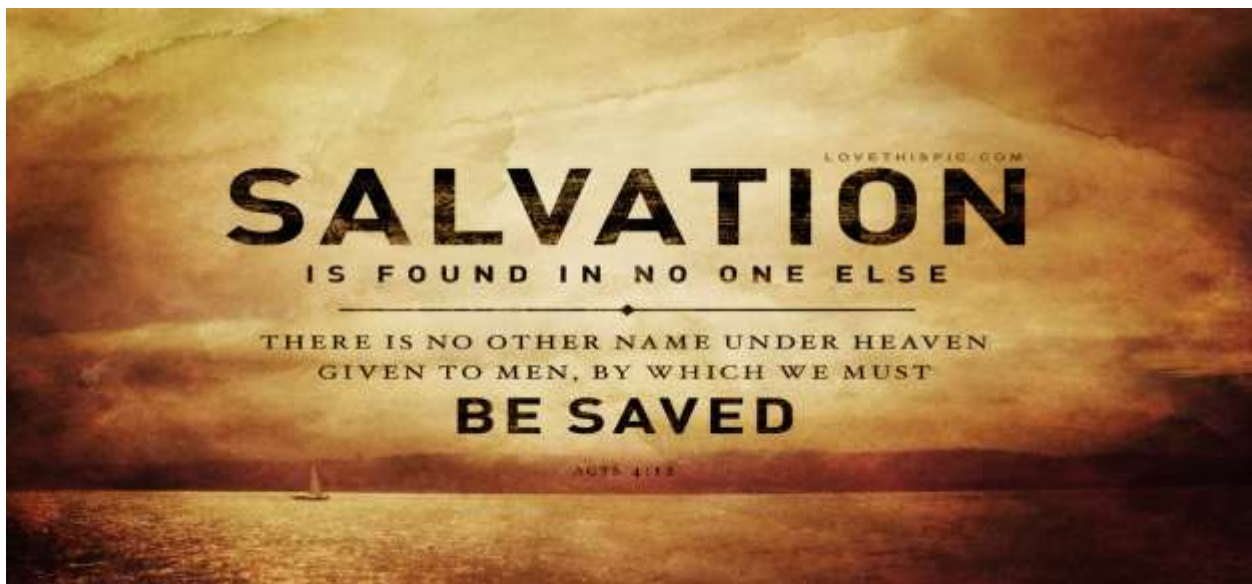
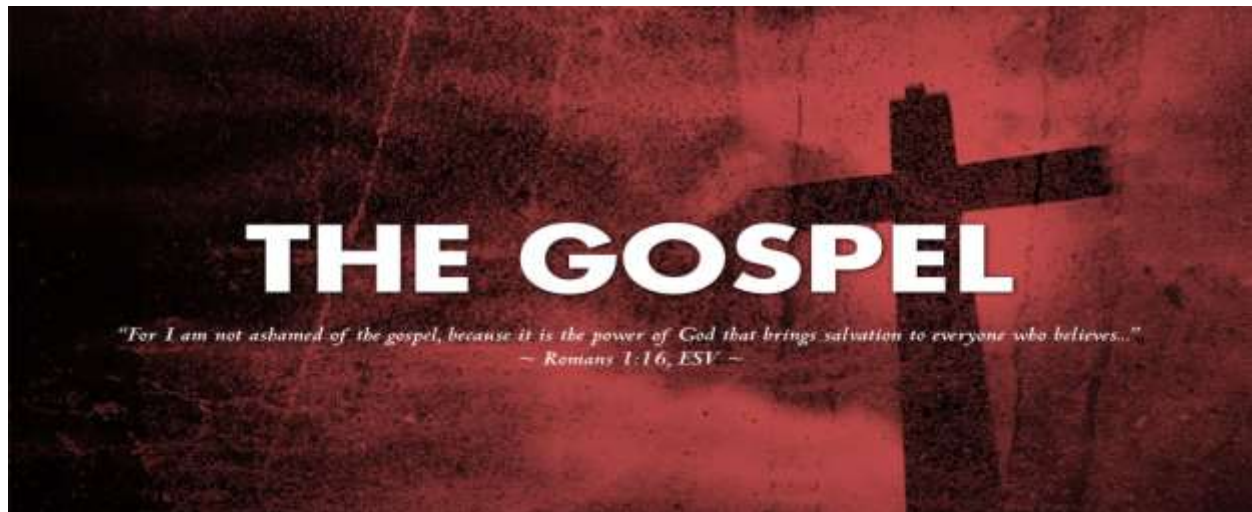


