

OpenTheo

The Centrality of the Gospel

October 17, 2021



For The King - Rocky Ramsey

This Sunday Bryce and I walk through the Gospel, the doctrine of first importance to the Christian. We must get the Gospel and we must believe in that correct Gospel to be saved, for no other gospel has the power to save! Thanks for listening and tuning in to the For The King podcast!

“This is why Paul upholds the teaching of the gospel in such a forceful way ... Seeing such an example and such a picture of man’s great weakness and fickleness, Paul states that the truth of the gospel must supersede anything that we may devise ... he is showing us that we ought to know the substance of the doctrine which is brought to us in the name of God, so that our faith can be fully grounded upon it. Then we will not be tossed about with every wind, nor will we wander about aimlessly, changing our opinions a hundred times a day; we will persist in this doctrine until the end. This, in brief, is what we must remember.”

— John Calvin, Sermons on Galatians

Key Texts: Romans 1: 1-4, 16 ; 1 Corinthians 15: 1-4

My guest joining me this week on the Sunday series is my brother Bryce. Bryce is getting his undergraduate degree in philosophy and hopes to get his MDiv. from a seminary after he completes his undergrad. He hopes to be a pastor shepherding Gods people one day.

Website: forthekeepingpodcast.com

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/For-The-King-105492691873696/>

Contact: forthekeepingpodcast@gmail.com

--- Support this podcast: <https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/rocky-ramsey/support>

Transcript

But notice this is all referencing to the content of Jesus Christ, what he came and what he did. And this is the whole point of the Gospel. So Bryce is the Gospel.

Does the Gospel have to do with... Sorry, is there a Gospel if there is no resurrection? No. Don't think I will even ask you to make Jesus Lord of your life. That's the most preposterous thing I could ever tell you to do.

Jesus Christ is Lord of your life. Whether you serve him or not, whether you bless him, curse him, hate him, or love him, he is the Lord of your life because God has given him a name that is above every name so that the name of Jesus Christ every knee shall bow and tongue confess that he is Lord. Some of you will bow out of the grace that has been given to you and others will bow because your kneecaps will be broken by the one who rules the nations with a rod of iron.

And I will not apologize for this God of the Bible.

[Music] Revelation 1 verse 5. Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. Whoa.

Yeah. That's a heavy-hitting verse, folks. That is this king.

So if you're joining in for the first time on the For the King podcast and you're curious what's the title about, what's the point of the podcast, that verse is a good insight into what we're doing here. We are just recognizing Jesus as the king of not just me, not just you, but of all the kings of the earth and everyone there unto, under their authority. What? No, it's good.

So that is who this king is. And when we say we're doing it for the king, that's who we're doing it for. And I don't know if I've ever exposed this on the podcast, but I always envisioned when I named it For the King, you know, you've seen movies, you've seen in pop culture where there's like this strong leadership figure that's leading into the battle and the men are just coming under that and love their king and want to fight for their king.

And like they're charging the battle and they're going like, "For the king!" You know, and then they go into battle and they go like, die for their king. So when I, like, For the King is kind of, you know, it's like an incomplete, it can kind of seem like an incomplete sentence when you just read it. But that's what I had envisioned.

Like when Bryce and I are talking about these things, spiritually, we're just like running into battle for the king, you know, for Jesus, you know, and we're trying to fight these battles, not that he needs us to fight, but that he's commanded us to fight and to proclaim the gospel on his behalf, obviously. As the king, he delegates authority to his subjects to go out and to proclaim the good news of him. And that's what this new series we're doing is about.

A big part of the king is that he did things for us. He's a servant king and he came to save wretched sinners like Bryce and I and like you. So this new series that we're starting this week, this Sunday, is going to be gospel foundations.

The central dogma, central truths about the good news of Jesus Christ as laid out to us in the scriptures. Am I missing anything, Bryce? Good. Good.

That's it. Okay. I must be doing a good job.

So we're going to keep this one shorter and we're going to get right into it. And we're just going to lay out a few texts that talk about the centrality of the gospel to the Christian faith and to specifically each person's individual salvation. Yeah, he is concerned with the people and saving a whole people, obviously, saving nations, that kind of thing.

But that doesn't mean he saves every individual. Each person must themselves place their faith in Christ to be saved. And that's central to everything that we do as Christians, every ministry, every Christian nation, whatever.

