

In Search of an Inoffensive Gospel

Galatians 5:11

I. INTRODUCTION: I

1. **2** In **Galatians 5:11** Paul said: *“And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution? Then **the offense of the cross** has ceased.”*
 - A. Back then there were those in the church who charged, and wrongfully so, that Paul preached circumcision and was inconsistent for having done so.
 - B. And they made these charges against the apostle and he says if that were true then *“is the offense of the cross ceased?”*
2. ****** I have no doubt that the most offensive thing in this world is the cross of Christ (1 Cor. 1:23).
 - A. Most consider the cross of Jesus Christ as extremely offensive.
 - (1) I’m not necessarily talking about those that wear the cross of Christ as a piece of jewelry; or the cross used by the aid agency known as the “Red Cross.”
 - (2) Not too many find the cross offensive when used in those ways.
 - (3) What I’m talking about is the true essence of the cross of Jesus the Christ, and the reason He went to the cross; most take great offense to that cross!
 - B. Let’s dismiss all that offensiveness from our minds and let us search for an inoffensive cross.
 - (1) ****** That will require us to search for a gospel that is devoid of offense, that will not turn anybody off, that will not drive anyone away.
 - (2) After all, isn’t that the dominant philosophy of “Christianity” in the 21st century?
 - (3) Isn’t that the type of message emanating from most pulpits today?
 - (4) So many are desperately searching for a gospel that will attract rather than repel people.
 - (5) A gospel that can be preached to anyone anywhere and not risk offending anyone, a gospel that:
 - (a) Does not cause anyone to stumble,
 - (b) Does not drive anyone away,
 - (c) Does not alienate or offend anyone.
 - (d) ****** A gospel that pleases everyone; draws everyone together (one big happy family!).
 - (6) So, what we’re going to do is select some different topics that won’t drive anyone away.
3. **3** Today we are in...***In Search of an Inoffensive Gospel.***

II. DISCUSSION:

Perhaps we can find an inoffensive gospel if we limit our preaching to one simple topic:

1. **4** God exists:
 - A. So, point number one, I thought perhaps if we will preach an inoffensive gospel we’ll just concentrate on the fact that God exists, that “God is.”
 - (1) Surely by just focusing on that one concept no one will be offended.
 - (2) You only really need to preach a couple of verses from the Bible:

Psa. 90:1-2: “LORD, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. 2 Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.”

- (3) Now, surely, if we will simply stick to that it will be an inoffensive gospel.
- (4) We'll not concern ourselves about “doctrine” since that gets people all upset and argumentative. Surely that will be acceptable and not be a “turn off.”

B. If we make some head way, we may add a couple of verses to our preaching:

- (1) We won't make a big fuss or make any comments, we'll just read **Isaiah 43:11**: “I, even I, am the LORD, and besides Me there is no savior.”
- (2) Just to show we know a little bit about the Bible we might even throw in **Isaiah 44:6**: “Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: ‘I am the First and I am the Last; besides Me there is no God.’”

C. For good measure we probably ought to throw in a New Testament verse too: Surely no one can fault us for quoting an apostle.

Rom. 1:20: “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,”

- (1) Now if God's attributes are invisible how are they seen?
- (2) He said they are seen in that they are understood.
- (3) They are understood through examining the things that are made. What are they?
- (4) There are two of them “...even his eternal power and Godhead.” (i.e., divine nature; deity)
- (5) Now, surely, if we will simply preach a gospel that declares and decrees “God is” and not say anything else, surely this will be unoffensive.

D. But, I forgot, wait a minute. Not everybody believes in God, do they?

- (1) Atheists and agnostics don't believe God exists?

“The God excuse, the last refuge of a man with no answers and no argument.”

—George Carlin

“We are atheists because there is not proof of the existence of God. There is no need of, or use for, a God.”

—anonymous atheist

- (2) If an atheist came to services and I was to preach an unoffensive gospel that God exists would that drive them away? Yes!

E. **** “Houston, we have a problem!”**

- (1) A Pew Research study (2014) said ~7% of the U.S. population is either atheist or agnostic.
- (2) Some claim Wicca (a form of paganism) is the fastest growing religion in America.
- (3) Many popular religions don't accept the one God of the Bible (Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam).

