

Title: The Great Word of the Gospel

Text: 2 Peter 2: 18-19

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2 Peter 2: 18: For when they speak great swelling *words* of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, *through much* wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. 19: While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

Peter is here speaking of false teachers. And he speaks of their method to attract their hearers.

1) He tells us what they speak—great swelling words of vanity.

2) He tells us how they allure—bait, entice—through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness—through that which the flesh craves

3) He tells us what they promise—they promise them liberty, but he says, they themselves are servants of corruption.

By these methods they bring back—entangle again—those who were almost escaped from them who live in error.

Title: The Great Word of the Gospel

Divisions: 1) The gospel we speak; 2) The attraction of the gospel; 3) The promise of the gospel

I. THE WORDS WE SPEAK ARE THE GOSPEL—V18: they speak great swelling *words* of vanity,--

The gospel we preach is great and it is through the word, but it is not vanity.

GREAT--Salvation by the Great God

Our gospel is “great” because it declares salvation is by the great God.

Deuteronomy 10: 17: For the LORD your God *is* God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward: 18: He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment.

Psalms 95: 3: For the LORD *is* a great God, and a great King above all gods. 4: In his hand *are* the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills *is* his also. 5: The sea *is* his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry *land*.

Titus 2: 13:...the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

GREAT--The Gospel of so Great Salvation

Our gospel is great because the gospel declares “so great salvation”—“the LORD wrought a great salvation for all Israel” (1 Samuel 19: 5). It is the great salvation to which all praise and glory goes to the Lord alone—God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

1. God the Father elected whom he would save

Ephesians 1: 3: Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: 4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

Romans 9: 15: For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

2. God the Son fully, accomplished, the complete redemption of all the elect of God by his obedience unto death for them

John 17: 4: I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

Hebrews 1: 3: Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Hebrews 10: 12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; 13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. 14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

3. God the Holy Spirit regenerates every elect child of God and brings us to faith in Christ.

John 1: 13: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Romans 2: 28 For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither *is that* circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: 29 But he *is* a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the spirit, *and* not in the letter; whose praise *is* not of men, but of God.

4. Each child chosen and redeemed and called shall be kept by our God and none shall be lost.

Philippians 1: 6: Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform *it* until the day of Jesus Christ:

John 10: 27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand. 29 My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all; and no *man* is able to pluck *them* out of my Father's hand.

THE WORD--the Incarnate Word, Christ Jesus the Son of God

John 1: 14: And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

THE WORD--The word of truth which we preach

James 1: 18: Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

1 Peter 1: 23: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

Ephesians 1: 13: In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation...

1 Thessalonians 1: 5: For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance;...

NOT VANITY—always accomplishes God’s purpose

Our gospel is not vanity for the gospel we preach never returns to the Lord void.

Isaiah 55: 11: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it.

GREAT SWELLING WORDS OF VANITY

But any word that makes salvation conditioned upon the will and work of the sinner—are “great swelling words of vanity!”

1. Salvation is by grace—not works—any words that say otherwise are great swelling words of vanity.

Romans 11: 5: Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. 6: And if by grace, then *is it* no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

2. Salvation is by grace, by the finished work of Christ through faith which rest entirely in his doing and dying on our behalf—not by our law-keeping—any words that say otherwise are great swelling words of vanity.

Galatians 2: 21: I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness *come* by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

Galatians 3: 21: *Is* the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. 22: But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

3. The believers sanctification is Christ into whom we have been separated by the Holy Spirit of God—and not by the works of our flesh—any words that say otherwise are great swelling words of vanity.

Galatians 3: 2: This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 3: Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

Hebrew 2: 11: For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified *are* all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,

Hebrews 7:19: For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope *did*; by the which we draw nigh unto God.

Any and all words that would turn you again to your flesh, to the law for justification or sanctification are speaking great swelling words of vanity.

THE GREAT WORD OF GOD DECLARES THE BELIEVER COMPLETE IN CHRIST

Colossians 2: 8: Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. 9: For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. 10: And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: 11: In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: 12: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. 13: And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; 14: Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; 15: *And* having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

The word of our gospel is great because God receives all the glory and all the praise

Ephesians 1: 6: To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

II. THE ATTRACTION OF THE GOSPEL—IS JESUS CHRIST, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS--V18:...they allure through the lusts of the flesh, *through much wantonness,*

False teachers beguile, allure, bait and trap sinners by appealing to the flesh.

Flatter by Preaching Works

They flatter sinners by putting a part of God's salvation in the sinner's hands.

Psalm 12: «To the chief Musician upon Sheminith, A Psalm of David.» Help, LORD; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men. 2: : They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: *with* flattering lips *and* with a double heart do they speak. 3 The LORD shall cut off all flattering lips, *and* the tongue that speaketh proud things: 4 Who have said, With our tongue will we prevail; our lips *are* our own: who *is* lord over us?... 8: The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted.

Hear the word of God!

