



## Ecclesiology: The Study of the Church

### Lesson 8: The Gospel Proclaiming Church

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#### INTRODUCTION

It is particularly important for our churches to have sound biblical theology in one special area—in our understanding of the good news of Jesus Christ, the gospel. The gospel is the heart of Christianity, and so it should be at the heart of our churches.

A healthy church is a church in which every member, young and old, mature and immature, unites around the wonderful, good news of salvation through Jesus Christ.

When a church is healthy and its members know and cherish the gospel above everything else, they will increasingly want to share it with the world. What is the gospel of Jesus Christ? You'd think that would be an easy question for Christians to answer. But if you ask fifty professing evangelical Christians that question, you're likely to get almost as many answers!

1. What are some ways you've heard evangelical Christians define the gospel? \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_

#### MAIN IDEA

The gospel is the good news about what God has done to save sinners through the sacrificial death and resurrection of Christ.

#### DIGGING IN

The most detailed, systematic discussion of the gospel in the whole Bible is found in Paul's letter to the Romans, especially in the first four chapters.

After announcing that he is not ashamed of the gospel because the righteousness of God is revealed in it (Rom. 1:16–17), Paul begins his proclamation of the good news by delivering some sobering *bad news*.

#### Romans 1:18–23.

1. To whom are human beings accountable? What passage(s) do you see this in? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What does God require of people? (Hint: See Rom. 1:21–23.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What are some problems that people tend to present as our main problem when they share the gospel? \_\_\_\_\_  
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4. What, according to Paul, is the most fundamental problem people face? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Now, on to the *good news*:

**Romans 3:21–26; 4:4–5.**

5. What is God’s solution to the problem Paul has been expounding for three chapters? \_\_\_\_\_  
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 \_\_\_\_\_
6. According to Paul, how do people receive the salvation God offers in Christ? \_\_\_\_\_  
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**SHARING THE GOSPEL: FOUR POINTS**

There are four points that we should try to remember whenever sharing the gospel: (1) God, (2) man, (3) Christ, and (4) response.

**I. GOD**

A right understanding of the gospel begins with a right understanding of God: that He is the righteous Creator, and that we are all accountable to Him.

**Genesis 1:1 – 3.**

1. What does Genesis 1 teach about the whole universe? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Romans 2:5–8.**

**Hebrews 10:30–31.**

2. What do these passages teach about God’s attitude toward sin? What do they say God will do to sinners? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## II. MAN

Humanity's fundamental problem is that we are all sinners by nature and by choice, and are therefore subject to the wrath of God.

### Romans 3:9–20.

3. Has any human being done what God requires of us? (Hint: See Rom. 3:9–12, 19–20.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. According to this passage, how many people are righteous in God's sight? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Read verse 20. In light of this verse, how would you respond to someone who said, "I'm generally a pretty good person. I'm sure that God will accept me in the end because I've done better than most people"? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## III. CHRIST

In His death on the cross, Jesus Christ satisfied God's wrath against all those who would turn from their sin and trust in Him. The heart of the gospel is the good news that Jesus has accomplished salvation for us through His death and resurrection.

### Acts 8:29–35.

6. What does "the passage of Scripture which he was reading" say about the Savior? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 1 Corinthians 15:3–4.

7. What is of "first importance" that we must share about Christ? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## IV. RESPONSE

The gospel calls all people to repent of their sin and believe in Jesus Christ in order to be saved.

### Mark 1:15.

### Acts 20:21.

8. What are the two elements of the right response to the gospel we see in these passages? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Throughout the New Testament, we see that the proper response to the gospel has two components, like two sides of a coin. Repentance and faith always go together. True faith, therefore, always produces a changed life. If you trust in Christ, you'll believe, and do, what He says. There's no way to believe in Jesus but say, "I don't think you get to tell me what to do with my life." Jesus Christ is Lord. He is the King of the universe. To believe in Him is to accept that claim. It's to rely on Him for salvation, which involves turning your whole self away from sin and to Christ.

#### **FOUR POINTS TO REMEMBER**

**God.** God is the creator of all things. He is perfectly holy, worthy of all worship, and will punish sin.

**Man.** All people, though created good, have become sinful by nature. From birth, all people are alienated from God, hostile to God, and subject to the wrath of God.

**Christ.** Jesus Christ, who is fully God and fully man, lived a sinless life, died on the cross to bear God's wrath in the place of all who would believe in Him, and rose from the grave in order to give His people eternal life.

**Response.** God calls everyone everywhere to turn from their sins and trust in Christ in order to be saved.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bobby Jamieson, *God's Good News: The Gospel*, ed. Mark Dever, 9Marks Healthy Church Study Guides (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 16–17.