F. So, we will have to ditch that approach in our search for an unoffensive gospel.

Perhaps we can find an inoffensive gospel if we limit our preaching to this simple topic:

- 2. **** Design demands a designer:**

- A. Everyone recognizes the truth that things evidencing “design” demand a designer.
- (1) William Paley (*Natural Theology*, 1802) argued design in nature suggested a designer (briefly explain premise of Paley’s book).
 - (2) Even evolutionists recognize design in nature:
“DNA is like a computer program but far, far more advanced than any software ever created.” —Bill Gates
 - (3) The Bible also recognizes this universal truth:
Heb. 3:4: “For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God.”
- B. So, I got it, we’ll just talk about the design so obvious in nature!
- (1) Since design demands a designer is true and even accepted by evolutionists; we’ve at least found a way for God to get His “foot in the door”!
 - (2) ID argument is a very strong suggestion God created the Universe and all that is in it.
 - (3) The Bible confirms that: Right? **Jn. 1:3:** “All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.”; **Gen 1:1:** “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”
 - (4) But we’ll try not to preach God is the grand Designer; hopefully we can soften them up to accept that...later. **Psa. 19:1:** “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork.”
- C. So, we may not all agree on God’s existence and all of that, but you and I undeniable **exist** and so we’ll just talk about intelligent design in **nature** (Everybody loves **nature**, right?!)
- (1) We’ll talk about it in general terms so that atheistic evolutions will not think we are trying to slip God in the discussion right under their noses.
 - (2) Atheistic evolutionists recognize design demands intelligence.
 - (3) For instance, the entire premise of Carl Sagan’s book *Contact* (also a movie starry Jodie Foster) is about intelligent design (ID). Premise of the fictional story:
 - (a) SETI (*Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence*) scientists detect a radio message from outer space.
 - (b) The message repeatedly broadcasts a series of numbers (2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23, 29, 31, 37, 41, 43, 47, 53... (up to a total of 26 of these numbers).
 - (c) If you recall basic mathematics these are *prime numbers* (i.e., numbers divisible, without a remainder, by only “one” and by themselves).
 - (d) The fictional SETI scientists get all “jacked up” upon hearing this repeated message because they understood it was a designed message and design is evidence of intelligence.
 - (e) That such an ordered list of numbers could be generated purely randomly is so unlikely as to be deemed impossible; it requires intelligence.
 - (f) So at least atheistic evolutionist say they believe in ID.
- D. ** **“Houston, we have another problem!”**
- (1) Even though atheistic evolutionists recognize design in nature and also recognize that design demands a designer; they are not about to admit the grand Designer is God!
 - (2) Consider the famous atheistic evolutionist Richard Dawkins:

“The illusion of design is so successful that to this day most Americans (including, significantly, many influential and rich Americans) stubbornly refuse to believe it is an illusion.”

“Natural selection is the blind watchmaker, blind because it does not see ahead, does not plan consequences, has no purpose in view. Yet the living results of natural selection overwhelmingly impress us with the appearance of design as if by a master watchmaker, impress us with the illusion of design and planning.”

- (3) Another atheistic evolutionist Francis Crick (co-discoverer of structure of DNA) believes life on Earth is evidence of a designer, but he claims life on Earth was “seeded” by a superior race of space aliens. He very vehemently denies God is the Designer!
- (4) So, as far as many will go is to grant the “appearance of design” and they are not about to cede an inch of ground to the notion that God is the Designer!

Heb. 3:4: “For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God.”

Psa. 19:1: “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork.”

Jn. 1:1-3: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.”

- (5) ** Evolutionists recognize the undeniable logic of design demands a designer, but deny it!

“There are only two possible explanations as to how life arose: Spontaneous generation arising to evolution or a supernatural creative act of God...There is no other possibility. Spontaneous generation was scientifically disproved 120 years ago by Louis Pasteur and others, but that just leaves us with only one other possibility...that life came as a supernatural act of creation by God, but I can't accept that philosophy because I do not want to believe in God. Therefore, I choose to believe in that which I know is scientifically impossible, spontaneous generation leading to evolution.” (George Wald, “Origin, Life and Evolution” in *Scientific American*, 1978)

E. So, if we're going to have an inoffensive gospel, we'll have to cross this one off the list too.

Perhaps we can find an inoffensive gospel if we limit our preaching to this simple topic:

3. ** The Bible is a good book:

A. What if we just simply say that the Bible is a good book.

- (1) We'll just tell folks it contains some good practical advice:

Prov. 15:1: “A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.”

Prov. 17:22: “A merry heart does good, like medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones.”

Prov. 18:22: “He who finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor from the LORD.” (We should probably drop the second clause as that will probably offend quite a few.)

