

21T22 Me Gospel

Hello my friends. Thanks for joining me @ the PUNLA coffee table. So, get your coffee or tea and get comfortable so we can talk.

If I say the word Gospel, what do you think of?

I'm sure some of you immediately thought about the Gospel you are taught in church. Share the Gospel, Preach the Gospel, Believe the Gospel. Okay

But what have you been taught the Gospel is? I was listening to a message by Dallas Willard. What he said had a profound impact on me. One of his philosophy students had summarized the Gospel by three things you get once you are "saved"; A certificate, a ticket and a catalog.

Let it sink in for a second or two. A certificate, a ticket and a catalog. Simply put, a certificate showing I'm a member of the club, a ticket to heaven and a catalog so I can ask for stuff.

I was more than slightly stunned as he began to unpack this perspective he had heard. But then I realized this was the gospel I have been taught in many churches over the years.

First the certificate. Dallas said, "you say something or do something and now I'm part of an exclusive club." I thought what is he talking about, Then I kept thinking. We have official church memberships, baptism certificates, I'm a Baptist or I'm a Methodist or I go to XYZ mega church, etc etc. Is Membership really this important. When put this way it sounded pretty selfish to me. Me, Me, I, I, I.

Then, a Ticket. Dallas said, "A ticket to heaven when I die. I said the right prayer. I believed the right thing. Now I'm guaranteed a ticket to heaven. They have to let me in no matter what else I do after that." I started feeling a little ashamed. Me, Me, Me again. What I get, What I can do. Pretty selfish and self-centered sounding.

Lastly, a catalog so we can ask for stuff. This pained me greatly. But then I thought about prayers which are often a litany of requests of God. Please give me this or please give me that. Heal my cousin's cancer or protect me as I drive. And all these requests are great, but it suddenly sounded like an order form from a catalog. Give me 2 from the healing section and 1 from the better job group and send 3 from the travel section to my cousins and sister. Etc. Again, Me, Me, Me, Me. '

Are we really this selfish? The answer is of course Painfully yes. Don't we remember who we are talking to. He's God. We humans are exactly this way. But is this really the Gospel, the way most people understand it.

Well, the word gospel really just means good news. So, yes having a ticket to heaven is good news, being able to ask for stuff is good news and being in an exclusive club is probably good news to some. But why do all of these seem so selfish and self-centered when described this way.

As I pondered this it occurred to me the words of Jesus. Repent and Believe the Good News. But what was that scripture. I did a quick search and found Mark 1:15 which is Jesus quoted. "And saying, the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:15 KJV)

Wait a second. The gospel Jesus is talking about is that the Kingdom of God is at hand or here right now. The only Me part is I have the opportunity to follow the King of kings right now.

Do we follow Jesus because of who He is or because of what we get? This is a question you better ask yourself honestly. Do you love Jesus, or do you love the stuff you think you get? There is a profound difference, I promise you. One is very selfish, the other is selfless.

I want to say it one more time to make sure you get it. Do you love Jesus, or do you love the stuff you think you get? Who is this story really about? You or Jesus.

I heard Steve Greg ask this question. If Jesus came to you and said oh by the way that heaven and hell thing, it doesn't exist. Then what? I sat and thought about this for a while. Then I talked with my wife and Joy about it for quite a while. Now then I came to this conclusion. This is me okay, no divine revelation. I thought about my life before I was on fire for Jesus. When I was Me centered and we all are. That life was empty and unfulfilling.

But then, I realized my new self was different from that. I realized I don't really care about heaven; I just want to be with Jesus. I don't care what or who you call me, I just want to please Jesus. I don't really need anything because I trust Jesus. I know He will give me what I need, and His will be done not mine.

I stopped because this was such a profound amazing moment for me. Heaven great, but I don't follow Jesus for Heaven. I follow Jesus because I love Jesus. Needs. Of course, I have needs and a lot of wants. But I trust Jesus because His plan for my life is way more exciting and fulfilling than the one, I tried to live without Him.

I'm not saying this because I have some special faith or think I'm better than someone else. Quite the contrary, I am just a servant to the King. It made me think of a song titled "Nobody" by Casting Crowns and Matthew West. I'm just a nobody, trying to tell everybody about somebody who saved my soul" It's not about saving me, so I get to go to heaven. It's about saving me from me, so I can live this amazing fulfilling life right now. Life as a citizen of the Kingdom of God bringing that Kingdom living to a place near me. Wherever I am, Whatever I do, Whoever I'm with. I get the pleasure of living this unbelievable satisfying life. And by the way, you don't have to ask for stuff, because Jesus told us our Father already knows. Stay focused on Jesus not us or our wants. Stay focused on pleasing the Lord with our lives, not where we go once, we are dead. Stay engaged with the world so you can show them Jesus, not isolated in our own small groups.

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father. Thank you for your good news. Help us to listen to you as we study and research your word

Help us not to be confused by the many voices and opinions. May we stay focused on your word Lord.

Help me Lord to let your word lead the way so we can see what your Gospel is. What Gospel you Lord preached while you walked among us.

We pay in your name Lord Jesus, Amen.

Thank you for joining me @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. If you liked the message, please click like. And Please Subscribe to our channel. Leave comments here, or our website or mail me. I want your feedback so let me know what you think.

See you next time @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. God bless.

LINKS

Dallas Willard the Gospels message.

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