

THE GOSPEL MESSAGE

Volume 65, Number 10

Editor ~ Wade Stanley

Publisher ~ Doug Twaddell

October, 2023

The Truth

Louis Garbi

The expression “My truth” is a point of view. It is an assertion rejecting reality. It is a means of trying to have things our own way. “My truth” is an offspring of humanism. It is a declaration that our observation is the only thing that matters. It closes the door to further discussion and creates a defense, walling the individual away from what is needed. Ever since the Father of Lies influenced man, the truth has been made to appear malleable, like a blacksmith working iron into the shape he desires or a child making rabbits out of clay. “My truth” is a foolish thing to say.

The truth is found in Jesus Christ. When Jesus stood before Pontus Pilate, He stated, “*You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into this world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice*” (John 18:37). Pilate’s response to Jesus was “*What is truth?*” This was his “My truth” moment, portraying the truth as meaningless. Someone who is “*of the truth*” is one who loves the truth more than himself. Such a person learns what is right, even at the expense of his self-esteem. Isn’t this where shame and the need to repent come? When our loving parents said, “You should be ashamed of yourself,” they were calling upon our highest nature of spirituality to recognize and identify the wrong we had committed. They were turning our heads to face the truth. Being “*of the truth*” is to seek and practice what God has revealed regardless of the cost. God not only shows us where we need to repent, but He also shows us the right way to live.

Mankind is unraveling. Even simple matters of truth are lightly cast aside. Gender dysphoria is such an example. Its advocates are trying to hijack biological reality for the sake of their confusion. Thus, anarchy becomes freedom, and truth becomes oppression. We are left with these acronyms of sorrow: LGBT, 2SLGBTQIA+, LGBTQQIP2SAA, QTPOC, TGNC, AMAB, AFAB, etc. As one advocate put it, “Sex is assigned at birth, gender is how you feel, and sexuality is who you are attracted to.” And so, feelings become more important than reality, and the truth becomes buried.

Feelings versus truth. Reality versus imagination. This gets

to the very heart of what defines us. This is not about an emotional response that results from something that has happened: joy upon reunion, gladness from a gift, sorrow because of a death, or guilt because of sin. It is about the problem of our feelings becoming more important than the truth. And so, “My truth” emerges. The question of what we value most presents the answer to who we are – corrupt or innocent.

Every temptation is born on the wings of feeling and desire outside the bounds of goodness. It is a presentation of something evil outside of ourselves that we have not done but we consider doing. It is easy to raise the flag of “My truth” at such a time – “This is who I am.” Not so! “*But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death*” (James 1:15). The desire or the feeling is not the problem. It is the conception and birth of sin. This is where corruption begins. Temptation is not corruption.

Our temptations are not who we are. Even Jesus was tempted. He had the desire to do evil things: to turn stones into bread (using His power to gratify Himself), to float through the air (to demonstrate God’s power for Himself), to worship Satan, rule the world, and possess its glory. From these three, every conceivable form of wickedness could sprout. These were His temptations. Yet, He anchored Himself to the truth of the scriptures and did not sin. “*For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin*” (Hebrews 4:15).

Jesus is the one who gives clarity and meaning to our lives. He said of Himself, “*I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me*” (John 14:6). If He were just a gifted man, a super exceptional person, this claim would be astonishingly egotistical. His declaration was humble because He came to give His life for our salvation. He offered Himself in obedience to the Father’s will. It was done out of love for His Father and love for us. Was this feeling over fact? Consider Jesus, “*the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God*” (Hebrews 12:2). The joy set before Him was the value of the children of God and their fulfillment. His love came from seeing the beauty of what we may become.

continued on the next page...

Who was this man who said He was the way, truth, and life? He

... is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist (Colossians 1:15-17).

John the Baptist said of Jesus,

He who comes from above is above all; he who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all. And what He has seen and heard, that He testifies; and no one receives His testimony. He who has received His testimony has certified that God is true (John 3:31-33).

Our part is to receive His testimony, the truth of heaven. He will not force us to believe, but every reason to believe is revealed in Him. Think of it! Here was one who was a part of the eternal glory, who created all things, who knew everything, and had power over everything. He is the one who revealed and made possible what we need to share in God's glory.

Our perception of life is based on information. We hear good and evil things. Upon maturing, we become the gatekeepers for what we accept or reject. The notion of "my truth" suppresses our ability to discern between right and wrong, the truth and the lie. It keeps us from being wise. "But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. For 'WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD THAT HE MAY INSTRUCT HIM?' But we have the mind of Christ" (1 Corinthians 2:15-16). It is the truth of Jesus Christ that matters.

~ 124 Locust St., Barnett, MO 65011-1004 ~ garbi14@gmail.com

The Hope of the Gospel

Tad Morris

What is the hope of the gospel of Christ? The hope of the gospel is not about living your best life now. It's not about health, wealth, peace, and prosperity. It's not even about friendship and fellowship. It's not about this life, this planet, or this physical body. If the hope of the gospel is about here and now, the apostle Paul says we are too be pitied! 1 Corinthians 15:19: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men

the most pitiable."

