

THE POISON LACED GOSPEL

“They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; adders' poison is under their lips.” Ps. 140:3

“What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel.” 1 Cor. 9:18

“I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.” Gal. 1:6-9

By Pastor Del Wray

*“No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, **and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD.**” Isaiah 54:17*

I hate to be the offensive one, the bearer of negative news, but Jesus said we are the “**salt**” of the earth not the “**sugar**” of the earth. The salt has lost His savor. We have so sweetened the Gospel that it has lost its effectiveness. You really want to know what is missing in our churches. Bad people! Bad people are missing from our churches! Our pews are packed with “good,” self-serving people. We have lost sight of how wretched we are and how wretched man really is.

*“And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? None is good, save one, that is, God.”
Luke 18:19*

All of us, apart from Jesus, are sinful, depraved from the top of our heads to the soles of our feet; we are all “bad to the bone” you might say. **We need to return to a Gospel that continually reminds us of this fact!** Cheap grace is just another way of describing the Gospel that is being peddled by most of our churches today. A costless Christianity! Eternal life at wholesale-club prices.

“So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.” Luke 14:33

The greatest message anyone can hear is that of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. But as important as that is, it is often given to enormous distortion and simply diluted to accommodate the masses. People think they're preaching the Gospel to you when they tell you, “you can have an abundant life,” a life that will “set you free” with meaning and purpose, or that “you can have

a personal relationship with Jesus.” All of those things are true, and they’re all important, but they don’t get to the heart of the Gospel. While at the same time they’re lacing the truth with Satan’s deadly poison of deception and distortion.

“Salvation is on sale at bargain-basement prices at your local entertainment center masquerading as a church.”

THE POISON LACED GOSPEL:

The Gospel is called the ‘good news’ because it addresses the most serious problem that you and I have as human beings, SIN, and that problem is simply this: God is holy and He is just, and I’m not. And at the end of my life, I’m going to stand before a just and holy God and I’ll be judged. And I’ll be judged either on the basis of my own righteousness, or lack of it, or the righteousness of another. The good news of the Gospel is that Jesus lived a life of perfect righteousness, of perfect obedience to God, not for His own well being but for His people. He has done for me what I couldn’t possibly do for myself. But not only has He lived that life of perfect obedience, He offered Himself as a perfect sacrifice to satisfy the justice and the righteousness of God. And because of Him *“There is therefore now no judgment to them that are in Christ Jesus...”* Rom. 8:1. He went even further being willing to come back in His “Spirit” and live through us a life that none of us could live. Even now He lives His life in you and me carrying out His redemptive program.

The great misconception in our day is this: that God isn’t concerned to protect His own integrity. He’s a kind of wishy-washy deity, who just waves a wand of forgiveness over everybody. No. For God to forgive you is a very costly matter. It cost the sacrifice of His Son. So valuable was that sacrifice that God pronounced it valuable by raising Him from the dead – so that Christ died for us, He was raised for our justification. So the Gospel is something objective. It is the message of who Jesus is and what He did. And it also has a subjective dimension. How is the benefits of Jesus subjectively appropriated to us? How do I get it? The Bible makes it clear that we are justified not by our works, not by our efforts, not by our deeds, but by **faith**, and by **faith ALONE**. The only way you can receive the gift of Christ’s life and death is by putting your trust in Him, and in Him **ALONE**. You do that, you’re declared just by God, you’re adopted into His family, you’re forgiven of all of your sins, and you have begun your journey and pilgrimage home for all eternity. 1 Cor. 15 gives us the gospel in a nutshell:

“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:” 1 Cor. 15:3-4

Now that you know what the gospel is, it can easily be seen when it is laced with poison.

More than a third of the entire gospel narratives in the New Testament are taken up with Jesus’ personal struggle against a religious community dedicated to the practice and ideals of the scribes and Pharisees. One of the largest of these religious communities back then and today is Romanism, propagators of every form of false idealism know to man, which all we believers should hold a very strong hatred for! Many of my friends have been trapped in its entanglements, some having escaped while others, personal friends, are screaming in hell right now that were

