
THE GLORIOUS GOSPEL PRIVATE

PURPOSE: To understand, appreciate, and appropriate the gospel of God's grace.

No one is born a Christian. The Bible describes this experience of God's grace in salvation in a variety of ways. Being born again, becoming new creations, being rescued from the kingdom of darkness, saved, etc. They all express the fact that we were born sinners, separated from God, objects of his wrath, and in need of his mercy. Understanding these truths and applying them by faith is the crucial foundation for Christian living.

I. OUR NEED FOR SALVATION

Salvation means to be made whole, to be delivered, made safe, preserved from destruction. But what do we need to be saved from? The answer is twofold - we need to be saved from our own sin and we need to be saved from God's wrath against our sin. No one can gain an understanding of the gospel without first recognizing his own rebellion against God and the severe consequences justly deserved as a result. Once we perceive our own sinfulness and God's holiness and judgment we are able to embrace the gospel with joy, gratitude, humility, and awe as our only hope for salvation.

A. Sin

1. Sin defined:

Sin is the personal act of turning away from God and His will including any violation of His commands. Sin is primarily directed against God. It is rebellion against God's right to rule in our lives.

- a. There are two primary ideas in Scripture that express what sin is: missing the mark - falling short of the standard that God has set for us and transgression - rebellion against the standard. Sin can be either by omission (failure to do what God commands) or commission (doing what God forbids). It can be by word, deed, thought, motive, or attitude.

- b. Sin is always fundamentally and primarily against God.

Psalm 51:4 "Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge."

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- 2. Sin is man's universal experience. Adam's sin brought sin and death to all mankind. All people sin because they are by nature sinners.

Romans 5:12 "Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men because all sinned"

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Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

Isaiah 53:6 "We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way."

3. Mankind is pervasively depraved because of sin.

We live in an age where most people believe in the inherent goodness of man. The Bible however presents a dramatically different picture. It describes man as being pervasively depraved.

- a. Pervasive depravity does not mean that man is as bad as he could possibly be. Rather it means that sin's corruption affects man in every part of his being - mind, emotions, will and body. There is nothing in man that has been left unaffected by sin. Everything he does, even what would be considered good by human standards, is tainted by sin in some way.

Romans 3:10-12 "As it is written: 'There is no one righteous, not even one; ¹¹ there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. ¹² All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.'"

Genesis 6:5 "The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time."

Isaiah 64:6 "All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away."

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- b. The results of this depravity is that we are incapable of pleasing or obeying God and are uninterested in doing so.

Romans 8:7-8 "The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God."

Romans 3:11 "There is no one...who seeks God."

Ephesians 2:1 "As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins."

- c. We are completely responsible before God for our sins and their consequences.

Ecclesiastes 7:29 "This only have I found: God made mankind upright, but men have gone in search of many schemes."

Isaiah 65:12b "I called but you did not answer, I spoke but you did not listen. You did evil in my sight and chose what displeases me."

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John 15:22 "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin. Now, however, they have no excuse for their sin."

Romans 14:12 "So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God."

Proverbs 19:3 "A man's own folly ruins his life, yet his heart rages against the LORD."

Teaching Tapes Available for Further Study on Sin:

The Fall of Man: Paradise Lost – June 11, 1995

The Results of Sin: Death and Depravity – June 18, 1995

The Results of Sin: Destroyed Dominion & Shattered Relationships – July 2, 1995

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B. God's Holiness and Wrath

1. God is holy.

To say that God is holy means two things.

- a. He is infinitely different and higher than man.

Isaiah 40:25 "'To whom will you compare me? Or who is my equal?' says the Holy One."

- b. He is morally perfect - untainted by evil desire, motive, thought, word, or act.

Deuteronomy 32:4 "He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he."

Psalms 145:17 "The LORD is righteous in all his ways and loving toward all he has made."

1 John 1:5 "This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all."

2. Wrath is God's holy response to sin.

- a. Wrath is God's settled opposition to sin. It is the only right and necessary response to sin by a perfectly holy God. God hates sin and all who practice it.

Habakkuk 1:13 "Your eyes are too pure to look on evil; you cannot tolerate wrong."

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Psalm 5:4-6 "You are not a God who takes pleasure in evil; with you the wicked cannot dwell. ⁵ The arrogant cannot stand in your presence; you hate all who do wrong. ⁶ You destroy those who tell lies; bloodthirsty and deceitful men the LORD abhors."

- b. Many think wrath unjust or unbecoming to God but this is largely because we underestimate both the extent and seriousness of sin and the holiness of God. God is perfectly justified in His wrath.

