

## WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

*Before we can obey or teach the gospel, we must know what it is. Do you know?*

The gospel is composed of real facts of history. Paul preached these facts, such as the resurrection of Jesus (1 Cor. 15:1-11). But the gospel is not limited to a record of historical events. In Acts 2:23, 36 preaching the gospel included telling others of their sins. Peter had sinned before and would sin again, but did that mean he had no right to warn others of their sin? No. The fact of personal guilt and sin is a vital part of the gospel.

In Acts 2:38-39, in preaching the gospel, Peter told all who would listen that God offered forgiveness (which includes His love, mercy, and grace).

The gospel includes all the promises of God, not just the facts.

Scripture also teaches that we must “obey the gospel” (Rom. 10:16; 2 Thess. 1:8). In Acts 2, the gospel taught sinners the necessity of believing the facts of Jesus, repenting of all sins, and being baptized to receive God’s promises (v38-39). Then, they learned more facts, promises, and instructions (v42; Mt. 28:19).

If you are not learning these facts (both historical and personal), promises, and instructions you are not hearing the original gospel.

### In This Issue:

- What is the Gospel?
- Washed & Sprinkled
  - Before 1727
  - Clergy & Laity

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## WASHED & SPRINKLED

Notice what gives full assurance of faith in Hebrews 10:22, “let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.”

This “sprinkling” is the sprinkling of blood (Heb. 9:21-22). Israelite priests often sprinkled blood as directed by God’s law to Israel. The blood of the new covenant is Jesus’ blood which removes sin when sprinkled on our heart. That happens when, motivated by faith, our bodies are washed with water (baptism). Saul was told to “be baptized and wash away your sins.” When he did, Jesus washed him from sin (Acts 22:16; Rev. 1:5). Men who teach salvation before baptism actually teach salvation before Jesus’ blood! None who accept this teaching have the assurance of salvation.

Also, notice that God does not say our bodies should be sprinkled with water. Jesus’ blood is not sprinkled on our heart when men sprinkle water on our body. Baptism means immersion, so if your “baptism” involved sprinkling water, you have not been immersed into Christ and the stain of sin remains. Contact us with comments or questions.

# BEFORE 1727

*Before 1776, there was no United States of America.  
Before 1962 there was no Wal-mart.  
I recently learned that before 1727 there was no . . .*

I was recently invited to visit a Baptist revival and, since Aquila and Priscilla visited a synagogue, I went and was kindly welcomed. Before the revival began, I read from the Foreword of a well-worn hymnal (“REJOICE! The Free Will Baptist Hymn Book”) which said “Free Will Baptists have always been a people of song. From our 1727 beginning, we have delighted in offering praise to God.” Notice that according to this hymnal, before 1727 there were no Free Will Baptists, thus no Free Will Baptist Church existed. Before 1727, God already revealed the gospel (Acts 8:25), His offer of salvation (Rom. 1:16), Jesus’ blood (Rev. 1:5), Christians (Acts 11:26), the church (Acts 2:47), etc.

If we need no new kind of gospel, blood, or grace, why did the people of 1727 need a new kind of church? Can you or your preacher explain? If so, we would be willing to listen to your or his explanation. Could we be united if we taught about Jesus’ gospel, blood, salvation, and church? By this, God will make us all of the same mind and judgment (1 Cor. 1:10). The unity of Christ is our goal (Jn. 17:20-21), is it yours?

*But they have not  
all obeyed the  
gospel.  
(Romans 10:16)*

You are invited to:  
Sunday AM  
Bible classes: 10:00AM  
Sunday AM Worship:  
**10:45AM**  
Sunday PM Worship:  
**5:00 PM**  
Wednesday Bible  
Classes & Worship:  
**7:00 PM**

## CLERGY & LAITY

Do you belong to the clergy or laity? To which did Paul and Timothy belong? Did they wear special robes, garments, or titles (“Reverend, Holy Father, Father, Archbishop,” etc.)? Jesus rebuked such distinctions, saying “They love . . . to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.' But you, do not be called 'Rabbi'; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren. Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven” (Matt. 23:6-10).

In Scripture, leaders in the churches of Christ were not given any religious titles or clothing (special robes, collars, etc), not even the apostles! Compare 1 Timothy 1:1 and 1 Peter 1:1 with the way modern religious leaders identify themselves.

Man invented the clergy-laity distinction, thus human authorities define the clergy, deciding that a certain education or human recommendation is essential. Ask your preacher to show from the Bible who is qualified to be “Reverend” or “Archbishop.” God appointed leaders in each congregation, but they were known by their God-given work, not their title or dress. God does not elevate men by rank or title for “you are all brethren.”

### Questions from this month's articles:

1. Of what is the gospel composed?
2. In Hebrews 10:22, what is sprinkled and with what are we washed?
3. How did God identify the group of saved people in Scripture?
4. Who revealed the terms and distinctions between the clergy and laity?

\* Mail your answers to church of Christ—Quail Valley 4104 East Harrison St, Batesville, AR 72501  
OR, e-mail your answers to **TruthAndReason@suddenlink.net**

\* If you have a comment or question, call (793-6700; 569-4491) or visit our website **WWW.QVCOC.COM**