never able to escape the snare of the church God called the “**great whore.**” They died believing a “gospel” laced with poison. Here are more of those proponents of a poison laced gospel: Protestantism; Lutherans, Anglican Episcopalian or Church of England, Methodist and the Presbyterians descendants from the Mother Church, the Great Whore. By the millions these are dying every day from a poisoning of the Truth. There are many churches that are so obvious pushing this poison laced message that it’s almost impossible NOT to recognize their venomous mixed gospel. This thesis in no way pretends to list all of these false organizations and religious societies that practice covertly the poisoning of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by way of distortion, deception and poisonous dilution. The Bible warns of a “pot” having been mixed with poison filled with all these churches and their deadly so called gospel. Like the Assemblies of God, the Church of God, the Church of Christ, Pentecostal Charismatic, Seventh-Day Adventist, Mormons, JW’s, Scientology, Nazarene, Mennonite, Wesleyan, Amish, the Salvation Army founded by William Booth, a giant for God who had his organization completely destroyed by this vile association of the gospel along with many others. Every one of these churches claiming to preach the true gospel, but in actuality has been spreading the false gospel. Again, let me iterate, that I am in no way saying every single person in any of these organizations is going to hell. Only God controls the affairs of men and knows their beginning from their end. He and He alone know the hearts of men and there are times when He will allow a believer because of his sin and a darkened mind to fulfill prophetic Scripture aiding the devil in his diabolical scheme. Today many a Christian is being used to do just that. Why else does Jesus cry out loudly?

“...Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.” Rev. 18:4

The church divided, sin in the camp the world system monopolizing using a poison laced gospel to damn the souls of men in our churches more so than ever before. There is one more organizational church group that I cannot help but expose because it by far is more deceptive than those I’ve mention already; it is in our own ranks, in our Baptist ranks, those who call themselves Bible believers, those calling themselves King James Bible believers. It was noted recently “that over four hundred Baptist pastors resigned their churches over the recent sex scandal” that was exposed in the news of late. You can think you have been called into the ministry never having been called by God. A person can call himself anything. And that is the greater wickedness, for it is far more easy and evil for a man to deceive himself than he deceives another. Church called pastors that have never been called by God. Let me say that again, “Church called preachers that have never been called by God.” Our pulpits are full of them. Jesus warned in Romans Chapter 1,

*“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, **who hold the truth in unrighteousness;**” Rom. 1:18.*

One can hold the Truth in unrighteousness! One can go about the work of God the wrong way and it never to be accepted by God. The wrong person can do a work for God and it too will be rejected. God is the ONE who does the calling, ordaining, empowering and He will only use His anointed vessel to carry out His work. Jesus is the life changing agent and He does it all through His every WORD. Thank God for His perfect unassailable Word!

May I begin by asking a question? Why did Jesus refuse to drink a mixture of gall and wine just before he was placed on the cross? Only two of the four gospels, Matthew and Mark, mention Jesus being offered something to drink before being placed on the cross. Matthew 27:33-34 refers to this drink as vinegar mixed with gall, while Mark calls it wine and myrrh Mark 15:23. Both biblical verses refer to the same thing. Matthew reads this way,

“And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull, They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink.” Matthew 27:33-34.

Mark reads this way,

“And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received it not.” Mark 15:23

Jesus was offered a wine and gall mix to drink just before 9 A.M. on Wednesday, April 5, 30 A.D. The offering took place right after he arrived at Golgotha but before he was nailed to the cross and the Roman soldiers cast lots for his clothes. The English word gall, in the New Testament, comes from the Greek word *chole* which literally means poison. All the Old Testament verses that use this word Lamentations 3:5, 3:19, Jeremiah 8:14, 9:15, 23:15 and so on have a common definition of something that tastes bitter and is many times poisonous. A mixture of wine and gall was commonly given to criminals before their execution in order to ease some of their suffering. As I was taught in school all poisons are bitter but acids are sour. Christ likely refused this drink knowing that its bitter taste meant it was more of a poison than a pain killer. He did not want to die from poisoning or have his senses numbed while on the cross. He knew that He had to shed his blood in order for Him to become the supreme sacrifice for the sins of all mankind, and He refused to take the easy way out.

The offering of this mixture by the Romans, however, was a fulfillment of prophecy given by King David. While in the depths of a painful trial David cried that his enemies gave him only something bitter to quench his thirst Psalm 69:16-21.

As can be seen here the Devil was still at work even the very moment Christ was to be hung on the cross manipulating trying to prevent Jesus Christ from dying on the cross naturally supposing to poison Him, negating and preventing Him from standing in the room for sinners. Even at the last minute the Devil was working to undo God’s program of reconciliation. Christ refused the drink and by doing so defeated the Devil on the Cross. Satan had lost he had been defeated at Calvary. He knew he was doomed so he changed his attack from the Son of God, to the fallen sons of men. Knowing he would lose in the end he has set out to take as many lost souls with him. Do you think Satan is any different today? What fools we’ve become?