Prov. 25:24: “It is better to dwell in a corner of a housetop, than in a house shared with a contentious woman.”

- (2) We will also tell folks the Bible teaches some good morals:

Matt. 7:12: “whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.” (BTW: We'll leave off the “Law and the Prophets” thing since it will surely offend some.)

1 Cor. 15:33: “Do not be deceived: ‘Evil company corrupts good habits.’”

B. But we'll have to be really careful to steer clear of passages like:

Lk. 13:3: *"I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish."* (People don't like to be told what to do.)

- (1) And, **Matt. 7:13-14:** *"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. 14 Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it."* Cf. Mk. 9:43-48
- (2) And surely we won't mention: **Jn. 14:6:** *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."*
- (3) You know so many don't like that "Jesus stuff!" Atheists, Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims

C. ** **"Houston, problem number three!"**

- (1) Many people won't accept **anything** the Bible says!

(a) Richard Dawkins (*The God Delusion*):

"The God of the Old Testament is arguably the most unpleasant character in all fiction: jealous and proud of it; a petty, unjust, unforgiving control-freak; a vindictive, bloodthirsty ethnic cleanser; a misogynistic, homophobic, racist, infanticidal, genocidal, filicidal, pestilential, megalomaniacal, sadomasochistic, capriciously malevolent bully."

(b) Sam Harris (*Letters to a Christian Nation*):

"The Bible, it seems certain, was the work of sand-strewn men and women who thought the earth was flat and for whom a wheelbarrow would have been a breathtaking example of emerging technology.

To rely on such a document as the basis for our worldview, however heroic the efforts of redactors, is to repudiate two thousand years of civilizing insights that the human mind has only just begun to inscribe upon itself through secular politics and scientific culture.

We will see that the greatest problem confronting civilization is not merely religious extremism: rather, it is the larger set of cultural and intellectual accommodations we have made to faith itself."

(c) Mark Twain (*Letters from the Earth*):

"It is full of interest. It has noble poetry in it; and some clever fables; and some blood-drenched history; and some good morals; and a wealth of obscenity; and upwards of a thousand lies."

- (2) Even many religious people are offended by what the Bible says:

(a) Protestant denominations, generally, won't accept Mark 16:16.

(b) Roman Catholics hate Matthew 23:9 (*"Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven."*).

(c) Jews won't accept the New Testament: Jn. 14:6 or **Matt. 16:16:** *"Simon Peter answered and said, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.'"*

D. And, heaven forbid any of these folks find out what the Bible says about itself.

- (1) Nobody likes being called a liar: **Prov. 30:6:** *"Add thou not unto his words lest he reprove thee and thou be found a liar."* That would surely offend some!

- (2) Most people would definitely be offended by:

2 Tim. 3:16-17: *"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."*

- (3) So, I don't think this approach will work either, because many will consider it too narrow and that if you live by anything but the Bible you're a liar.
- (4) You know how it irritates folks when you call them a liar!
- E. Strike three! But let's try again...

Perhaps we can find an inoffensive gospel if we limit our preaching to:

4. **5** Jesus was a good man:

- A. Here it is; I've got it!
- B. Maybe we could just talk about Jesus, how that He was a good person, a good man:
 - (1) Everybody likes rest...right?

Matt. 11:28-30: *"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."*
 - (2) And He was definitely good:

Acts 10:38: *"how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him."*
(We will have to tamp down the first and last clauses, but I
- C. We will have to tamp down the first and last clauses of Acts 10:38, but I think we're really on to something now! We'll just focus on Jesus.
 - (1) Jesus helped the needy, Jesus healed the sick, and so forth.
 - (2) He did no wrong, and He tried to help everybody.
 - (3) And if we just mention He was a carpenter and had no wealth to flaunt.
 - (4) I mean He didn't even have a house to live in and He went about teaching and *"doing good and healing."*
 - (a) I don't know about you, but I've had some great teachers in my lifetime and most people appreciate good teachers they've had; so maybe they'll really appreciate Jesus as a great teacher.
 - (b) You think about some of the things He said, *"Behold the lilies of the field how they toil not neither do they spin but Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."*
 - (c) That's great! You know, I think we found it! You just can't beat the teaching of Jesus.
 - (d) Remember the Good Samaritan? Don't you just love that?! What a teacher!
 - (e) We all want our kids to act like the Good Samaritan!
- D. **** "Houston!!"** But, wait! There's a wrench in the gears again, a fly in the ointment.
 - (1) Jesus upset some folks: **Jn. 7:12:** *"And there was much complaining among the people concerning Him. Some said, 'He is good'; others said, 'No, on the contrary, He deceives the people.'"*
 - (2) They said He was a good man, and that's what we're going to say, but I didn't look at the other side of the coin; others said, *"He deceives the people."*
 - (3) And you know, if a man, no matter how gifted his teaching abilities are, if he deceives people, he is not a good man, is he?
 - (4) It is hard to believe in a man who is accused of being a liar, right?

