atonement

**1Pet. 2:24** "He himself bore our sins" in his body on the cross

**2Cor. 5:21** God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

- Jesus paid with His blood for the offense to God that my sin caused. His death satisfied the justice of God.

- One of the major problems of PC is that it doesn't acknowledge that sin cannot go unpunished.

- The Gospel is received by grace and faith alone.

**Gal. 1:6,7** ¶ I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— which is really no gospel at all.

- A move away from grace is a move away from the Gospel.

- Good works, social justice, tolerance and inclusion – it's not the Gospel. Jesus saves by grace through faith. **That's the Gospel!**

**Rom. 1:17** For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”

- Any Gospel other than grace and faith is no gospel at all.
- Salvation has always been and always will be by grace and faith. All we have to do is accept it by faith. Not simple belief, but absolute belief. It is complete trust in God for our forgiveness, redemption, justification, and future glorification.
- There is NO OTHER WAY to Salvation and Heaven than through the Gospel of Jesus.
- The Gospel includes the physical resurrection of Jesus.

**1Cor. 15:3,4** ¶ For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures

**1Cor. 15:17** And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.
- Jesus’ death was the penalty for sin, Jesus’ resurrection is the power over sin.

## II. Why Must It Be Held Firmly?

1. A different gospel introduces confusion.

**Gal. 1:6,7** ¶ I am astonished that you are so quickly...turning to a different gospel—which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ.
2. A confused gospel becomes a perverted gospel.

**Gal. 1:7** ...Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ.
3. Supernatural signs do **NOT** validate a false gospel.

**Gal. 1:8** But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God’s curse!
4. Another gospel results in God’s curse.

**Gal. 1:9** As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let them be under God’s curse!
5. A distorted gospel is often the result of people pleasing.
  - **Gal. 1:10** ¶ Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ.
  - **The true Gospel pleases God NOT man!**
  - Progressive Christianity is changing the Gospel to please themselves. They want to practice things that God disallows.

## III. How Do We Practice It?

1. Prioritize the Gospel! Put first things first!
  - Not everything in the Bible is of equal importance.
  - The Gospel is of first importance.

- Listen, don't die on every hill in the Bible. I said it last week, It bears repeating Some beliefs we talk over, some beliefs we fight over, some beliefs we die over. The Gospel is a belief to die over!
2. Commemorate and celebrate the Gospel at every baptism and Communion Service.
    - When we water baptize, it's a big deal! It is a reenactment of the Gospel. Going under the water symbolizes our death to sin through Christ's death. Coming out of the water symbolizes our resurrection to new life in Christ through His physical resurrection.
    - When we take Communion. It's a big deal! So big that Paul says if we do it wrong, we could bring sickness and premature death to ourselves. When we eat the bread, it proclaims His death as a substitution for our death. When we drink the cup, it proclaims His death as payment for our sins.
  3. Guard the Gospel with Biblical discernment.
    - Learn how to lovingly confront those who distort and pervert.
    - Pick your battles. Don't argue over ever denominational difference. But it's okay to disagree with doctrinal defects (false teachings). In fact, we should have no fellowship with them.
    - A good person doesn't guarantee good doctrine. Remember, moral teaching creates better behavior. Only the Gospel creates total transformation.
  4. Share the Gospel at every opportunity.
    - Those who teach a different Gospel are under a curse. That curse will result in their eternal damnation. Warn those who have departed from the faith or those who have never accepted the Gospel of Salvation.

**CONCLUSION:** Let me conclude with some questions that you MUST answer!

- Have your sins been forgiven? Have you received the grace of God by faith? Or are you still trying to be good enough for God?
- You must respond to the Gospel! You can either accept it and be saved, or change it and be cursed. There is NO OTHER OPTION.

**Let's Pray:** Father God, I thank You that You have offered forgiveness and redemption in the Gospel. Thank You Jesus for Your sacrifice. Thank You for dying in my place and paying the penalty for my sin.

- We repent O God, for deserting the Gospel You prophesied in the OT. We repent of trying to change the Gospel, making it no Gospel at all.
- Forgive us for thinking that we can improve or expand on Your Gospel.
- Forgive us for our pride and arrogance. We humble ourselves before You!
- We acknowledge You Jesus as the ONLY way to God and heaven.
- Help us to commemorate and celebrate the Gospel at every baptism and communion. Help us guard and defend the Gospel with discernment.
- Give us the courage to share the Gospel at every opportunity.
- In Jesus strong Name we pray, AMEN!