What Jesus encountered with the scribes and Pharisees was called “dead orthodoxy.” We need both salt and light in the lives of believers. We need both the positive and the negative Word of God and anything short of that leaves the gospel laced with poison. Both the relational and the practical are needed. Commission and omission! The great danger here is you begin to trust your feelings and exalt experience over truth, what is felt over what God has infallibly revealed. Before long you are interpreting the Bible in light of your experience instead of interpreting your experience in light of the Bible. The vocabulary becomes “God told me this” and “God said that” but what follows isn’t a quote from the Bible, wherein God actually speaks, but a quote from the

feelings or imagination or subjective experience. Following these hunches and impressions, we end up with a Christianity on shaky ground because it might be of God, if it agrees with sound interpretation and application of Scripture, or it might just be from your own vain imagination or it might be from the enemy, the “angel of light” who comes in a disguise to deceive the biblical illiterate. This is a world-wide epidemic doing much harm as people build their lives on the shifting sands of feelings instead of the rock-solid foundation of the Word of God, and the gospel of Jesus Christ in Scripture. It’s the actor playing out his role in church. All demonstration, flare and roar, with plenty of “shouts” and “praises” but it fades away as quickly as it is sent heavenward, never to be taken into God’s presence by His Holy Spirit. Your feelings can deceive you and be a poison when laced with the gospel of Jesus Christ that can kill and damn the soul throughout all eternity. Feelings and emotions should come into play after salvation and never before! They’re so deceiving!

We do well then to pay attention to the Word of God, this “Lamp” shining in a dark place, a great description of the Bible in this world, until Christ Himself returns. Why? It’s all about Jesus and the Source and permanence of the Bible compared to all human experience. The Bible is one-hundred percent from God and permanently fixed in the written word. Men were moved by the Holy Spirit, not by their own feelings. Paul didn’t wake up one morning and say, “I think I will write the book of Romans today.” And when it came time to write the book of Romans, Paul didn’t give his own private interpretation or personal opinion or religious insight. The Bible is not the thoughts of man; it’s the voice of God from His Heavenly throne. Men spoke, and wrote “from God” as they were “moved by the Holy Spirit.” It is Divine Authorship through human instruments and permanently preserved in the writings of the King James Bible. We need to pay attention to this shining lamp, the KJB, allowing the Bible to interpret and clarify our Christian experience. It is more reliable than our greatest experience or strongest feelings. The only sure source of truth and righteousness! Even in our day as man continues to lace its pages with arsenic and poison we who know God’s Word have the sure fire of the Word of God!

Bible separation in its truest sense; Biblical principles are understood and external standards are implemented. In legalism; Biblical principles are ignored and external standards are exalted. In libertinism; Biblical principles are forgotten and external standards are despised.” The third description seems to be where the vast majority of the church is moving today.

The gospel laced with Legalism:

Legalism is a special kind of false teaching. In Acts 15:1 we see that legalism crept into the early church: "And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." When you think of the word "legalism" you should think of the word "law." These people were saying that a person cannot be saved without keeping the law, being circumcised. Is this really true? To be saved does a person need to be circumcised? According to Acts 16:30-31, what is the one and only thing that a person must do to be saved? "And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." Acts 16:31

Legalism is dangerous because it gets a person to look away from what Jesus Christ has done on the cross. The person starts looking at what he can do. Legalism says that man must do something to get God's blessing and God's salvation. The Bible says that Christ has already done

it all, John 19:30. It is not what I do that counts; it is what Christ has done! Legalism says, "What Christ did on the cross is not enough. There are certain things which I must do also. The believer says," Jesus died for me! What He did is enough. It is not my anything that saves me; it is God's everything!" There are people today who say, "You cannot be saved unless you are baptized in water." Is this legalism? Why? There are people who say, "You cannot be saved unless you live a good life and try to keep the Ten Commandments," is this trusting what Christ has done? Or does this man trust what he can do? No one has ever been saved by keeping the law, but multitudes have been saved by trusting Jesus Christ and Him alone. Danger: Do not let anyone get you to take your eyes off Jesus Christ and what He did for you on the cross. Legalism is a poison lacing the gospel of many preachers.

Every generation since the foundation of humanity up to the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ required much of a courageous servant. God instilled quality courage required of a servant as early as the Old Testament prophets. History records examples of the strongest in faith that were not afraid to rebuke even kings. Elijah the Prophet rebuked King Ahab without giving heed to the consequences of his actions. Such type of faith ascended Elijah into Heaven in a fiery chariot; while dogs licked up Ahab's blood. St. John the Baptist rebuked King Herod for not following the law. God told Isaiah the prophet to,

"Cry aloud with strength, and spare not; lift up your voice like a trumpet and declare to My people their sins, and to the house of Jacob their lawlessness" Isaiah 58:1.

