

Short Studies for the Skeptic Series – Part 2

An Apparent Hesitancy

There has always been an apparent hesitancy with those who are confronted, for the first time, with any notion that there's more than one gospel. Why is that? The short answer; Ignorance.

I attribute this hesitancy to that of having a preconceived idea, planted into one's thinking, that the 'gospel' had always contained the same elements such as Christ's death, burial & resurrection and depending upon one's 'religious' bringing, a typical response of action was expected.

The word 'gospel' is found 98 times in the New Testament: 17 times in the 4 Gospels; 6 times in Acts; 69 times in the Pauline epistles; 5 times in the General epistles (Heb – Jude) and once in Revelations. Ensuing a timeline, the earliest the word 'gospel' is found is... **Mark 1:1** The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God;

Following, is showing variances of a search in the King James Bible on the exact expression starting with, "gospel of": gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; gospel of the kingdom; gospel of the kingdom of God; gospel of his Son; gospel of Christ; gospel of God; gospel of the grace of God; gospel of peace; gospel of the uncircumcision; gospel of the circumcision; gospel of our salvation; gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; gospel of the blessed God.

Though there can be, and often is, an overlay between the various usage of the word 'gospel' within these expressions, distinction also needs to be pointed out. Such is the case with Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles, in contrast with the ministries of John the Baptist, Jesus & His Apostles whose focus being on the Jews & nation of Israel.

Gal 1:11-12 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. ¹² For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught *it*, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. **Gal 2:2** And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain. **Gal 2:7-9** But

contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as *the gospel* of the circumcision *was* unto Peter; ⁸ (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:) ⁹ And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we *should go* unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

Acts 20:24 But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

In Part 3 of this series, we're going to zero in on the Chart showing the fact that those things spoken of by the Lord Jesus were not only not understood, but were actually 'hid' to His disciples. How can that possibly be?