REFERENCE NOTES

The Gospel, Salvation and Evangelism



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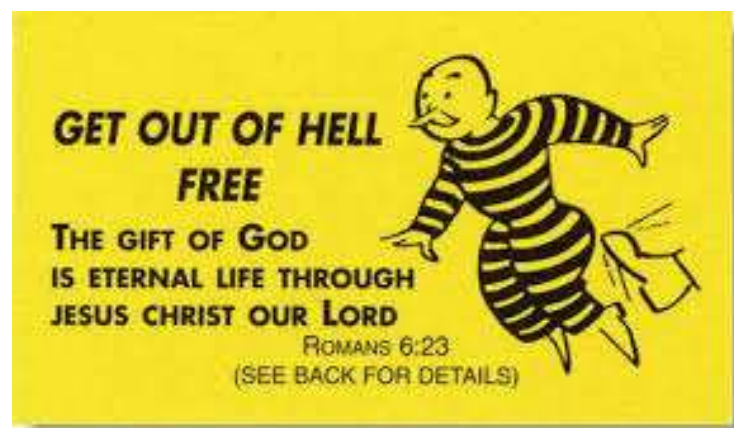
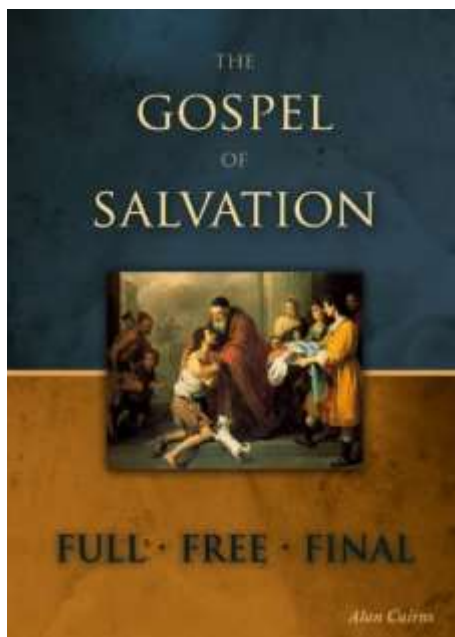
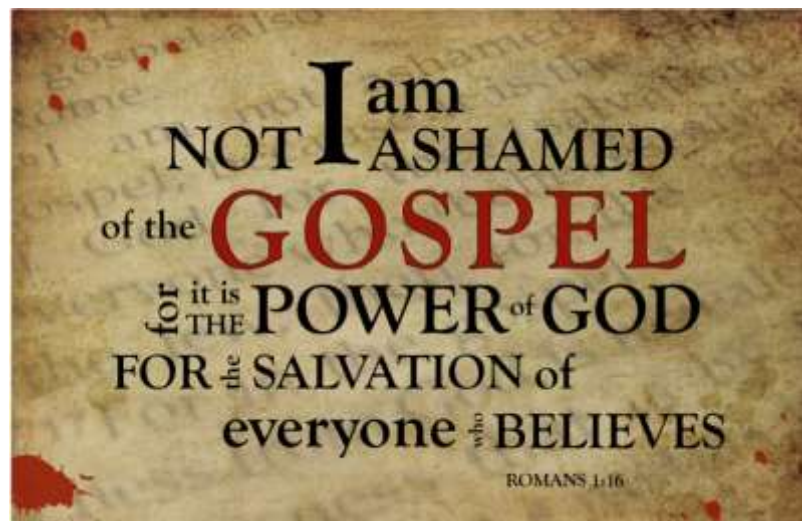
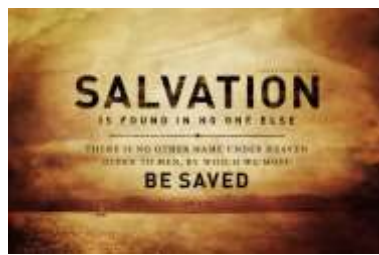
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The Gospel of Jesus the Messiah (Christ)

See definition: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

[Christ](#)

What is the Gospel? (i.e., the “Good News” of salvation via Jesus Christ)

I was always hesitant to share the Gospel. I was never confident that I was reciting what I was trained via Evangelism Explosion, the Four Spiritual Laws, Billy Graham's Bridge to Life, the Roman Way and many others (the companion to these Reference Notes has these sharing aids and many others if interested). While they have been effectively used by many to share the Gospel and lead others to a saving faith in Christ Jesus, they left me with concentrating on the particular method and the pressure of making sure I got the words and their sequence just right. Was I following the right plan? Did the plan include everything necessary?

