

The Gospel

by George Kulp

The Gospel is a permanent miracle that brings a new creation, not just a moral improvement, and it is the key to understanding the Bible and experiencing transformation in our lives.

Scripture: Psalm 34:18, Psalm 119:105, Proverbs 4:23, Isaiah 55:11, Matthew 18:12, Luke 15:7, John 3:16, Acts 16:14, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Hebrews 4:12

Topics: "Gospel Power", "Spiritual Transformation"

Description

George Kulp preaches on various impactful stories and messages related to faith, transformation, and the power of the Gospel. He emphasizes the importance of attending church with open hearts to receive God's message. Kulp highlights the newness and transformative power of the Gospel, contrasting it with other forms of moral improvement. He shares a powerful story of a seemingly insignificant sermon leading to the conversion of several boys who later became ministers, illustrating the profound impact of one message. Kulp also delves into the significance of discovering the key to one's heart, as seen in a touching story of a troubled boy finding solace in his sister's Bible. Additionally, he discusses the destruction of the Bible, emphasizing the impossibility of eradicating its influence from various aspects of life.

Transcript

DON'T BE A DUCK

In a famous ecclesiastical trial in Virginia, a number of years ago, it was said by someone that the preaching of the party on trial "had no more effect than pouring water on a duck's back." Quick as a flash the reply came, "Is that the fault of the water, or the duck?" There is food for thought in that home thrust; and so let us all go to church, next Sunday, praying for the preacher, asking God to "open our hearts," as He did the heart of Lydia, that we may attend unto the things that are spoken.

-- Central Presbyterian.

EFFECTS OF THE GOSPEL

God never repairs. Christ never patches. The Gospel is not here to mend people. Regeneration is not a scheme of moral tinkering and ethical cobbling. What God does, He does new-- new heavens, new earth, new body, new heart -- Behold, I make all things new." In the Gospel, thus we move into a new world and

under a new scheme. The creative days are back again. We step out of a regime of jails and hospitals and reform shops. We get live effects direct from God. That is the Gospel. The Gospel is a permanent miracle. God at first hand -- that is miracle. The Gospel thus does not classify with other schemes of amelioration. They are good, but this is not simply better, but different, distinct, and better because distinct; it works in a new way, and works another work. Compare the wrought chains riveted on the demoniac, and the divine word working a new creation in the demoniac. It is all there. It is like the difference between the impotent Persian lashing the turbulent sea with chains, and the gracious Lord saying to the troubled sea, "Peace, be still!"

RESULT OF ONE SERMON

Dr. Antliff was preaching special sermons in the chapel at Wolstanton, a pleasant village in the Tunstall Circuit. In one of his discourses, touching upon the tendency of preachers to underestimate the possible results of services at which there was only a small congregation, he gave an illustration from his own experience. Some years ago he went to preach in a small Derbyshire village, and found he had to preach in a farmhouse kitchen. The congregation was composed mainly of a number of boys and other young people. He accordingly addressed himself to children, and then prayed with and for the boys then present, and thought that several of them appeared impressed and interested. On returning home at night his wife said, "Well, Samuel, what sort of a day have you had?" "Only a poor day," he replied, "hardly anybody present but a few boys." "But," said the doctor, "God has graciously blessed that service. One of the boys, who dates his conversion from that afternoon, is now a Wesleyan minister, Rev. (giving a well known name); two more of those boys (giving their name) are now Primitive Methodist ministers." As he mentioned these names a young minister in the congregation became deeply moved, and rising and interrupting the preacher, said, with tears rolling down his face, "Forgive my intruding on your sermon, Dr. Antliff, but I am another of those boys who were led to Christ at that service in the farmhouse kitchen." The young man who thus testified is now doing noble ministerial service at one of the stations within a mile or two of Wolstanton.

TURN TO THE LIGHT

A weary and discouraged woman, after struggling all day with contrary winds and tides, came to her home and, flinging herself down into a chair, said:

"Everything looks dark, dark."

"Why don't you turn your face to the light, aunty dear?" said a little niece who was standing near.

The words were a message from on high, and the weary eyes were turned toward Him who is the light and the life of men, and in whose light alone we see light.

"Turn your face to the light," oh, weary watcher! You have looked, and longed, and struggled in the darkness without avail; now turn your glance the other way; "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give unto us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," and if we will look toward the light, we shall find blessing and peace all along the way, and even amid darkness and shadows shall rejoice in hope of the glory of God, the light of an unsetting day.

