

He had seen a demon possessed girl turn to a rational creature. He had seen intellectuals at Athens who laughed at him - yield to faith.

He had seen wicked, corrupt people at Corinth - who were prostitutes of the world become saints in the church. No wonder he had confidence in the Gospel. He had seen it at work.

And this is his affirmation of the Gospel.

Martin Luther, a monk in Germany - he did everything he could to earn his salvation. He felt frustrated - unfulfilled, and unsatisfied. So he went on a pilgrimage to Rome and while in Rome - he did everything he could to (earn) and merit salvation. He visited the sacred sights and prayed. And he viewed the holy relics. Some of the things that he did was to visit and climb the sacred stairs on which Pilate stood, when he sentenced Jesus. He climbed the stairs on his hands and knees. (Kissing) each step. And repeating prayers as he climbed.

But all the while a text - while speaking on Galatians - passed through his mind. [The just shall live by faith.] Chapter 3:11. The just shall live by faith. At the top he rose to his feet - and questioned, who knows whether it is so. But the seed of the Gospel had been planted. He returned to Germany where it continued to grow. And the Protestant Reformation exploded six years later. The Gospel was dynamite in the life of Luke. And Paul made his affirmation, to this glorious fact. He says, I am proud of this message. The very Gospel means good news. The message of hope and deliverance.

There is a story of a submarine that sank off the New England coast. The divers went down to rescue the men. They tapped out a message in Morse code. Is there any hope. The divers answered back - yes, we are here. To save you now.

Now that was the message of the Gospel. God, in Christ, on the cross dying for the sins of the world.

This was good news. And the world has only bad news. It is that God loves us and Christ died for us. And Paul said, I express my affirmation to this fact.

II. ASSURANCE

Paul thought of the Gospel as dynamite. With great assurance when he said, it is the power of God. Now this was assurance. The power was a strange word to use of the Gospel. When the Roman soldiers marched down every road. It would seem that at that time - power was with Rome. But where is Rome today - and where is the Gospel.

People often search for power.

They say it is in military might. But look at the powers that have fallen. Germany, Japan.

It is in political might. Many observers feel that it is there. But we look

at those who have fallen. We say it is in economic strength - but fortunes are made and lost. Clovis Chappell tells of a young man who came out of the Ozark Mountains. In early manhood, with a firm purpose of making a fortune. Gold became his God. And he put it first and he won it. He became a man worth millions. Then the crash came - and he was reduced to poverty. His reason left him - along with his fortune. He was a beggar. He was on the road one day and a policeman found him. On a bridge, gazing down at the waters of the Mississippi. He ordered him to move on - let me alone, he answered. "I am trying to think. There is something that is better than gold - but I have forgotten what it is." They placed him in an institution for the insane. They knew that a man who could forget that was not himself.

This power which Paul talks about is one which works - and is the very nature of God.

The law was never called power. But grace is the power of God - unto salvation. So we contrast the powers in the world today. And how they explode into the lives of people. But here is a power that will come - dynamite of assurance and will change the old patterns of life and the old sins because it is dynamite.

Here is a man who is in prison. He has been there and yet he is the man who is known throughout this country and nation of ours. And he has lived in a material world - but while he is there in prison - the power of God changes Charles Coleson. And God saved him - and he became a new man.

Another man who was a black panther, a rebel, a revolutionary - with all kinds of hate, in his life against the white man and his establishment. But Elderidge

ⁱⁿCleavor, Jesus got ahold of him. And the dynamite saved him. You have a black man and a white. The opposite ends of society - and yet today, they stand together on the same platform. And tell about this power that changed their lives and made them into new creatures.

The power of God that is going to change this world. The power of God that is communicated through the proclaimed Gospel, of our Lord Jesus Christ.

III. ACTIVITY

When Paul thought about the Gospel being dynamite - he not only had an affirmation of it, he had assurance of it. But he also had a feeling about it's activity. Because he says, it is the power of God unto salvation. That is the first activity of God's powerful dynamite, the Gospel. It brings salivation.

Now salvation is one of the greatest words that we have in the Scripture. It means to rescue the soul from sin, and unrighteousness. The heart of salvation and righteousness is revealed in Christ. And Paul choses the word dynamite to describe the effectual working of the good news of salvation. That it is power and natural ability - residing in the thing by virtue of its nature. The power which a person or thing exerts or puts forth. The Gospel is God operating. To save a soul. So the Gospel power results in salivation.

