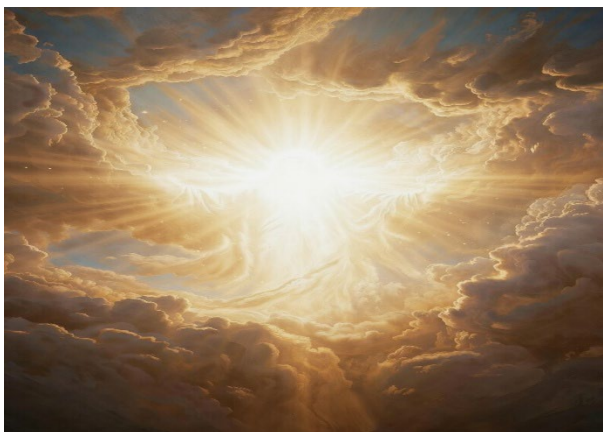




JUST WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

The Good News Explained

Abstract:

You'd want to know what the gospel is!

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What is the Gospel? The Good News Explained

As Related in the New Testament

Garland Van Dyke

What Is the Gospel? The Good News Explained

Definition

Imagine receiving the best news of your life – news that changes everything. That’s what the gospel means, “good news.” It could be good news about anything, a sale at a local supermarket, for example.

But in the Bible, the gospel means the good news about Jesus.

Romans 1:16-17

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

Rom 1:17 For in it *the* righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘BUT THE RIGHTEOUS *man* SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.’”

Links To Sections

[A Bit More About Our Salvation](#)

[About Man-Made Salvation](#)

[The Gospel Explained](#)

[The Good News](#)

[Just Believe](#)

[Love and Justice Combined](#)

[The Sinner’s Prayer](#)

[Urgent Universal Need](#)

[Verses Used In This Document](#)

[What the New Testament Says](#)

The Apostle Paul, writing under the influence of the Holy Spirit, said the gospel is God’s power to save. It’s the power to save anyone, regardless of how rotten they’ve been.

Urgent Universal Need

Everyone needs the gospel, whether they realize it or not, for all have sinned, states Romans 3:23, and the penalty for unforgiven sin is spiritual death – a separation from God, the source of life. And that means eternal hell (2 Peter 2:4-22).

So, the gospel is God’s way of saving the lost. It’s also the way to inform people of how to fix a terrible relationship with Him. If we’re living sinfully, then we’re in a horrible relationship with God, and that means The-Bad-Place.

Think of Adam and Eve, the first God-created people. They were in a perfect setting, having a perfect life, with a perfect relationship with God. But then sin came in via our enemy, the devil. He’s the epitome of evil. and he seeks to destroy every living person.

1 Peter 5:8

“Be of sober *spirit*, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”

Down through the ages, people have sinned; everyone. You and me, too. That means billions of people from the beginning of time through the end of the earth would be sentenced to hell on judgment day. Unless... Unless there is a go-between, a mediator, someone to plead our sinful plight before God.

The Good News!

What is the Gospel? The Good News Explained

As Related in the New Testament

Jesus is *the* perfect mediator. He is our salvation, for He can make all our sin disappear. All of it, even if we've been super stinky, rotten, evil-filled people.

Now, as I write these words, some are saying, "So what?" while others are sighing in relief. The-Down-Below-Place is exceedingly painful and scary; heaven is perfect. I would choose heaven. Wouldn't you?

Of course you would. Everybody would, except that some don't give a whit about it. If God says "Be careful," then He means it.

Let's do what we can, right now, to take hold of the gospel, the good news about Jesus and salvation. [Click here to see God's Plan of Salvation.](#)

A Bit More About Our Need For Salvation

Romans 3:23

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

Falling short of God's glory means we've missed the mark,

understanding that God is our target. Not only did we miss Him, but we also missed His glory.

That bright, shining, loving, compassionate, merciful, sweet God who gives life to everything - we've missed His *magnificence*!

Exodus 34:6-7

"Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; Exo 34:7 who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave *the guilty* unpunished, ..."

