

How to Handle the Gospel

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Paul told Timothy to “handle aright the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15). This passage also tells us that God’s approval depends upon our handling the Gospel properly. What does this involve?

- **Don’t be ashamed of it.** Paul suffered continually for the Gospel’s sake because he wasn’t ashamed of it (Rom. 1:16). Many people try to be “closet Christians,” ashamed for others to know that they are Christians. We must be willing to suffer hardship with the Gospel (2 Tim. 1:8).
- **Don’t pervert it.** Paul denounced those in Galatia who perverted (changed to a wrong purpose) the Gospel (Gal. 1:7). Some wrest (twist, torture) Scripture to their own destruction (2 Pet. 3:16). Those who tamper with the truth mishandle it and commit spiritual suicide.
- **Obey it.** The Gospel is not for us to read and forget, but to hear and obey (Jam. 1:22–25). The Lord will condemn the disobedient at his coming (2 The. 1:8).
- **Defend it.** Paul did (Phi. 1:7, 16). In spite of the rich heritage of able defenders of the Gospel (inspired – including our Lord – and uninspired), misguided men are now saying it needs no defending, only proclaiming. But if it will defend itself, why will it not also proclaim itself? We must contend earnestly for it (Jude 3).
- **Hold fast to it.** Once we have embraced the Gospel, we must cling to it (1 Cor. 15:1–2). If we drift away in neglect (Heb. 2:1–3) or make shipwreck of the faith (1 Tim. 1:19) we are doomed. How awful to stand at the judgment with but a memory of faithfulness, long ago abandoned.
- **Live it.** “Let your manner of life be worthy of the Gospel of Christ” (Phi. 1:27). It isn’t enough to be good professors; we must be good practitioners of the Gospel. Do our neighbors, kindred, friends and work associates think highly of the church or poorly of it because of our conduct? Give no one cause to call you “hypocrite.” Let your life habits adorn the Gospel (Tit. 2:10).
- **Preach it.** Jesus commanded that we preach the Gospel everywhere because no one can be saved without it (Mark 16:15–16; Rom. 1:16). Like Paul, we need to be “ready to preach the Gospel,” believing “woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel” (Rom. 1:15; 1 Cor. 9:16). The Gospel wasn’t given to be hoarded, but to be heralded.

Nothing in all of the world is comparable to the Gospel. It is that unique message from heaven that reveals God’s plan to redeem man from sin through his own Son. With that infinite and loving care God has given it to us and preserved it for us to this very hour. With what incomparable cost – the very blood of Jesus – was it certified and energized. The Gospel is so

important and precious to God that our attitude toward it gauges our attitude toward Christ himself (John 12:48).

[Note: I wrote this MS for and it was published in the January 1986 edition of *Spiritual Sword*, ed. Thomas B. Warren.]

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