It is a demonstration, he says, not by argument - but by what it does. Looking to what it can do - Paul is proud to preach it anywhere.

Vinson says, the Gospel is not merely a powerful means in God's hands. But it is itself a divine energy.

So our word dynamite - as we think of it in the Greek word. Which is translated dunamis - however, does not refer to gun powder. But the Gospel is dynamite within itself. All that the Gospel has is God. Which is the thing that makes it powerful unto salvation.

This salvation is from the guilt and the tentative sin.

It is from the habit and from the power of sin.

It is from the results of sin or worldliness.

James Carter described his rescue on a hunting trip as something of salvation. He said that they went out duck hunting. And the weather changed. They got in a boat and it was still dark. And they started off going about four miles down the river. And strangely enough, the motor ran out of gas. So they paddled to an island and decided that a couple of them would stay there - and they would take the boat and a towing motor, and return to the camp and get some more gas. Actually the ordeal required about four hours. Before they were delivered. But he said, we were saved.

Now that is what salvation means - deliverance. We were delivered from the island and the cold. When Christ saves us, he delivers us from our sin. We have

been in the power of sin, and self, and satan. Jesus has accepted a Saviour - and he delivers us from that and gives to us salvation.

So from the Greek word - power comes dynamite. God breaks into our lives. But there is another activity of God's powerful Gospel. And it gives us strength for every day.

Dynamo also comes from the same word for power. But dynamo constantly continually talks out power. And some of us who have known the power of God in salvation, have failed to use this power of God in our daily lot. We profess Christ. We may also then turn around and completely destroy our lives with drinking, lying, cheating, lusting. Now there may be two reasons. First, you may not really have been changed. Or second, you may not be depending upon the power of God to help you. But here is a power that will work in your life every day, that you live. And this word salvation - means to save. Being saved.

And we look at it in the Old Testament - and it means deliverance from trouble. Deliverance from an enemy - as Israel delivered at the Red Sea. Stand still and see. Let God work. And there is something marvelous about the dynamite coming in and delivering.

And in the New Testament, we find the same idea, that the purpose of Jesus Christ, was to come and to save us. This is the good news of God to men. It is the way of salvation. It is the power of salvation. It is the aim of the whole Christian message.

IV. ACCEPTANCE

Now as Paul thinks of the Gospel as dynamite - he thinks of the acceptance that people must make. He says here in this verse - and in this text, that this message was preached first to the Jews. But now everyone is invited to come to God in this very same way. So Paul says, that the Gospel includes everyone. The old hymn - yes, he included me. It is very appropriate. All people. Both Jews and Greeks.

If it is so inclusive - how do you receive it. [?]

By believing! Everyone who believes in Jesus Christ who expresses faith in him can know the power of God's working salvation in his life. Now, there are people who call and have religion that is in a secret society. And if you were on the outside, you could not benefit from the secrets of that religion. We are told that in some countries, they have groups called Druse in Lebanon. They are a strange secret sect for men only. No one can join outside. They keep their religion to themselves. It is secret - passed on the inside, and nobody knows much about them. It is a religion that is exclusive.

It is like an exclusive club. Or society, or circle. They have drawn around them. And they will not let other people in.

Now Paul has a wonderful, glorious thing to say about this dynamite, the Gospel. He says this is extended everywhere. And to everyone who will believe.

Paul says that I am proud of this Gospel, of Christ. The message of that Gospel, the good news of salvation - the power of that Gospel to change human lives.

In a small town - people gathered around the old post office and would sit down and whittle and talk. One day a group of men stood on the porch steps discussing all the things that God could do. One old man said - there is one thing that God can't do. The others looked up shocked. (God can't see my sins after they have been covered with the blood.)

Now that is powerful theology. The blood of Jesus is the only thing that can sponge our sins from our souls and make us whole again. Though your sins be as scarlet.

Paul says to everyone who believes - the individual - this power of God. Is manifested to each, separately, and individually. Not to a group, tribe, or a nation - but to individuals who believe. So that the personal responsibility of the Gospel is faith.

Here is the universality of the Gospel. It comes through faith.

