The Gospel Changes Lives

Ken Chapman · Philemon 1:1–25

INTRODUCTION

- Those words, though first spoken and recorded thousands of years ago, are still just as valid and applicable today.
- For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.
- It is the power of God because it changes things. It can change you. It can change your life.

1 Paul: From Persecutor to Prisoner

Acts 9:1

- Specifically in this book, he's gone from being a persecutor to now a prisoner.
- The gospel made that change. From being the persecutor to the persecuted, to being the imprisoner to being the imprisoned.
- Of Acts 9, verse 1, who was breathing out threatenings and slaughter and murders and imprisonments against the people of God is now the Paul who could pin these words.

2 Onesimus: From Useless to Useful

Philemon 1:11

- The word Onesimus means helpful or useful.
- He says this Onesimus, who had been useless, is now profitable for you again in verse 11.
- When he ran away, he became useless. He wasn't doing his duties anymore. But Paul says he can be useful to you once again.
- It seems that he is willing to return voluntarily on his behalf as well. To take up his obligations as onerous and detestable as they may be.

3 Not Just as a Slave, but as a Brother

Philemon 1:16

- Paul says now that you accept him back, not just as a slave, but as a brother.
- What Paul is saying here is your relationship with this man has now changed.
- That means he has become a child of God, and as Paul would point out to Philemon, he is now your brother.
- This relationship will be like it never was before. Because the word of God is living and powerful.

4 From Sinner to Saint

Acts 22:16; Romans 6:1–4

- The gospel is the power of God to salvation because it transforms us from sinner to saint.

- And now, why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.
- If his heinous sins could be washed away when he submitted to baptism, then surely there is hope for me through the power of the gospel.
- Why don't I walk in sin is simply this. I was changed. It was the power of the gospel that did that.

5 From Being Selfish to Serving God

Colossians 3:18–25

- To having our eyes and our hearts open to a greater and deeper cause.
- This comes about when we, through the power of the gospel, submit ourselves to God. And recognize we're now servants of His.
- And whatever you do it heartily as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of inheritance, for you serve the Lord Christ.
- Everything I do is because I submit and serve God. The gospel has changed me. I no longer serve self. I serve God.

6 From Being Hopeless to Hopeful

Ephesians 2:12

- The depth of the sadness of that word in that scenario cannot compare to that being our spiritual diagnosis.
- At that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in this world.
- But thanks be to God that his word is living and powerful and can change that.
- We're no longer without hope. But because of the guidance and the love and the power of God, we have purpose. And we have a goal. And we have a longing for home.

> THE CHALLENGE
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> **Would you let that word transform you today? From a sinner to a saint, from being useless to useful, from being selfish to selfless, and from being lost and without hope, to full of hope and direction and life.**

MY NOTES