

Eight Basic Elements of the Gospel¹

Here are the eight basic elements of the gospel as revealed in the first six chapters of Genesis.

1. **God.** In Genesis chapters 1–3 God created everything from nothing. He is a holy God without equal and without peer. He is our creator, potentially our Father, and will be our judge (Gen. 1-2; 3:8-19, 22-24). Every human and all of creation are subordinate to his absolute authority. He is the sole ruling monarch of his creation.
2. **Holiness.** God is holy and requires of man complete holiness, sinless perfection, and perfect obedience to his will. He is transcendent (supreme, preeminent, without peer) over His creation and morally perfect in His character. He rules and reigns in “sovereign majesty and power” over creation.² When Adam and Eve sinned against God they lost the intimacy they previously enjoyed with Him because they were no longer holy. It was a great tragedy. (Gen. 1:26-27; 2:15-17).
3. **Sin.** Adam and Eve violated God’s requirement by rebelling against his authority. They ate the forbidden fruit and essentially decided to make themselves equal with God. They committed treason against the King of Creation, and it was deadly. They found themselves naked, which after the fall signifies the guilt and shame of sin (Gen. 3:7, 10-11; 2 Cor. 5:3; Heb. 4:13; Rev. 3:17). They died spiritually that very day, were alienated from God, and were under his wrath (Gen. 3:6-7, 9-11).
4. **Judgment and Wrath.** As a result of sin and disobedience Adam and Eve (as well as all their biological and spiritual children) were guilty, separated from God, and children of wrath. God’s judgment came down on Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:8-19; 6:5-8, 13). The punishment (“you shall surely die”) would be spiritual death which meant separation from God immediately and separation from God for all of eternity suffering his wrath in the fires of hell commencing at physical death.
5. **The Cross and Resurrection.** But God promised Adam and Eve a Savior who would rescue them from their sin and God’s wrath. The cross and resurrection were prophesied in Gen. 3:15 in the bruising of Jesus’ heel, a non-fatal blow, the cross. The bruising of Satan’s head predicts a fatal blow to be inflicted on him by the Savior through the cross. The effect of this for Adam and Eve, as they repented and trusted in God’s promise, is seen when God clothed them with the skins of animals. This symbolized their being clothed in the righteousness of Jesus and that God’s wrath was averted. (Gen. 3:15, 21). They were rescued from his wrath and restored to union with God.
6. **Grace.** Adam and Eve deserved only God’s condemnation and wrath, but God acted out of his love in grace. He gave them the promise of a Savior, their only hope of a rescue from the result of their sin. “And the *Lord God made* for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them” (Gen. 3:21). God did this out of his great mercy and undeserved favor (grace). (See also Gen. 6:8).
7. **Counting the Cost of Following Christ.** There is a cost of following the Savior and it began at the Fall. Enmity was introduced on the earth between the offspring of Eve and the offspring of Satan. The cost is three-fold: a.) sin must be forsaken, b.) one’s self-determination must be abandoned and replaced with living for the glory of Christ, and c.) there is opposition from the offspring of Satan toward those who follow Christ (i.e., Cain’s murder of Abel, Gen. 3:15; 4:1-26; 6:11-13). “In evangelism there’s a huge problem of us not calling people to see this as a precondition of repentance. We repent and believe as we become Christians having

1 From *The Gospel Uncompromised*, pp. 43-45, 67.

2 Walter A. Elwell (General Editor), “*Holiness*,” *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), p. 984.

counted the cost. Of course, it's then a daily part of discipleship, but it's getting the understanding in at the beginning that is so often critical to facing suffering and persecution (see Lk. 14:25-33)."³

8. Repentance and Faith. To be saved, a sinner must turn from their sin and place their trust in God. Adam and Eve trusted in Satan's word, and it proved disastrous. They needed to turn away from their sin, turn away from the lies of Satan, and trust in God and his word. Repentance does not mean to stop sinning. No one can do that perfectly. It means to have sorrow for sin, to feel remorse, to have revulsion toward it and to give it up. This sorrow and revulsion is "accompanied by a true change of heart toward God."⁴ "The emphasis...seems to be more specifically the total change, both in thought and behavior, with respect to how one should both think and act."⁵ Repentance and faith entail turning to Christ for his mercy and forgiveness and following him as Lord (Gen. 3:20; 4:25; 6:9, 22).

