

Come Follow Me Podcast  
Elo Viz Production  
Week 43  
3 Nephi 27- 4th Nephi

If someone were to ask you “What is the gospel of Jesus Christ?” What would be the first thing that comes to your mind? There are so many things we could say: service to others, temple covenants, The Atonement. These would all be great answers.

However, Jesus gave a different answer that may surprise you. In 3 Nephi 27 verses 13-16. This is what He taught:

“**13** Behold I have given unto you my **gospel**, and this is the gospel which I have given unto you—that I came into the world to do the **will** of my Father, because my Father sent me.

**14** And my Father sent me that I might be **lifted up** upon the **cross**; and after that I had been lifted up upon the **cross**, that I might **draw** all men unto me, that as I have been lifted up by men even so should men be lifted up by the Father, to stand before me, to be **judged** of their works, whether they be good or whether they be evil—

**15** And for this cause have I been **lifted up**; therefore, according to the power of the Father I will draw all men unto me, that they may be judged according to their **works**.

**16** And it shall come to pass, that whoso **repenteth** and is baptized in my **name** shall be filled; and if he **endureth** to the end, behold, him will I hold guiltless before my Father at that day when I shall stand to judge the world.”

There is a lot in those few verses. Let's try and break it down a little so we can better understand. First, what is the Gospel of Jesus Christ? According to verse 13, Jesus said: “This is my gospel—that I came into the world to do the will of my Father.

Just a little trivia for you. This is the only time in the scriptures that we don't see a specific phrase attached to “His gospel”. Most of the time, in fact every time except for this verse when we see the phrase “This is my gospel” it is always followed by “repent and be baptized”. But, this verse is different...Well, sorta. It does talk about repentance and baptism. But specifically, His gospel is to do the Will of His father. No wonder his first words to these saved Nephites was this exact same message:

“**10** Behold, I am Jesus Christ, whom the prophets testified shall come into the world.

**11** And behold, I am the **light** and the life of the world; and I have drunk out of that bitter **cup** which the Father hath given me, and have glorified the Father in **taking** upon me the sins of the world, in the which I have suffered the **will** of the Father in all things from the beginning.

12 And it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words the whole multitude fell to the earth;" (3 Nephi 11:10-12)

In his opening words as He descended from Heaven and in His final words before He left these same Nephites His message was the same. My Gospel is to do the will of My Father.

If this is His gospel, then what are we to do?

Should not our personal Gospel be to do the will of the same Father and His beloved Son? Jesus declared "If you love me keep my commandments" (John 14:15)

Going back to the definition of His gospel in 3 Nephi Jesus continues in His teachings. In verse 20 through 22 Jesus taught:

"20 Now this is the commandment: Repent, all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me and be baptized in my name, that ye may be sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost, that ye may stand spotless before me at the last day.

21 Verily, verily, I say unto you, this is my gospel; and ye know the things that ye must do in my church; for the works which ye have seen me do that shall ye also do; for that which ye have seen me do even that shall ye do;

22 Therefore, if ye do these things blessed are ye, for ye shall be lifted up at the last day."

The call to repent is a tough one for some. There can exist a negative connotation attached to this command. Repentance can be accompanied by pain, shame, and even embarrassment.

But consider this: If this is the gospel of Jesus Christ, and an essential step to keeping His commandments and entering into His kingdom, then how attentive is the adversary to this principle and how hard will he try to distort God's truth?

I believe he has done a pretty good job at blinding our eyes to the truth about repentance. Brad Wilcox told a similar story not too long ago:

While serving as a Bishop of a young single adult ward, he had a young man come to him and confessed all of his sins, all of his sins. Everything he had ever done or struggled with since second grade. And when they were finished he literally floated out of the room. And Brad just sat there marveling at the power of the atonement. To have this young man that should have unloaded this years ago, to have him feel so completely lightened of this load he had carried for so long; he watched him just float out of the room. Brad was so excited for sacrament meeting for this young man. Because he knew how meaningful it would be for him. But he wasn't in church. Brad thought: well, maybe he is just visiting another ward like many young single adults do. Perhaps I will see him next week. But, the next week he wasn't there either. Brad was starting to feel a little concerned. When he wasn't there the next week then he went down to his apartment and knocked on the door. And the young man that answered the door was very

different from the young man that floated out of his office. His eyes were dark, his countenance was dark. He said through a crack in the door: "Yea, so what do you want?" Brad said: well, I haven't seen you in church and so I wanted to come by. He said: Oh, the church isn't even true Bishop, I saw this thing online and it said the church isn't even true. And, there is not a God, no one can prove there is even a God. So, you're just wasting your time.

