

## The Law and the Gospel

John Colquhoun (1815)

### Chapter 5 (Lesson 7)

**The Gospel of Christ**-The word “gospel” simply means good news or \_\_\_\_\_.

Before we begin, we must first correct a misunderstanding and also examine how the word gospel is used in Scripture in both a general and strict way.

A common misunderstanding is that everything in the Old Testament is to be considered “\_\_\_\_\_” and everything in the New Testament is to be considered “\_\_\_\_\_”.

*“Some have thought that whatever is in the Old Testament is law and that whatever is in the New is gospel. But this is such a mistake as reveals great ignorance of the sacred oracles. The law and the gospel, in their strict and proper sense, are intermingled with each other both in the Old Testament and in the New.”*

#### General ways in which the word gospel is used in Scripture

-This word can be used to discuss the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ (Mark 1:1). We often speak this way when we refer to the books of Mathew-John as the “Gospels”.

Sometimes the word gospel is used to denote “the whole of divine truth”, comprising \_\_\_\_\_ the law and the gospel strictly taken (1 Peter 4:17).”

#### Strict way in which the word gospel is used in Scripture

*“The ‘gospel’ strictly taken signifies ‘good news, glad tidings, or a joyful message.’ It is the joyful tidings of a free salvation through Jesus Christ to sinners of mankind, or it is a revelation and exhibition of the covenant of grace to men. The gospel reveals to us what the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit have done for us; what inestimable blessings they have provided for us and are willing to impart to us; how fully and freely these are offered to us; and how they are to be received and enjoyed as gifts of infinitely free and sovereign grace.”*

There are four particular elements of this gospel that Colquhoun will highlight.

#### 1. This gospel contains the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

When he mentions the doctrines of grace he is not speaking of the 5 points of Calvinism that are sometimes referred to as “the doctrines of grace”. But rather he is referring to all of those doctrines in Scripture that are tied to God’s saving grace (ex. the covenant of grace, the eternal counsel of peace, the Mediator and His offices, the Father’s election, the Son’s atoning work, the Spirit’s life-giving work, etc.). One cannot \_\_\_\_\_ doctrine and at the same time elevate the gospel-The doctrines are part of the gospel.

*“It is a declaration of the free grace of God to sinners of mankind, manifested in His redemption of them by Jesus Christ; and it is the best tidings that ever have reached their ears...The gospel, then, is glad tidings of good things. No tidings were ever as joyful as those that are announced in the gospel, and no benefits were ever as good as those that are exhibited in it.”*

*“At the same time, no man will ever love or so much as understand rightly a single doctrine of the gospel unless he sees and feels that as a sinner he is utterly undone. It is to men as sinners that the word of this salvation is sent. No doctrine deserves to be called gospel but that which makes the adorable Redeemer ‘all in all’ (Eph. 1:23).”*

## 2. The gospel contains all of the divine \_\_\_\_\_ of blessing and life

*“Every promise of that gracious covenant belongs to the gospel. The gospel, in the proper acceptance of it, consists of free and absolute promises of grace and glory...”*

Some of these promises are: The promise to destroy the work of the devil, the promise to bless all the nations of the earth, the promise of pardon, the promise of \_\_\_\_\_ with God, and the promise of life.

The gospel, in its strict sense, is all promise—there is no \_\_\_\_\_ in it. The gospel is what God has done. The law is what we must do.

*“The gospel...consists of absolute and free promises of salvation by Him, contains no precepts. It commands nothing. It does not enjoin us even to believe and repent, but it declares to us what God in Christ as a God of grace has done and what He promises to do for us and in us and by us. Every requirement of duty, all precepts, those to believe and repent not excepted, belong to the moral law that binds the new duty on us the moment that the gospel exhibits the new object.”*

The gospel is the declaration of what God will do/has done for sinners. The law then calls on sinners to believe the promises of the gospel. Those who respond with \_\_\_\_\_ do so because God has already begun the good work in them (the new birth by grace alone).

*“When therefore God in the gospel graciously promises to give elect sinners faith, repentance, and eternal life, the law that commands every duty obliges them, in common with all other sinners who hear the gospel, cordially to believe and trust and plead those promises. It binds them to trust those promises especially and to receive the fulfillment of them in the order in which the gospel exhibits them; to exercise faith and repentance daily in order to be prepared for the consummation of eternal life. While every divine promise, then belongs to the gospel of God, and none of them to His law, every divine precept is contained in His law and none of them in His gospel strictly taken.”*

## 3. The gospel contains God’s gracious \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ

The gospel not only involves all of the doctrines of grace and all of the promises of God but chiefly it contains the very offer of Christ Himself. All of the doctrines of grace and the promises lead us to Christ. And Christ is offered \_\_\_\_\_ to all mankind.

*“That God has given to us an offer of eternal life in and with His Son is the record which He has given of His Son. It is the sum, or at least the leading part, of the testimony of God.”*

*“While all duties are commanded in the law, all privileges and blessings are offered in the gospel. While the former are required of all, the latter are presented to all. Christ and all the blessings of His great salvation are in the gospel offered freely, fully, presently, and particularly, and that to sinners of mankind in common; and as they are offered, so must they be received by sinners.”*

## 4. The gospel contains God’s gracious \_\_\_\_\_ to accept the offer of salvation in Christ

The invitation of God shows His desire to be \_\_\_\_\_ for sinners (which is part of the gospel).

*“Those invitations, when considered as calls to perform the duties of believing and repenting, belong to the law; but when viewed as expressions of the readiness or willingness of God to bestow salvation on sinners and as affording them an additional warrant to trust in the compassionate Savior for it, they form part of the gospel...These commands, when given to unregenerate sinners, belong to the law as a covenant of works; and when given to believers to persevere in believing and repenting, they belong to the law as a rule of life.”*