***The Gospel

RV129-01***

We are studying Revelation 7:4-8. Our topic is the tribulation evangelists, and this is segment number two.

**The 144,000**

The apostle John, in this vision, sees a large number of God's servants, in the tribulation years, receiving a seal which will preserve their lives. The specific number which are sealed, we are told, is 144,000 Jews from the 12 tribes of Israel. These so-called children of Israel are racial Jews. They are exactly what the word says they are. They have been saved during these tribulation years. The 144,000 do not belong to the church. They do not belong to the church age. It is a specific group of people who have not been saved during the church age, but who have been saved after the rapture, when the tribulation period is in effect. So, they are back on Old Testament ground.

**Evangelists**

The mission of these born again glacial Jews is to serve as evangelists during the tribulation, preaching the gospel to the lost. This ministry will, of course, be an extension of the witnessing role of Christians today, but it will be under much more adverse circumstances. These Jewish evangelists will claim to speak for the only and true God in opposition to the false God who will set himself up at the time, the antichrist. So, that's going to be a tough condition under which to be an evangelist. They will thus be the ambassadors of the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, the Lord Jesus Christ, whom the antichrist specifically opposes, and whom he hates as his mortal enemy. So, that is going to be a tough time to be a witness for the Lord. You have someone who says, "I am God," and they say, "No, you're not God." You have someone who says that he is the supreme authority, and the people who are witnessing say, "No, you are not. There is no authority above you."

The message that they will bring will center upon Jesus Christ as the only means for eternal life, and thus they will reduce the whole tribulation humanity to the helpless creatures they are. At that time, as you know, the New Age movement will be in full swing, and man will have reached the epitome of his delusion that he can make it on his own apart from God. The Bible itself will be upheld by these evangelists as the only authority which actually speaks for God. So, they will be discrediting the antichrist's right hand man, the false prophet, who will be claiming to be the spokesman for God.

Nothing will be able to silence the voice of these Jewish ambassadors. As we shall see later in this seventh chapter of Revelation, thousands of Jews and gentiles will be saved as a result of their witnessing. It will be, as I say, an extension of what we do today. I think it would be well, therefore, for us to get a perspective on what these 144,000 will be doing, by reviewing what we are supposed to be doing.

**The Gospel**

We, of course, would naturally want to begin with the gospel itself. We get the word "gospel" from this Greek word "euaggelion." "Euaggelion" actually means "good news." That's why we say that the gospel is good news. That's what the word in the Greek language means. It is good news because God has provided a surefire solution that enables sinners to spend eternity in heaven instead of hell. It is a surefire solution. Many doctrines, of course, are associated with the gospel message. They amplify the gospel message, but they are not the gospel.

It is amazing how often people do not know the gospel. When we send out a teacher application in Berean Christian Academy for people who would like to be on our faculty, one of the areas we look at most carefully is when we ask them how a person becomes a Christian. That tells worlds about people right then. We have had people who were qualified; who were desirable; who were experienced; and, who could have been effective teachers, but they did not know how a person is saved. They would write something like this: "Well, first of all, you must do unto others as you would want them to do unto you. You must obey the golden rule. You must learn the Ten Commandments and be careful to keep these Ten Commandments. You must, in every way, try to do what pleases God. You must try to have consideration for people." They just carry on and on with one thing I do as a human being after another to make it with God. And sometimes, someplace along the line, they get in the fact that Christ died for them. The problem is that, by the time they get to that, you have the uncomfortable feeling that what Christ did is one of the elements to which they have added their own doing. As you know, if Romans 11:6 is true, you cannot be saved if you add any human element to what the Lord Jesus has already done.

**Doctrines Related to the Gospel**

So, the gospel is not clear in the minds of people. Even in church people, it's very balled up. It's botched up to an amazing degree. It is true, as I say, that there are certain doctrines that are associated with the gospel: the doctrine of propitiation – satisfying the justice of God; the doctrine of redemption – that somebody has to pay a price to get us out of the slave market of sin; the doctrine of reconciliation – that where we were once back-to-back with God, we can again face him face-to-face as friends; the doctrine of imputation – that the absolute righteousness of Jesus Christ is imputed to us, and it's placed in our credit; and, the doctrine of justification – that once we have absolute righteousness imputed to us, then we stand before God the judge as those who are justified. That means we are absolutely, in his eyes, fully perfect, as if there had never been any sin discredit to us at all. There is the doctrine of sanctification, of course – that as you go along in your Christian life, you can become a better Christian.