Isaiah 40: 6: The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh *is* grass, and all the goodliness thereof *is* as the flower of the field: 7 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people *is* grass. 8 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

Romans 3: 10: As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: 11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. 12 They are all gone out of the way, they are

together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. 13 Their throat *is* an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps *is* under their lips: 14 Whose mouth *is* full of cursing and bitterness: 15 Their feet *are* swift to shed blood: 16 Destruction and misery *are* in their ways: 17 And the way of peace have they not known: 18 There is no fear of God before their eyes. 19 ¶ Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

What about after a sinner's conversion

- David, the man after God's own heart, said Psalm 39: 5: Behold, thou hast made my days *as* an handbreadth; and mine age *is* as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state *is* altogether vanity. Selah.
- The apostle Paul after he was converted said, Romans 7: 18: For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not.
- Simon Peter saw the power of the Lord Jesus Christ...Luke 5: 8: "When Simon Peter saw *it*, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

Flatter By Giving Titles and Position

False teachers bait men by giving men titles and offices in the church. Only God is able to make a man faithful so that he can serve him in his kingdom.

A new church begins to assemble—right away they begin ordaining deacons. Do you know how many were in the church before Peter first told them to call men to help with the widows?

- They began with 120
- Then on the day of Pentecost, Lord added 3000
- Later the Lord added 5,000
- Later it says, Acts 5:14 And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.)
- Acts 6: 1: And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied,...and IT WAS ONLY AFTER THE LORD HAD PROVIDED AND PROVEN FAITHFUL MEN, THAT THE NEED FOR THOSE MEN AROSE.

But when Simon Magus came seeking a position in the church—Peter did not bestow upon him titles

Acts 8: 18:...he offered them money,...20 But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. 21 Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. 22 Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. 23 For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and *in* the bond of iniquity.

Paul told Timothy to commit the gospel "**to faithful men who can teach others also.**" But we wait on Christ--the Head of the church—who alone makes faithful men.

Ephesians 4: 11: And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12: For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:...

The Believers Attraction is Christ and him Crucified

False teachers appeal to the lusts of the flesh—but God draws his children to Christ—we preach Christ and him crucified.

1 Corinthians 1: 17: For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. 18: For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. 19 For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. 20 Where *is* the wise? where *is* the scribe? where *is* the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? 21 For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. 22 For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: 23 But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; 24 But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. 25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. 26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called*: 27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; 28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea*, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: 29 That no flesh should glory in his presence. 30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: 31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

Yokes and constraints and entertainment to attract will bait men in. And when some come out of that—appear escaped—it often turns out that the gospel of Christ and him crucified is not enough for them. They are allured back by great swelling words which appeal to the lusts of the flesh. But never the elect of God—*my sheep hear my voice and they follow me*. It is not possible for one of God's elect to be led into bondage with them.

Matthew 24:24: For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

III. THE PROMISE OF THE GOSPEL—V19: they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

False teachers promise health, happiness, prosperity, other things temporal, while they, themselves, are servants of corruption—servants in bondage to the flesh. As soon as they bait sinner's in they bring them back under the bondage of legalism and law which the flesh lusts after—craves the glory which belongs to Christ alone.

Colossians 2: 18: Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, 19 And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. 20 Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, 21 (Touch not; taste not; handle not; 22 Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? 23 Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.

But I can make no promises to you—I have no power to fulfill any—let alone the promise of liberty to you—I can't give it. Nor does the false teacher.

1 Corinthians 3: 5: Who then is Paul, and who *is* Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? 6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

Great and Precious Promises

But my gospel IS the gospel of God's great and precious promises. Peter said that by the power of God through the knowledge of Christ Jesus God has given us all things which pertain to life and godliness...

2 Peter 1: 4: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

- The promise of “no more offering for sin.” “Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us” (Heb 10: 15-17.)
- The promise of Reconciliation by the body of his flesh through death (Col 1:21-22.)--Ephesians 2: 19: Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;
- The promise of eternal life.--John 6: 54: Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.
- The promise of inheritance--Romans 8: 17: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.
- The promise of resurrection. 1 Corinthians 15: 52: In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.
- The promise of reigning with Christ--Revelation 3: 21: To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

These are promises of the new and everlasting covenant of which Christ is the Mediator, surety, and messenger, the Author and Finisher. They are confirmed by his oath. Each one is made good by his power and faithfulness. They are all better promises than those of the covenant of works. There is not one of these promises which are merely temporal, none are conditional or legal; but each one are spiritual and eternal, absolute, free, and unconditional, irreversible and unchangeable.

No, I can make no promises of liberty to you—but my God, my Savior, Jesus Christ can!

John 8: 36: If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

He bores our ear and makes us willing bond servants—not as servants, not in the spirit of bondage again to fear, but as sons and daughter in love with him.

LET ME END BY REMINDING YOU OF WHAT WE HAVE HEARD HERE TODAY

1) Our gospel is not great swelling words of vanity—but the great word of the gospel of our great God and Savior, of salvation wrought by his grace.

2) The attraction of our gospel—is Jesus Christ and him crucified—the power and wisdom of God.

3) The promise of our gospel is made in the heart of his saints through the blood and righteousness of Christ Jesus our Lord and our Savior.

Has Christ made you free?

Ephesians 4: 17: This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, 18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: 19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. 20 But ye have not so learned Christ; 21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: 22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. 25 Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. 26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: 27 Neither give place to the devil. 28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. 29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. 30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: 32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. 5: 1: Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; 2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

Galatians 5: 1: Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. 2 Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. 3 For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. 4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. 5 For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. 6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love... [the rule of faith which worketh by love is the believers rule of life]...6: 16: And as many as walk according to this rule, peace *be* on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

Amen!