-- The Christian

HOW TO DESTROY THE BIBLE

First, get rid of all the copies in all the languages -- there are 160,000,000 copies, say, of the Old and New Testaments in one book and in portions of the book -- you must have all these piled together into a pyramidal mass and reduced to ashes before you can say you have destroyed the Bible. Then go to the libraries of the world, and when you have selected every book that contains a reference to the Old and New Testaments, you must eliminate from every book all such passages; and until you have so treated every book of poetry and prose, excising all ideas of grandeur and purity and tenderness and beauty for the knowledge and power of which the poets and prose writers were indebted to the Bible -- until you have taken all these from between the bindings and turned them to ashes, leaving the asculated fragments behind -- not until then have you destroyed the Bible. Have you done it, then? Once more. Go to all the courts of law, and, having sought out the pandects and codes, you must master every principle of law, and study what it may have derived from the Old and New Testaments, and have all such passages removed from the codes of jurisprudence. You must then go to the galleries of art throughout the world, and you must slash and daub over and obliterate the achievements that the genius of the artist has produced -- not until then have you destroyed the Bible.

Have you done it then? What next? You must visit every conservatory of music, and not until the world shall stand voiceless as to its masters, not until then have you destroyed the Bible. Then you must visit the baptistries of the churches, and from the baptismal rolls you must erase all Christian names -- the names of John and Mary -- for they suggest the Scriptures, and the register is stamped with the Bible. Have you done it then? No. There is one thing more you must perform. There is one copy of the Bible still living. It is the cemetery of the Christian. The cemeteries, while they exist, are Bibles, and to suppress the book, to let not a trace of it be discovered, you must pass from grave-stone to grave-stone, and with mallet and chisel out every name that is biblical, and every inspiring passage of Scripture graven thereon. To destroy the Bible you must also blot from the memory of every Christian its promises and comforts. Not till you have done all this can you destroy the Bible.

THE LONGEST DAY

It is quite important, when speaking of the longest day in the year, to say what part of the world we are talking about, as will be seen by reading the following list, which tells the length of the longest day in several places. How unfortunate are the children in Tornea, Finland, where Christmas Day is less than three hours in length!

At Stockholm, Sweden, the longest day is eighteen and one-half hours in length.

At Spitzbergen the longest day is three and one-half months.

At London, England, and Bremen, Prussia, the longest day has sixteen and one-half hours.

At Hamburg, Germany, and Dantzic, Prussia, the longest day has seventeen hours.

At Wardbury, Norway, the longest day lasts from May 21 to July 22, without interruption.

At St. Petersburg, Russia, and Tobolsk, Siberia, the longest day is nineteen hours, and the shortest five hours.

At Tornea, Finland, June 21 brings a day nearly twenty-two hours long, and Christmas one less than three hours in length.

At New York the longest day is about fifteen hours, and at Montreal, Canada, it is sixteen

But the longest day of all will be in the New Jerusalem; for "there shall be no night there."

-- The Evangel.

THE KEY TO HIS HEART

I had at one time a class of promising boys, with one exception. One of the nine was considered the worst boy in the school. As rough, untutored specimen of a boy as ever was.

I made the same appeals to John that I did to the others, and there is just where I erred. I pointed out his rough, careless ways, and urged him to give himself to God; but I never studied him; I never searched for his heart, to know what was in it; I never tried to find the link between his soul and Heaven.

John was a great trouble in the school. He spoiled the other boys, and annoyed the superintendent by keeping up a general disquiet.

Time and again, the superintendent used to come to me, saying, "Can you do nothing with John? Can you make no appeal to his heart?"

"Heart!" I answered. "John is without a heart, so far as I can judge."

There was one thing about the boy that I had noticed, without making any inquiry concerning it; and that was, that he always brought his own old Bible -- a worn, ragged copy; and when he could be persuaded to read, never read from any other. Occasionally, I urged him to use a newer copy, but he steadily refused, and always slipped his ragged Bible into his pocket at the close of the session.

One Sabbath I missed John from his usual place. "Now, boys," I said, "we may expect a quiet, profitable time, since our tormentor is not with us."

In a moment, I felt in my heart that I was rebuked, and I would have given much to have seen my troublesome scholar's shaggy head restlessly moving about before my eyes. Was this the spirit of my Master? Was I a fit keeper for that soul? What had I succeeded in doing for him all along? A sense of my utter unworthiness and uselessness took possession of me. In vain I took up the lesson and attempted to teach. The scholars were dull and indifferent, and I had no power to interest them. The lesson was a failure, and I was relieved when it was finished.

