

# The Gospel





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Thank you for taking a few moments to consider the message of the Bible, which it calls “The gospel”. The gospel means “Good News”, but its message is actually some very bad news followed by much better news.



As you read this introduction, you may find yourself in one of the following three categories:

1. You're aware that you don't understand the gospel
2. You think you've understood the gospel, but actually have not; or
3. You may truly understand the gospel and have chosen to reject it.

It's more likely you belong in one of the first two categories than category three, and the reason is simple. The Bible can be overwhelming and hard to understand. But the message of the Bible doesn't have to be confusing. God has designed the gospel to be explained in a variety of ways, depending upon audience. Jesus Himself gave the gospel to people in different ways, yet it was always the same message, anchored in the same absolute truths. In this little booklet, we will start at the beginning, and give you a clear explanation of what the Bible *says*, and what it *means for you*.

As you start through the next few pages, start by asking yourself the five following questions:

1. What does the God of the Bible care most about?
2. What is God's main problem with mankind?
3. What does God primarily offer mankind in salvation?
4. Who is Jesus and how does He enable this offer?
5. How does a person receive this offer?

If you can answer these questions, then you are well on your way to finally understanding what the Bible is actually saying... and you are ready to consider what you now want to do with it.

## **Are you Skeptical about the Gospel?**

We love science, reason and empirical proof. In our western culture we are careful to only trust that which is proven and reasonable. Faith, though acceptable for someone else, is largely seen as a weakness and a crutch.

But consider this. You are a person of faith. Some believe in an admitted faith (Jewish, Buddhist, Christian, etc) while others in an unadmitted faith (secular, agnostic, atheist, etc).

Our views on assault, intolerance, bigotry and beauty show that we truly believe in absolutes and ultimate morals. Each of these absolute ultimately go beyond reason to a faith. It is unavoidable, though, for much of our secular culture, it is unbearable to admit.

The hope of this booklet is to allow you, as a reasonable person who rests on faith, the chance to “hear out” a simple summation of the faith that is found in the Bible. Truthfully, our ultimate hope is that in doing so, you hear the voice of Christ calling you and place your faith in Him.

## **Do you Believe the Gospel?**

God changes people through the gospel. It is the precious foundation for all of our thinking and the most powerful tool we have for accomplishing our mission. We must be gospel-centered people who preach the gospel to ourselves daily and eagerly seek the opportunities to share it with others.

The gospel is greatly misunderstood and quickly forgotten. One of our biggest obstacles to sharing the gospel is our world’s impression that they already understand it. The same can be said of the Church. That’s why our greatest ambitions will always be our personal understanding,

our belief in the gospel and our ability to convey that message to the world around us.

The gospel can either be explained simply in a few sentences or made fully unfolded as the whole 66 books of the Bible. Yet God has given us the freedom and obligation to communicate the gospel in the most effective fashion possible. To accomplish this, three criteria should be met.

1. It must be Biblically correct and paint a clear story.
2. It must establish core concepts, while not fostering common misconceptions.
3. It must provide the believer with clear direction for every area of life.

As you read through this booklet, consider two things: Are there areas of your life that suffer from poor understanding, remembrance or belief of the gospel? Then, how you would explain the gospel to the people God has placed in your life.

Take a moment to think through the five questions on the previous page and keep your answers in mind as you work through this booklet.

## The Gospel in a Snapshot



### God

God made all things for His Glory and communicated with mankind in the Scriptures.



### Man

All people were created by God for His glory. Mankind was designed to have relationship with God and to embrace God as our ultimate treasure and authority.



## Fall

Every person has rejected God's authority and has chosen to be self centered and self directed and thus, commit sinful acts. As a result, all people are separated from God, justly sentenced to eternal destruction in Hell.



## Offer

God offers the hope of salvation. He gives fallen people the opportunity to end their rebellion—to have God as their rightful authority and treasure. If that relationship with God would be reconciled, the person would live eternally with God in Heaven.