**Doctrines Pertaining to Jesus Christ**

There are, furthermore, doctrines pertaining to the person of Jesus Christ: the hypostatic union – that He was a God-man, human and divine; the impeccability of Jesus Christ, as we have learned – that He could not sin because His humanity was attached to His deity; the doctrine of the kenosis – the fact that Jesus Christ put aside the visible demonstration of His deity, and took the humiliating, humble position of a servant even unto the death on the cross.

All of these are doctrines which amplify the gospel. But *the gospel is a very small area of truth*. That's why it's such a joke so often when you go to churches where they preach on everything under the sun. I mean, they'll talk about Noah's Ark, and how they could get all those animals on there. They'll talk about all of the great stories of the Bible in the Old Testament. They'll talk about the incidents of what Christ did in the gospel that demonstrated His deity, and so on. Then, at the end of the service, they'll say, those of you who won't be saved, will you please raise your hand, or will you come down the aisle? And I have often sat there and thought to myself, "Now, if I were an unbeliever, and I wanted to be saved, what would the basis be upon which I would come to salvation?" Very often, it would be that I knew that Noah's Ark was big enough to care for all those animals, and that they had enough crew to clean up after them. But I wouldn't know anything at all about the gospel. That is a specific area of truth, and unless you tell that to a person, they cannot be saved.

In the tribulation, I can assure you, the 144,000 are going to know exactly what the gospel is. They're going to know how to go right to the issue. They're going to know how to explain it specifically, and then they're going to tell people what they have to do with the gospel, namely to believe it.

I should say also that sometimes we get applications from people who would like to be on our faculty who have a fantastic grasp upon the gospel. It is just refreshing to read that page. We have two current candidates now that are absolutely among the best that we have ever read – people who clearly show that they know how to get into a heaven, and they distinguish between what they do, and what God does, and they don't get them mixed up together.

A splendid example of that gospel is to be found in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 which summarize it. Paul says, "For I delivered unto you, first of all, that which I also received." So, Paul says, "I didn't make up this good news. It was given to me by God: "That Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures (as the Bible, even in the Old Testament, predicted that He would come as that suffering lamb); that He was buried;" that is, He was genuinely dead. He had experienced physical death, as well as that spiritual death, that even in the Old Testament, we were told that He would suffer deaths (plural), because He would die both spiritually and physically: "And that he rose again the third day." There was a physical resurrection, and this also was according to the Scriptures, and according to the indications of the Lord Himself – that He would, after three days, come back to life.

What this summary of the gospel tells us is that Christ died for our sins. He died as our substitute in spiritual death to pay for our sins. Furthermore, He was buried, which tells us that He also died physically for our sins. At the point of His physical death, the Bible tells us that that curtain in the temple, that divided the holy place from the holy of holies (the holy of holies, which nobody could go into except the high priest, and he could only go in one time a year on the great day of atonement to make a special presentation of the blood of an animal) – that curtain was ripped from top to bottom, and the holy of holies was thrown open for everybody to look into, and for anybody to go into. Why? Because at the point of the physical death of Christ, the payment for salvation was complete.

So, it's significant that when it says, "He was buried," he is telling us that, at that point, the final payment for sin was made. So, He was dead spiritually, and He was dead physically. Then, He rose again the third day, indicating the pattern of our own physical resurrection, but also indicating more importantly that salvation was a reality. You and I could never know that we were justified if He had not been raised from the dead. We would always be wondering whether that was possible.

So, the declaration of the Word of God is that the gospel is this specific area of truth – that Christ has died for us, spiritually and physically; that He was buried; that He was raised again to life; and, that we will follow in that same pattern.

