

Full Gospel 1 Peter 1

- “Full Gospel,” a term applied to a movement that desired to return to all the features of the apostolic age, implies that modern Western Christianity had been leaving something out.
 - As with nearly all splits in Christianity, the full gospel movement had some good points and some blind spots:
 - The older denominations had become stagnant in tradition and centralized authority. The role of the Spirit became a background idea without practical application.
 - The Restoration Movement broke down tradition by emphasizing the Scriptures, traded one form of authority for another, but still largely overlooked practical applications of the Spirit.
 - The Calvinistic denominations focused on faith but failed to define it, so God became the divine puppeteer.
 - Pentecostalism focused on the work of the Spirit, but neglected to address evidence, so unrealistic claims became their reality.
 - The desire to return to the power of the apostolic age has some good ideas and some blind spots:
 - As with any discussion of “the good old days,” the apostolic age was idealized:
 - Most of the groups to whom letters were addressed had serious problems. Which messed up groups should we emulate?
 - The “mystery” was not fully revealed until the end of the apostolic age. They were operating on partial information.
 - Jesus said that age was the worst in all of human history.
 - Routine displays of the power of the Spirit are desirable.
 - Logic easily concludes that, without divine help, we have no hope of achieving anything of lasting value.
 - The works of the Spirit of that time were clear deviations from what would happen naturally, not unprovable claims.
 - The purpose of those miracles was to endorse the message of the one through whom it came.
 - The full gospel is attainable if we address the shortcomings of the past without being reactionary.
 - The apostolic church was populated by the same messy people as today.
 - We have the advantage of a fully revealed mystery, including how Judaism fits into the picture.
 - The power of the Spirit is still the endorsement of the faithful.
 - The Spirit chooses how to display that power in provable ways.
- The “piecemeal” gospel
 - The “good news” is described in nine different ways in the New Testament (see *Characteristics of the Gospel* handout). They are different facets of the whole, nine ways to look at the same good news.
 - Many focus on the good news of salvation by faith but neglect the good news of reality, so faith remains undefined. Just like legalists who invent arbitrary benchmarks of behavior, then either deceive themselves that they have reached the arbitrary level of acceptance or worry about doing enough, faith without reality results in self-deception or worry about having enough faith.
 - Many focus on the good news of grace, but tend to stop with forgiveness. This leads to the question, “Do I want to spend eternity with me?” Without the power of the Spirit, grace is not good news.
 - Many focus on the good news of God’s plan, but unrealistically assert that God’s plan cannot be thwarted. However, simple observation reveals that God’s plan rarely happens; we call it

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- sin. Rather, the good news is that God is not reacting to the messes people make, but has prepared a way for people to overcome themselves.
- Many focus on the good news of peace but define peace in human terms: what makes me happy, a lack of suffering, etc. The good news is that we can have peace with God even though we are messy people and despite the experiences of this broken world.
 - Peter's description of the good news
 - Chosen (1:2) The faithful are chosen. We are not acceptable because of our faith, but because God, because of His gracious nature, chose those with faith.
 - Plan (1:2) Many translation use "foreknowledge," which gives the incorrect impression that God knew beforehand. The impact of that word is that God planned. God is not simply reacting to messy people, but has a workable plan despite people. Later (1:20), Peter adds that this plan was formulated before Creation.
 - Sanctification by the Spirit (1:2) The Spirit is the power behind the faithful being reserved for godly purposes. "Into obedience and the sprinkling of the blood" describes that our obedience is due to the work of the Spirit, and that we are re-dedicated after our bad choices in the same way that physical objects were re-dedicated under the Law (*e.g.*, Leviticus 16:19, the sacrifice symbolized atonement, the sprinkling symbolized sanctification).
 - Mercy (1:3) Mercy is one step beyond compassion, including the compelling desire to fix the problem. God supplies the ability to overcome.
 - Born again (1:3, 8, 23) Transformation is an essential feature of the good news.
 - Living hope (1:3) This hope has to do with living, not just the future (1:13).
 - Through the Resurrection (1:3) An essential feature of good news is evidence. See also 1:21.
 - An inheritance eternal and pure (1:4) Heaven is prepared. (Note: the new heaven in which we will reside was created in the six days of creation.)
 - Kept by the power of God through faith (1:5) If we were kept by our self-discipline, we would not have good news. However, the effectiveness of the power of God depends on faith. Whether our faith is sufficient is revealed only when the power of God is seen in us.
 - Ready to be revealed (1:5) This encompasses both the destruction of Jerusalem through which the final evidence was revealed, and at the end of time when our rescue is completed.
 - Rejoice despite a broken world (1:6, 8)
 - The brokenness of world has a purpose (1:7) Our faith is refined by difficult times. The revelation applies more to the destruction of Jerusalem because our praise, honor, and glory of the power of God are evidence to unbelievers. At the end of time, unbelievers can no longer benefit.
 - We trust His promises, so we choose what is in His best interests (1:8)
 - Soul already resurrected from death (1:9) Salvation is rescue. "Soul" in this place is one's eternal part. The eternal part is either dead (separated from God) or alive (connected to God). We have been re-connected. Later, Peter uses the word "redeemed" (1:18).
 - Grace (1:10) This is something not available to the prophets, although God's gracious nature is described in the Old Testament. So, this manifestation of God's nature (1:11) is Jesus, God coming to earth, His sacrifice, and the subsequent indwelling Spirit that transforms us. In 1:13, this grace is future and the object of hope. See also 1:20.
 - Peter addresses all the characteristics of the gospel except the good news of the kingdom and the good news that the poor are its objective. The kingdom of priests is described in the beginning of chapter 2. The lowly (the poor) are addressed in that Jesus was rejected by men but chosen by God, and so are we.