

The gospel Paul preached

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[0:00] It strikes me we're living in a world that loves short things. I don't know an example for you. I don't know if you've come across TED Talks.

You can watch them online. They're interesting things. Interesting short talks on interesting subjects. I read an article fairly recently that said TED Talks' time limit have been shortened of late. They used to be about 20 minutes. Now they're 13 minutes. Another example is Pope Francis apparently last year said that the ideal length of sermon should be 8 to 10 minutes long. If they're longer, then people will fall asleep or lose focus. To which someone in our church phoned me up and said he should try coming to Calvary.

Anyway, people have recognized that our attention spans aren't what they used to be. I suspect some of the blame could be social media apps like TikTok, short, sharp, few-second videos.

[1:14] And if it doesn't hold your attention in those first couple of seconds, you swipe onto the next one. I've heard said about songs that are being made now.

If you don't get someone's attention in a song, then you've lost them and they'll move on to the next song. That's the sort of world we're living in. Well, this evening, maybe we'll be thankful to know that we've got a short summary of the gospel here in Romans.

Someone has described it like an espresso, a shot of coffee. But not only is it short, it's also rich and deep in flavor.

A bit like an espresso. I don't know how long my talk will be. It's going to be on the short side, but it's longer than it took us to read those first seven verses.

But let's dive into it and let's pray that we're helped by God's word this evening to hear about the gospel, to hear this short summary of the gospel.

[2:29] Firstly, two things. Firstly, the gospel is ancient. The gospel is ancient. And do you see that there in verse two? The gospel, it's been promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures.

The gospel is ancient. It's been promised to the prophets and in the Holy Scriptures through all kinds of people as we read through the Old Testament.

Throughout centuries of world history. Through floods, through slavery, through sacrifices, through temple building projects, through judgments, through exiles, through kings, through prophets, through servants of the Lord.

All these different things have been pointing towards the gospel, the good news, the gospel that is ancient.

And it's a bit like a good mystery novel or TV show. Perhaps you're into like Agatha Christie's Porro or Miss Marple.

[3:41] Perhaps more up to date, like Richard Osman's murder mystery books or Brighton's very own detective, Grace. Been enjoying just recently watching through those episodes on ITV.

Great to see Brighton. Scary to think how many murders there are. But as you watch or read these books, you find clues on the way that uncover a bit more of the mystery.

And you try and work out who's done it. Well, there's a sense in terms of the gospel being ancient. As you read through the Old Testament, you're trying to work out how's God going to fulfill these promises?

How's it going to come about? And there's a sense of mystery in it in the pages of the Old Testament, which is made clear to us in the New.

I like the way Paul puts it in Colossians. Perhaps helpful to turn there. Colossians chapter 1. Colossians chapter 1, verse 25.

[4:53] Paul writes, So there was a sense of mystery. So there was a sense of mystery. By the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness.

The mystery. The mystery. The mystery of the gospel that has been kept hidden for ages and generations is now disclosed to the Lord's people.

To them God has chosen to make known. So there was a sense of mystery for the people in the Old Testament, but before the Lord Jesus Christ.

And now it's been revealed. Not who done it, but who does it? And it's the Lord Jesus Christ. The Son of God. And that leads us to the second thing.

Now that the mystery's been revealed, it's ancient. It's about a person. It's about the Son. The book of Romans, as you may well know, is full of wonderful theology.

[6:03] We love it in churches like ours. We love the doctrines. We love exploring them. The depths of them. The doctrine of justification by faith.

The doctrine of adoption. The doctrine of atonement. Sanctification and more. But none of these wonderful doctrines that we love to think about and preach wouldn't be so if it wasn't for who the gospel is about.

For the Lord Jesus Christ. The great Son of God. The Word being made flesh. We mustn't move far away from the fact that the gospel is about him.

It's about a person. Do you see that there? In verse 3. Who's the gospel regarding? It's regarding his Son. The Lord Jesus Christ.

If you were to think about how the solar system works. About planets orbiting the sun. The sun is at the center. The gospel has the Son of God at the center.

[7:13] It's about him. It centers on him. And what do we know about the sun from these verses? Well let's continue to read verse 3.

The gospel is regarding his Son who as to his earthly life was a descendant of David. So we discover first that the Son is a person.

He's a human being. We see that he's a descendant of David. Descended from a human being. A human family.

A man in the flesh. And it's really good that he is a man in the flesh. Because it means he's able to represent his fellow human beings.

Not only was he descended from a human being. But from David. Part of the Jewish race.

[8:15] A Jewish man. Part of God's chosen people. Knowing the law. Knowing the sacrifices. Knowing the feasts. And so even more qualified to be able to represent fellow human beings before God.

And he's descended from David. A royal king. Royal blood is in his line. Should be rolling out the red carpet for the Lord Jesus Christ.

But that wouldn't be good news really if he was just a human being. Because he would be like David.

A sinner. Not able to represent us perfectly before God. No, he's also part of the three persons of the Trinity.

The one God. God see that in verse four. Verse three talks about his earthly life. Verse four in comparison. And speaks about his life as the son of God.

[9:26] Part of the Godhead. Verse four says. And who through the spirit of holiness. Was appointed the son of God. In power. By his resurrection from the dead.

Jesus Christ. Our Lord. Through the Holy Spirit. The son of God. Is declared in power.

To be. The son. Of. God. John Calvin comments on that phrase.

Declared in power. He says. A divine. Power. Is said to have shone forth. In the resurrection. Of the Lord Jesus Christ. For this reason. Because he rose.