Love and Justness Combined

That's a wonderful passage, for it shows how loving our God is, and to be fair, it also shows His anger at those who won't come to Him for forgiveness.

To make it plain, if one dies in sin, they will end up in hell.

But those who ask for His forgiveness, by following His way

of salvation, are forgiven and have full expectations of heaven.

Romans 6:23

"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Two main characteristics of God are plain.

1. God is loving and merciful.
He provides a way to be saved.
2. God is also powerfully just, right. He will not let sinners go without retribution.

So, the best course of action is to get to Jesus as soon as possible and to heed what He said about salvation. It is the most imperative thing on this earth. There is an afterlife, and we'll end up in one of two places after our passing: heaven (the most unimaginably beautiful, perfect existence) or hell (the most torturous place described in the Bible).

John 5:28-29

"Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice,

What is the Gospel?

The Good News Explained

As Related in the New Testament

Joh 5:29 and will come forth; those who did the good *deeds* to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil *deeds* to a resurrection of judgment.”

Acts 4:12

“Let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by this *name* this man stands here before you in good health.

“He is the **STONE WHICH WAS REJECTED** by you, **THE BUILDERS**, *but WHICH BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone.*’

“And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.”

Jesus is the answer for our sins. Do you believe that? I do. The Bible is God’s word for salvation and right living.

2 Timothy 3:16

“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for

reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness.”

In all of these verses, we see God’s love and justice combined.

Consider this. A young woman was in court for a speeding ticket. The judge levied a \$200.00 fine. She stood there, before him, not knowing what to say or do.

After a moment, the judge asked the woman, “Do you have the \$200.00?” She answered, “No.”

The judge reached into his back pocket and extracted the required amount, handing it to the bailiff.

The judge said, “Young lady, do not let me see you in my court again.”

The woman replied, “Thanks, Dad!”

That’s love and justness. The wrong is wrong, and the gift is perfect.

That’s God. We deserve deathly punishment (after all, in the scheme of all things, all of us have rebelled against Him), but God paid the debt of our sin through

Jesus, the cross, and the resurrection. That’s why it’s called the gospel; it’s the good news of Jesus paying the cost of our sin.

This is God-powerfully important! Salvation from sin is the *most vital need* of every generation.

What About Good People?

Here’s the truth: it makes no difference how good a person is; if they’ve not given their life to Jesus, they’re “not heaven-bound.”

Jesus explained this.

Matthew 10:38-39

And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.

Mat 10:39 “He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it.

Jesus’ cross led Him to die for everyone. Our cross means to die to ourselves, in complete, total, absolute submission to Jesus.

In this way, we lose our life, but gain eternal heavenly life. I

What is the Gospel?

The Good News Explained

As Related in the New Testament

choose Jesus. Don't choose the devil.

Good people, but unsaved, go to the same place as those rotten, stinky, evil people.

There's no such thing as a little bit good, somewhat good, and completely good. If life is not given to Jesus, all degrees of goodness don't mean a thing, eternally.

It's about being saved through Jesus' substitutionary death.

Just What Did Jesus Say?

John 8:24

"Therefore, I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."

We must believe Jesus is God's Son, He died for our sins, and He is the only one who can free us from sin.

Luke 13:3

"I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."

We absolutely must do our best to stop sinning. It's not just stopping, though; repentance means to turn from our lives to God's way of living.

Matthew 10:32-33

"Therefore, everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven.

Mat 10:33 "But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven."

Confession, public confession of faith is an absolute must. Do you believe in Jesus? If yes, are you willing to repent? And upon believing, would publicly confess that Jesus is Lord?

Mark 16:16

"He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned."

For centuries, people have argued the baptism thing. Is it necessary or not?

My answer is it's an absolute must.

Why do I believe this? It's simple, Jesus said to do it, and not doing it means condemnation. I don't want to be condemned. You don't either!

But as Paul was preparing for his apostleship, a Christian approached him, saying, "Now why do you delay? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name (Acts 22:16).

This means that sin is washed away through complete immersion in water.

I could go on and on about the necessity of water baptism for the removal of our sins. I trust that these two verses will effectively communicate the Bible's perspective.

