
The Gospel for You

What is the gospel and what does it mean?

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Introduction Question asked at an Annual Christian Booksellers Convention

Popular answer locates the gospel in what we do:

Accept Jesus

Believe in Jesus

Discussion at Flock about "Partners in the gospel" from Philippians 1:6

What is the gospel?

The Gospel according to Scripture

1 Corinthians 15:1-4

¹ Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, ² and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. ³ For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁵ and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. ⁶ Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷ Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. ⁸ Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. ⁹ For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰ But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. ¹¹ Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed. 1 Corinthians 15:1–11 (ESV)

Its Importance

What Paul preached...

What all received...

What they stand in...

History - Its Statement

Christ died

Christ arose

Interpretation - Its Meaning

According to the Scriptures

"The good news of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, affecting every sphere of life and for all the people groups."

The Gospel for the Lost

Romans 1:16

¹³ I want you to know, brothers, that I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented), in order that I may reap some harvest among you as well as among the rest of the Gentiles. ¹⁴ I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. ¹⁵ So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome. ¹⁶ 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. ¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.” Romans 1:13–17 (ESV)

Christ's death and resurrection is His work as contained in the gospel.

The work of Christ restored all that sin had destroyed.

The work of Christ brings the sinner out of death and into life.

The work of Christ is to be believed, trusted and relied on as an act of faith.

The gospel issues a call to believe and repent that is to be obeyed.

The Gospel for the Saint

The gospel is for the saint as well. The death and resurrection of Christ are objective facts whose interpretation is “according to the Scriptures”. So what does the gospel mean for the saint, according to the Scriptures?

Death and life dealing with earthly remnants in us Colossians 2:20-3:6

²⁰ If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations— ²¹ “Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch” ²² (referring to things that all perish as they are used)— according to human precepts and teachings? ²³ These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh. ¹ If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. ³ For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. ⁵ Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. ⁶ On account of these the wrath of God is coming.

Death and life dealing with the power of the old realm Romans 6

¹ What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? ² By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? ³ Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we

would no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷ For one who has died has been set free from sin. ⁸ Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰ For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. ¹¹ So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. ¹² Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. ¹³ Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. ¹⁴ For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace. Romans 6:1-14

Death and life dealing with the problem of the Law

Romans 7

⁴ Likewise, my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God. ⁵ For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. ⁶ But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code. Romans 7:4–6 (ESV)

Death and life giving us Sonship in the Spirit

Romans 8

¹ There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ² For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. ³ For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵ For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. ⁶ For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷ For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. ⁸ Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹ You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹ If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

¹² So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. ¹³ For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴ For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" Romans 8:1–15 (ESV)

Reflect and Respond

It is so important to ask honest questions. If you don't know or don't understand, ask. So often we simply assume we know what the basic words mean. Can you define them? Do you know what is the difference between redemption and reconciliation? Do you know who/what the church is?

DO NOT BE ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL. People may make fun of you. It may at times sound like foolishness. But what Christ did is how people are saved. Hearing about what Christ did is how God grants faith for salvation and transformation.

KNOW THE GOSPEL. As you read your Bible, listen for when the gospel is being referred to, either directly by term or indirectly by content. Observe and learn how the Bible applies the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ to every sphere of life.

PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL. With courage and confidence, simply tell people the truth. God created all that exists, including man. Man rebelled against God through disobedience resulting in present separation from God and future judgment to come. God has worked through time and history to reveal Himself and to save His people. He sent His son into the world as a man who lived a sinless life and died as a sacrifice and as a substitute in the place of His people. Three days later, He rose from the dead and forty days later, ascended back into heaven. One day He will return to judge the world. Now, through the preaching of the gospel God is commanding all men everywhere to repent. Will you?

APPLY THE GOSPEL. The death and resurrection and ascension of Christ is vital for Christian living. If you live by faith in the gospel, you will be living by grace. If you believe the gospel in an obeying way, you will be transformed and will glorify God through every increasing maturity and holiness.

LIVE THE GOSPEL. Take all that I have said and wisely work it out in the day-by-day details of your living. All of this talk has to become real practical obedience where you live.