As we go through the Bible, we find the gospel referred to in a variety of ways. I want to stress that there's only one gospel. People who do not believe in dispensations – that God has different ways of dealing with people in terms of their lifestyle from one era to the next, often will accuse us (who are dispensationalists) of having more than one way of salvation. There's only one gospel. There is only one way of salvation. And it is foolishness to pretend that sometimes God has one order of existence, that obviously he did for the Jews, and a totally different order of life for those of us who are Christians. That's quite evident. I always like to remind people who say they are not dispensationalists, that they are closet dispensationalists because they're not bringing their lamb to the altar anymore to be sacrificed; they're not coming to church on Saturday; and, they're not stoning anybody that they catch picking up sticks on Saturday or anything else. So, they really do believe that God has a different life style from one age to the next.

**There is Only One Gospel**

We have one gospel. It is true that it's called by various names. In Romans 1:16-17, we have the words "the gospel of Christ." There, the emphasis is on the person of whom the good news speaks. In Romans 2:16, Paul speaks of "my gospel," with the emphasis on the distinctive message that Paul preaches. In 2 Corinthians 4:3-4, we have the term "our gospel," with the emphasis on the single message that all of us who are ambassadors of God preach. We have one message, and it is our gospel mutually. In Ephesians 6:15, we have the term "gospel of peace." There, the emphasis is on the reconciliation of a sinful human being with the Holy God. In Revelation 14:6, we read of "the everlasting gospel," with the emphasis on the permanence of the divine solution for sin. This is the gospel which produces eternal results. In Matthew 24:14, we read about "the gospel of the kingdom." The emphasis there is on the fulfillment of the unconditional covenants with Israel.

Then in Galatians 1:6-9, Paul warns against the thing that he calls "another gospel," which is a false gospel. It is not good news. It is human viewpoint expression of the gospel in some way – like the social gospel. The social gospel is another gospel. It is not one you find in the Bible. Some churches, including some large denominations, have what they call the social gospel. They believe that a person gets to heaven if you help people in their social needs: material, physical, etc., of one kind or another. Of course, that's not true. You don't find that in the gospel.

Another false gospel is the gospel that is found in many churches, which is dependent upon your human performance for you to secure it, and to keep it. This could be called the good works gospel, or any number of varieties that men have invented, each of which is another gospel. These are all different, and the gospels that the Bible does speak about in a variety of ways are the same gospel.

**How do you go to Heaven?**

So, how do you go to heaven? You know what the gospel is. You're a sinner. You can't go to heaven unless you have absolute righteousness. You can't earn that absolute righteousness. That had to be done by Jesus Christ. He did it on the cross. He paid for it spiritually and physically. He was raised by God the Father, demonstrating that our justification has been effected. The price that He paid satisfied God the Father. Now what you have to do is believe it. If you believe it (if you accept it), you will be saved. You believe with your head. Your head (your brain) is what you believe with. It is true that the Bible says that, "With the heart man believes unto righteousness," but "the heart" in the Bible means "the mind." It is not the seat of emotion as it is in English and in our culture. In the ancient world, when they wanted to talk about where the seat of emotion was, they talked about the stomach, which we can understand. We say, "Oh boy, that was some ride. I felt that in the pit of my stomach." Or something happens, and we feel it down inside of us. They used to use the word "bowels." It was the visceral area of the body. That's where they felt things. So, that to them was the seat of emotions, not the heart. The heart is something that you believe with.

This will be the gospel which they will be preaching in the tribulation. It is the same one that we are preaching; the same Savior; the same basis; the same information; and, the same basis of salvation – by believing it. It is Satan who will come in and do what he's doing now, which is described for us in 2 Corinthians 4:3-4. He will be doing the same thing in the tribulation as these verses tell us He is doing now: "But if our gospel be hidden, it is hidden to them that are lost, and whom the God of this age has blinded the minds of them who don't believe, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

What Paul says is if the gospel is hidden or not understood by somebody; if you cannot grasp it; if a person just can't receive it; and, he can't understand it, it is, in all likelihood, because that person has not been elected by God to eternal life. Therefore, Satan is able to blind that person's mind to the truth of the gospel. But otherwise, he is neutralized (overridden) by God. But he's out there trying to blind everybody's mind concerning the gospel. He's trying to bring confusion concerning the gospel. And there are plenty of little Christians who are out there helping him do it, by coming up with their cutesy-pooh saying, like, "Invite Jesus into your heart," and other variants of that kind which are meaningless to people.