Two weeks passed. Each Sabbath I expected to see John, but he never came again. One evening of the third week of his absence, a woman, carelessly dressed, weeping bitterly, came to my house.

"Are you John Wesley's Sabbath School teacher, sir?" she asked.

"I am," I replied.

"Oh, then, sir, our John's a-dyin'! He didn't like to send for you, because he said he'd been a bad boy. But he longed and longed, and watched the door, sir, hopin' you'd come in. I couldn't stand his looks; so tonight, I just slipped off without sayin' a word to him. Oh! won't you come with me to see him?"

I made no answer, but snatching my hat, blindly hurried out beside her, and spoke not a word till I stood at the bedside of the worse boy in school. How changed he was! His old, restless air was quite gone.

"My boy!" I exclaimed through choking tears.

He turned his filmy eyes upon me, and made an effort to speak, but failed. I knelt and prayed aloud in bitter agony of soul; prayed most for myself; for had I not sinned more than this boy? Then I held tight the hand of John, and yearned over him with unutterable sorrow.

"He was wild, poor boy!" said the mother sobbing: "but I missed training him right. But he had his soft ways, too. You see that little, old Bible by his pillow?" I looked and saw the same old copy which he had read in school.

"Well," continued his mother, "that used to belong to his sister. She had read it over and over again, and sometimes read bits of it to Johnny. She died very happy, and Johnny kept her Bible. But he got more reckless, after she was gone. When he was very bad at times, I used to remind him of little Mary's Bible, and it softened him. Since he's been sick, he would have the book by him all the time."

And there was poor John's history -- all bound up in that little volume! At last I had discovered his heart. All that long time the key to it had been carried about with him. One word about Mary's Bible might have suddenly given me the secret workings of his soul. But that word I had never uttered.

John died, his hand held in mine.

Friends, I believe my scholar is in Heaven. I know that the Holy Spirit came in just where I failed, and performed the work in John's heart at last. But I still carry with me a wholesome regret; and I write this that you may be warned in time, that every scholar has a heart, and that it is discoverable.

THE LAST REQUEST

It was at the close of a hard fought day when death from the cannon ball, death from the rifle bullet, and death from the bayonet thrust had laid low many a brave man, that a stalwart soldier, rifle in hand, knelt on one knee, beside a dying comrade.

Hand clasped in hand the two men held their last interview. It was very brief and the crack of the rifle and the boom of the distant gun mingled with the solemn word that passed. "George," said the dying man, "you will see the folks at home, though I shall not. Will you take them a message for me?" "I will faithfully, Fred," said his friend. "I feel my time is short," said Fred, as he pressed his arm on a wound from which the life blood was slowly but surely flowing; "but I should like to send some consolation to the home where they will weep for me." "You may trust me, Fred," said the kneeling soldier, who, strong and manly as he was, could scarcely repress his tears. "If I live to see the dear old village again, I will surely take your message."

"Thank you, old boy. I am sure you will. You know what I was when I left home, a wild, careless boy without a serious thought in my head. Well, my mother gave me a Bible when I came away and I promised to read it. You know we had to go to church and Sunday School when we were boys, but afterward I did not go when I could avoid it. Mother grieved, I know; and she was afraid that when I was away I should come to harm. But I read the Book every day, George tell her that -- I was among a wild lot and I was careless, but I always found a chance to keep my promise. And the dreadful scenes we have seen have sobered me. I always thought I should get knocked over in some of our fights, as I have, and the thought,

though it did not unman me, made me serious. At times I have heard the hymns we used to sing at school, 'Around the throne of God in Heaven,' and 'I think when I read' -- you remember them, George? Well, I fancied I could hear them above the music of the drum and fife. Odd scraps of sermons, too, have come in my mind at times, and though I did not care for them when I heard them, they have had a new light with the boys dying around us.

"Well, George, I prayed, too, and I have had some talk with the chaplain and -- my dear, old boy, I am dying fast, I cannot see your face now, it is growing dark all around - don't loose my hand, George, I cannot say all I wanted to, but go to my mother and tell her I am a Christian. Tell her I died trusting in Jesus and sure that He will receive me on the shining shore we used to sing about. Tell her I could see --"

But George never told Fred's mother what her boy could see as he lay dying. He told her all beside, but when he had told her that, he had to tell her that a bright flash of joy shot across his face, and he fell back speechless in the arms of death. The old Christian lady shed many tears over her son's death, but the message his friend carried to her was the best consolation she could have had, and it was with a happy face that she said, as the sorrowing king said in the hour of his bereavement: "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."

