Gospel of God BEFORE Gospel of Christ

[MIKE MCGLATHERY](https://www.facebook.com/mike.mcglathery)·[TUESDAY, MARCH 15, 2016](https://www.facebook.com/notes/mike-mcglathery/gospel-of-god-before-gospel-of-christ/10153892196471335)29 Reads

**Gospel of God before the Gospel of Christ:**

Let's look at several passages that clearly show that Paul always presented the gospel **of God,** **BEFORE** the gospel **of Christ** that saves believers.

**¶**

(1a)

First, look at the situation of Paul's visit to Thessalonica.

**Acts 17:2,** And Paul, **as HIS MANNER was**, went in unto them,

and **three sabbath days** **reasoned** with them out of the **scriptures**,

**Acts 17:3,** Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered,

and **risen again** from the dead;

and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, **is Christ**.

Acts 17:3 clearly is the gospel of God as Paul describes it in **Romans 1:3-4.**

**Acts 17:3,** Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered,

and **risen again** from the dead;

There is Christ's resurrection.

and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, **is Christ**.

That identifies Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah.

After having to leave Thessalonica too soon, Paul wrote back from Athens:

**1 Thessalonians 2:9,** For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail:

for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you,

we preached unto you the **gospel of God**.

Writing back to Thessalonica, he verifies that it was the gospel of God that he had preached to them.

**(1b)**

Then, from Athens, Paul went a step further:

**1 Thessalonians 3:2,** And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God,

and our FELLOWLABOURER IN THE **GOSPEL OF CHRIST**,

to **establish** you,

and to **comfort** you CONCERNING **YOUR FAITH:**

Then, in 1st Thessalonians 3, verses 6, and 7, you can see Paul's comfort from the positive response of the Thessalonians.

**1 Thessalonians 3:6** ¶But now when Timotheus came from you unto us,

and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity,

and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us,

as we also to see you:

**1 Thessalonians 3:7** Therefore, brethren,

we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith:

**¶**

**(2a)**

Secondly, in Acts 20:21, we can see Paul separating the two phases of his preaching. First, Paul tells of his being SEPARATED unto the "gospel of God" when he says "repentance toward God". Then in the second part of the verse, Paul tells of his being SENT to preach the "gospel of Christ" "both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks" when he says "faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ".

**Acts 20:21,** Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks,

**repentance toward God**,

**"Repentance toward God" is the gospel of God** described briefly with different words. Change your mind about Jesus being the Son of God, the risen Messiah.

Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks,

**repentance toward God**,

**(2b)**

**AND**

Next came saving faith in **the gospel of Christ**.

**faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**¶**

**(3a)**

Thirdly, here again, you can see the gospel of God information given before it is followed up by the gospel of Christ information.

**Acts 26:18,** To open their eyes,

and to **turn them** from darkness to light,

and from the power of Satan unto God,

**That is the gospel of God** described briefly, with different words. They were to turn from the darkness of their apostasy, to God and the belief that Jesus is the Son of God, the risen Messiah.

(3b)

Next in **Acts 26:18** came **the gospel of Christ** that **forgives** sins, and **saves** people.

**THAT THEY MAY RECEIVE**

**forgiveness of sins, and inheritance** among them which

are sanctified **BY FAITH THAT IS IN ME**.

The phrase "that they may receive" reflects Paul's offer that they "RECEIVE" God's salvation offer, including that they RECEIVE to themselves the "FORGIVENESS OF SINS".

**¶**

**(4a)**

Fourthly, look at the first four verses of Romans and hear Paul describe the gospel of God at the very beginning of his epistle. Christ separated Saul of Tarsus **FROM** his mother religion, Judaism, **TO** the gospel of God.

**Romans 1:1,** Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle,

separated unto the **gospel of God**,

**Romans 1:2,** (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,)

**Romans 1:3,** Concerning **his Son** Jesus **Christ** our Lord,

which was made **of the seed of David** according to the flesh;

**Romans 1:4,** And declared to be **the Son of God** with power,

according to the spirit of holiness,

**by the resurrection** from the dead:

That was in the **first 4 verses of Romans 1** about the **gospel of God**.

(4b)

Then later in the first chapter comes **verse 16 of Romans 1,** about the **gospel of Christ..**

**Romans 1:16,** For I am not ashamed of the **gospel of Christ**:

for it is the power of God **unto salvation**

to every one that **believeth**;

to the **Jew first**, and also to the Greek.

There again, we see the "gospel of God" presented before the "gospel of Christ".

**¶**

**(5a)**

Before Christ started His new pattern of salvation by saving Saul of Tarsus as the first one in as a sinner, Gentiles that wanted to be right with God had to bless Israel, coming through Israel's doctrine and kingdom gospel. But, in saving sinner Saul of Tarsus, Christ separated him unto the "gospel of God".

No longer do Gentiles need to bless Israel in order to get right with God. Their belief that Jesus is the Son of God, the risen Messiah makes Gentiles acceptable and set apart by the Holy Ghost, to hear and believe the gospel of Christ to be saved.