Try to put yourself in the position of an unsaved person, where you're told, "Invite Christ into your heart." How are you going to do that? "Open the door of your heart to Jesus." How are you going to do that? How are you going to put that together? You just think that over: "How am I going to open the door?" You go home; you stand in front of a mirror; you get an overhead projector pen; you draw a door; and, you pretend you open it and close it. That is the utter nonsense that drives people away from understanding how to be saved.

**Belief**

God says, "I want you to believe what I say." And in 1 John 5, you have that splendid statement – that if you do not believe God, then you are pointing to Him and saying, "You're a liar when you tell me that if I believe the gospel, I will be saved." It makes it very clear that that's what makes the difference: believing; or, not believing. Satan is around to try to confuse this – to keep you from believing it.

**Don't be Ashamed of the Gospel**

The problem that every believer faces, strangely enough, is that a lot of people are ashamed of the gospel. In Romans 1:16, right at the very beginning of this book, which was designed to explain in detail how to go to heaven, the apostle Paul says, "For I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. For it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." There is a gospel. We're not ashamed of it. The apostle Paul was very clear that he was not ashamed of the gospel.

I have heard one Christian rebuke another Christian in a social setting because one person broached the gospel to someone that they really didn't know – someone who was just there, and the conversation went to it. And I have heard Christians rebuke them for saying, "You know, that's not very nice for you to just bring up this gospel and talk to this person about going to heaven or hell." I know exactly what bothers that Christian: *He's ashamed of the gospel.* Isn't going to be nice to stand out in eternity, if such a thing were possible, which, thank God, it won't be – that you can look over the edge, and see all the people in the agonies of hell to whom you were squeamish about giving the gospel, because you didn't want to insult them, and you didn't want to hurt their feelings.

**Our own Relatives**

Who can intimidate us more than our own relatives in giving the gospel? And part of the reason that the relatives are hard is because there's a biblical doctrinal principle that comes into play when you deal with relatives. The Bible says that a prophet (a spokesman for God – a conveyor of divine viewpoint – a person who brings the truth) is not without honor except in his own country. So, within your own territory, on your own turf, in your own house – that's where they're going to think that you're nothing. That's where they're going to discount you.

How many of your relatives are going to be in hell for all eternity, and look back and say, "My God, I had a gold mine of information in the person that was in that household who was in my family. They had come to the knowledge of the truth, and I wouldn't listen. I passed them off, and I dismissed them.

Being ashamed of the gospel is expressed by being intimidated by your relatives. We are intimidated by the smug sophistication of our spiritually disoriented society that makes us silent because we don't want to be laughed at. That's what we experience sometimes when we as Christians speak up. Either we're laughed at, or if you run into the crowd that hates the idea of being born again, they rise up in indignation at you, and we back off. We don't want to be laughed at, and we don't want to be rejected.

**Rejection**

There are two things that Satan plays on big. Every human being, until he understands that, is like Samuel when he had to learn (when the Jews insisted on having a king) – that they were not rejecting Samuel (God spokesman), but they were rejecting God Himself. We are the representatives. We do not take this personally. But when people refuse to listen, it is not our feelings that should be hurt, and that we should recoil from because we don't want to be rejected. People hate to be rejected. People hate to be made fun of. What we should remember is that they're making fun of God, not of you. They are rejecting God, not you. The problem that they have is one that they're going to go out and regret for all eternity. So, what difference does it make if they reject you, or if they rebuke you?

**Religion**

Religion is a powerful deterrent to witnessing. This person goes to a church. Are you going to insult somebody that goes to a great, mighty denomination, and ask them if they're going to heaven? Are you going to bring up the subject of new birth, especially if you talk to them, and you discover, and you sense that this person does not understand how to go to heaven? Are you going to insult them? People don't like that.

