

# Not Everything Labeled “Gospel” Comes From God

By System Import | Sermon | March 13, 2026

---

## Not Everything Labeled “Gospel” Comes From God

We live in an age of unprecedented spiritual confusion. Walk into any Christian bookstore, scroll through religious podcasts, or flip through Christian television channels, and you will be bombarded with a dizzying array of messages, all claiming to be “the Gospel.” You hear messages about financial breakthrough, messages about inner healing, messages about social revolution, and messages about rigorous rule-keeping. They all use the same vocabulary. They say “Jesus,” they say “Bible,” they say “Faith.” But if you listen closely—if you listen with the ears of a Berean who tests everything against the Scriptures—you will discover a terrifying reality: not everything labeled “Gospel” actually comes from God. Just because a bottle has a medicine label on it doesn't mean it contains the cure; if the contents are poison, the label is a lie. The Apostle Paul was so passionate about this danger that he wrote to the Galatians with a ferocity rarely seen in the New Testament. He said, “I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.” He went so far as to say that even if an \*angel from heaven\* preached a different gospel, let that angel be accursed. Why such strong language? Because a counterfeit gospel cannot save you. A counterfeit gospel is not just a difference of opinion; it is a spiritual death trap. It inoculates people against the truth. It gives them a false sense of security while leaving them dead in their sins. And before we dive in, if this message is already stirring something in you, hit the subscribe button and stay connected to God's Word daily, because we believe that truth sets us free. Today, we are going to do the hard work of discernment. We are going to strip away the shiny packaging of the modern religious marketplace and examine seven popular “gospels” that are circulating in the church today. We will hold them up to the light of Scripture to see if they hold water. This is not about being critical for the sake of being critical; this is about survival. It is about ensuring that the faith we hold is the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. If you are tired of spiritual fluff and hungry for the raw, undiluted truth of Jesus Christ, you are in the right place. Let's learn how to spot the fakes so we can cling to the real thing.

The danger of a false gospel is that it usually contains 90% truth and 10% lie. If it were 100% lie, no believer would swallow it. The enemy is subtle. He doesn't come with a pitchfork; he comes as an angel of light. He quotes Scripture, just as he did in the wilderness temptation of Jesus. He uses biblical language but changes the dictionary definition of the words. He takes “faith” and turns it into a force to manipulate God. He takes “grace” and turns it into a license to sin. He takes “justice” and separates it from righteousness. This mixing of truth and error is what makes these false gospels so pervasive and so deadly. It is the drop of cyanide in the glass of pure water that kills you. You don't taste the cyanide; you just die. That is why discernment is the most critical need

# Not Everything Labeled “Gospel” Comes From God

By System Import | Sermon | March 13, 2026

---

of the hour. We need Christians who know the authentic bank note so well that they can spot the counterfeit by touch alone.

Furthermore, these false gospels appeal to our flesh. The true Gospel offends our pride because it says we are helpless sinners who contribute nothing to our salvation but the sin that made it necessary. It tells us we must die to ourselves, take up a cross, and follow a suffering Savior. The false gospels, however, stroke our ego. They tell us we are champions, that we deserve wealth, that we are victims of society rather than perpetrators of sin, or that God just wants us to be happy and self-actualized. They sell well because they demand little. They offer a crown without a cross. They offer heaven without holiness. But Jesus warned us, "Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many." We must be willing to walk the hard, narrow road of truth, even if it makes us unpopular, even if it challenges our own preferences.

## Number 1: The Gospel of Prosperity (The Transactional Lie)

The first and perhaps most widespread counterfeit is the Prosperity Gospel. This is the teaching that it is God's will for every believer to be wealthy, healthy, and happy in this life, and that faith is the currency we use to access these blessings. It turns the Creator of the universe into a cosmic vending machine. You put in your faith, your positive confession, or your "seed money," and God is obligated to dispense a blessing. If you are sick, poor, or suffering, this gospel says it is because you lack faith or haven't confessed the right promises. It appeals to our natural greed and our desire for comfort, wrapping materialism in religious language.

This gospel distorts the very nature of God. It reduces Him to a means to an end. We don't come to God to get God; we come to God to get stuff. We treat Jesus like a spiritual Amazon Prime delivery driver. But the Bible presents a radically different picture. Jesus said, "In this world you will have tribulation" (John 16:33). He didn't promise a Ferrari; He promised a cross. The Apostle Paul, the greatest missionary in history, was not flying in a private jet; he was beaten, shipwrecked, hungry, and eventually beheaded. Did Paul lack faith? Did Peter lack faith when he said, "Silver and gold have I none"? The Prosperity Gospel insults the memory of the martyrs who died for the faith in poverty and pain. It suggests that their suffering was a sign of spiritual failure rather than spiritual glory.