THE DAY THAT BABY DIED

A poor, little, faded woman had been brought into court as a witness in a very disagreeable case, involving very serious issues. The entire case depended on the fact that a paper had been signed on a certain day, and this the forlorn little woman was prepared to prove.

"You saw the paper signed?" asked the opposing counsel in cross-examination.

"Yes, sir.

"You take your oath that it was the 30th of August?"

"I know it was, sir."

The lawyer, who thought another date could be proved, assumed an exasperating smile, and repeated her words:

"You know it was! And now be so good as to tell me just how you know it."

The poor, little woman looked from one to another with wide, sorrowful eyes, as if she sought understanding and sympathy. Then her gaze rested on the face of the kindly judge. "I know," she said, as if speaking to him alone, "because that was the day that baby died."

THE BACKWOODSMAN'S THRILLING STORY

Special services were being conducted in the East of London recently, and at one of the meeting an old man desired that the well-known children's hymn, commencing -- "I want to be an angel," might be sung. In compliance with the request the hymn was sung, and the impression made was of a most encouraging character. Many present were touched with the simplicity and tenderness of the words, and most felt that they would like to enter into "the rest that remaineth for the people of God." Among those who remained for prayer was the old man himself, and he was completely broken down. Christian friends present inquired how it was that he was so affected by the hymn, as he had been on the Lord's side for a number

of years, and knew that when death came he would "enter in through the gates into the City." He replied:

"Many years ago I was living in the backwoods of America, and, although far away from companions, my life was a very happy one. A loving wife and little daughter were the sunshine of my home, and made even bush life far from monotonous. I was not, however, a Christian, and felt quite unconcerned about my soul's salvation. Death, however, came into my home, and took away my wife. I then began to think seriously about the importance of decision for Christ, and reconciliation to God. But, alas! I did not yield to the strivings of the Spirit, and, in order to deaden my impressions, and to silence my conscience, I gave way to drink and day after day I became worse.

"Thus I was going headlong towards perdition. My little daughter was neglected, and, furthermore, forbidden even to read her Bible or attend the Sunday School, some three miles distant, and which was presided over by a Christian missionary. In my drunken fits I treated her most cruelly, and threatened that I would shoot her if she crossed the threshold of the Sunday School any more. With a cry of sorrow she would say, 'Father, I do love Jesus! I do love my teacher! and I do so want to go to Heaven when I die! I hope you will let me go to school.' My heart was not in the least affected by her pleadings, but rather hardened, and I resolved that if she would insist upon going I would punish her severely. The following Sunday, however, on my return home, I found that she was absent, and being almost mad with drink, I took down my gun and made for the direction from which she would come.

"On meeting my child I at once leveled the gun, but was stopped from firing by her entreaties. On perceiving that I fully intended to commit this diabolical act, she cried, 'Stop a minute, father; I want to pray;' and after a few words of simple prayer, she sang the following verse --

"I want to be an angel,
And with the angels stand,
A crown upon my forehead,
A harp within my hand.
There with the blood-bought children,
So glorious and so bright,
I'll make the sweetest music
And praise Him day and night."

"Then, oh, how can I repeat it! I shot her -- my child. The act sobered me, and realizing what I had done, I lost consciousness. On my recovery I seemed to hear the voice of God, saying, 'The fearful, and unbelieving and the abominable, and murderers and all liar, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone.' For many days and nights I was in a most distressed state of mind lest God's judgment should come upon me, and that I should have my part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. But I cried unto the Lord for mercy, and He heard my cry and saved my soul, and now I want all present to thank God for His goodness."

* * * * *

One day last week a man on his way to the station to take a train, passing a fine old mission, saw smoke issuing from the roof. He rang the bell and told the servants that the house was on fire. They laughed at him. Having done his duty, he went on to the train. Thirty minutes afterward the flames burst out and the edifice was destroyed. How oft the friendly voice that warns the reckless boy is laughed at. It was always so. When Lot warned his friends to flee out of Sodom, we are told that "he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons-in-law." But the end came then, and ever will, to a life of sin, sooner and far more terribly than any warning voice can depict.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/george-kulp/the-gospel/>

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