I once had a man say to me, after several conversations, in indignation, "You just made me feel like everything that I believed all my life is wrong." The sad part was that he was wrong. I told him that his answer indicated that he was wrong. I posed the question, "Will you go to heaven?" And he said, "I hope so." I said, "That very thing that you have told me in that answer tells me that you are expecting to go to heaven on some basis that depends on what you've done, and you're not sure you've done it enough, or that you did it right. Otherwise, you wouldn't say, 'I hope so.' If you understood the Bible kind of salvation, which is dependent on what God does, and you take it as a gift, you would never say, 'I hope so.' You would say, 'You bet. I know so.'" And he was wounded. He was offended. And that isn't pleasant. That's enough to scare you off, and to make you back off – the fear of being rebuffed by an unbeliever.

**"It's the Pastor's Job"**

Furthermore, Satan's monumental deception is that the witnessing work is to be that of the professional minister. A lot of Christians love to hide under that: "It is my pastor's job. It is the preacher's job to do the witnessing." And I know that many preachers themselves think that the witnessing time is in those church services. They starve their poor lambs to death relative to the Word of God, because they can't feed them on that, because they're giving the gospel, and that's the time that they give the gospel.

I heard of a preacher one time who had a man who came to his office, and he was in personal distress over the eternity that he faced. Where was he going? The poor man wanted to know how to go to heaven. Do you know what the preacher said to him? He said, "If you come out next Sunday night (I always preach on the gospel on Sunday nights), I'll preach the best gospel sermon you ever heard to get you saved."

Another great man that said that one time was D. L. Moody. D. L. Moody preached a powerful sermon in a campaign in the city of Chicago in the late 1800s. And when he came to the end, he said, "Now I want all you people to go home and think about what I have said to you. Think about this gospel, and I want you to come back next week and make a decision." There wasn't a meeting next week, because that week Mrs. O'Leary's cow kicked over the lantern and set ablaze the city of Chicago, so the great Chicago Fire took place, and terminated the lives of many of those people.

The gospel is something we have to know, and the gospel is something that we (who know it) have to speak. But Satan makes us the great silent majority. So, we say, "It is these who are the professionals that are the ones to do it. There are Christians in parts of the world where their very lives are endangered when they give the gospel. You would have no idea what happens to people in a communist country if they give the gospel message even to their children – the suffering; the trauma; the pain; and, the removal of the children from the homes of those parents, if they dare do such a thing. And we who have the freedom to speak it go around as the great silent majority.

Well, in the tribulation period, they're going to have some tremendous Jewish evangelists who are going to understand what they're calling is; they're going to know the message; they're going to get out there under the worst kind of conditions; and, they're going to proclaim it. The problem that we face is the problem that they will face. They will be witnessing to what we can call "the modern man." The modern man that you and I deal with is not impressed with the fact that Jesus Christ died for his sins. The reason he's not impressed with that is because he doesn't think that he has a sin problem to deal with. He has some internal problems that make you uncomfortable, and he has some uneasiness in his soul, but he thinks that that's some imaginary guilt that he's got that he picked up from society, or he thinks that that's just some economic or social pressure that's on him. So, the solution that the Bible presents for this moral guilt (and that's what it is that's bothering him), he doesn't think he needs.

So, the modern unbeliever has to be made to see that he is a failure even by his own standards. It's not too hard to press people a little bit for them to admit: "You know, I can't live up to my own standards. I believe that certain things are right, and then I break those rules. I don't even do what *I* think is right, so there is a problem with me relative to doing what is right. And some of those things are indeed moral issues of right and wrong, so guilt contaminates all the facets of his soul.

**The Trinity**

The distinctions of the Bible plan of salvation are that it declares to mankind that the world that God created was a perfect world, and that it was created by a personal, infinite God. The world did not come into being by an impersonal a Star Wars force. It came into being by a personal God. The God in the Bible is described as a Trinity, and the reason that the Godhead is a Trinity is for interpersonal relationships. It takes three people to have interpersonal relationships. Two people can love each other. That's not an interpersonal relationship. It's a limited relationship. A true interpersonal relationship arises when the two of you can love a third person. That's what happens when a child is born into a home. Then the level of love steps up to its highest degree. This is why, in the Trinity, there are three persons – so that there can be interpersonal love of two toward one, and each toward the other.

