

THE FRUITS OF THE GOSPEL

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The apostle Paul was called by God to reveal the Gospel to Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel (Acts 9:15). Paul references this ministry when he wrote to the Colossians. He said, "Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:25-27).

The fruit of Gospel preaching is twofold: (1) salvation and (2) sanctification. First, men must be "in Christ." The preaching of the Gospel involves relating to men what God has done through Jesus Christ. Paul preached Jesus Christ and Him crucified (I Cor. 2:2). He told men that there was forgiveness of sin through the power of the blood of Christ. Jesus' death upon the cross made atonement for sin possible. When men obeyed the Gospel (Rom 10:10-17; Rom. 6:3-4), they were delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son (Col. 1:13).

Second, men must have Christ in them. One of the goals of Paul's ministry was to perfect men in Christ (Col. 1:28). In order to do this, Paul knew that Christ had to be formed in them. They must have the mind of Christ and develop the character of Christ in their hearts and lives.

The ultimate goal of Gospel preaching is to bring men to Christ so that they can be "in Christ" and Christ can be "in them."