

Gospel Foundations



This is good news! When we were hopeless, God sent Jesus to save us! Despite our sin and rebellion, God saves all who come to Him in faith!

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

In short, the Gospel is the good news of salvation offered through Jesus Christ. Here are four ways to gain an understanding about the Gospel and why it is good news

Creation

God created us in His image, for His glory. // **Colossians 1:16**

Fall

Our first-parents rebelled against God, thus rebellion is at our core. // **Ephesians 2:1-3**

Redemption

We had no hope of salvation, but God sent Jesus to save people. // **John 3:16**

Restoration

Through Jesus, God is reconciling all things to Himself. // **Matthew 6:9-10**

Starting Conversations

"Hello!
My name is [insert
name]. What's your
name?"

Hey! My name is
[insert name]

*Someone once said, "People don't care what you know until they know that you care." In order to share the gospel with people we love, we must demonstrate our love intentionally through our conversations. **One way to start a conversation is by thinking of FIRE.***

F

Find Common Ground. Ask questions that help determine things you have in common.

I

Interests. You can also ask questions to determine a person's interests. For example: Where do you go in your free time? What are some hobbies that you enjoy?

R

Relationships. Deeper conversations include the way people relate to others. What is your family background? How many siblings do you have? Do we have any mutual friends?

E

Experience with Spiritual Things. Spiritual beliefs are deeply personal but asking questions about experiences invites people to listen and learn. Have you been to church? Were you raised in a specific belief?

Sharing the Gospel



WHAT DO YOU SHARE?

YOUR STORY

Tell the story about how God showed you that you were a sinner and how He saved you through Jesus Christ. First, share about your life before meeting Jesus. Next, share how God opened your eyes to the truth about Jesus (his perfect sinless life, substitutionary and atoning death, and his resurrection) and the reality that sin separates us from God. Finally, share how God's grace and forgiveness has transformed, and is continuing to transform your life. The goal of this is to give your testimony about your salvation experience while pointing to Jesus Christ the entire time.

GOSPEL PRESENTATION

There are a number of ways the gospel can be presented. You can share your story and incorporate the gospel as listed above. You can read through passages of Scripture (**John 3:16, Romans 3:23, 6:23, 5:8, 1 John 1:9**). Or you can walk through a Gospel demonstration (Some demonstrations include Three Circles and the Bridge Illustration.) It is challenging to share the full gospel in one conversation, so consider having follow up conversations.

GOING DEEPER IN FOLLOW UP

When talking with people who are seeking truth, invite them to read the Bible with you. When they agree to this it shows that the Holy Spirit is working in their life! A recommended set of texts to read would be these: **Mark 1:1-15; Mark 2:1-12; Mark 3:7-35; Mark 8:22-38; Mark 10:17-45; Mark 14:53-15:15; Mark 15:16-39; Mark 15:42-16:8**. The plan would be to meet anywhere from four to eight weeks, walk through each of these portions of Scripture, and ask open ended questions. Some questions to ask include:

- What do you like about this passage?
- What is challenging about this passage?
- What does this passage say about Jesus?
- What does this passage say about mankind?
- How can we apply this passage?

WHO IS YOUR MISSION FIELD?

The mission field includes all people who don't know Jesus. This also includes those who claim to be believers yet are not walking in a way that brings Jesus honor and glory. This could also be people who profess to be Christians but do not gather with a church. In order to come up with this list of names, think about the people God has placed in your life.

WHY DO WE DO THIS?

We want as many people to know God as possible. This comes by Christians reproducing themselves, and forming Biblical communities that are reproducing themselves. Through all of this we hope to see a Gospel movement that transforms our campuses and ultimately the world.

HOW WILL YOU TRAIN THEM?

Next Steps:

- Train and equip new believers to grow in Christ and live on mission.
- Encourage these new believers to join other believers in corporate worship.
- Help them to identify people with whom they can share the gospel, and go with them as they share with these people.

The Church

WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

The moment that you accept Jesus as Savior and Lord, you are adopted into the family of God (**Ephesians 1:5**). This is based on the position given to us through the obedience, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Every child of God needs to be a part of a spiritual family, a church (**1 Timothy 3:15**). So while we often think about the church as a building, the church is not a building but the people of God united by their faith in Jesus Christ.

WHO LEADS THE CHURCH?