Psalm 50:21a "You thought I was altogether like you."

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Psalm 36:2 "For in his own eyes he flatters himself too much to detect or hate his sin."

Genesis 18:25b "Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

Teaching Tapes Available for Further Study on God's Character:

The Supremacy of God in All Things – April 9, 2000

The Character of God: Integrity – March 5, 1995

The Character of God: Love – March 19, 1995

The Justice of God in the Salvation of Sinful Man – August 20, 2000

- 3. Sin's consequences are:

- a. Broken relationship with God. This is the first and worst of all of sin's consequences and the one from which all the others follow.

Isaiah 59:2 "But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear."

- b. Dominion of Satan and sin. We are enslaved and unable to break free from their control.

Colossians 1:13 "For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves."

John 8:34 "Jesus replied, 'I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin.'"

2 Corinthians 4:4 "The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God."

- c. Temporal curses. All the sorrow, pain, suffering, sweat, tears, strife, sickness, and death we experience were not part of God's original creation. They are here because of sin.

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Genesis 3:16-19 *“To the woman he said, ‘I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.’¹⁷ To Adam he said, ‘Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, “You must not eat of it,” ‘Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life.¹⁸ It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field.¹⁹ By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.’”*

- d. Eternal punishment. The ultimate, final and irrevocable punishment for all who die in sinful rebellion against God is hell. It is in comprehending hell that we comprehend the full magnitude of our sinfulness and God's wrath.

2 Thessalonians 1:8-9 “He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹ They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power.”

Teaching Tapes Available for Further Study on the Effects of Sin:
The Results of Sin: Death and Depravity – June 18, 1995
The Results of Sin: Destroyed Dominion & Shattered Relationships – July 2, 1995
Condemned by the Law – July 30, 2000

II. THE GOSPEL - THE GOOD NEWS OF GOD’S SAVING GRACE

Romans 1:16a “I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes.”

How are we saved from our sins and God's wrath? The answer is again twofold - we are saved by God's grace and we are saved by Jesus. Grace comes through Jesus and Jesus came because of grace.

Understanding this will enable us to comprehend and appreciate the truly amazing salvation that we enjoy.

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B. Saved by Jesus

How can God be gracious and still be just? How can God remain holy and still be merciful? How can God save sinners? Why would He want to?

The answer to these questions are found in the gospel. The gospel is the holy history of Jesus, the good news about what He has done to save us from our sins and God's wrath. The apostle Paul said "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Timothy 1:15b). What He did and why it saves us is the gospel. The gospel includes Jesus' birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension and coming return.

1. His birth.

Jesus is God, yet he was born into this world as a man, conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of a virgin named Mary. Jesus is thus born fully God and fully man.

John 1:1,14 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ¹⁴ The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth."

Matthew 1:20-21 "But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

Hebrews 2:17 "For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people."

Philippians 2:5-8 "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: ⁶ Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, ⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death--even death on a cross!"

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Psalm 49:7-8 "No man can redeem the life of another or give to God a ransom for him-- ⁸ the ransom for a life is costly, no payment is ever enough."

Teaching Tapes Available for Further Study on Christ's Incarnation:

Jesus Christ: Son of God – July 30, 1995

Jesus Christ: Son of Man – August 6, 1995

The Incarnation of Christ – August 13, 1995

4. His resurrection from the dead.

The resurrection demonstrates that Jesus' death was an acceptable and effective sacrifice on our behalf. Death is the penalty for sin and if death is overcome, then sin too must be overcome as well.

Romans 4:25 “He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.”

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1 Corinthians 15:17 “And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.”

Teaching Tapes Available for Further Study on Christ’s Resurrection:

The Resurrection of Christ – September 3, 1995
The Good News of the Resurrection – April 7, 1996
Raised for Our Justification – April 15, 2001

5. His ascension and return.

The ascension marks the beginning of Jesus' reign. He sits at the Father's right hand building his church, defeating its enemies, advocating and interceding for the saints. At the time that God has determined, He will return to consummate His work and to initiate a new heaven and earth where we will reign with Him for eternity, experiencing the full fruits of His saving work.

Ephesians 1:19-23 “and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength,²⁰ which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms,²¹ far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.²² And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church,²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.”

Matthew 24:30-31 “At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory.³¹ And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.”

Teaching Tapes Available for Further Study on Christ’s Return:

The Second Coming of Christ – October 2, 1994

Teaching Tapes Available for Further Study on Christ's Return:

The Second Coming of Christ – October 2, 1994

The Day of the Lord – December 3, 2000

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