That's central. Okay. So good.

Anything you want to add? Anything funny you want to say? No. Okay, fine. So Romans 1. I do 1 through 3. Yeah.

I do 4 as well. This is how Paul starts his letter to the Romans. So Romans chapter 1 verses 1 through 4. Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, concerning his son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be the son of God and power according to the spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Boom. About a boom. About a bang.

Okay. Anything you want to start? Yeah, sure. So the point that me and Rocky are trying to drive home today is that the centrality of what the gospel is, is centered on the content of the life of Jesus, his death, his burial and his glorious resurrection.

And this is a concept theme that you see Paul bringing up a ton and is littered, sorry, littered throughout the entirety of scripture. So first off, Paul makes his point that it was promised beforehand through the prophets and the holy scriptures. And this is referencing to the, all of the Old Testament is pointing to the teleological end of Jesus Christ.

He is the end of the Old Testament law and prophets because he is the summation of it. Yeah, let me jump in real quick. If you want to learn more about that, go to our

Christology series that we did like a month, month and a half, two months ago and go to the episodes about the pre-incarnate Christ.

Yeah. And we'll, we lay that out for you. Right.

Yeah. And that's, that's very helpful to walk through to see, to see exactly what we're talking about here. So what does this concern? And that's where Paul picks up in verse three.

It's concerning his son, referencing to God the father, who was descended from David according to the flesh. So he was truly human and he was declared to be the son of God and power, which shows that he is not only truly human, but he is truly God at the same instance. Yeah.

And his two natures and power according to the spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord. Right. And he, all these foundational principles, who Jesus is being the son of God and a descendant, according to the descendant of David, according to the flesh, the God man.

And what did this God man do? He raised from the dead. Now, this implies everything about Jesus's life that Paul is going to get into for the rest of the epistle. But Jesus was raised from the dead because he died for our sins.

Right. So the resurrection is the validation of the entire life and ministry of Jesus Christ and the satisfaction of God's divine wrath on us. And we have other episodes talking about that.

See the very first series that we did on Christ's propitiation. But notice this is all referencing to the content of Jesus Christ, what he came and what he did. And this is the whole point of the gospel.

Yep. So Bryce is the gospel. Does the gospel have to do with, sorry, is there a gospel if there is no resurrection? No.

If Jesus, and this is the point, and we were talking about this right before the episode, in 1 Corinthians 15, Paul will say, "If Christ is not raised, then we are still dead in our sins." Yep. Right. And the whole point is that the resurrection is so essential because Paul makes the claim later on in Romans that because of Christ's death, we are buried with him.

By baptism, talking about a spiritual baptism and a physical, but the physical not being what saves you. But we're buried with him in death. And as he lives, we are raised with him and we live.

Right? So we die because he died. But if he has not been raised, then there's no life for

us. Yeah.

Eternal life is found upon Christ's resurrection for us. And how was he raised from the dead? How would such a thing happen? Well, Paul says here, "It's in power according to the spirit of holiness." Yep. Is what happened.

It's by the validation of God the Father. Jesus said, "Tear this temple down," referring to himself, "and I will raise it up on the third day." It shows that Jesus is Lord like Paul makes here. But not only is he Lord of, like we talked about the beginning of rulers on earth, but he's also Lord of death.

He raised from the, he raised himself up from the dead. No one else can do that. Yeah.

Cool. Yeah. That's, that's, I'm just asking those questions just to really bring it out of the text.

Yeah. Like what Paul is saying, like how's it happen? Yeah. It's the power of God.

Exactly. And Paul will always bring that up when he is talking about the gospel as Jesus's resurrection, victory over death. And I've heard a lot of people say it was God vindicating his son.

Everybody accused him. Everybody said, "You're not the son of God." You count yourself equality to be equal with God. All these things.

And God says, "Yeah, he was," and raises him from the dead. And that's, that's... And when Jesus says, "I'm going to build this temple back," it's also him equating himself with God again because the scriptures attest to God raising him from the dead. He also raised himself.

He had the power to do that. He is God. Right.

Yeah. Let God be true though every man a liar. Yeah.

Every man says this man was not the son of God. Yeah. Every man says this man was not the son of God.