**Romans 15:16,** That I should be the **minister** of Jesus Christ to **the Gentiles**,

**ministering** the **gospel of God**,

that the offering up of the Gentiles **might be acceptable**,

being **sanctified by the Holy Ghost**.

It is true that Romans 15:16 is less specific than other verses, but it does mean the same thing in less specific words. It does not go against the rest of the verses that are more specific that the gospel of God is to be understood or preached before the gospel of salvation can be received.

**¶**

**(6a)**

Before commenting, please read these 2 verses.

**2 Thessalonians 2:13** But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you,

brethren beloved of the Lord,

because God hath from the beginning

chosen you to salvation

through sanctification of the Spirit

and

belief of the truth:

**2 Thessalonians 2:14** Whereunto

he called you by our gospel,

to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, lets take a closer look at what Paul said in these verses.

**2 Thessalonians 2:13,** But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you,

brethren beloved of the Lord,

because God hath from the beginning

chosen you to salvation

through **sanctification of the Spirit**

According to Romans 15:16, **it is the** "gospel of God" that sanctifies toward hearing and believing when the "gospel of Christ" is preached to that person.

**(6b)**

**AND**

**belief of the truth**:

The truth in this verse refers to the gospel of salvation, as you can see from the following 2 references:

(“the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation,” in **Ephesians 1:13**)

(“the word of the truth of the gospel … of the grace of God.” In **Colossians 1:5-6**)

**2 Thessalonians 2:14,** **Whereunto he called you by our gospel**,

to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our gospel is Paul's gospel, the gospel of salvation whether before or after Christ sent Paul to all men.

**¶**

**(7a)**

**Acts 17:16-33,** especially verses: **32-33.**

**Acts 17:16,** Now while Paul waited for them at Athens,

his spirit was stirred in him,

(spirit with lower case "s" = his attitude).

when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry.

**Acts 17:17,** Therefore **disputed he in the synagogue with the JEWS**,

AND **WITH THE DEVOUT PERSONS**,

There you see the Jews and the Greeks again.

and in the market daily with **them that met with him**.

Who did it say met with him in the market? The Jews and the Greeks earlier in that verse.

**Acts 17:18,** Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks,

encountered him. And some said,

What will this babbler say?

other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of **strange gods**:

because **he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection**. (*gospel of God*)

That is a scripture that tells that Paul preached the gospel of God first, before ever mentioning to them the gospel of salvation. They called him a "**babbler**, and said he preached "**strange gods**", **JESUS**, and the **resurrection**. The Athenians were **rejecting** the "**gospel of God**".

**Acts 17:19,** And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying,

May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is?

**Acts 17:20,** For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears:

we would know therefore what these things mean.

**Acts 17:21,** (For all the Athenians and strangers which were there

**spent their time in nothing else,**

**but either to tell, or to hear some new thing**.)

**Acts 17:22,** Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said,

Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are **too** superstitious.

**Acts 17:23,** For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions,

I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.

**Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship,**

**him declare I unto you**.

**Acts 17:24,** God that made the world and all things therein,

seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth,

dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

**Acts 17:25,** Neither is worshipped with men's hands,

as though he needed any thing,

seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;

**Acts 17:26,** And hath made of one blood all nations of men

for to dwell on all the face of the earth,

and hath determined the times before appointed,

and the bounds of their habitation;

**Acts 17:27,** That **they should seek the Lord**,

**if haply** they might feel after him, and find him,

though he be **not far from every one of us**: *(the synagogue)*

"Not far from every one of us" probably refers to the synagogue just down the street where Paul had just been before.

**Acts 17:28,** For in him we live, and move, and have our being;

as certain also of your own poets have said,

For we are also his offspring.

**Acts 17:29,** Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God,

we ought NOT to think that the Godhead is like unto

gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.

Act**s 17:30,** And the times of this ignorance God winked at;

but now commandeth **all men every where to REPENT:** (*gospel of God*)

Repent of what? Repent of **NOT** believing that Jesus is the Son of God, the risen Messiah.

**Acts 17:31,** Because he hath appointed **a day**,

in the which **HE WILL JUDGE** the world in righteousness

by **that man** whom he hath ordained;

whereof he hath given assurance unto all men,

in that **he hath raised him from the dead.**

So, "that man" is the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ being raised from the dead is part of the "gospel of God".

**Acts 17:32,** And when they heard of the **resurrection** of the dead,

some **mocked**: and others said,

We will hear thee again of this matter.

By rejecting the gospel of God, the Athenians rejected their opportunity to hear the gospel of Christ to be saved.

**Acts 17:33,** **SO** **PAUL DEPARTED** from among them.

"'SO' Paul departed". "So" means because they rejected the gospel of God, they did NOT get to hear the gospel of Christ. Those Jews, Greeks, and alien Gentiles in Athens DID **NOT** GET TO HEAR the gospel of salvation, because they DID **NOT** RECEIVE the gospel of God that Paul preached to them. The "**gospel of God**" was **preliminary** and **prerequisite**.