Eventually, I realized it might be a good idea to read the Bible and see what Paul and Peter considered to be the Gospel. Which “Plan” did they follow? Were they the same or different? Much to my relief, the points they shared when presenting the Gospel are similar and straightforward...

The following is a compiled summary chart of the Gospel as shared by Paul and Peter in Acts and Paul's letters.

Everyone is saved who believes in Jesus Christ: that He...

	Died on a cross / for the Forgiveness of our Sins [as foretold by OT Prophets in Scripture],
	He was Buried / then was Raised up on the 3 rd day (Resurrection) [as per OT Prophets].
	Witnesses after Jesus arose: Apostles ate and drank with Him; over 500 men/women saw.
	Why Preach? – commanded by Jesus; of first/highest importance; and to warn you that
	Jesus was appointed by God to reign over everything and to judge the living and the dead.

NOTE: The order of this information does NOT matter. NO gospel presentation is complete without emphasizing Jesus' resurrection and the Jesus was appointed ruler (Lord) and judge over all.

Exact wording is not required as long as the essence of the message is clear and complete.

The above summary of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is based on Paul's and Peter's (via Luke's Book of Acts) explicit statements of the Gospel (see: 1 Cor. 15:1-11, 20-28; Acts 10:34-38, 39-45 re: Peter's presentation of the Gospel to the Gentile Roman Centurion Cornelius). Other similar statements of the Gospel are found in Rom. 1:1-5; Acts 17:16-34 (Paul's speech at Mars Hill, Athens) and to a lesser extent, 2 Tim. 2:8-10.

[“Christ” = from *Christos*, the Greek word for the Hebrew “Messiah” = “Anointed One of God”; i.e., Jesus the Messiah]

For chart details (and explanation of color codes) see: [Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#)

See also: [Christ](#)

[What is the “Gospel”? \(Summary Page\)](#)

[Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

[Occurrences of Jesus Risen/Resurrected Mentioned by Apostles in the Bible](#)

More about what is the Gospel...

N.T. Wright: What is the gospel, and why is it the "good news"? (2009)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cWoezpvlEz4> [Video] (Clip from [Paul Ankerberg Show](#) appearance)

What is the Gospel? NT Wright (2013)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICHovRHJAYY> [Video]

<https://vimeo.com/54601664> [Video]

Wright addresses the following questions:

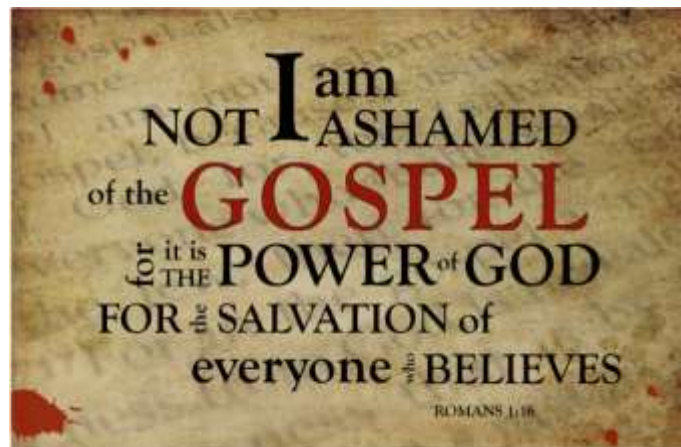
- Why do we need to ask the question “what is the gospel”?
- What is the gospel according to the gospels?
- If you only had a couple of minutes, how would you communicate the gospel with someone?
- Do we need to talk about repentance when we present the gospel?
- Why do you emphasize the importance of talking about Jesus’ life, as well as his death, when presenting the gospel?
- Is the gospel of Paul different to the gospel of Jesus?
- What would your advice be to a young evangelist?

N.T. Wright: What is the “Gospel of God”? (in Romans)

<http://ntwrightonline.org/what-is-the-gospel-of-god/> [links to video]

See also: [Gospel of God](#)

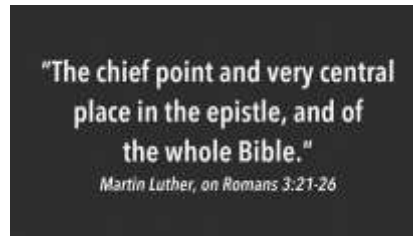
See also: [What is the Gospel \(Various Video Presentations\)](#)



Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

More about what is the Gospel...