And instructed Ezekiel to "But you, Son of man, do not be afraid of them nor be dismayed by their looks, for they will swarm and sting you, and crowd against you on every side. You will live in the midst of scorpions. Do not be afraid of their words or dismayed by their looks, for they are a house of provocation. You shall speak My words to them, whether they hear or are put off, because they are a house of provocation" Ezekiel 2:6-7. Although St. John the Baptist was beheaded, yet his saintly voice still rings true today with the same message, "It is not lawful to you" Matthew 14:4.

Our SIN needs to be forgiven but we also need it covered, covered from God's sight. Our pardon, liberty was paid for by the Lord Jesus on the cross. If you've experienced this forgiveness and pardon, you have been blessed beyond measure, forever blessed. Beyond that, your SIN has been covered. Covered by what and from Whom? What is the precious blood of Jesus Christ! The whom is from God's eyes, an eternal covering. Your SIN will be remembered against you no more. God is the only ONE who not only forgives our SIN but covers our SIN. Psalm 85:2 reads, "Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their sin." We have a vital need of forgiveness and pardon, in order for that to happen, our sin must be covered from the all seeing eyes of God. Can anything be hidden from Him? Yes! Our sin can be hidden, covered from His all seeing eyes, but only by the precious blood of the sacrificial Lamb of God, our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 1 reads,

"...forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was

foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you... ”
1 Peter 1:18-20

Most Christians are not aware of how serious it is to add to what Jesus Christ has finished! It is the difference between whether or not a person is saved. It is the difference between heaven and hell. The salvation that God has provided through Jesus Christ is by grace. "For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" Ephesians 2:8-9. Acts 15:11 says, "But we believe that through the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they." Eternal life is not received by, attained by, or kept by a person's works, conduct or behavior. We are saved by grace through faith. Grace by definition excludes all works. "And if by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work" Romans 11:6. One work added to grace would render it no more grace. If you were to add one drop of poison to a glass of pure water, it would render it no more a glass of pure water: but a glass of poisoned water. The gospel of grace becomes poisoned when just one human work is added to the plan of salvation.

The grace test: What is the grace test? This is an easy way of testing whether or not you have the true message of the gospel as it is given in the Bible. You simply ask, "Did Jesus pay for all my sins on the cross?" or "Do I have to do something or not do something in order to gain my salvation?" If you have to do anything at all to be saved, then you have failed the grace test. You will stand before God on the basis of your works, your righteousness, which are "filthy rags" in the sight of God Isaiah 64:6. You will not be saved.

This is a real serious business! God warns about adding or subtracting from what He has said in Revelation 22:18-19. Salvation is the gift of God Romans 6:23.

"Paul, an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead; And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia: Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: To whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the race of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." Galatians 1:1-10

We who are saved, who've been forgiven and covered, are indeed BLESSED more than words can express!

"Cheap grace is the grace we bestow on ourselves. Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, Communion without

confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without bearing our cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate.” *Dietrich Bonhoeffer*

- ✓ A poisoned laced gospel is a perversion of the gospel of Christ. Galatians 1:7.
- ✓ A poisoned laced gospel is a perversion of the gospel of Christ, and therefore the teller of this message is telling a lie. Proverbs 30:4-6.
- ✓ A poisoned laced gospel is a perversion of the gospel of Christ and is a subtle way of calling God a liar. 1 John 5:10.
- ✓ A poisoned laced gospel is a perversion of the gospel of Christ by adding man's righteousness as a condition of salvation. Isaiah 64:6.
- ✓ A poisoned laced gospel is a perversion of the gospel of Christ and is in reality the preaching of a religion that will not save. I Corinthians 1:17.
- ✓ A poisoned laced gospel is a perversion of the gospel of Christ and is a message that causes the lost to be blinded to the truth. II Corinthians 4:4.
- ✓ A poisoned laced gospel is a perversion of the gospel of Christ and causes saved persons to become confused. Galatians 2:13; I Corinthians 1:10; I Corinthians 15:11.
- ✓ A poisoned laced gospel is a perversion of the gospel of Christ and keeps the true Christian from a clear witness. Galatians 2:16.
- ✓ A poisoned laced gospel is a perversion of the gospel of Christ and brings persecution to the preacher of the true message. Galatians 5:11.
- ✓ A poisoned laced gospel is a perversion of the gospel of Christ and is in reality the preaching of a religion that will not save. I Corinthians 1:17.