This kind of a God, to be able to experience that, has to be a personal God. This God in the Word of God is described as a personal being, which means, therefore, that he can communicate to us. That's what the unbeliever has to know. He's uneasy about something within himself. Things aren't right. He has to know that there is somebody out there to whom he is accountable, and that that being out there is a personal being who can communicate.

Some of you like to talk to your plants in order to try to make them grow. Sometimes you think you hear the plants saying something back to you. Well, you can be as nutty as you want about that, but I can assure you that you cannot communicate with an impersonal, inert object. You can communicate only with a person who can respond in the fullest sense of the word. So, Christianity was revealed to make man's personal relationship to the God who made him complete. That's what you and I are looking for in our unsaved days. There's a yearning in our souls. There's an uneasiness in our souls. No matter how blasé we are, and no matter what kind of a front we put on, the unbeliever has an uneasiness in his soul, and you can imagine what they're going to feel in the tribulation when they see all hell breaks loose around them, and these terrible things taking place. You can be sure that they are going to be very uneasy in their souls. This is where the gospel comes in to resolve that tension within the human being. Once a believer admits that he falls short of a standard of righteousness, even his own, and once he admits that there is a person, an infinite personal God to whom he is accountable, then he is in a position to be ready to receive the gospel. That is the Word of God the Holy Spirit.

The Bible says that our problem is real moral guilt. It's not that it happened by chance – that man was made wrong. It's the fact that man was made right, but he brought sin into the picture. The result has been the breakdown of everything that God created for man, including his relationship to that God. So, man is morally guilty. He's in rebellion against the truth of God. His guilt feelings are not just imaginary. They are real.

Also, everyone is responsible for his own condition. So, the Bible comes in with this splendid message of the gospel, and it teaches that the pressure of moral guilt can only be removed, not by any human effort, but by something that God has done. And that is that God, as the judge, must take a legal action to declare you justified. Once a person is declared justified, because he has had absolute righteousness imputed to him, he is saved from the lake of fire permanently. Then, and only then, peace comes into the soul.

So, God, through the payment of Jesus Christ on the cross for the moral guilt of mankind, has provided *a just ground* for declaring the sinner justified. God does not ignore sin. God does not ignore, as many of you parents do, the rebellious, willful wrongdoing of your children. God requires a payment, and He has made it. God cannot but hate sin, and there's no human rationalization that's going to change that. The reason man needs righteousness is because God hates our unrighteousness. It's not just that sin is bad – He hates our unrighteousness. So, we see that in the Bible that even men who are favored by God, men after his own heart, the apple of his eye: a Moses; or, a David, when they sin, God brought the boom down upon them. That is the nature of a just God.

So, the purpose of the gospel is to legally put a sinner into a right relationship with the Holy God. Our doctrine (the Bible's doctrine) of justification by faith is not a human philosophy that we invented. It is the authoritative way to solve this problem. So, the apostle Paul indicated that he took great delight in the gospel. He was not ashamed of it. It was not just one of these philosophical ideas for the smart men to sit around and shoot the breeze over. It was the solution that God Himself had provided. All human systems of religion and philosophies will fail to get anybody into heaven. Only the biblical gospel, and believing it, will do it.

**A Mind; a Will; Emotions; and, a Conscience**

There is within the nature of man, then, this problem. It goes back again to the fact of the image of God. The image of God, in which we have been created, means that we reflect what God is like. We reflect the fact that God has a mind. We reflect the fact that God has emotions. We reflect the fact that God has will. God also has, so to speak, a conscience – a sense of right and wrong. This is stamped on every one of us. I don't care who you are. You have a mind; a will; emotions; and, you have a conscience. The presence of God's image demands certain things. Because you have a mind, you require real truth for thinking. Sometimes this is called true truth. The mind of man wants to know what is for real. We need information. The emotions of man – everybody in this room needs to be loved, and everybody needs to love absolute values. You have to have something which is true and faithful to love. Then everybody has a will, and that craves for freedom to make choices that make changes.