What is the Gospel? The Gospel is the Good News that God has made a way for all people to be declared right with himself through faith in Jesus. The Gospel is not good religious teaching—not even, the good teaching of Jesus. No, the Gospel is news—an announcement—a special alert. God has made a way for everyone who believes in Jesus to live in and enjoy a personal relationship with God. **Romans 3:21-26** is the clearest explanation of that simple definition of the Gospel in all the Bible—an explanation with rich theological significance so we will have to dig underneath words like righteousness, faith, justification, propitiation, redemption, and atonement along the way. — [Charles Boyd, Fellowship Greenville](#)



Note: Here are the above referenced verses from three different versions of the Bible:

[21] But now apart from the law the righteousness of God (which is attested by the law and the prophets) has been disclosed – [22] namely, the righteousness of God through the **faithfulness of Jesus Christ** for all who believe. For there is no distinction, [23] for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. [24] But they are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. [25] God publicly displayed him at his death as the mercy seat accessible through faith. This was to demonstrate his righteousness, because God in his forbearance had passed over the sins previously committed. [26] This was also to demonstrate his righteousness in the present time, so that he would be just and the justifier of the one who lives because of Jesus' faithfulness. [Net Bible]

[21] But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; [22] Even the righteousness of God *which is* by **faith of Jesus Christ** unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: [23] For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; [24] Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: [25] Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; [26] To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. [KJV]

[21] But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— [22] the righteousness of God through **faith in Jesus Christ** for all who believe. For there is no distinction: [23] for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, [24] and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, [25] whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. [26] It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. [ESV]

For details about why the variances in the above versions, see "[Pistis Cristou](#)" in my other separate references resource:

Reference Notes on Paul and Romans (including Galatians plus Ephesians)

See also: [Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#) / [Faith](#)

Messiah (Christ)

Messiah is the Hebrew word for “the anointed one”. *Christ* is the equivalent Greek word.

The Jews had a typical/traditional understanding of what the Messiah would do when he appeared. Mark and the other disciples in the Bible eventually came to a different understanding/realization...

“Messiah”: Typical/Traditional understanding vs. Mark’s understanding

TYPICAL UNDERSTANDING	MARK’S UNDERSTANDING
• The future deliverer of Israel • A man of grandeur and power who will usher in God’s kingdom in a mighty way	• Jesus is the Messiah who must suffer and die in order to bring salvation for the world (8:31-33)

Presumably, Peter uses the term “Messiah” in the more traditional sense, the way other Jews in the first-century would have; that is why Peter rebukes Jesus (Mark 8:32)

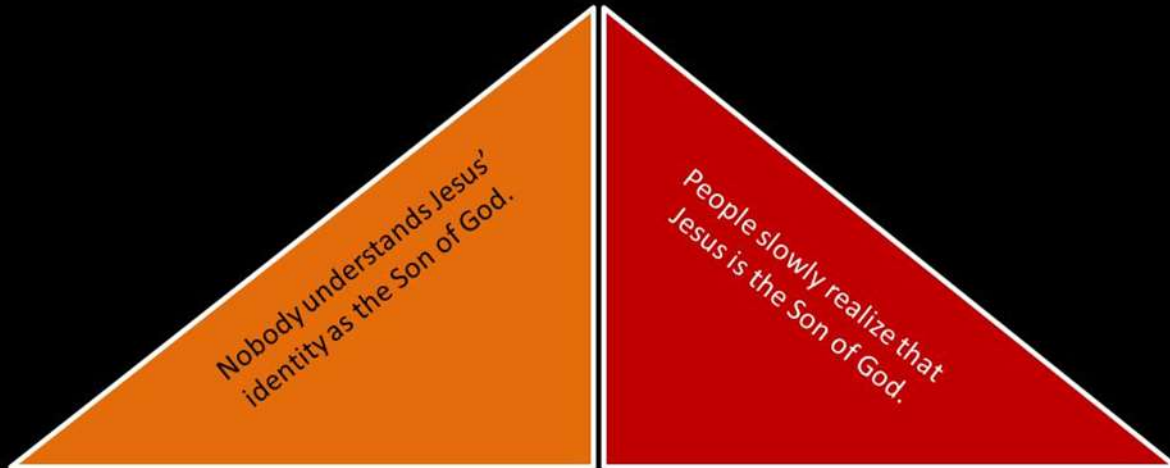
<http://slideplayer.com/slide/5880989/>

See also: [Jesus: Christ](#)

See next slide on following page...