Exactly. Yeah. And that is because God is a God of justice, he will always vindicate his servants that are accused by Satan and obviously his host.

Yeah. So that's what we see God doing there. So you want to move on? Yeah.

You want to do verse 16? Yep. Romans 1, 16. This is what Paul says, "For I am not ashamed..." Sorry.

I made it pack with myself. I was going to start doing the whole quote unquote thing. So let's start doing that so people know when we're reading a text.

Okay. It's easier to follow. You know how Doug Wilson does that all the time? Quote.

And then ends the quote. Okay. Romans 1, 16.

Quote, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." You know, what is it? 16b isn't really what we're getting at here. 16a, the first part of this text is that Paul is not ashamed of the gospel because for, he's connecting that thought, it is the power of God unto salvation. So what's there to be ashamed about? Salvation being saved from your enemies, being saved from death itself, death, where's your sting? What is there to be ashamed about? When we proclaim the gospel, we're proclaiming life to people.

Right. True life. And there's really nothing to be ashamed about.

It's even if people think, oh, you're stupid for believing in God, all this stuff that people would ridicule Christians for, we're just loving them. We're proclaiming life to them. And they're the ones that reject it.

There's nothing to be ashamed about. Right. And notice the lack of shame that we should have, we shouldn't be ashamed of the gospel is founded upon the power of God.

And that's where Paul leads into. It's the power of God for salvation. This is why we shouldn't be ashamed.

It's for the same reason why a soldier should not be ashamed of his king when they write out to battle. It's because the power of his king is being manifested through all his workings. And this is what you see here.

The gospel is the power of God for salvation. So notice this, nothing but the gospel is the power of God for salvation. It's not sacraments.

It's not the works that you do, any merit that you have. It's none of these things. It's only the gospel.

The gospel is what saves. So all the potpourri, Rome is wrong when they say it's the gospel plus works. Eastern Orthodox is wrong when they say it's the gospel plus works also.

Every religion boils down to gospel plus works except Christianity because we recognize the grace of God. Exactly. So this is the power of God and the salvation.

And this is again, this is so central. We have to be focused on the gospel. The gospel is what saves people.

Exactly. Yeah. You telling somebody the law of God does not save them.

Though the law of God is holy and righteous and good. It is good. It restrains.

Yeah. Well, that's a different discussion. But Jesus Christ saves sinners through the power of his death, burial and resurrection.

And all of it is focused on that content. Yeah. It's central to the Christian faith and to our salvation.

And like you're saying, it's not Jesus plus anything, not plus works. You doing philanthropy or doing civil good, that doesn't do anything for your faith. It doesn't do anything to earn salvation.

It doesn't do anything. There's so many Christians that think, "Well, I do good things." Your salvation is not predicated on doing good things. It's predicated on the power of God.

So you must trust that God will do what he said, what he's promised in his word. Which is to save those, to have eternal life available for all those that would believe and repent. And that's one action.

We're not saying some people say, "Oh, you say believe plus repent, therefore you believe in faith plus works." Because repenting is a work, isn't it? This is a simultaneous action that necessarily happens. There are logical extensions of each other. Okay.

Are we good here? Yeah. Okay. So now continuing to 1 Corinthians 15, chapter 15.

All really lays out how central the gospel is to everything that Christians do. I'm going to read the first four verses of chapter 15. Quote, "Now I would remind you brothers of the gospel I preached to you, which you received in which you stand and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you unless you believed in vain.

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, that he was buried and he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures." Okay. End quote. So what I like about this text, Paul is saying, "You must believe in this.

You must hold fast to this. It's not just a believe at one time and then you're done." Paul is laying out a lifelong belief in Christ, in the gospel, in the good news. And this is something that is of first importance.

This is the thing, if Paul is going to deliver something to people that don't believe, what's he going to deliver to them? The gospel. He's saying, "I delivered this to you as first importance. This is the first thing that I delivered to you and everything else we do after that is built upon the gospel." So yeah, Christians shouldn't expect obviously people that don't believe in the gospel to now adopt all the rest of what the Bible says.

You must believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God being vindicated by being raised from the dead and living a perfect obedient life and then dying for our sins, being buried and then resurrected. You must believe in that for any of this to come after that. It is the starting point.