Wow, from floating on air to the pit of despair within a few weeks. Brad's first reaction was to quote him a few scriptures, reprimand him a little bit, testify that there is a God and that the church is true. But then he had one of those Bishop moments, where he just knew what was wrong. And he said: you messed up again didn't you? And then this returned missionary started to cry. He opened the door and invited him into his apartment. And he said: I'm sorry I was so rude Bishop. I'm just so discouraged. I finally did what they tell you you're supposed to do, I finally confessed. I finally felt forgiven, I finally repented I finally did it. And I felt so good, and then I just blew it again, as if nothing had ever happened. Now, I'm worse off than if I had never come to you. I'm worse off than if I had never repented. Because now all my former sins have returned. Yes, that is a scripture and yes that is a quote from the miracle of forgiveness. But that doesn't mean that God won't give us more chances than one. The young man quoted Doctrine and Covenants 58:43, confess and forsake, I confessed but I didnt forsake and so now it is all over. Brad said: It's all over? Is it over? What about grace? He said oh you know, 2 Nephi 25:23 "It is by grace we are saved after all we can do", I tried that and it didn't work. It didn't work huh? Brad said, then what does it mean that we are saved by Grace if it didn't work? He said, oh you know. It's like buying a bike, you have to pay all these coins and then Jesus makes up the difference. Brad said, I love that analogy, but I look at it a little different, I look at it like this: Jesus already bought the whole bike, and the coins he asks from me are not to help pay for the bike, rather, they are how He is teaching me to use it, to value it, to appreciate it, to own it. In the long run it is not about buying a bike. It is about learning how to ride it. And that means getting up every stinking time you fall off. That means getting back on the bike. Jesus forgives our sins, plural, not just multiple sins but multiple times we commit the same sin. Surely Jesus who was ready to forgive those that knew not what they did, also stands ready to forgive those of us who know exactly what we are doing, and just can't seem to stop. Surely He stands ready to do that as well.

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This little story proves that even the most elect among us are being deceived by the Father of lies. The truth about repentance is that it is a joyful, amazing process that we should be looking forward to everyday. I think if we were to change that way we use that word it would make a big impact on how we view this process. What if instead of saying we need to repent, we said: We need to change. That doesn't sound nearly as scary, nearly as painful.

-If you are someone that has an addiction to a substance or images. What if instead of saying we need to repent we said: I can do a little better, this week I can feed that addiction less.

-If you are someone that gets angry or violent, perhaps we can say: this week, I can do better, I can get angry less, I can do better at how I view others around me, I can be more patient.

-If you are someone that uses foul language, maybe we could say: this week I can do better, I can try to speak as Jesus did. I can try and speak in a way that allows me to keep the spirit with me.

-If you are someone that struggles with keeping the sabbath day holy. Perhaps we can say. This week I can do better. This week I can try and prepare myself for this sacred day and try to ponder and pray and serve more than I have done before.

That is all Jesus is asking of us. He doesn't expect us to be perfect, He asks that we try to do better, and then when we get there, we raise our sites to be even better than we thought possible.

I'd like to close by quoting from Tad Callisters book "The Infinite Atonement" He says:  
"But how does the Atonement motivate, invite, and draw all men unto the Saviour? What causes this gravitational pull- this spiritual tug? There is a certain compelling power that flows from righteous suffering- not indiscriminating suffering, not needless suffering, but righteous, voluntary suffering from another. Such suffering from another is the highest and purest form of motivation we can offer to those we love. Contemplate for a moment: How does one change the attitude or the course of conduct of a loved one whose every step seems bent on destruction? If examples fail to influence, words of kindness go unheeded, and the powers of logic are dismissed as chaff before the wind, then where does one turn? Jag Parvesh Chader spoke of exhausting all such nonviolent sources and then added this insight: "When it fails to produce and salutary effort, voluntarily [one] invites suffering in his own body to open the eyes of the person who is determined to see no light"

The Infinite Atonement By Tad Callister page 213

Jesus knows that we will all make mistakes, that we will need time and patience to learn the lessons that need to be learned in order to be more like Him. I pray that we can view Christ's suffering as the ultimate sacrifice for us that allows us the time to become the beings that God intended us to be.

In the holy name of Jesus Christ, Amen.