

REVIEW

- There is objective truth.
- There is evidence—obvious natural evidence and historical evidence.
- What we have in the Bible is true and is God's Word.

THIS WEEK: THE GOSPEL

- Warnings about allowing the gospel to be distorted are found in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.
- The gospel is the good news.

Galatians 1:6–8 ⁶I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—⁷which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. ⁸But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God's curse!

WHAT IS IN THE GOSPEL?

Colossians 1:15–23 ¹⁵The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. ¹⁹For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. ²¹Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. ²²But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—²³if you continue in your faith, [an abiding/remaining faith—a settled, established, faithful faith] established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

THE PLAN OF SALVATION—THE GOOD NEWS

1. The world was created by Him and for Him—He is *where we came from*.
2. We have all gone astray. We've fallen short of the glory of God, and we need reconciled to Him. (vs 20)

Isaiah 53:6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Romans 3:21–24 ²¹But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. ²²This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, ²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

3. Jesus came and presented Himself as the Lamb of God and the Messiah, the King.
4. Those who accept His sacrifice for their lives, and accept His Kingship in their hearts, are saved—through faith and faithfulness.
 - o Justification versus sanctification
 - o Verse 23: "If you continue in your faith..." Faith is a settled faith, a growing in obedience faith, and allegiance to Him.

Ephesians 2:8–10 ⁸For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

2 Corinthians 5:14–15 ¹⁴For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. ¹⁵And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

5. A public confession in baptism is based on repentance.

- o Now the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit moves in.

Acts 2:36–41 ³⁶“Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.” ³⁷When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” ³⁸Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.” ⁴⁰With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” ⁴¹Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

Revelation 3:20 Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.

AS WE END THIS SERIES, IT'S RIGHT THAT WE TAKE TRUTH TO ITS CONCLUSION.

- Some need to decide to follow Jesus for the first time.
- Some were click-baited but never caught the real thing—they believe a false gospel.
- Some need to rededicate their lives to Jesus.
- Some need to remember we have a mission.
- If you've made a decision, would like prayer, we have decision cards in the back, or you can go online.

2 Corinthians 5:17–21 ¹⁷Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! ¹⁸All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. ²¹God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

THE GOSPEL'S POWER

Romans 1:14–17 ¹⁴I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish. ¹⁵That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are in Rome. ¹⁶**For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes:** first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. ¹⁷For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”

QUESTIONS TO REFLECT AND DISCUSS:

Passages to consider: Colossians 1:15-23; 1 Corinthians 15:1-7; Acts 2:36-41; Romans 10:9-15

Icebreaker: When you have some good news, what is your favorite way to share it?

1. Share what was significant to you from the sermon.
2. Read Colossians 1:15-23 and 1 Corinthians 15:1-7. What do these passages say about who Jesus is and what He did? A) What makes it significant? B) What about it is good news?
3. Look at Acts 2:36-41 and Romans 10:9-15. Jesus' actions require a response from us. Where are you in the journey of responding to Jesus?
4. How would you share the gospel with someone in your life? (*Do you, as a group, need to learn and practice together?*) A) Who is someone in your life who needs to hear what Jesus has done?
5. In what ways has this series helped you with the evidences to believe Christianity? A) What questions has it sparked?

Passages to prepare for next week's new series, Cultivate!

This week, read Romans 8:1-6 and Galatians 5.

As you read, ask yourself these questions:

- a) What is the passage saying about God, mankind, and how the world works?
- b) What do I learn about myself from this passage?
- c) What response does this require of me in my thinking, believing, and doing?