## Payment

In order to reconcile people to God, God Himself made a payment. Jesus, being God and man, came to earth in order to live, die and rise from the dead. By doing this, all who would trust in Him would find complete forgiveness for rebellion and would be given Jesus' righteousness as a free gift. When Jesus' work is applied to a person, they are no longer separated from God and actually become His Child.



## Response

The only way a person will be reconciled to God through Christ is by asking God to apply the work of Jesus to transform him from a self-centered rebel, to a God-centered person who loves and obeys Him. Such a repentance and plea for salvation is called "being saved by grace through faith." From that moment on, God reconciles that person to Himself and He becomes their treasure, authority and their Father.

Each of God's adopted children are a part of His beloved family which He calls the "Church". Helped by the Holy Spirit that the Father has placed in each believer, the members of this family love God and one another as they dedicate their lives to the mission of God—to represent their Father and bring His gospel to the entire world.

# The Gospel in Detail



**God is the only God and is uncreated.**

*Isaiah 43:10-11*

Before Me there was no God formed, And there will be none af- ter Me. I, even I, am the LORD, And there is no savior besides Me.

**In the beginning God created everything.**

*Genesis 1:1*

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

**God's ultimate motivation is always to show His Glory.**

*Isaiah 48:9,11*

For the sake of My name I delay My wrath, And for My praise I restrain it for you, In order not to cut you off. For My own sake, for My own sake, I will act; for how can My name be profaned? And My glory I will not give to another.

**One way of explaining God's glory is as Him showing His greatness. God chose to communicate to His creation in two ways. First, He showed His power, order and beauty through nature.**

*Romans 1:19-20*

Because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

**Second, He chose to communicate His mercy, values and plan by giving the Scriptures to the world as His authoritative and final Word.**

*2 Peter 1:20-21*

But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.



## Man

**Every person was created for God's Glory—to be “God-Centered.”**

*Isaiah 43:7*

Everyone who is called by My name, And whom I have created for My glory, Whom I have formed, even whom I have made.”

*Deuteronomy 6:14-15*

You shall not follow other gods, any of the gods of the peoples who surround you, for the LORD your God in the midst of you is a jealous God; otherwise the anger of the LORD your God will be kindled against you, and He will wipe you off the face of the earth.

**Mankind is unique from the rest of creation because he was created with the ability to have relationship with God.**

*Genesis 1:27*

God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

## Fall

**Every person has rejected God and is not “God- Centered.”**

*Romans 3:23*

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

**In doing this, every person has sinned. Sin is rebellion against God’s glory. It is being “self-centered” instead of being “God-centered.” Because this is true, people do sinful actions.**

*Mark 7:21-22*

For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness.

**Everyone is spiritually dead, unable to help themselves.**

*Ephesians 2:1-3*

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

**All people are described as having become enemies of God, therefore the wrath of God is on them and all are facing the just punishment of eternal death.**

*Colossians 1:21*

And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds...

*Romans 6:23*

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

*John 3:36*

But he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.



## Offer

**Yet, God offers the opportunity to walk away from the self-centered and godless life. This is called repentance.**

*Acts 26:20*

Paul kept declaring both to those of Damascus first, and also at Jerusalem and then throughout all the region of Judea, and even to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance.

*Romans 5:1*

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

**God's kind offer is the chance to be restored in relationship with Him, to be made "God-centered."**

*John 17:3*

This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

**It is a chance to be owned and ruled by God as the King, completely used for His glory.**

*1 Corinthians 6:19-20*

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own. For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

**A “God-centered” person not only finds God to be King, but also their greatest treasure.**

*Deuteronomy 6:5*

You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

*Psalms 73:25*

Whom have I in heaven but You? And besides You, I desire nothing on earth.

**This restored relationship lasts forever, even after death, in heaven.**

*John 10:28*

I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand.

**The offer of salvation that God extends is a change of authority: Self will no longer get to be the god. Now, God will be the person’s God. He gets to call the shots and His desires are the most important.**

*Mark 8:34*

And He summoned the crowd with His disciples, and said to them, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.”



