

What is
The Gospel?

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THE GOSPEL IS



A STORY



A PROMISE



A PERSON



POWER

INTRODUCTION

The word “gospel” has come to be identified with the Christian faith even though initially it was not exclusive to it.

It was an ordinary commonplace word which in the Greek “Euangelion” simply meant “good news”. And when the disciples went around talking about the ‘gospel of Jesus Christ,’ what

the people heard was ‘the good news of Jesus Christ’.

Let’s examine the content of this “good news”.

First, we see there is a story behind this good news; then there is a Person at the heart of it, a promise undergirding it, and finally a power inherent in it. Let’s examine the content of this ‘good news.’

THE GOSPEL IS A STORY

It is a story that begins in the beginning with
God Himself



■ The beginning

The Bible declares that in the beginning, God created; and goes on to talk about the creation of all things, including man. Man in his original state is in right relationship with God, walking in intimacy until temptation comes from the devil, and he gives in.

Distrust, suspicion, pride, ambition, and rebellion now enter into his heart and take the place of love and intimacy. He disobeys God and eats of the forbidden fruit.

■ Things go wrong

He loses his place of grace and intimacy in this fall. He is consequently banished and separated from God. Sin takes over man's heart, and evil becomes predominant on the earth, man having been cast down.

Despite it all, God promises the coming of a redeemer, "the seed of the woman", who will bruise the devil's head and bring redemption to man through his reconciliation with God.

■ The story goes on

Thus, the story of man's relationship with God from this time forward becomes the story of the preparation of a people through whom the Savior is to come.

Through the lives of several characters in the Old Testament, we see this setting apart and preparation; Cain and Abel, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Isaac, Joseph,

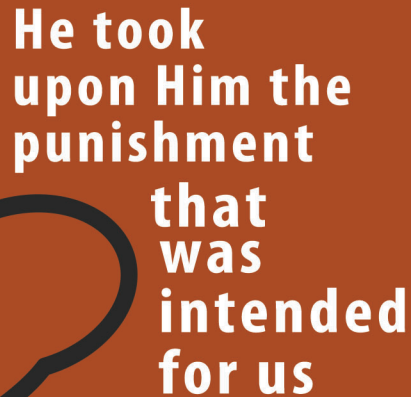
Moses, Joshua, the judges, and on to the prophets and the kings.

Israel, generation after generation, expects the birth of this Anointed One, the Messiah and King, whose coming holds great hopes for the people.

The prophets speak ceaselessly of it, in particular, Isaiah. And finally, there is a man called Joseph and his fiancée, Mary, to whom an angel announces her conception by the Holy Spirit and the coming birth of a Son, who is to be the Savior of His people.

■ The plan has begun

And so, Jesus is born. He lives a pure life, is empowered by the Holy Spirit to do good; preach, teach, heal, and set people free from all evil and darkness.



**He took
upon Him the
punishment
that
was
intended
for us**

He fulfills the purpose for which He comes to earth in that He offers His life and allows His blood to be shed as an atonement for the sin of humanity.

He takes thus the punishment that is accrued to man on Himself by dying on the cross. And His resurrection demonstrates His victory over the powers of death and darkness.

■ The plan has worked

Consequently, all who believe in Him receive His substitutionary sacrifice for themselves and are thus freed from the penalty of their sins and declared not guilty. They have, therefore, become children of God. The reconciliation of man with God has been made possible through Jesus and is available to all men who believe and ask.

THE GOSPEL IS A PROMISE



The good news is that Jesus's coming, death and resurrection have opened the way for mankind to fully enjoy the benefits promised by God for those who believe in Him. Indeed, God has made man many promises. What are these promises?

■ The Promise of Redemption and Forgiveness of Sins

Sin is slavery. Man is a slave to sin and under the authority of the devil.

God in Christ Jesus offers to buy him back. To this effect, Jesus pays the price on the cross.

When you believe in Jesus, you are redeemed, and your sins are forgiven; "in Him we have

redemption, the forgiveness of sins".

God forgives generously and wipes the slate clean when we come to Him in faith, because of Jesus, "for by grace you are saved through faith, and not by works so that no man can boast".

■ The Promise of Adoption

One of the beautiful promises of God is that when we believe in Jesus, He will bring us into His family.

All men are God's creation, but it is only when our sins are forgiven, and we are reconciled to God that we become His children.

As the gospel of John puts it, 'to all who received Him, to all who believed in Him, He gave the power to become children of God'.



That is why the Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of adoption because once we commit our lives to Jesus, He prompts us to cry out, "Abba Father", that is "Daddy".

■ The Promise of Justification

To be justified is to be declared “not guilty”. Jesus was “raised for our justification”.

God chooses to wipe the slate clean and to clear our records of sin. It is the image of going before a court and knowing that you are truly guilty, but having the judge declare you not guilty and choose to clear out your record as well.

That is what God offers us when we come to Him through Jesus.