Rather, the hope of the Christian life is built on one very specific expectation - the promise of eternal life. The Spirit says that "having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:7). Paul explains our hope like this in Romans 8:23-25:

...we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.

We are hoping for the redemption of our bodies, when we are delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious children of God. So then, the Christian hope is not about what we see here and now; otherwise, hope is not hope! Instead, we joyfully anticipate the day when this corruptible body is transformed into "incorruption" (1

Corinthians 15:53) and mortality is swallowed up by life (2 Corinthians 5:4)! This hope is the anchor for the soul (Hebrews 6:19).

How can we be sure this expectation is valid? Because God has already proved He is faithful. Romans 15:4: "For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Our hope is based on observation and evidence. For example, the life of Abraham is presented as proof that God can be trusted, that we can place our hope entirely in Him.

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE® Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation (Requester Publications Only)

1. Publication Title: **The Gospel Message**

2. Issue Frequency: **Monthly**

3. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: **September 2023**

4. Issue Frequency: **12**

5. Number of Issues Published Annually: **12**

6. Annual Subscription Price: **\$7.00**

7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication (Not printer) (Street, city, county, state, and ZIP+4®): **1700 S Ann Ct, Independence, MO 64050-1909**

8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher (Not printer): **1700 S Ann Ct, Independence, MO 64050-1909**

9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor (Do not leave blank):
 Publisher and complete mailing address:
Doug Twissell
1700 S Ann Ct, Independence, MO 64050-1909
 Editor Name and complete mailing address:
Wade Stanley
10078 State Hwy 143, Unionville, MO 63085
 Managing Editor Name and complete mailing address:

10. Owner (Do not leave blank. If the publication is owned by a corporation, give the name and address of the corporation immediately followed by the names and addresses of all individual owners or holding a controlling interest in the total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, give the name and address of the individual owner. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, give its name and address, and the names and addresses of all individual owners. If the publication is published by a nonprofit organization, give its name and address.)
 Owner:
Doug Twissell
1700 S Ann Ct, Independence, MO 64050-1909

11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities. If none, check box.
 None

12. Tax Status (For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at nonprofit rates. Check one):
 Non-Profit
 Other

13. Publication Title: **The Gospel Message**

14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: **September 2023**

15. Extent and Nature of Circulation

September 2023		Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	
1. Total Number of Copies (Net press run)		1204	1146
2. Paid and Unpaid Distribution Outside the United States (a) Outside the United States (b) Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, and Counter Sales (c) Other Paid Distribution Outside the United States (d) Other Paid Distribution Outside the United States (e) Free or Nominal Rate		997	948
3. Paid and Unpaid Distribution Within the United States (a) Paid (b) Unpaid (c) Free or Nominal Rate		77	74
4. Total Paid and Unpaid Distribution Outside the United States (Sum of 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 2e, and 2f)		0	0
5. Total Paid and Unpaid Distribution Within the United States (Sum of 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d, 3e, and 3f)		1074	1022
6. Total Paid and Unpaid Distribution (Sum of 4 and 5)		1074	1022
7. Copies not Distributed (Sum of 1b, 1c, and 1d)		0	0
8. Total (Sum of 6 and 7)		1074	1022
9. Copies not Distributed (Sum of 1b, 1c, and 1d)		131	124
10. Total (Sum of 8 and 9)		1205	1146
11. Paid and Unpaid Distribution (Sum of 6 and 7)		100	100

16. Publication of Statement of Ownership for a Requester Publication is required and will be printed in the **October 2023** issue.

17. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner: **Doug Twissell, Publisher** Date: **10-25-2023**

18. I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

PS Form 3526-R, July 2014 (Page 2 of 4) PRIVACY NOTICE: See our privacy policy at www.usps.com

Hebrews 6:11-19:

And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself...

Seeing then the immutability of His counsel, we lay hold of the hope set before us.

What about you personally? How do you know this hope is yours? Because God has given you His Holy Spirit as a guarantee. Paul explains in **2 Corinthians 5:4-5**,

For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

The Holy Spirit is our witness that we do belong to God, that God will save us, and fulfill His promise of eternal life.

But how does that work? How does an invisible resident of our bodies prove anything? A feeling? A voice? A miraculous sign? Speaking in tongues? No, these are not the evidences of God's faithfulness. The visible proof that we have been sealed by the Spirit and prepared for eternal life is the fruit of the Spirit. When a Christian receives the Spirit by faith through baptism into Christ (**Acts 2:38**), this begins a real and substantial personal transformation. **Romans 6:22**: *"But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life."* The fruit of the Spirit is just the beginning of a process that ends in eternal life. He is God's guarantee, pledge, promise, and down payment on eternal life. He is proof that God is willing and able to deliver in full.

What can take this hope away? Nothing can. That's the point of **Romans 8:35-39**:

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

This passage gets a lot of attention for what it doesn't mean. This passage does not say that it's impossible to fall away from Christ and be lost. So what does it say? When you are attached to Christ, there is no force in this world strong enough to

separate you from the love of God. Persecutions will hurt you, but they cannot destroy you. Temptations will find you, but they cannot defeat you. Satan will harass you, but he cannot condemn you. Death will catch you, but it cannot keep you. The power within you is greater than the powers against you. When you suffer, you have a Comforter. When you're tempted, you have a Deliverer. When you sin, you have an Advocate. When you are in Christ, you are secure in the love of God. This is the hope of the gospel of Christ.

