

Who is the real Jesus?
“THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST”
Pastor Rick Shelton
December 13, 2009

- **II Corinthians 11:3-4 (NKJV)** But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. ⁴ For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or *if* you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted—you may well put up with it!
- **Galatians 1:6-8 (NKJV)** I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, ⁷ which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. ⁸ But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.
- Who is the real Jesus? I begin by telling a story that shows my journey in knowing Jesus better.
- Christianity is not a code of behavior, or doctrines, but it is about a person, Jesus Christ! Your whole life rises or falls by how well you know Him.
- Many years ago a patriarch of the faith, T. L. Osborn, came here to minister. We spent time in conversation over lunch and we really hit it off. He invited me to his home in Tulsa. I determined on the way to his home to tell him how much I appreciated the privilege to meet with him. I arrived, and rang the bell. T. L. opened the door, jumped out, hugged me, saying, “Oh, Rick! WOW! God must love me that He would send a great preacher like you to come and see an old man like me.” We spent the day on the floor going through files and talking about the Gospel. T. L. asked, “Do you get it? This Gospel that we preach, most preachers don’t get it!” I replied, “They don’t?” He responded, “There’s only ONE GOSPEL! That’s the Gospel of Jesus Christ! He came from heaven as deity in human flesh, walking as a man, showing us the way to the Father, then letting Himself be nailed to a cross, and shedding His own innocent blood because we couldn’t help ourselves, and giving us His righteousness they we might stand before the Father. When He finished all that, the justice of the universe demanded He rose out of the grave and ascended to the right hand of the Father, carried His blood with Him and dumped it over the mercy seat of heaven, and now forever when the Father looks all He sees is the blood of Jesus. Rick, they don’t get it. When He poured the blood out, He sat down; do you realize that means it is finished? There is nothing else we can do! We are already right with God, brought into fellowship with God. Our ticket is already paid. We can’t pray enough, fast enough, or work enough to make it any better. It’s already perfect in Christ Jesus! He paid our ticket to heaven to live with Him in glory. It’s already done!”
- I Corinthians 1: These things don’t register with our head, but is revealed in our heart of hearts, and changes the way we live, and think.
- T. L. said, “Rick, there is only ‘One Gospel’. My concern is that many Christians, and preachers use the Bible as a handbook for living, self-help book to learn how to better our marriages, treat people, etc. It is a huge mistake to think this is gospel of prosperity, good marriage, success, and better life. It is the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and every page of the Word of God reveals this!”
- You can preach on prayer, marriage, or anything, and never preach the Gospel! The Gospel is Jesus Christ, died, buried, raised from the dead, seated at the right hand of the Father, sending the Holy Spirit to live on the inside of us so we can carry out the work He has for us on this earth, and then go to heaven.
- Today there is a muddy picture of what Christianity is about!
- I was talking to one of my sons about the mind, and using scriptures to control it. But there is so much more than that!
- This is not about self-improvement. The cross was the great exchange!
- What is the Gospel?
- **Romans 1:19-21 (NKJV)** because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown *it* to them. ²⁰ For since the creation of the world His invisible *attributes* are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, ²¹ because, although they knew God, they did not glorify *Him* as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

- So many know God only through nature. People say, "I get in touch with God when I go fishing, when I am out in nature, etc." They are right! You can see and feel God and His peace and presence when you're in the woods, etc., and know Him that way, but still be totally wrong, and futile in your thoughts.
- When I look out in the morning, I see the majesty and beauty of God in looking at sky, animals, birds and flowers. I'm saying this so we can be armed to speak to those who say all the above, and their minds are blinded.
- You can't know God, how He thinks, what He wants, etc. until you know Jesus! Everything is about Jesus!
- All creation, even your body, doesn't tell you what God wants for you, thinks about you, how to pray, your eternal destiny, or your authority in Christ. All of creation tells you nothing about these things.
- Four ways people may believe: 1) God is a heavenly dictator (powerful, wise but a dictator - fate - saying God made everything and has already decided everything); 2) God is a benevolent grandfather (gives candy - He loves me, so how could He judge me. A loving grandfather would never judge my life style.
- Loving father disciplines for the greater good of his child; benevolent grandfather gives candy!
- Pastor took his grandkids to the movie, bought them candy, and took them home. They were 'hanging from the ceiling'. When their parents asked what happened, Pastor said, "It was a great movie."
- God is a loving father; not benevolent grandfather. He blesses, but disciplines to get you where He wants you to be.
- 3) Some believe God is a 'divine insurance company' (keep your dues up and God will take care of you. Some think they are paying their dues by coming on Christmas and Easter - "C&E Christians" - come to church once in a while - but God the Father is much more interested in you than that.)
- What do you know about God through Jesus?
- If Jesus had not come, we would never have known we can talk to God personally, and He answers us; we would never have known we could speak and take authority over sickness, etc. You need 'spiritual power' to become all God wants you to be.
- Many non-Christians believe Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead, but have no idea what happened in those three days before His resurrection.
- In II Corinthians 12, Paul was caught up into paradise and learned by revelation, and wrote it for us.
- 4) We would be left to believe in reincarnation (soul sleep, nothing after we died, etc.) except for the cross.
- John at Patmos had a vision of Jesus revealed to him. Jesus spoke of the future of all things.
- When I awoke this morning, I did not doubt my forgiveness, or that I will be with Jesus when I die. I don't 'know' that by looking at the creation, or the sky, etc. . . . I KNOW that by knowing Jesus!
- The greatest treasure in the world is knowing Jesus!
- He is the joy in my sorrow, my friend when I'm alone.
- You may need financial help; it is about Jesus and relationship, and He will talk to you about those things.