(5) That presents a real thorny problem:

(a) John claimed: **Jn. 1:14**: "...full of grace and truth."

(b) Jesus Himself said: **Jn. 8:40**: "...a Man who has told you the truth..."

Jn. 14:6: "...I am the way, the truth, and the life."

Jn. 18:37: "I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth."

E. And so, unfortunately, I don't think just preaching about Jesus is going to work.

(1) Those folks that still believe "*He deceives the people*" aren't going to let go of that!

(2) And, there are folks that believe He never lived! He's a myth!

"I argue that the Jesus of the Gospels is essentially a myth. The Gospels are largely fiction. They were created around the turn of the first and second century in order to give concreteness and substance to the Jesus who, as the Messiah, had appeared to Paul and his fellow apostles in ecstatic visions." —Alvar Ellegård

F. Whew! This is getting really tough finding an inoffensive gospel!

Perhaps we can find an inoffensive gospel if we limit our preaching to:

5. **** The hope of life after death:**

A. Well, how about this: Maybe it could work if we just talk about Jesus, not as the Son of God and a teacher, but as a Savior.

(1) You see, nobody wants to go to the grave and stay there.

(2) Everybody wants to live, we want to exist, and we don't want death to be the end.

(3) And Jesus held out that hope.

(a) He told the apostles:

Jn. 14:6: "I am the way, the truth, and the life..."

(b) He told Martha:

Jn. 11:25-26: "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. 26 And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die."

B. That's it! If you live and believe in Him, you won't die! Everybody wants to live! Right?!

C. **** You guessed it! "*Houston, here we go again!*"**

(1) But, wait a minute. Turn to John 8. I think we got a little problem here.

Jn. 8:21: "I am going away, and you will seek Me, and will die in your sin. Where I go you cannot come."

(2) That's going to hurt somebody I would think.

(3) Verse 24 is also a little problem, I just happened to notice that last part, where Jesus says:

Jn. 8:24: "Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."

(4) Well, let's see. We don't want to offend, right? That's a given.

(5) The Jews, what do they say of Jesus? Do Jews believe in Jesus? No.

(6) What about the Buddhists or Hindus? Wicca? Islam? (explain)

(7) I don't think it will be well-received at all by any of those folks to have to tell them that if you die and you don't believe in Jesus you can't be saved!

D. Strike five! Well, at least we are not playing baseball!

Perhaps we can find an inoffensive gospel if we limit our preaching to just:

6. **** Preach morality:**

A. Something just occurred to me. We're off focus! Do you know why we're missing it?

- (1) We're fed up with the sins of this world, aren't we? And people are trying to be decent.
- (2) Even *Budweiser* is saying "Know when to say 'when.'"
- (3) I know what we'll do, we'll turn to moral issues.
- (4) We'll just preach morality and virtue.
- (5) Let's turn to Proverbs and see what you think.

Prov. 20:1: "Wine is a mocker, Strong drink is a brawler, And whoever is led astray by it is not wise."

Prov. 23:29-30: "Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? 30 Those who linger long at the wine, those who go in search of mixed wine."

B. Can't we just preach morality and virtue, cleaning up our act a little bit, and living better? That's obviously not gonna hurt folks is it? Nobody wants a DUI on their record!

- (1) **** But, wait a minute. "*Houston! Help!*"** I didn't see this part in Proverbs 23; I guess I should have read this a little closer:

Prov. 23:31: "Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it swirls around smoothly;"

- (2) Before you drink, don't look at it, don't even touch it! It's saying you can't drink at all!
- (3) That says don't be enamored, don't be allured, don't be enticed by even those clever advertisements that make it sound good, look good, feel good.
- (4) I think even "social drinkers" will be offended by that one! And those that really like to "tie one on" ...forget about it!