Furthermore, this teaching is cruel. I have seen it destroy the faith of good people. I have walked into hospital rooms where faithful believers were dying of cancer, and they were weeping—not because they were afraid of death, but because they thought they had failed God. They were told by prosperity preachers that if they had enough faith, they would be healed. So they blame themselves. They think, "I must not be believing hard enough. I must have a secret sin." This is

# Not Everything Labeled “Gospel” Comes From God

By System Import | Sermon | March 13, 2026

---

spiritual abuse. It adds the burden of guilt to the burden of illness. The true Gospel says that God is sovereign over sickness and health. It says that sometimes God heals to show His power, and sometimes He sustains us in sickness to show His grace. His grace is sufficient, whether the thorn is removed or not (2 Corinthians 12:9).

The Prosperity Gospel also ignores the biblical warnings about wealth. Jesus said, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God" (Matthew 19:24). The Bible calls the love of money the root of all kinds of evil. Yet, this false gospel encourages the love of money. It sanctions greed. It tells you to name it and claim it. But the Bible tells us to be content with food and clothing (1 Timothy 6:8). The true treasure of the Christian is Christ Himself. If you have Jesus and live in a shack, you are rich. If you have the whole world but lack Jesus, you are bankrupt. We must reject the transaction and embrace the relationship. We serve God because He is worthy, not because He pays well.

## Number 2: The Gospel of Cheap Grace (Licentiousness)

On the other side of the spectrum is the Gospel of Cheap Grace. This is the teaching that emphasizes God's love and forgiveness to the exclusion of His holiness and commands. It says, "Jesus paid it all, so it doesn't matter how I live." It treats the blood of Christ as a license to sin rather than a power to overcome sin. This gospel is popular in a culture that hates rules and loves "tolerance." It presents a God who is a friendly grandfather in the sky, who just wants you to be happy and doesn't really care about your moral choices. It invites you to accept Jesus as Savior but refuses to submit to Him as Lord.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the German theologian who was martyred by the Nazis, coined the term "cheap grace." He wrote, "Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, Communion without confession... Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate." This false gospel lulls people into a deep spiritual sleep. They think they are saved because they walked an aisle when they were seven years old or because they mentally agree with Christian facts, yet their lives are indistinguishable from the world. They sleep around, they gossip, they cheat, they harbor bitterness, and they feel no conviction because "God knows my heart."

But the Bible is clear: "Faith without works is dead" (James 2:26). The grace that saves us also trains us to renounce ungodliness (Titus 2:11-12). You cannot have justification without sanctification. If there is no change in your life, there is no reality to your faith. Jesus said, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments" (John 14:15). He didn't say, "If you love me, do whatever you want." The proof of love is obedience. Cheap grace strips the Gospel of its

# Not Everything Labeled “Gospel” Comes From God

By System Import | Sermon | March 13, 2026

---

transforming power. It leaves the sinner trapped in their sin, falsely believing they are free.

If this message inspires you, don't forget to subscribe for more Bible insights every week. We must recover the biblical tension between grace and truth. We are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, but the faith that saves is never alone; it is always accompanied by a new nature that hates sin and loves righteousness. Authentic grace breaks your heart over your sin. It makes you want to be holy. It doesn't make you comfortable in Babylon; it makes you long for Jerusalem. We need to preach a Gospel that costs something—a Gospel that demands we pick up our cross daily. Only that kind of Gospel has the power to raise the dead.

## Number 3: The Gospel of Legalism (Performance-Based)

If Cheap Grace falls into the ditch of lawlessness, the Gospel of Legalism falls into the ditch of works. This is the belief that we are saved, or kept saved, by our own performance. It adds to the finished work of Christ. It says, "Jesus + My Good Works = Salvation." It creates a culture of judgment, fear, and exhaustion. In legalistic churches, the focus is always on the external: how you dress, what music you listen to, which Bible translation you use, and how many meetings you attend. It measures spirituality by a checklist of do's and don'ts rather than by the condition of the heart.

The Apostle Paul fought this heresy in the book of Galatians. The Galatians had started with faith in Christ, but false teachers came in and told them they also needed to be circumcised and follow the Mosaic law to truly be saved. Paul called them "foolish Galatians." He asked, "Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?" (Galatians 3:3). Legalism is seductive because it appeals to our pride. It allows us to measure ourselves against others and say, "I am holier than you because I don't do X, Y, and Z." It creates a hierarchy of holiness that God never established.

Legalism destroys the joy of salvation. When you are living by a checklist, you never know if you have done enough. You live in constant anxiety that God is angry with you. You view God as a harsh taskmaster rather than a loving Father. You serve Him out of fear of punishment, not out of gratitude for redemption. This kills intimacy. You cannot be intimate with someone you are terrified of disappointing. The Legalistic Gospel turns children into employees. It turns the Wedding Feast into a Performance Review.