It is the central first admission into the kingdom of God. And once you're in the kingdom of God, you're going to want to live according to what the king has said. And then you will take in all the applications of what the gospel talks about.

But this is central. This is the starting point, first importance. Right.

Yeah. And this is why we derive from this the different...you have primary doctrine, secondary doctrine, tertiary doctrine, right? This is not to say that different levels of doctrine that are on different levels of importance are invaluable, but it is to say that there is a hierarchy in terms of the doctrine that this is of first importance here. The gospel is much more important than your eschatology.

Yeah. Even though eschatology, the study of the last days, is extremely important and you should be studying and understanding where you land on this and what the scriptures teach. But it is significantly less important than the gospel.

Why? Because the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. This is the message of eternal life. This is what all of the books of the Bible end up hitting on, right? All the New Testament epistles, there is some misunderstanding of the gospel at some point that you see.

Exactly. When there's all these false teachers who try to come in and say, "Yeah, yeah, yeah." Faith plus works. It's faith.

You put faith in Christ, you know, but you also got to be circumcised. You also got to keep the law. Right.

It is faith in the gospel. It's God's grace alone. But you actually probably, you shouldn't be married.

Marriage isn't that good. There's also some foods you probably shouldn't eat. And that's actually just as important.

Whenever you elevate anything to gospel importance, it's heresy every time. Even if you mean well, it's heresy. Because this is of first importance.

Anything that comes even close, that you're putting on a pedestal, that this is equivalent to the gospel, that you must believe, like we just did a whole study on a masculine patriarchy. Me and Rocky will never say that you must believe in the gospel and you also must believe in a biblical patriarchy. We would never say that in that sort of way.

You should believe biblical patriarchy because the Bible teaches it, but that is not on the same level of the gospel. Yeah. Somebody who's an egalitarian may be saved because of the gospel of Jesus Christ because they actually believed Jesus's words as he died for our sins.

Exactly. And that's how someone is saved. It doesn't matter that you believe every part of doctrine is correct.

Right. Exactly. Like, me and Rocky heavily disagree with our minions.

We think that they are just plainly wrong from scripture, but that doesn't mean that they're not Christians. It doesn't mean that they're not saved. It's because the gospel is what is the power of God unto salvation.

So notice this is of first importance and that's Paul's whole point here. I would say this is the only primary doctrine of Christianity. Well, I guess if you divvy up different parts of the gospel, Jesus is the son of God.

That's primary importance. Right. Jesus did die and he was a real person, not an apparition.

Like he wasn't just a spirit. He had a physical body. All the central doctrines, if you want to divvy them up, they always come back to the gospel.

They affect the gospel. So when we say primary doctrine or first importance and then you have secondary stuff like Arminianism that are very important, like biblical patriarchy, very important, but not attacking the gospel. And when the secondary, for instance, Arminianism can be thought of as semi-Pelagianism and it can bleed one into thinking, believing Pelagianism, which is a heresy because it attacks the central doctrine of the faith, which is the gospel of Jesus Christ.

So if these secondary doctrines bleed into the gospel, that's when they now become of first importance. You've made them of first importance and that's why this was happening in the early church all the time. These people would come up and they would teach things that are antithetical to the gospel.

Right. So, yeah, I guess that's our point. The gospel is completely central and if anything bleeds into it to touch it, you have now made that issue that's touching it of primary importance as well.

Even good things. Even good things. Even good things.

Yeah. And secondary issues can bleed into your, for instance, premillennial dispensationalism, it can bleed into a primary doctrine because there are literally pre-mill disputes that say Jews don't need to be evangelized, Jews are saved. John Hagee has

said this.

You do not need to evangelize a Jew. That has now become a first importance and that is a heretical thought. Right.

So, a lot of these other things can bleed into first importance and why do they bleed into first importance? Because they're attacking the gospel. The gospel is everything. We stand and fall as a church on the good news of Jesus Christ.

That's the... Hopefully that was helpful. Right. And that's what when Paul says the foundation of the church has been laid.

It's been laid on Christ. Christ is the chief cornerstone. What does he mean? It's the gospel.

It's the gospel of what Jesus came to do. That's what the church is built on. It's built on Christ's blood.