So, as a human being, you have a mind. Whether you know it or not, that mind yearns for real truth. You have emotions. They yearn for real, genuine expressions. You have a will, and you yearn for freedom to use your will so that you can make changes. Over all of these, you have a conscience that demands a code of conduct, and everybody comes up against some standard. That's the idea that we have to take a standard of conduct, and we go back to the only standard that counts, and that's the Bible. You cannot compromise that standard just because 51% of humanity has a different viewpoint. If 51% of mankind wants to have another standard, that doesn't change anything. Conscience will never be satisfied on something that is the invention of man.

**The Mind**

The apostle Paul witnessed to human beings on the basis of these four needs of the human soul. To the mind, he brought the truth about God. The written Bible was the basis of giving full knowledge about God, and about our human condition under the wrath of God. This was absolute truth, found no place else except in the Bible. That's why, in the era of the Reformation, it was the Bible that the reformers went back to as the only basis of truth. Suddenly, their minds had something that they could depend upon. That's what they were yearning for. Now that had found it. How can I find truth about God? My mind screams for it. I can only get it from the Scripture.

**Emotions**

Secondly, Paul appeal to their emotions – the desire for personal acceptance by God. You want to be accepted. Ultimately, the only acceptance that counts is God. What good does it do if human beings everywhere accept you; exalt you; laud you; and, praise you. That's kicks for the moment. But unless God accepts you, there is no ease within the soul. So, man has to have acceptance by the God who made him. Only the biblical gospel makes it possible for us to be accepted in our emotions by God, and how we feel, and for our emotions not to be enslaved by evil. Only with the gospel can you be free to use your emotions.

People who are not saved destroy themselves with their emotions. Look at the people they marry. You're an unbeliever. You marry somebody that's just absolutely stupid. You can't believe it. Why is that? It's because your emotions are not governed by the gospel message and the regeneration that comes. So, your emotions work against you.

**Will**

Then there is your will – faith exercised in some absolute truth so that you know you have changed your destiny: "I can believe the gospel, and I know that I have changed my destiny forever." Faith is the act of submission instead of rebellion against God. It's bowing down to accepting what we are, and to what God has provided. Please remember that the Bible does not ask us to make a leap into the dark, in hope-so salvation. It tells us exactly what our problem is, and what God has done, and if we believe it, it tells us what the result will be. No other system of religion gives us this option of a real choice that makes a real difference for eternity. You people have it in your capacity to tell people that.

**The Conscience**

So, you meet the needs of their minds; you meet the needs of their emotions; and, you meet the needs of their will. Finally, you meet the needs of their conscience, because you declare the fact that real moral guilt has been removed. All human viewpoint systems still leave you feeling guilty. But with the gospel, you have a genuine ground for having your guilt removed. For the first time, you come into what the Bible calls "the peace with God." Only in the gospel can the conscience find this kind of peace. Christianity provides the absolute ground for doing that. Without it, there is no hope.

So, the gospel of the Bible is the only thing that enables a person to live in harmony with these four basic desires that he has. The gospel is the truth. All other religious systems are *the* error. And a failure to understand the absolute truth of the biblical gospel gives a person a sense of false trust that eventually breaks down, and which will carry him to his eternal death.

We are the witnesses because we have something that meets the needs of the human soul. We can meet your mind; we can meet your emotions; we can meet your will; and, we can provide your conscience with ease. For the unbeliever to live with this human viewpoint, he has to constantly be pretending that something is not so, and he does not get away with it.

So, in the tribulation, these people are going to come along, and they're going to face the same thing that you and I face. They're going to face the resistance of society, and they're going to face the same needs. They're going to take the gospel, and they're going to say, "I've got the answer for what your mind is looking for. I can give you the real truth." They're going to come to the person's emotions and say, "I can give you something that you can reach out with enthusiasm for and rejoice over. I've got the real answer." They will come to their wills and they can say, "I can tell you exactly what to do. It's an act of believing (receiving) what God has done, and you will, by that act, change your destiny." They can come to that person and say, "I've got that which will put your conscience at ease, because God has spoken the truth, and He will not lie. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved."

Dr. John E. Danish, 1984

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