Furthermore, legalism fails to deal with the root of sin. Colossians 2:23 says that strict regulations "have an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh." You can force a person to dress modestly, but you cannot force them to be pure in heart. You can force a person to attend

# Not Everything Labeled “Gospel” Comes From God

By System Import | Sermon | March 13, 2026

---

church, but you cannot force them to love Jesus. Only the Spirit can change the heart. We must reject the yoke of slavery and stand firm in the freedom for which Christ has set us free—a freedom that leads to love, not license, and obedience, not performance.

## Number 4: The Gospel of Social Justice (Without Atonement)

There is a new gospel gaining traction in many circles, often called the "Social Gospel" or the Gospel of Social Justice. This teaching focuses almost exclusively on horizontal issues—fixing societal structures, fighting poverty, combating racism, and caring for the environment. These are all good, biblical concerns. God cares deeply about justice (Micah 6:8). However, this gospel becomes a counterfeit when it replaces the vertical reality of Atonement. It preaches a Kingdom without a King. It seeks to fix the world without fixing the human heart. It confuses political liberation with spiritual salvation.

The danger of this gospel is that it turns the church into just another NGO or political action committee. If our primary mission is to dig wells and march in protests, we have lost our unique calling. The Red Cross can dig wells. The government can pass laws. Only the Church can preach the message of reconciliation between a holy God and sinful man through the blood of Jesus. Jesus did not come primarily to overthrow Rome or solve the poverty crisis of the first century; He came to save his people from their sins (Matthew 1:21). He said, "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?" (Mark 8:36).

If we feed a man's belly but let him go to hell, we have failed. If we liberate a man from oppression but leave him in bondage to sin, we have not truly loved him. The true Gospel changes the man, and the changed man then changes society. The Social Gospel tries to reverse this. It believes that if we create a utopia on earth, man will be good. But history proves this wrong. You can put sinful men in a perfect environment, and they will tear it apart because the problem is not just outside us; it is inside us. We need a Savior, not just a social worker.

If this message inspires you, don't forget to subscribe for more Bible insights every week. We must not swing the pendulum too far and ignore the poor—that would be disobedience. But we must keep the main thing the main thing. The Gospel is first of all the news that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. Social justice is a *\*fruit\** of the Gospel, not the *\*root\** of it. We do justice because we have been justified. We love our neighbor because God loved us. When we sever the fruit from the root, the fruit rots. We must keep the Cross at the center of our mission.

## Number 5: The Gospel of Self-Help (Therapeutic Deism)

This is perhaps the most subtle counterfeit of our time. It is the Gospel of "You." It frames

# Not Everything Labeled "Gospel" Comes From God

By System Import | Sermon | March 13, 2026

---

Christianity as a journey of self-discovery and self-actualization. The sermons sound more like TED Talks or therapy sessions than biblical exposition. The focus is on "unleashing your potential," "overcoming your insecurities," and "living your best life." God is presented as a Life Coach or a Therapist who exists to help you achieve your personal goals and feel good about yourself. Sin is redefined as "dysfunction" or "low self-esteem." Salvation is redefined as "mental health" or "success."

This "Therapeutic Moralistic Deism," as sociologists call it, removes the glory of God from the center and replaces it with the happiness of man. But the Bible is not a story about you; it is a story about God. You are not David; you are the Israelites cowering in the fear of Goliath, needing a Champion. You are not the hero; you are the one who needs saving. The Gospel of Self-Help tells you to look inward for the solution. "Believe in yourself." "Follow your heart." But the Bible says the heart is deceitful above all things (Jeremiah 17:9). Looking inward is the problem, not the solution.

The true Gospel calls us to look outward and upward. It calls us to deny ourselves, not affirm ourselves. "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Galatians 2:20). Christianity is not about making a better version of \*you\*; it is about killing the old \*you\* and raising a new creation in Christ. The Self-Help gospel cannot save because self cannot save self. A drowning man cannot pull himself out by his own hair. We need a Rescuer from the outside.

Furthermore, this gospel fails when life gets tragic. "Positive thinking" is useless at the graveside of a child. "Believing in yourself" collapses when you face a terminal diagnosis. We need something sturdier than psychology. We need theology. We need the rugged truth of the sovereignty of God, the hope of the resurrection, and the fellowship of suffering. We need a God who is big enough to handle our pain, not just a God who validates our feelings. We must trade the mirror for the window—looking away from ourselves to the majesty of Jesus.