By his own power. As he had often testified. That he would. That's important. That he rose. By his own power. He rose others.

[10:23] From the dead. But if he died on the cross. As we're remembering this evening. And stayed dead. Or somebody else rose him from the dead.

Then can we really take confidence in him. But because as he said things. I destroy this temple in three days. And I will rise again. We can take confidence.

It was entirely the work of God. The Trinity. Working together. To raise him. Back to new life. Just as.

In the beginning. There was darkness. There was no life. And God spoke. And there was life. As a spirit of God. Breathed. Life.

Into human beings. So here. In the resurrection. There was a new creation. The son of God. Being raised from the dead. And entirely. A work of God.

[11:21] He didn't need help for it. And so he's declared. In power. To be. The son of God. Not just. An ordinary. Human being.

At all. He is divine. And I. And I think. The father. Is. Is at work. Here. I think. Father. Spirit. And son. Is at work. Here. In verse four. Read it again. And who. Through the spirit. Of holiness. There's a spirit. Was appointed. The son.

Of God. In power. It doesn't mention. God. The father. Specifically. But I. I think. Paul might have had.

Psalm 2. In mind. Just turn there. If you could. Briefly. And which. Incidentally. Is a psalm. We're going to look at. And in a week's time. At this.

[12:13] This very evening service. And psalm 2. Psalm 2.

And verse. Five and six. sorry six to seven the Lord says I have installed my king the Lord Jesus Christ I think on Zion my holy mountain I will proclaim the Lord's decree he said to me you are my son today I have become your father ask me and I will make the nations your inheritance the ends of the earth your possession you will break them with a rod of iron you will dash them to pieces like pottery all worked up in a similar situation to the verses we looked at this morning from Daniel 7 the Lord God the Father speaking of the Son today you are my son today I've become your father because of the resurrection which we look forward to where he would be declared in power to be the Son of God but but don't mishear this as thinking there was a time when he was not the Son of God that's not true as the creed states we sometimes say he's eternally begotten of the Father but something about his resurrection from the dead that we we proclaim in the gospel says he is the Son of God that the world wanted to get rid of him the world wanted to crucify him but the world is shown in this great powerful act of the resurrection you have messed with the wrong one here he is risen he is declared in power to be the glorious

Son of God and so the gospel message then is about one who is human and who is God and and we can extend that thought that he is fully human and fully God we must not deny him any less and he can therefore represent us before God perfectly in our place dying as our sacrifice our full sufficient sacrifice in our place but then one who rose again mightily and so we can trust by his death that he has indeed fully paid for our sins and his death ends in life as we heard this morning he is now exalted and ascended he is the glorious Son of God in heaven hopefully you kept up with that you can ask me more questions later the gospel effects finally

I don't know if I have used the right effects here but what happens when you believe in the gospel well I think Paul is a good example here for us Paul is thrilled I sense in this writing to write about the gospel here it's transformed his life we noted that a bit this morning in Acts chapter 9 this once persecutor of God's people now knows God's grace because of the gospel because of the good news found in the Lord Jesus Christ because the Lord Jesus came to him on that road to

Damascus that God would look on a persecutor and say I'm going to interrupt his life I'm going to open his blind eyes to see me for who I really am it's amazing it's extraordinary so no wonder Paul is excited about the gospel we see a bit later on even more of how he's excited about the gospel verse 15 that is why

I'm so eager to preach the gospel also to you in Rome I love the gospel I want to come and preach it to you in person but for now here's some writing about it and in verse 16 it continues even more for I am not ashamed about the gospel it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes first to the Jew then to the Gentile I'm excited about this gospel but it's about the son son of God who became flesh who died for us who rose again in great power and it is truly the son of God it has transformed my life and I get to preach it to people that's why he would go through arrests trials shipwrecks storms snake bites in order to get to Rome to preach the gospel to them he loves it

and what's the effects on us well we should love it too let me help you to see why verse 7 he writes to fellow believers those who have been changed by the gospel he says to all in

[17:52] Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ if Paul was writing this letter to us at Calvary perhaps he would say to all in Brighton who are loved by God and called to be his holy people grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ the gospel is so full of wonderful treasure it may have been hidden in ages past but it's been revealed to us even today even in 2025 even here in Brighton all about this glorious Son of God the Lord Jesus Christ and this gospel in miniature in these verses that we can celebrate will also be seen in miniature in this meal that we're about to take an extraordinary meal that reminds us of the gospel and I think as we take the bread and wine this evening let's remember these things in verse seven that we are loved by God that we are called to be his holy people that we know grace and we know his peace and also nicking from verse six that we belong to Jesus

Christ we're called to belong to the Lord Jesus Christ so as we take this meal together we take it and see that it's a visible image to us reminding us of how closely we belong to him as we take these symbols that represent him and feed on him we're seeing a visible image of our union with him he is in it's like he's inside us we're united to the Lord Jesus Christ we belong to him body and soul and as we touch the bread and as we sip the wine we can be reminded of what Paul says to them first in verse seven you are loved by God love so much that he would give his life for you and as we take this meal together we can remind ourselves of our identity that we're called to be his holy people because of the blood that Jesus has shed for us because of his blood we're covered in the righteousness of Christ we're holy people in the

Lord Jesus Christ and as we touch and handle the elements we can be reminded of how undeserving we are that he would come and do this work of salvation for us and as we taste and swallow these things may we know as Paul said to them the peace of God for us peace like this world can't give because we're now reconciled to him we now have peace with him we were once his enemies Paul says in Romans and now we're his friends we have a glorious gospel what a glorious gospel meal we have to partake in together I suggest that we sing together a lot of