And, the Gospel is for all sinners - each separately, but each all alike in faith, can receive it. To the Jew first and also to the Greek. Now the Greeks included all Gentiles and all mankind. Therefore, the Gospel was divinely preached - first to the Jews. And then given equally to the Gentiles. The Messiah promised

as the seed of Abraham, the son of David - that promise was first preached to the Jews. And then came the privilege of grace. And yet, the emphasis in point of time is that Paul was glad to refer to the responsibility of the Jews. And he says, that this is a matter of righteousness. As God's character - God gives himself to make sinners righteous. Man is acceptably being clothed in God's righteousness. V. 17. Man has no righteousness - yet, he cannot be saved without it. Man cannot produce righteousness. He is corrupt. He is a victim of sin. And this Scripture is clear that man has no righteousness of his own. Therefore, a man cannot be saved by his work - but by divine work. God does the saving - and he does it with his righteousness.

One might ask how much of God's righteousness will be given to each believer. Millions of redeemed people. The emphasis here is, that God - not that God is present - everywhere, but that all of God is present here now and all the time. The idea is not that God is scattered throughout the universe. But you have all the presence of God all the time. He is all to you that he could be. Were you the only person being in the universe. Therefore, it puts no strain - whether there are millions of person upon God's righteousness, then if you are the only one drawing upon this supply. This righteousness and supply to each believer. If you were the only one ever saved - God's grace and righteousness could not be richer or fuller to you than now.

And this comes by faith - and it denotes a growing faith. That we obtain this.

This salvation then, if accepted then is from sin. Jesus was called Jesus because he was to save his people from their sins. Matt. 1:21. By himself, man is a slave of sin. He cannot free himself from it. The saving power of Christ alone can do that. He breaks the power of sin. He sets sin's prisoner free.

The salvation spoken of here is that which saves a man from all that would ruin his soul in this life and in the life to come. And the thing that makes this dynamite effectual - is that the believer believes.

Here is a story of William Wallner. He grew up in Europe. He became a Lutheran minister in Prague, Czechoslovakia. The first - at first, his congregation was small. Before long, and if God ever used a man - he used Dr. Wallner. Hitler was coming to power in Germany and soon this man was preaching five sermons on Sunday. To over 25,000 people in different language. There were over 3,000 Jews including a Rabbi who had become a Christian. This was an unusual ministry. He was caring for refugees who came by the thousands to escape Hitler.

One of these very talented young Jewish men, Carl Lowes, from Frankfurt was a drama and art critic - and his word could make or break a star. He told Dr. Wallner, he did not want to become a Christian. And was embarrassed to ask for help. However, he did become a Christian - and a powerful leader among students. He came into Czechoslovakia - Carl fled for his life.

Pastor Wallner stayed as long as he could. He accomplished many heroic actions. Such as one day he discovered a number of Jewish children were to be taken on a cold December day and left to freeze to death in a ditch. Quickly, he arranged through the underground to have the allies fly them out to safety. Right under the nose of the Nazi's. He had been honored by having an olive grove planted in his honor by the state of Israel. At the end of the war, a group of underground fighters were discovered in a cellar. And were all murdered by the Nazi's who left in this organized retreat. On the walls were messages written in various languages. Wallner was asked to translate them. One of the poems stopped him cold in his tracks.

It read --

I believe in the sun and it is not shining

I believe in love and I do not feel it

I believe in my Lord Jesus, even when he is silent

It was signed by Carl Loves. The preacher wept at the last tragic meeting of his long lost friend. But there was also wonder at the faith of this man. Who had soared to such great heights.

It is dynamite. And this power of God can be known in your life - if you believe in Christ. We invite you to believe in him today.

Now when you believe and the Spirit releases in you the strength needed for daily living - it will become dynamite for the kingdom of God. Phillips Brooks used to complete his sermons with these words -

The love of God, the peace of Jesus Christ

And the communion of the Holy Spirit

Be with you always.

When there is a bond between the members of the church - believer with believer - and between the members and God, then there is communion. A spirit of fellowship is the work of the Holy Spirit. And how powerful and wonderful.

Dr. Hershey Davis a teacher of Greek for many years, at Southern Seminary was a giant of a man. One day, he sat lecturing to his class. He searched - hunting for the right word, to give the meaning in the Greek. And in the middle of it - he turned

to the class and said - young men, I can teach you the meaning of the Greek. But only the Holy Spirit can make the words live in your life.

How true. The indwelling of the Spirit is possible only if we allow him in.

Paul said this message which I have preached - I am proud of the good news - the Gospel. And it is God's dynamite and method for bringing you to Heaven. Especially, those who will believe.

Now everyone is invited to come. And they come to God the same way - by believing. Will you believe?