

Preaching the Gospel to Yourself

Week One – What is the Gospel?

Simplified Version:

The Gospel is God's plan to glorify Himself through the redemption of sinful humankind in Jesus Christ. God is perfectly holy and man has a sin problem. Without an answer for our sin, eternal judgment (aka Hell) will be our ultimate outcome. Thankfully, God graciously provides the answer to our sin in His own Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus lived the perfect life we could not live and died for us to bear the wrath of God for our sins. Yet we must receive this gift of salvation by grace through faith. Our appropriate response is to confess our sin problem, acknowledge our need for a Savior, and believe in Jesus Christ as our Savior. When a person believes in Jesus Christ for salvation, they have the hope of eternal life. This is the beautiful Gospel.

However, agreeing with this Gospel means that I must agree with what God says about ALL of life, and I will humble myself and seek to live in obedience to Him, just as Christ did, through knowing and obeying God's revealed will in Scripture.

Extended Edition:

The Gospel is the story of the Bible. It is traced throughout the Old and New Testament, and it is the story of God's **redemptive** plan for His creation. You see, God's creation, specifically mankind, rebelled against Him by choosing **sin** over God. (Gen. 3; Rom. 1:18-23, 3:23) We are inclined to do what is right in our own eyes rather than to live for our Creator in the way He has commanded. Because of this sinful bent in our lives, we are by nature enemies of God, because He is **holy** and opposed to sin. (Isa. 6:1-7, 64:6) We are objects of His wrath, because we are living in sin and God hates sin.

However, the Gospel also tells us of God's **grace** and **mercy**. God has abundant loving-kindness and faithfulness towards us, as His image-bearers, and has provided a Savior, His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus was both God and Man, and He came to live a perfectly obedient, sinless life to be the perfect sacrifice for our sin. (Rom. 5:6-8, 8:3) You see, the Gospel tells us that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was rejected by men, whom He came to save (this includes each one of us), but He still willingly went to the Cross, where He died for **our** sins. (John 15:12-14; Acts 3:18-19) His death was not simply a good man dying for crimes He didn't commit, but the very Son of God dying for the creation that He made (John 1:1) in order to serve as a **reconciler** between God and man. (John 3:16-17; Rom. 8:32) Because Jesus' death was accepted by God, as evidenced by His resurrection, it is possible for us, as sinful men/women, to be made clean again in God's eyes by grace through faith. (Isa. 53:10-12; Eph. 2:8-9)

Our faith is evidenced as we confess with our mouths that Jesus is **Lord** and believe in our hearts that God raised Him from the dead. (Rom. 10:9-10) The Gospel tells us that, as sinners, we could never have done anything to be righteous again in God's sight, BUT the sacrifice of a perfect lamb, without blemish, would ultimately be acceptable as the ransom/redemptive price for man's sins. (Rom. 4:5; Titus 3:5-7; Heb. 9:11-14) As a result of that sacrifice by Jesus Christ and our subsequent acceptance of the grace freely given through him, there is a restoration between us and God. (Acts 5:31; Rom. 5:1-2; John 1:12) Our relationship is made new and there are some significant truths for us to take hold of.

Commented [N1]: Redemption means deliverance from some evil by payment of a price. It is more than simple deliverance. (NBD)

Commented [N2]: Sin is defined as:
1. Missing the mark or taking the wrong path
2. Deliberate wrongdoing or rebellion (NBD)

Commented [N3]: Holy means unique, pure, set apart, God's distinguishing characteristic that sets him apart from all of creation; God's perfection

Commented [N4]: Grace is God's unmerited favor.

Commented [N5]: Mercy is compassion on one in need.

Commented [N6]: Reconcile – to restore a relationship

Commented [N7]: Lord implies that He has the right and authority to demand obedience from us.

Truths to Take Hold Of:

- We are no longer enslaved to sin, we have the choice to offer our bodies to God as instruments of righteousness (Rom. 6 & 12)
- We are part of a living body of believers, who are called the church, who are God's people. As part of this body, we are called to serve and use the gifts/abilities that God has given us to build unity in the body (Eph. 4 & 1 Cor. 12) and to be a visible witness of the invisible God.
- God has forgiven us and no longer has wrath stored up for us. He has poured out His wrath on His Son. He still hates sin, but He sees us through the blood of Christ, washed clean of sin. (Rom. 5, 8:3; 1 Peter 3:18; Acts 13)
- When we choose sin after being made new in Christ, we have an answer for how to handle it. Confession and repentance (Eph. 4:20-24; James 4:8; 1 John 1:9)
- We will answer to Jesus one day at the judgment seat of Christ for how we have lived our life, being guaranteed eternal life with Him in heaven, but having more or less of a reward based on our stewardship of the life He gave us while on Earth. (1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Peter 4:1-11, but especially 10-11)