The logic of these individual components flows like this:

God is our creator, our judge, and may become our Father. God is holy and requires of everyone perfect holiness, sinless perfection, and perfect obedience, yet all have sinned and are under God's judgment and wrath. But there is hope, for God sent his Son as a ransom for many by his death on the cross and rose from the dead on the third day as proof that God's anger at sinners was appeased. This salvation by grace through faith is received freely by all who, having understood the cost of following Him, repent of their sins and trust Jesus as Lord.

	Description	Gen. 1 – 7	New Testament	Gospel of Mark	Jeremiah
1.	God – creator, father, judge	Gen. 1-2; 3:8-19	Jn. 4:25-26; Mt. 6:9-13; Acts 17:22-34; Col. 1:15-20; 2 Tim. 4:1; Heb 1:2-3; Rev. 4:11	1:1, 11; 9:2-8; 13:24-27; 14:62; 16:1-8; 21 miracle accounts.	
2.	Holiness – God's standard for everyone	Gen. 2:15-17	Mt. 5:48; 22:34-40; James 2:10.	8:34-38; 10:17-31; 12:29-31.	
3.	Sin	Gen. 3:6-7, 9-11	Rom 1:18-23; 2:1-29, 3:9-20, 3:23; 5:18-19, 6:23.	4:1-20; 7:14-23; 8:14-21, 33; 9:33-37, 42-50; 11:12-21; 12:1-11, 38-40.	
4.	God's wrath, judgment	Gen. 3:8-19; chapters 6 & 7	Mt 13:36-43; Jn. 3:16, 36; Rom 1:18, 2:5, 8, 16; 5:9; Eph 2:3, 5:6; Col 3:6; 2 Thess. 1:5-10; Rev 6:12-17; 11:18; 19:15-16; 20:15; 21:7-8.	9:42-50; 11:12-25; 12:1-12; 13:1-2; 24-27.	
5.	The cross and the resurrection	Gen. 3:15, 21	Rom. 3:21-26; 4:24-25; 5:6-11, 19; Eph. 2:14-16; Col. 1:20; 2:14; 1 Pet. 2:24-25, 3:18; (also in OT Isa. 52:13-53:12).	8:31-32; 9:31,10:32-34; 10:45; 14:1-2, 22-25; 15:1-47; 16:1-8.	
6.	Grace	Gen. 1:1, 3:15, 3:21; 6:8	Rom. 3:21-26; 4:13-25; 5:2; Gal. 2:15-21; 3:10-14; 5:4-6; Eph 2:8-9, Titus 3:4-5.	1:40-45; 2:1-12, 13-17; 10:13-31; 10:46-52; 21 miracle accounts.	
7.	Count the cost of following Jesus	Gen. 3:15, 4:1-26; 6:11-1	Lk. 14:25-33; 2 Cor. 2:14-16; 6:4-10; 7:1-4; 1 Thess. 1:6; 3:2-4; 2 Tim 3:12.	6:14-29; 8:34-38; 10:28-31; 13:5-37.	
8.	Repent and believe	Gen. 3:20, 4:1, 25-26; 6:9, 22	Luke 13:1-5; 15:1-32; Acts 2:14-41; 3:19; 17:30-31; Rom 10:9-13; 2 Pet 3:9.	1:4-5, 14-15; 8:34-38.	

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⁴ Spiros Zodhiates, General Editor, The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament (electronic edition), (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000), μετανοέω (metanoóō), word no. 3340.

⁵ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 41.52, p. 509.