That is why the Bible states that “we are at peace with God” through Christ Jesus.



■ The Promise of Life

Life does not end here. There is a question of our eternal destination.

And God promises to every person, who is reconciled with Him through Jesus, an eternity in His presence.

Jesus tells several parables that illustrate the fact that there will be at the end of the age, a separation between those who know God and those who do not.

Hell is a reality, and it is the destination of unredeemed man; it is a place of pain and torment.

God offers a way out, Jesus says that He does not come to condemn man because he is already condemned, but to save him.

He offers you
salvation
today, will
you choose to
receive it?

THE GOSPEL IS A PERSON



The Story of the Gospel has a central character, Jesus.

But why Jesus?

Why do we say that reconciliation with God is made possible by Jesus only?

It all revolves around the identity of Jesus and His life, death and resurrection.

We understand from the Bible that God is one Supreme Being in three Persons – the **Father**, the **Son**, and the **Spirit**. This is referred to as the **Trinity**.

■ What's so unique about Jesus's identity ?

He fulfills the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the Messiah. Numerous prophets speak of different aspects of the life of a glorious personage to be born, and these find their fulfillment in Him. Isaiah speaks of a virgin who will have a child who is to be called Emmanuel - God with us.

He goes on to describe this child who is to be born as, among other things, "mighty God". In furtherance, Isaiah describes the sufferings and agonies of the 'servant' of the Lord which correspond perfectly with the experiences of Jesus. His birth in Nazareth is predicted along with other circumstances surrounding His birth, such as the unfortunate slaughter of innocent children.

Furthermore, it is the clear teaching of Scripture that Jesus the man is none other than God

the Son who takes flesh and becomes a human being. This is what is called the incarnation. John puts it this way,

"In the beginning was the word, the word was with God, and the word was God... And the word became flesh..."

So, indeed, the extraordinary fact is that God the Son chooses to take on flesh and blood (Heb. 2) to become like us in order to save us. He Himself causes an uproar when He affirms His equality with God. He speaks very clearly of the fact that anyone who has seen Him has also seen the Father. Thus, Jesus is unique because He is God in human form. **Most extraordinary !**

■ But why ?

Quite simple! The epistle of Romans makes it clear that sin entered the world through one man. Thus, the removal of sin could only be effected by another man, who would have to himself be without sin. Of course, no human being can fit the bill.

God Himself, therefore, in His infinite mercy, comes as a man to take the penalty of our sins. Under the Old Covenant, animals are sacrificed yearly to symbolically remove the sins of the people so that they may continue to have dealings with God who is holy and cannot abide in sin.

By accepting to be crucified and by His resurrection, Jesus becomes once and for all the sacrifice for sin. Through Him, the crucified Savior, every man can now receive forgiveness because 'without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sin.' Which is why 'he who has the son has the father, he who does not have the son, does not have the father.'

It is also the reason why Jesus Himself says,

"I am the way, the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father except through me."



THE GOSPEL IS POWER

God is the all-powerful One who made all that is and has the capacity to alter it. Indeed, one of the attributes of God is omnipotence.

When Jesus was on the earth, He demonstrated the power of God amply. Acts 10 tells us how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and power, and how He went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed by the devil for God was with Him.

Jesus exercised great power when He was on earth, supernatural power. He healed the sick; He delivered those who were oppressed and even raised people from the dead.



On the cross, Jesus destroys the power of the devil and makes a public spectacle of him.

Consequently, He tells His disciples that all power in heaven and on earth has been given to Him. He then sends them, and us, to make disciples of all nations; to restore, heal and deliver because of His love for humanity. (Matthew 28:19)

The Gospel is power;

it is the means by which God does the greatest miracle of all, transferring men from the dominion of darkness into the kingdom of His Son, setting man free from captivity to sin and reconciling him with God.

The power of God is still working actively today as the Holy Spirit empowers believers to be God's agents in His mission for the salvation of man.

He has given them the power to set captives free, bringing restoration, deliverance, healing, and provision in people's lives.

And so you can be set free from depression, sickness, and all forms of oppression and fear, which are characteristic of the devil's domain, when you put your faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

CONCLUSION

Man in his natural state is separated from God and in a state of sin; however, God offers forgiveness and reconciliation through Jesus who has already taken the punishment that should have been ours. The call is now made to you to believe in Jesus as the Son of God who came to reconcile humanity, lost and estranged, to God.

Receive Him in your heart today, turn away from sin and all that is not pure and holy and commit your life to Jesus to follow and serve Him.

This is all you have to do and all the promises of the Gospel will be yours – reconciliation with God, forgiveness of sin, peace, joy, faith and eternity in His presence. You will be ‘born again,’ transformed, and saved from an eternity in hell without God.

If you wish to receive this offer, pray and ask for forgiveness of your sins, profess your faith in Jesus, and commit your life to Him completely. Find a place of worship where you can grow in your new faith, and learn to follow Jesus fully.

May God bless you