## Payment

**God determined that there is only one way in which He would give this offer to save people.**

*John 14:6*

Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

**Jesus always was God, and then became a man as well when He came to the earth.**

*John 1:1,14*

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... and the Word became flesh.

**He came to earth because each person’s sin must be justly punished. As the perfectly just Judge, He cannot ignore sin.**

*Romans 2:16*

On the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.

**By Jesus’ sinless life, death on the cross and resurrection, He took the punishment for sin for all who would trust in Him. In doing this Jesus earned the right to restore people to a relationship with Him.**

*Colossians 1:22*

He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach.

**By doing this, He solves two problems. First, He completely forgives the sins of all who ask Him.**

*1 John 1:9*

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

**Second, He also gives them the complete righteousness that God expects of them.**

*2 Corinthians 5:21*

He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

**In the eyes of God, it is as if they have never sinned and have lived perfectly “God-Centered” their entire life.**

*Hebrews 10:14*

For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

**Only His work and worth can be the hope of a person. Salvation is completely accomplished by Christ alone, without any assistance from the person.**



## Response

**God will only restore relationship with a person and make them “God-centered” if they turn away (repent) from their rebellious “self-centeredness” and place their belief on the promise of God to save them through Christ’s work.**

*Mark 1:15*

“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”

*Romans 10:9*

If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

**Faith is defined as personally placing trust in God's promise to save those who ask Him.**

*Ephesians 2:8-9*

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

**God will not save a person who is attempting to gain His favor by doing good things or attempting to be "God-centered."**

*Titus 3:5*

He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit...

*Romans 10:3*

For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.

**Authentic faith produces a new life, a life increasing in love and obedience to God.**

*I John 2:3*

By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments.

*James 2:26*

For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

**Not only does God give spiritual life, but the Spirit of God himself enters into believers, confirming in their hearts that they are indeed the children of God, guiding and empowering them on the mission of Christ.**

**When a person is reconciled with God, they are made a part of God's family, which is called the "Church."**

*II Corinthians 6:18*

"And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me," Says the Lord Almighty.

*I Timothy 3:15*

but in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.

**God loves His Church. Each of His Children are to be deeply connected and functioning in God's family by being a part of a local church. God Commissions His family to mutually care, serve and share with supernatural love that only He can supply through the Spirit. Through this supernatural love between the members of His family, God is showing the world His love and the truth of the Gospel of Christ.**

*John 17:23*

I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.

**Finally, as part of the Church, He then calls of His children into His mission to spread this wonderful news about Himself, which He calls "The gospel." The heart and mission of God**

**become the heart and mission of those who are truly made God's children by the Cross of Jesus.**

*Matthew 28:18-20*

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

**Each child of God truly enjoys God's love while living within the Father's design as an active part of His family on His Mission.**

*John 15:9-11*

As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

# The Gospel in Passages

Now that you have seen the gospel in steps and verses, consider for yourself the thematic message of these passages:

## *Acts 17:22-31*

<sup>22</sup> So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: “Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. <sup>23</sup> For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, ‘To the unknown god.’ What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. <sup>24</sup> The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, <sup>25</sup> nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. <sup>26</sup> And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, <sup>27</sup> that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, <sup>28</sup> for “In him we live and move and have our being”; as even some of your own poets have said, “For we are indeed his offspring.” <sup>29</sup> Being then God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man. <sup>30</sup> The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent,

<sup>31</sup> because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”

## *Romans 3:9-28*

<sup>9</sup> What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under the power of sin, <sup>10</sup> as it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one; <sup>11</sup> no one understands; no one seeks for God. <sup>12</sup> All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.” <sup>13</sup>

“Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive.” “The venom of asps is under their lips.”<sup>14</sup> “Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness.”<sup>15</sup> “Their feet are swift to shed blood;<sup>16</sup> in their paths are ruin and misery,<sup>17</sup> and the way of peace they have not known.”<sup>18</sup> “There is no fear of God before their eyes.”<sup>19</sup> Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God.<sup>20</sup> For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.<sup>21</sup> But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—<sup>22</sup> the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction:<sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,<sup>24</sup> and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,<sup>25</sup> whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God’s righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.<sup>26</sup> It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.<sup>27</sup> Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith.<sup>28</sup> For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

