



Season 8 Podcasts

The Sincerity of the Gospel

By

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So far in my 8th Season Podcast series I've shared thoughts with you about:

- 8 Rules for Bible Study
- 40 Rules for Ministry
- The Heart of the Gospel
- Defending and Confirming the Gospel
- Your Fellowship in the Gospel
- The Completion of the Gospel
- The Affection of the Gospel
- The Discernment of the Gospel
- The Excellence of the Gospel

The next aspect I'd like to share with you is the 'sincerity' of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Paul continued his letter to the Christians in Philippi by writing:

“... that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ ...” Philippians 1:10b

Always remember the context.

“And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ.” Philippians 1:9-10

We know that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is about God’s ‘love,’ but have you thought about it being ‘sincere?’ Paul prayed that the Philippian Christians would be ‘sincere and without offense till the day of Christ.’ What does that mean and why would Paul pray that for a group of Christians?

The Greek word for 'sincere' is *eilikrinés* and means 'pure, judged by sunlight, tested as genuine, sincere.' The idea of the word is that something judged 'rightly' because it had been seen in 'full light' like the light that comes from full sunlight. Paul wrote Timothy at the end of his life that even as his salvation was genuine, so his ministry should be genuine. Being genuine is an important aspect of being a follower of Jesus Christ and a servant of the Gospel of Christ. There is no room for insincerity in Christianity, though we find ourselves surrounded in churches and denominations by members and leaders who are insincere and not genuine. It is an easy thing for Christians to fall into traps of 'insincerity' and Paul knew that. It's why he included being 'sincere' in his prayer for the Philippians.

Paul also prayed that the Christians in Philippi would be 'without offense' until the day of Christ. The Greek for 'without offense' is *aproskopos* and means 'blameless, inoffensive, without offense, not stumbling, not causing to stumble.' I think it's important we understand that the word was understood by ancient Greeks as active and passive. That means they should not actively cause someone else to

stumble, and they should not passively stumble themselves. Both happen in churches week after week, month after month, year after year, century after century. Christians often stumble into sin, while others in churches cause them to stumble.

Jesus warned in Mark 9 what would happen to people who caused others to stumble spiritually. Paul warned Christians in Romans 14 that they should not cause their brothers in Christ to stumble spiritually over minor issues. He wrote in 1 Corinthians 8 that it was wrong to use the liberty Christians had to become a stumbling block to those who were weak in their faith. He said that if certain food made his brother stumble, he would never eat that food again.

Paul wanted the Christians in Philippi and all churches to have that kind of love and concern for one another that they would be 'without offense' until Jesus Christ returned for His Church. That could be any day, any minute, so we need to pay particular attention to what the apostle to the Gentiles wrote two thousand years ago. We should believe in and practice a 'sincere,' genuine Gospel, and cause no offense.

We should do that until Jesus returns. Even so come, Lord Jesus!

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In Christ's Love and Grace,

Mark McGee

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