

What is the Gospel?

The word *gospel* literally means “good news” and is used more than 70 times in the New Testament portion of the Bible. To narrow it down even more, scripture declares that the gospel is the good news concerning Jesus Christ - that in His death and resurrection you and I can have eternal life – that we can be in relationship with God once again. But that’s not all of it. There’s more – so much more.

First, the good news of the gospel declares that there is a living God who created heaven and earth.

There simply can be no good news if there isn’t a God who created all things. If there is no God, there is no eternity, no heaven. And if there is no heaven, then this life, and this place, is all that we have. The good news is that there is a living God who wants to be in relationship with you. This creator of all things knows all about you and He loves you. He knows your name and all about what’s happening in your life. He has a plan for your life and wishes that none would perish.

Second, the good news of the gospel declares that Jesus is the Messiah, sent by God to restore our relationship with the Father by paying the penalty for our sins. Jesus came to earth “to give His life as a ransom for man.” (MK 10:45). While on the cross Jesus endured the wrath of God so that those who repent and believe would not have to. The apostle Paul, in 1 Corinthians 15:1-3, declared that “Now I want to make clear for you, brothers and sisters, the gospel I preached to you, which you received, on which you have taken your stand and by which you are being saved... that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures...”

Third, the good news of the gospel declares that the promise of salvation is for all who believe, repent, and receive this gift from God. Many people around the world have heard that Jesus died upon a cross to pay the penalty for their sins. Many believe it to be true. So does the devil. Knowing that Jesus died for our sins and believing it to be true does not mean that you are saved from the penalty of your sins. Let me explain a few things. First, salvation cannot be earned. None of us can meet God’s standard of perfection. Second, salvation is a gift. Romans 6:23 declares that what we deserve for our sin is death but that the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Third, God has done His part, but we must do ours. Paul states in 2 Corinthians 5:21, “He made the one who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” Romans 5:8, “But God proves his own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

How do we *experience* the gospel? How can a sinner who is spiritually dead and living under the influence of Satan, find new life in Christ?” Jesus, in the Gospel of Mark, provides a clear and simple answer. In Mark 1:15 we read, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe in the good news (Gospel).” How does one move from death to life? Jesus says that you must *repent and believe in the gospel*. This is the same thing that Peter preached on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:37-38), and it is how Paul characterizes his ministry in Acts 20. The proper response to the Gospel is to REPENT and BELIEVE.

Finally, the good news of the gospel declares that our relationship with God can be restored. What makes all the events of Good Friday and Easter and all the promises we have spoken of is that gospel leads us to God – It restores our relationship with Him! Peter declared in 1 Peter 3:18, “For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring you to God.” Jesus

declared in John 17:3, *“This is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and the one you have sent —Jesus Christ.”*

God is the gospel.

Conclusion

Are you ready to experience the good news of the gospel? Repent and believe.

We cannot separate repentance and coming to Christ in faith. They describe the same person in the same action, but from different perspectives. In one instance (repentance), the person is viewed in relation to sin; in the other (faith), the person is viewed in relation to the Lord Jesus. The individual who trusts in Christ simultaneously turns away from sin or repents. In believing he repents and in repenting he believes.

You can receive God's free gift of salvation by praying a prayer like the one below where you ask God to do what you could not do on your own. Although praying the prayer doesn't save you, it should reflect the desire of your heart. And, if it is your desire, the Bible states that you are saved from your sin:

Dear God, I'm a sinner and know that my sins have destroyed our relationship. I acknowledge that I deserve death, separation from you for eternity. I'm sorry for my sins. I want to turn from my sins but cannot do so in my own power. I believe Jesus Christ is your Son. I believe He died on a cross for my sin as my substitute and that You raised Him to life. I trust Him as my Savior and desire to follow Him as Lord from this day forward. Jesus, I put my trust in You and I submit my life to You. Holy Spirit, come into my life and be my guide. I pray this in the name of Jesus. Amen.