C. This is really looking grim! It's really hard to find someone not offended by the gospel!

Perhaps we can find an inoffensive gospel if we limit our preaching to just:

7. **** Talk about home and family:**

A. You know, mommy and daddy, and the kids. Do you like that?

- (1) I mean who's against momma and motherhood, and apple pie?
- (2) Everybody has a family!

B. Turn to the book of Ephesians chapter 5.

- (1) Husbands:

Eph. 5:25: "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,"

Eph. 5:24: "Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything."

I Pet. 3:1-5: "Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, 2 when they

observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear. 3 Do not let your adornment be merely outward — arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel — 4 rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. 5 For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, 6 as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.” (Save a lot of money on clothes and jewelry!)

(2) Marriage:

Matt. 19:4-6: “Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’ 5 and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? 6 So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.” (Everybody loves a beautiful wedding! Right?)

C. ** **“Houston, we are in a real pickle!!!”** You know the drill by now!

(1) Loving your wife will be offensive to some:

- (a) What about loving your wife “just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her”; many folks hate the “church”; hate “organized religion.”
- (b) Submission of the wife to the husband is bound to offend many!
 - (i) Ephesians 5:24 says “the wives be [subject] to their own husbands in everything.”
 - (ii) Ouch! I Peter 3; here’s that submission thing again!
 - (iii) And, adding insult to injury wives are supposed to imitate Sarah and refer to their husbands as “lord”!
 - (iv) What do you think the *National Organization for Women* and all those other women’s rights movements and the Hillary Clintons of the world are going to say about that?!

(2) And what about that marriage thing Jesus talked about in Matthew 19?

- (a) You know: “Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’ 5 and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’?”
- (b) I read there are now about 400,000 same-sex married couples in the U.S.
- (c) I’m pretty sure they are going to be offended by what Jesus said about marriage!
- (d) And, all those who have divorced for “any cause” will really be upset too!

D. This is getting to be a real “drag”! Well, there’s one more that I want to try...

What if we just:

8. ** Warn folks about hell:

- A. Now this is obviously going to work because nobody in their right mind wants to be lost and go to eternal torment. Right?
 - (1) And so, what we’ll do is simply try to warn people about eternal torment, about the fire that never shall be quenched, the fire that will never go out.
 - (2) Remember what Jesus said?

Mk. 9:43-44: *"If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched — 44 where*

*'Their worm does not die
And the fire is not quenched.'*"

(3) There's something similar in:

2 Thess. 1:7-9: *"...when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, 8 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,"; Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:14-15*

B. Now we're not going to tell anyone that they're going there, of course not! We would never be so direct! That would be downright rude.

(1) But, we'll just politely warn everybody, they may appreciate it.

(2) That's how we'll make hell unoffensive.

C. ** Hold the phone! **"Houston, we are totally out of luck!"**

(1) Atheists certainly don't believe in hell; some even make light of it!

"I do not myself feel that any person who is really profoundly humane can believe in everlasting punishment." —Bertrand Russell

"A Christian telling an atheist they're going to hell is as scary as a child telling an adult they're not getting any presents from Santa." —Ricky Gervais

(2) Wait a minute, the JW's and 7th Day Adventists don't believe in hell even though Jesus mentions it 11 times in the gospels.

(3) Even some of our brethren don't believe in eternal punishment! e.g., Homer Hailey

(4) Heaven forbid they study Matthew 25:46 (explain passage).

D. I guess this will be a big flop too!

III. CONCLUSION: 6

I. Do you get the point?

A. There is no such thing as a gospel that is not offensive to somebody.

2 Cor. 2:15-16: *"For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. 16 To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life. And who is sufficient for these things?"*

(1) Are "sufficient for these things?" "And who is equal to such a task?" (NIV)

(2) In other words, "can you handle it!"

B. ** There is certainly a "right" way to preach the gospel and a "wrong" way.

(1) We shouldn't use the Bible as a club to beat people over the head.

(2) We must *"speak[ing] the truth in love"* (Eph. 4:15)

(3) ** But we must preach *"the whole counsel of God"* (Acts 20:27).

(4) That will offend many, but it puts us in good company:

Matt. 15:12-14: *"Then His disciples came and said to Him, 'Do You know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?' 13 But He answered and said, 'Every plant which*

My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. I 4 Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch.”

2. The same gospel that guides some to heaven will condemn most to hell:

Matt. 7:13-14: “Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. I 4 Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.”

3. ** What about you? Are you “equal to such a task?” 2 Cor. 2:15

4. Invitation

—Adapted from a sermon (*The Search for an Inoffensive Gospel*) by Ryan Thomas.