Right. And this is Paul's admonition to different elders from the Church of Ephesus in Acts 20. He says, "Guard the flock because Christ purchased these sheep by his own blood." Yeah.

Right. And that's the whole point is that the church is built upon the foundation of Christ's blood and his resurrection. Yeah.

And this is why it's a first order importance. Right. If you don't have the gospel, you don't have anything.

Exactly. You're dead in your sins. Okay.

So Bryce, what must you believe to be saved? You must believe that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin, that he came into this world as a true man and that he's also the son of God, that he's truly God at the same incense that he came to take away the sins of the world by going to an old rugged cross, even though he was entirely innocent and condemned to death where he was nailed to that cross and physically beaten and bruised. But even more than that, the full wrath of God was poured out upon him. And he said, "It is finished," meaning that the complete work that he came to do and satisfying the divine wrath of God for our sins was accomplished.

And he gave up his spirit to the Father. He was buried. And after three days of being in the tomb, he rose again, victoriously, triumphing over the principalities and powers, triumphing over death itself and revealing himself to be the true son of God because of his vindication from the death, from the dead.

And now he is seated at the right hand of the Father after he made purification for sin. So you must believe that this is what Jesus came to do. You must repent and turn from

the wickedness of the world, which says that Jesus was just a man who didn't do much.

He was just a wise teacher. You must repent of these things and turn and put your faith in Christ's work. Come to him with empty hands, not relying on yourself, but relying on his work.

Amen. No, that's good. I'm trying to think of more questions that could expose more the centrality of the gospel.

So can I believe all that and agree with that and then also be a Mormon that has now added to God's words or say, yes, Jesus is all those things, you know, and whatever. He's also the brother of Satan. He's all those things.

He wasn't an apparition. He was truly the son of God, all that. It's just he was also Satan's brother.

They're related. Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah. So this again is a problem because it misunderstands what it means to be the son of God. To be the son of God means that you are eternally begotten of the father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, one in being with the father.

They fundamentally reject who Jesus is because if you get the person of Christ wrong, then you get the whole gospel wrong because the gospel is about the person of Christ. So Jesus Christ is the son of God and what this means is that he is, like it says in Hebrews 1.3, the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature. He is God.

So that's just that's fundamental to the Christian faith because Jesus is not God, then he could not have risen himself from the grave. Only God could do that. If he's the brother of Satan, then that means that he himself was also created.

Jesus is not the highest being in creation. Jesus created all things. See John chapter 1 verses 1 through 4, Colossians 1, 15 through 17.

He's the creator of all things and by the word of his power, he upholds all of it. All things consist in him. He holds it all together.

So that means that he is outside of time. He is God. He created all things and in the beginning was the word.

The word was with God and the word was God. It's right there. The word referencing to Jesus Christ, he is God.

If you get that wrong, you don't have the gospel right because the gospel is about the

person of Christ. Exactly. And we'll get into this more in other episodes.

Where's the gospel contained at? It's in the word of God. We must, you know, that's more, these are more questions I could ask you about the centrality of the gospel. Where do we learn about the gospel? How do we know who Jesus was? How do I get it right? Is it just up to me to conjure up what I think Jesus is in my head? How do I truly know and create these constraints around the person of Christ? We're going to get into all that and these are just kind of teaser questions to get into more about the good news of Jesus.

Yeah. Good. Good.

Anything else? Anything else? No, I thought it was good. I thought it was good, Bryce. Bryce and I don't rehearse any of this.

We talked for a second before the podcast, but we just love God's word and we try our best to just be faithful. We pick a few texts and just expound on it, you know. So as always, if you have any questions, you can reach me at fortheキングpodcast@gmail.com. Go check out the website fortheキングpodcast.com and I've written some blogs on there.

I have a blog where I write sometimes and Bryce is going to eventually write on there and I'll have some other buddies write. So go check that out. There's some resources there.

If you go to the, I think the about tab or something or extra info or what I forget what I had tiled it, but you can find other podcasts, Bryce and I listened to that we think would be edifying to you guys. A lot of resources out there. Pray for the podcast and support it financially if you feel inclined, if God would lead you in that way and thanks for listening to everybody.

I always end in this doxology from 1 Timothy 1 verse 17, quote, "To the king of the ages, immortal and visible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen." Solely, nay-o, Gloria.

[Music]