~ 23711 State Route N, Eminence, MO 65466
mr.thaddeusmorris@gmail.com

The Holy Spirit: Our Comforter and Friend

Terry Martin

On Saturday August 5, 2023, I attended the funeral of my friend and brother, Brad Russell. An excerpt from Brad's obituary stated, "Because of Brad's dedication to the will of our heavenly Father, he was a wise, fierce and loyal protector of his wife, children, parents, siblings and entire family." In my personal conversations and observations of Brad, I know this to be a true statement, which reminded me of **John 15:12**, *"Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends."* Yes, I/we lost a brother and friend; let us not forget we have a friend in Jesus.

In the Sacred Selections songbook there is song, # 63 "What A Friend We Have in Jesus," with the following lyrics, "What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear; what a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer, O what peace we often forfeit; O, what needless pain we bear; all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer." In **John 14:16**, Jesus promised his apostles and us a Helper (a friend) *"He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever."* Jesus left us the Holy Spirit to aid us in our pain and prayers even though, at times such as this, we often do not know how to find the words in those prayers. So let us continue to *"comfort each other... just as you are doing"* (**1 Thessalonians 5:11**).

In **John 16:7**, Jesus tells His apostles that He must go away in order for *"the Helper to come."* My friend Brad has gone on, but in His place, Jesus provides us a Helper in the Holy Spirit to comfort and guide us.

Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. You have heard Me say to you, I am going away and coming back to you. If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, I am going to the Father, for My Father is greater than I (**John 14:27-28**).



Please check your expiration date!

Continued from page 3: "The Holy Spirit..."

I loved my brother and friend, even more so I love my friend Jesus, who left me a comforter in the Holy Spirit, and it's because of this Helper, I can be at peace.

205 N 1700 Rd., Lecompton, KS 66050
~ megamartinmen@yahoo.com

Glory to God!

The **Old Lamine Church of Christ** in rural **Blackwater, MO** were overjoyed when six souls were added to the congregation in recent weeks. **Shane** and **Robin Christy** placed membership, and their three children — **Jacob, Ava, and Sophia** — were baptized for the remission of sins! **Landon Snoddy** chose to be immersed into Christ as well.

The church in **Martensdale, IA** rejoiced when **Mark Klatt** was united with the death and resurrection of Jesus in baptism on August 27.

The church in **Nixa, MO** warmly welcomed **James** and **Loralee Bennett** as members.

The church on **Dean Avenue, Des Moines, IA** praised God when **Candy Meek** surrendered her life to the Lord in baptism on September 3.

Blessed Are the Dead

Ethel Marie Frampton, 91, of West Bolivar, PA, went home to be with the Lord on Sunday, July 30. Sister Ethel was born Oct. 18, 1931, in Bolivar, the daughter of the late **William "Mack"** and **Goldie (Wambaugh) James**. She was also preceded in death by her husband, **Lesley M. Frampton**; daughter, **Gloria Elam**; and three brothers and three sisters. She is survived by her daughters, **Diane Frampton**, of Bolivar, and **Sharon Frampton**, of Ligonier; granddaughters, **Leah (Christopher) Duncan**, and **Tyla Cesario**; one great-grandson,

Christopher "JR" Duncan; sister, **Donna Gibson**; brother, **Robert James**; and son-in-law, **Roger Elam**, of Iowa. Ethel was a faithful member of the **Bolivar Church of Christ**. She enjoyed reading her Bible and her flower garden. She was known for her special smile and hugs, and for her special cards that she would send to those who needed encouragement.

Special Meetings

Northern Missouri Fall Campout

The churches in **Martinstown** and **Unionville, MO** plan their second annual **Fall Campout** for **October 6-8**. For a meeting flyer, please scan the QR code to the right with the camera on your phone or tablet.



Weekend Meeting, Ozark, MO

The **Riverside Road church of Christ** plans a special weekend meeting for **October 14-15**. Their theme is "This is the Way -- Walk It!" The flyer for the meeting can be found using the QR code to the right.



Youth Workshop, Ottawa, KS

The **Rock Creek Church of Christ** plans a special "Youth Workshop" for the weekend of **October 28-29**. On Saturday, Brothers **John Lee** and **Doug Twaddell** will lead the studies on a variety of topics related to "Commitment." The Sunday morning worship service will be led by the young men who participate in the studies. A flyer with more information can be found by clicking the QR code above.



THE GOSPEL MESSAGE (USPS:576-040) (ISSN:1054-7991) is published monthly for \$7 per year by **THE GOSPEL MESSAGE**, 1700 S. Ann Ct., Independence, MO 64057. Periodicals Postage Paid at Independence, MO. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to **THE GOSPEL MESSAGE**, 1700 S. Ann Ct., Independence, MO 64057