## Number 6: The Gospel of Universalism (No Judgment)

The Gospel of Universalism is the teaching that, in the end, love wins and everyone will be saved, regardless of what they believe or how they lived. It posits that a loving God would never send anyone to hell. This message is incredibly appealing to the modern mind because it removes the offense of exclusivity. It allows us to coexist peacefully with all religions, claiming that "all roads lead to the top of the mountain." It erases the fear of judgment and the urgency of evangelism.

However, this gospel makes the Cross of Jesus completely unnecessary. If everyone is going to be saved anyway, why did Jesus have to die? Why did He sweat drops of blood in Gethsemane? Why did He endure the wrath of God? If there is no hell to be saved from, the Cross becomes a

# Not Everything Labeled “Gospel” Comes From God

By System Import | Sermon | March 13, 2026

---

confusing act of child abuse rather than a glorious act of redemption. Universalism mocks the sacrifice of the Son of God. It trivializes the justice of God. It assumes that God's love overrides His holiness, but the Bible teaches that God's attributes are in perfect harmony. He is fully love and fully just.

Jesus spoke more about hell than anyone else in the Bible. He warned of the "outer darkness" where there is "weeping and gnashing of teeth." He spoke of the narrow door that leads to life and the few who find it. To preach Universalism is to call Jesus a liar. It is to give people a false hope that leads them to eternal ruin. It removes the urgency of the Great Commission. Why go to the ends of the earth and risk your life for the Gospel if the people in the jungle are going to heaven anyway? Universalism cuts the nerve of missions.

We must have the courage to preach the difficult truths. The Bible teaches that there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12). This is exclusive, yes. But it is also inclusive, in that the invitation is open to *\*anyone\** who will believe. But they must believe. They must repent. God respects human freedom enough to allow people to choose life apart from Him, which is the definition of hell. We cannot love people by lying to them about the consequences of their choices.

## Number 7: The Gospel of Political Idolatry

Finally, we face the Gospel of Political Idolatry. This happens when the Kingdom of God is conflated with an earthly political party or nation. It wraps the Cross in the flag (of any nation). On the Right, it looks like Christian Nationalism, believing that a specific nation is God's chosen vehicle for salvation and that voting a certain way is a litmus test for faithfulness. On the Left, it looks like believing that big government is the primary way God establishes His Kingdom and that state policies are the means of redemption. Both sides make the mistake of looking to Caesar for what only Christ can provide.

When politics becomes our gospel, we demonize those on the other side. We stop seeing them as souls to be saved and start seeing them as enemies to be destroyed. We lose our prophetic voice because we have become a special interest group for a political party. We compromise our ethics to gain power. We justify the immoral behavior of "our guy" because he delivers the policies we want. This is prostitution of the church. Jesus refused to be made an earthly king. He said, "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36).

The true Gospel transcends political lines. It challenges the idols of both the Right and the Left. It calls out greed and it calls out immorality. It advocates for the unborn and for the refugee. It refuses to be fit into a binary political box. When the church gets in bed with politics, the church always

# Not Everything Labeled “Gospel” Comes From God

By System Import | Sermon | March 13, 2026

---

gets pregnant, and the offspring is never the Gospel. We must remember that our citizenship is in heaven (Philippians 3:20). Presidents come and go; nations rise and fall; but the Word of the Lord endures forever.

This doesn't mean we withdraw from the public square. We should vote, we should advocate, we should be salt and light. But we must never pin our hope on a donkey or an elephant. Our hope is the Lamb. The moment we think that electing a certain candidate will bring in the Kingdom of God, we have succumbed to a false gospel. The Kingdom advances not by the sword of the state, but by the towel of the servant and the blood of the martyr. We must keep our allegiance to King Jesus undivided.

## Conclusion

We have navigated the minefield of modern heresies: the greed of the Prosperity Gospel, the license of Cheap Grace, the bondage of Legalism, the secularism of the Social Gospel, the narcissism of Self-Help, the deception of Universalism, and the idolatry of Politics. It is a sobering landscape. But the purpose of exposing the counterfeit is to make us cherish the True Gospel even more.

The True Gospel is the good news that although we were dead in our trespasses and sins, enemies of God, and without hope, God in His rich mercy sent His Son to live the perfect life we could not live and die the death we deserved to die. He rose bodily from the grave, conquering sin, death, and hell, and now offers full forgiveness and eternal life to anyone who will repent and trust in Him alone. This Gospel doesn't just get you out of hell; it gets the hell out of you. It transforms you. It gives you a new heart, a new desire, and a new power.

Do not settle for a cheap imitation. Do not drink the poison just because it is labeled "medicine." Be a Berean. Search the Scriptures. Test the spirits. Hold fast to the form of sound words. Your eternity depends on it. Let us be a people who are not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it—and it alone—is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes.

Before you go, make sure to subscribe, like this video, and share it with someone who needs encouragement today. And join us next time as we uncover another powerful truth from God's Word.