Ephesians 5:23 tells us that the head of the church is Jesus Christ. So while the church is led by pastors at a physical level, they are to be following the leadership of Jesus Christ and what He would desire for the church. Here are several verses showing Christ's relation to His church.

- **Romans 12:5** - ...so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.
- **Ephesians 1:22-23** - And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

What implications does this hold for you based upon these verses concerning Christ and the unity of His church?

The Church...

THE FUNCTIONS OF THE CHURCH

As we gather as the church, there are many functions that take place. These take place to promote the glory of God, to make believers more like Jesus, and to reach the world with the Gospel.

- Worship God | **Psalm 149:1**
- Care for one another | **Hebrews 10:24**
- Train one another | **2 Timothy 2:2**
- Serve others | **Ephesians 4:12**
- Reach the world | **Acts 1:8**

THE LOCAL CHURCH

Salvation through Jesus brings you into His church, yet to best grow in Him and to experience the functions of the church you must be part of a local church. You may also wonder how important it is for you to attend worship gatherings of the local church. Scripture tells us the following:

Hebrews 10:24-25 says, "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."

ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH

As the church gathers corporately, Jesus gave the church two things that they were to continue to do until he returns.

- Baptism | **Romans 6:1-14; Matthew 3:15**
- Communion | **Matthew 26:17-19, 26-30; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29**

Baptism

A NEW CREATION

When you become a Christian, it means a great deal! A tremendous change has taken place that will radically change your entire life. How are you different? Read these statements and the corresponding verses.

YOU ARE ALIVE SPIRITUALLY

Romans 8:9-11

YOU ARE A NEW CREATION

2 Corinthians 5:17

YOU HAVE A NEW HEART AND A NEW SPIRIT

Ezekiel 36:26

YOU HAVE BEEN RESCUED AND ADOPTED

Colossians 1:13

WHAT IS BAPTISM?

Baptism is the immersion of professing believers in Jesus Christ in water to show the change that has taken place in their life.

- Baptism is only for those who believe in Jesus. | **Acts 8:12; Galatians 3:27**
- Immersion in water is practiced in the New Testament. | **Mark 1:5, 10; John 3:23**

WHY DO WE BAPTIZE?

Baptism illustrates all that faith in Jesus does in the life of a believer.

- Baptism symbolizes the death of the believer to sin and their new life in Jesus Christ. | **Romans 6:1-4**
- Baptism symbolizes Christ taking the wrath of God for believers. | **1 John 4:10**

Throughout the Bible, water signifies judgment and wrath. This can be seen in the stories of Noah and Jonah. The water of baptism signifies the believer being immersed into the wrath of God due to their sin but rising to new life.

IS BAPTISM NECESSARY?

Baptism is not necessary for salvation. The Bible explicitly states that salvation is by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9). Yet there are a few reasons believers should be baptized:

- To follow the example of Jesus Christ | **Matthew 3:13-17**
- To publicly proclaim your allegiance to Christ | **Mark 8:34-38**
- To obey the commands of Scripture | **Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16**

WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE IN YOUR LIFE BASED ON THIS INFORMATION?

Prayer

WHY DO WE NEED TO PRAY?

Prayer is simply talking with God yet it is extremely important in the life of a Christian. Prayer teaches us that we are in constant need for God in our lives and can do nothing on our own. **1 Peter 5:7, Jeremiah 33:3, Psalm 143:10**

HOW DO WE PRAY?

We need to seek God's grace, mercy, and guidance every day of our lives. The reason for this is because we are sinners who have separated ourselves from Him. Knowing this, how then can we pray? Will God listen to us? **Hebrews 4:16, Psalm 135:3, 1 Thessalonians 5:19, 1 Timothy 2:1, Matthew 6:11, 1 John 1:9, 1 John 5:14-15.**

HOW DOES PRAYER CHANGE US?

