

## What is the Gospel?

Mark 1:1 (NKJV)

<sup>1</sup>The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

- *The Greek word that we translate as gospel literally means “the good news” in some languages the word gospel is translated as, “news that makes one happy” or “the information that causes one joy” or “words that bring smiles” or “a message that causes the heart to be sweet.”*
- *Before one can understand and fully appreciate the Good News one must first know what the bad news is.*
- *The bad news is that we are all going to die.*
- *Every religion must answer three basic questions:*
- *Where did we come from?*
- *Why are we here?*
- *Where are we going?*
- *Everyone has a religious perspective?*
- *Many people consider themselves agnostics and the way they answer these three basic questions is, “I don’t know”, because agnosticism literally means, “not to know.”*
- *Another religious perspective is called atheism and its central tenet is a belief that there is no God.*
- *Their answers are straightforward, “we are an act of random chance; our lives have no eternal purpose and when we die we simply cease to exist.”*
- *It is obvious that atheism doesn’t provide either any comfort or purpose and those with this view take on the Biblical adage for those who do not have any belief in a life beyond this one as, “let us eat and drink today for tomorrow we die.” (1 Corinthians 15:32)*
- *The key to answer the second question, “why are we here?” hinges heavily upon how we answer the third question, “where are we going?”*
- *Everyone knows they are going to die but most don’t believe it.*

- *Many young people live their lives as if they will never grow old and as people do age they try to ignore the reality that they will grow frailer and soon their lives are going to end.*
- *The bad news is not only that we are going to die but that we are going to be held accountable on how we lived our lives.*
- *The problem that every person faces is that we all have sinned and come short of the glory of God and the reason that we have sinned is because we are all sinners.*
- *Sin is more than an action but is an attitude of the heart.*
- *Jesus taught that if a man looks upon a woman lustfully he is an adulterer and if a person hates someone he is a murderer. Our hearts betray the true condition of our souls.*
- *One may be able to put on a good face and control their actions but in their hearts are hidden all sorts of sins from lust, envy, greed, pride, anger, hate to mention only a few.*
- *The question is how do we deal with our sins?*
- *Some may argue that there is no such thing as sin and thus the question becomes irrelevant.*
- *Others seek to be a “good person” and to do enough good works to balance out or outweigh the sins they have committed.*
- *The problem with the first argument, that there is no such thing as sin, is that the world is filled with so much evil and destruction it is impossible to ignore it.*
- *In fact many people argue against the existence of God by saying, “if there is a God then why is there suffering and injustice in the world?”*
- *Suffering and injustice is not evidence that there is no God but evidence there is a devil and there is sin.*
- *In reality the very fact that mankind has not been destroyed by all this evil is evidence that there is a God who is holding things in check so people can be saved.*
- *The problem with those that seek to mitigate or to avoid the eternal judgment their sins deserve by doing “good works” is they misunderstand the very nature of justice.*

- *God is just and He always acts according to His nature.*
- *Justice means that sin and wrongdoing must be paid for and no violation is to be overlooked.*
- *However the Bible also teaches us that God is loving and merciful but the fact that He is merciful does not mean He can simply by-pass or ignore sin since He is also just.*

**Psalm 85:10 (NKJV)**

<sup>10</sup>**Mercy and truth have met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed.**

- *This Psalm reveals something of the Good News, “Mercy and truth have met together.”*
- *How can mercy and truth or justice come together?*
- *We can have mercy or we can have justice but in God’s economy He is able to not only have mercy and justice co-exist but even more than that He is able to have righteousness and peace actually kiss.*
- *God’s standard of righteousness is His perfect holiness but when sinful man is confronted with the holiness of God that does not produce peace in the person but instead a fearful expectation of judgment and eternal condemnation.*
- *The Bible says that no man can be forgiven or found righteous through doing good works because good works never can cancel out our sins and transgressions because God is just. (Titus 3:5; Romans 4:2-8)*
- *If we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God and we cannot receive forgiven by doing good works then how can anyone possibly be saved?*
- *That is where the Good News, the Gospel of Jesus Christ comes in.*
- *The Gospel not only provides us with the way to receive forgiveness and salvation but it provides us with complete assurance of salvation.*

**John 3:16 (NKJV)**

<sup>16</sup>**For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.**

- *Why did God have to send His only begotten Son to die for our sins?*
- *First only God Himself is righteous enough to pay for our sins.*

- *No one else could die for our sins because all mankind has sinned and each man has to die for their own sins with the consequence of eternal damnation and eternal separation from God in the depths of Hell.*
- *However, Jesus Christ the Son of God, being both perfect and sinless came in the form of a man to live the perfect life that we could never have lived and then He gave His own life as a sacrifice and ransom for all mankind.*
- *The next question that arises is, “Why did Jesus have to die for our sin? Why couldn’t God simply have forgiven us?”*
- *The Greek word for “forgiveness” not only means to pardon but the literal meaning is, “to release, to let go, to send off.”*
- *Some people misunderstand that forgiveness does not mean that the injury or loss that has been incurred by someone’s careless or malicious actions simply disappears.*
- *Forgiveness means the injured party no longer is demanding punishment, retribution or payment for the damages incurred but releases the person and thus the one who forgives absorbs the loss himself.*
- *Jesus Christ, the Son of God, bore our sins, curses and penalties on the cross of Calvary and died for our sins.*
- *Our sins and transgressions didn’t simply disappear they were paid for in full through Jesus’ suffer and death.*
- *But because Jesus is the righteous Son of God and He Himself is sinless, He was able to overcome death and Hell and the third day He rose from the dead declaring that His redemptive sacrifice was complete and perfect and that the way of salvation is open to all those who are willing to put their faith in Him.*

**2 Corinthians 5:19, 21 (NKJV)**

<sup>19</sup>that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

<sup>21</sup>For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

- *The Greek word for reconciliation can be used as an accounting term meaning, “to exchange coins of equivalent value.”*
- *Thus the word reconciliation is an accounting term where the ledger sheet is balanced and the liabilities and assets equal.*

- “For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” – *At the cross of Calvary, Jesus took all our sins and gave us all His righteousness, and God called it a fair transaction and declared the ledger sheet of Heaven has been reconciled.*

#### **John 3:16 (NKJV)**

<sup>16</sup>For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

- *How do we actually receive forgiveness and salvation? “Whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”*

#### **Ephesians 2:8–9 (NKJV)**

<sup>8</sup>For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,

<sup>9</sup>not of works, lest anyone should boast.

- *Faith is the conduit by which the grace of God flows to us to, not only to bring forgiveness and redemption, but through the new birth we have a new life and identity in Christ.*

#### **John 3:3 (NKJV)**

<sup>3</sup>Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

- *The Good News is that God provides us with salvation through the new birth where our sins are not only forgiven but we are given a new righteous nature through Jesus Christ so that we are at peace with God.*
- *The Bible teaches us that it is not our faith but the faith of Christ (Galatians 2:20) and thus faith is something that God gives us.*
- *Faith is not something we conjure up but something we respond to.*
- *Faith is the conduit by which grace flows to us to save us.*

#### **Romans 5:1 (NKJV)**

<sup>1</sup>Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

- *We can find peace with God when we put our faith in Christ since our sins have been forgiven.*

#### **Romans 10:8–10 (NKJV)**

<sup>8</sup>But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith which we preach):

**<sup>9</sup>that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.**

**<sup>10</sup>For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.**

*The ABC's of the Gospel:*

*A – Admit you are a sinner.*

*B – Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.*

*C – Confess Him as Lord.*

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