### *2 Corinthians 5:18 - 6:1*

<sup>18</sup> All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; <sup>19</sup> that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. <sup>20</sup> Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup> For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

### *Hebrews 1:1-13*

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets,<sup>2</sup> but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son,

whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. <sup>3</sup> He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, <sup>4</sup> having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. <sup>5</sup> For to which of the angels did God ever say, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you”? Or again, “I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son”? <sup>6</sup> And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, “Let all God’s angels worship him.” <sup>7</sup> Of the angels he says, “He makes his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire.” <sup>8</sup> But of the Son he says, “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom. <sup>9</sup> You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.” <sup>10</sup> And, “You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of your hands; <sup>11</sup> they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment, <sup>12</sup> like a robe you will roll them up, like a garment they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will have no end.” <sup>13</sup> And to which of the angels has he ever said, “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet”?

### *Ephesians 2:1-10*

and you were dead in the trespasses and sins <sup>2</sup> in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience- <sup>3</sup> among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. <sup>4</sup> But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ- by grace you have been saved- <sup>6</sup> and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup> so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not a result

of works, so that no one may boast.<sup>10</sup> For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

### *Titus 3:1-8*

Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work,<sup>2</sup> to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people.<sup>3</sup> For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.<sup>4</sup> But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared,<sup>5</sup> he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,<sup>6</sup> whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,<sup>7</sup> so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.<sup>8</sup> The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people.

### *Galatians 1:6-8*

<sup>6</sup> I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—<sup>7</sup> not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.<sup>8</sup> But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed.

## **The Question is for you**

Do you desire to be made “God-Centered”? Does the idea of being owned by God—Him getting to call the shots, and being in a relationship with Him forever appeal to you? Do you desire to become part of His family and a part of what He is doing in history?

If so, will you submit to the idea that only God can save you based upon what Christ did by living, dying and coming back to life? Will you ask Him to forgive you, to bring you back to spiritual life, to save you? He promises He will. You must speak to Him personally, and ask Him for salvation based upon His promise.

## **Won't you trust Him?**

*John 6:35*

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst."

*Matthew 11:28-30*

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 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. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

## **If you have repented and truly placed your faith in Christ...**

You get to live this life and eternity as a God-centered person through the influence of the Spirit who now dwells in you!

You now have God's complete approval and love for you as His child.  
(Romans 8:37-39)

He has permanently adopted you and guaranteed His love for you.  
(Galatians 4:5-7)

One of the first things He asks of you is to demonstrate that you were spiritually dead and were made alive by Christ by demonstrating this in the act of baptism. (Matthew 28:19-20)

## **It is time to thrive in God's design for you**

### **You are a worshipper of God through Christ.**

You now have the freedom and honor of loving and obeying Him. Your relationship with Him will grow only by listening to Him (reading the Bible) and speaking to Him (prayer) through the help of the Spirit (Colossians 3:16, 1 Thessalonians 5:17, Romans 8:26-27). We love God.

### **You are a part of God's beloved family.**

He desires that each of His children be an active part of His family by being connected in a local church (Hebrews 10:24). You are not designed to be alone and encounter unique grace and help as you embrace His family. We love His Family.

### **Your life is dedicated to the mission of God.**

Your earthly life belongs to God and its purpose is to join with Him in His mission to reconcile the world to Himself. (Matthew 22:37-40 and 28:18-20). We love His world.

Our new identity as a God-centered person in God's family on His mission shapes our lives and all other priorities for God's glory and our joy.

## **Can we help?**

Please reach out to the person who gave you this booklet with further questions or help in following Jesus. We can also be reached anytime at [gospelin6@gmail.com](mailto:gospelin6@gmail.com) with any questions, needs or ideas.

The following websites can be used to help find solid churches

*[thegospelcoalition.org](http://thegospelcoalition.org)*

*[gmarks.org](http://gmarks.org)*