About Man-Made Salvation

Saying the Sinner's Prayer

Preachers everywhere are misinforming and misleading people about salvation.

Google has this to say about the Sinner's Prayer.

What is the Gospel?

The Good News Explained

As Related in the New Testament

- **17th-19th Century Roots:** The concept grew from Puritan and Scottish Calvinist practices of "receiving Christ into your heart" and later Methodist preacher *James Caughey's* calls for instant salvation in the mid-19th century.

- **The "Anxious Seat":**

Charles Finney's 19th-century revival meetings pioneered public responses for salvation, setting the stage for a standardized prayer.

- **Early 20th Century Formalization:** The prayer, as a formalized, repeatable "sinner's prayer," began appearing in the 1920s, with 1922 often cited as the earliest printed example.
- **Popularization:** *Billy Sunday* and later *Billy Graham* and *Bill Bright* (creator of the "Four Spiritual Laws") made the prayer a staple of evangelical evangelism.

The Gospel Coalition states:
Biblical Basis (Theological Foundation)

While not a set formula in scripture, proponents often base the prayer on:

- **Romans 10:9-10:** Confessing with the mouth and believing in the heart.
- **Luke 18:13:** The tax collector's plea: "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!"
- **Revelation 3:20:** The invitation for Christ to enter the heart.

Baptist News Global has this: The prayer serves to express... personal and public faith, highlighting the concept of immediate salvation through faith, rather than through rituals or works.

The Bible never says this, in any form or any way.

Don't set your eternal life on what some man or woman says, not even me. Check the Bible. See for yourself. This too is imperative.

Just Believe, and You'll Be Saved

Again, Google has this.

Many Christian perspectives, based on the Bible, hold that the formula for salvation is straightforward: one must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and trust in His work (Acts 16:31; Romans

10:9). This involves acknowledging one's sinfulness, believing that Jesus died for our sins and rose again, and confessing Him as Lord.

From Desiring God

Key Components of Believing for Salvation:

- **Heart Belief:** Trusting that Jesus is the Son of God who lived a perfect life, died for sins, and rose again.
- **Confession:** Publicly declaring that Jesus is Lord.
- **Repentance:** A change of mind and heart that leads to turning away from sin and toward God.

Desiring God has this.

Common Perspectives on the Formula:

- **Faith Alone (*Sola Fide*):** The view that salvation is attained by faith alone through grace, rather than by good works.
- **Confession and Belief:** Some emphasize Romans 10:9, which requires both believing in the heart and confessing with the mouth.

Saying or doing these things is not part of the Bible, not any part of salvation or the gospel.

What is the Gospel? The Good News Explained

As Related in the New Testament

Once again, do not trust your eternal soul to what men or women say is necessary for salvation, even me. **READ YOUR BIBLE** to verify what I've written!

What the New Testament Says Is Necessary for Salvation

1. **Hearing** God's word (the Bible) and coming to your belief in Jesus: faith (Romans 10:17).
2. **Believe**: one must believe that Jesus is Lord, and that God raised Him from the dead (Romans 10:9-10).
3. **Repentance** means changing your current way of life to align with living a Godly life (Luke 13:3).
4. **Confession** is a public confession that Jesus is the Lord (Romans 10:9-10).
5. **Baptism** is water immersion to remove sins (Mark 16:16, Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 2:38, 1 Peter 3:21).

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Thanks for Reading!!

Feel Free to Contact Me

What is the Gospel? The Good News Explained

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Appendix A

Verses used in this document

1 Peter 3:21
1 Peter 5:8
2 Timothy 3:16
Acts 16:31
Acts 2:38
Acts 22:16
Acts 4:12
Colossians 3
Ephesians 4
Exodus 34:6-7
Hebrews 12:23
John 5:28-29
John 8:24
John 8:24
Luke 13:3
Luke 18:13
Mark 16:16
Matthew 10:32-33
Matthew 10:38-39
Matthew 28:19-20
Revelation 3:20
Romans 1:16-17
Romans 10:17
Romans 10:9-10
Romans 3:23