- Our faith is strengthened. | **James 1:6**
- Our motivation will be corrected. | **James 4:2-3**
- Confession of sin will become common. | **Psalm 66:18**
- Your desire would be for God's will to be done. | **1 John 5:14**
- You will develop a prayer life that is persistent. | **Luke 18:1**



Scripture Reading

SCRIPTURE AND OUR LIVES

Reading the Bible is an important thing in the life of a Christian. How important is meditating on Scripture? These verses give us a glimpse:

- **Deuteronomy 8:1-3**
- **Hebrews 5:12-14**

THE BIBLE IS GOD'S WORD

Many people believe a variety of things about Scripture, even within Christianity. We believe that the Bible is God's Word. This is an act of faith. Thus, our belief in God and His Word comes from the Bible itself. What do you believe? Read these verses to discover what the Bible says about itself. **2 Timothy 3:16-17, 2 Peter 1:21, Deuteronomy 29:29, Isaiah 40:8e**

SCRIPTURE AND OUR LIVES

So if all of these things are true, that means that we should study the Bible to learn as much about God as we can. This means we should:

- Meditate on God's Word. | **Psalm 119:15**
- Read the Bible daily. | **Psalm 5:3**
- Delight in Scripture. | **Psalm 42:1-2; Psalm 119:47-48**

What is the purpose of spending all of this time reading, meditating, studying, and enjoying the Word of God?

- We draw near to God. | **James 4:8**
- To worship God. | **Romans 12:1**
- For our joy. | **Psalm 16:11**
- To become more like Jesus. | **John 17:17**

DIGGING DEEPER

As you continue to grow as a Christian, you will realize that the Bible is full of more insight and application than you could have imagined. We want to encourage you to dig deep in Scripture. One way to do this is by reading a passage of Scripture and asking the following questions:

- What do you like about the text?
- What do you not like? or What is challenging about these verses?
- What does the passage say about God?
- What does the scripture say about man or mankind?
- How can you apply this text to your life?

The God that Saves

Learning about God

Now that you are a Christian, you need to understand your God. Just as a person has characteristics that would define them, there are some ways that we learn from Scripture that we can describe God:

- God is good and loving. | **1 John 4:7-8**
- God is holy. | **Leviticus 11:45**
- God saves sinful people. | **Romans 10:13**
- God provides for His people. | **Philippians 4:19; Romans 8:32**
- God protects His people. | **2 Thessalonians 3:3; 1 Corinthians 10:13**
- God disciplines His children. | **Hebrews 12:6-7**

God loves us and it should be our desire, in light of His goodness and grace, to live our lives for Him and for His glory! Our desire should be to show the world the greatness of God.

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

When we read all of these characteristics about God, we need to understand that some of these things are done by God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit. God is made up of three Persons yet exists as one Being.

- **Deuteronomy 6:4** says, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one."

This hard-to-grasp concept is known as the Trinity. All three Persons are equally God in every way, yet they are distinct in their tasks and relation to humanity. There are times in Scripture when all three forms can be seen. One such time is at the baptism of Jesus found in **Matthew 3:16-17**

Another aspect to note about the Trinity is that the Son and Spirit both submit to the Father; they both work to show honor and glory to the Father. In doing so, both the Son and the Spirit reveal their own honor and glory.



The God that Saves...

All Things for His Glory

When trying to learn about someone, it is great to see what drives them to do what they do. Throughout Scripture, we can see that God does all things for His glory. This means God does all things to show the world His greatness, power, holiness, perfection, beauty, etc. Here are a few Scriptures to show the basis for this claim about God's motive for His actions:

- Judgement and mercy for His glory. | **Isaiah 48:9-11**
- God chose people for His glory. | **Ephesians 1:4-6**
- God created us for His glory. | **Isaiah 43:6-7**
- God raises up people for His glory. | **Romans 9:17**

Since God does all things for His glory, we as His people should do all things in order to show Him to be as glorious and wonderful as He truly is! Here is how the Bible calls us to live.

- Bring God glory in all our actions. | **1 Corinthians 10:31**
- Work in a way to bring God glory. | **Matthew 5:16**
- Serve others in a way to show God's glory. | **1 Peter 4:11**

As a Christian, it seems like a daunting task that we are to live to show God's glory. This is an impossible task for us as sinful people yet God makes all of this possible.

God the Father is glorious, and in His glorious love sent His Son to redeem sinful people. God's Spirit works to convict us of sin and show us the truth of the Gospel. After our conversion through faith in the Son of God, Jesus Christ, God's Spirit refines us and conforms us to the image of God (Romans 12:2). All of this is made possible by the Father. Thus, God Himself makes it possible for us to do the very thing He has called us to do and has given us the power to make all of this possible! This is how mysteriously and intricately God works!

What Now?

These doctrines are deep and difficult yet that is why God is God. Spend time reflecting on the greatness and magnitude of God. Answer the question: How can you best live for the glory of God? What needs to change in your life to cause God to seem more glorious to those around you?