The Plot of Mark's Gospel

"Do you not understand?" (Mark 8:21)



Jesus' Self-Understanding – N.T. Wright (2002)

<http://ntwrightpage.com/2016/04/05/jesus-self-understanding/>

See also: [Jesus: Christ](#)

See: [Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

[Occurrences of Jesus Risen/Resurrected Mentioned by Apostles in the Bible](#)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

See the following additional perspectives on what is the Gospel...

Question: "What is the gospel of Jesus Christ?"

<https://www.gotquestions.org/gospel-of-Jesus-Christ.html>

Answer:

The word *gospel* means “good news,” so the gospel of Christ is the good news of His coming to provide forgiveness of sins for all who will believe ([Colossians 1:14](#); [Romans 10:9](#)). Since the first man’s sin, mankind has been under the condemnation of God ([Romans 5:12](#)). Because everyone breaks God’s perfect law by committing sin ([Romans 3:23](#)), everyone is guilty ([Romans 5:18](#)). The punishment for the crime of sin is physical death ([Romans 6:23](#)) and then an eternity spent in a place of punishment ([Revelation 20:15](#); [Matthew 25:46](#)). This eternal separation from God is also called the “second death” ([Revelation 20:14–15](#)).

The bad news that all are guilty of sin and condemned by God is countered by the gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ. God, because of His love for the world, has made a way for man to be forgiven of their sins ([John 3:16](#)). He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to take the sins of mankind on Himself through death on a cross ([1 Peter 2:24](#)). In placing our sin on Christ, God ensured that all who will believe in the name of Jesus will be forgiven ([Acts 10:43](#)). Jesus’ resurrection guarantees the justification of all who believe ([Romans 4:25](#)).

The Bible specifies the content of the gospel message: “Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time” ([1 Corinthians 15:1–6](#)). In this passage, Paul emphasizes the primacy of the gospel—it is of “first importance.” The gospel message contains two historical facts, both supported by Scripture: Christ’s death and His resurrection. Both those facts are bolstered by other proofs: Christ’s death is proved by His burial, and His resurrection is proved by the eyewitnesses.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is the good news that God provided the way for man to be freed from the penalty of sin ([John 14:6](#); [Romans 6:23](#)). But not all people will be saved from hell; only those who place their faith in Jesus will go to heaven when they die ([Acts 4:12](#)).

The gospel of Jesus Christ is the best news anyone will ever hear, and what a person does with this news will determine where he or she spends eternity. God is calling you to choose life. Call on the name of the Lord and be saved ([Romans 10:13](#)).

What is the Gospel?

<https://bible.org/article/what-gospel>

What Does the Word “Gospel” Mean in the New Testament?

<http://www.ligonier.org/blog/what-does-word-gospel-mean-new-testament/>

NOTE: For issues and details related to Heaven and life after death, as well as covering related topics and including different perspectives (including N.T. Wright) - see my separate [“Reference Notes on Heaven”](#) (based in part on the book, *Heaven*, by Randy Alcorn).

What Is the Christian Gospel? (John Piper) (2002)

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/what-is-the-christian-gospel>

Excerpt:

...This is why the New Testament often defines the gospel as, simply, Christ. The gospel is the "gospel of Christ" ([Romans 15:19](#); [1 Corinthians 9:12](#); [2 Corinthians 2:12](#); [9:13](#); [10:14](#); [Galatians 1:7](#); [Philippians 1:27](#); etc.). Or, more specifically, the gospel is "the gospel of the glory of Christ" ([2 Corinthians 4:4](#)). And even more wonderfully, perhaps, Paul says that the preaching of the gospel is the preaching of "the unsearchable riches of Christ" ([Ephesians 3:8](#)).

Therefore to believe the gospel is not only to accept the awesome truths that 1) God is holy, 2) we are hopeless sinners, 3) Christ died and rose again for sinners, and 4) this great salvation is enjoyed by faith in Christ-but believing the gospel is also to treasure Jesus Christ as your unsearchable riches. What makes the gospel Gospel is that it brings a person into the everlasting and ever-increasing joy of Jesus Christ...

What Is the Gospel? (Gospel in 6 minutes – John Piper) (2007) (links to video)

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/the-gospel-in-6-minutes>

Excerpt:

What is the gospel? I'll put it in a sentence.

The gospel is the news that Jesus Christ, the Righteous One, died for our sins and rose again, eternally triumphant over all his enemies, so that there is now no condemnation for those who believe, but only everlasting joy.

That's the gospel.

You Can't Outgrow the Gospel

You never, never, *never* outgrow your need for the gospel. Don't ever think of the gospel as, "That's the way you get saved, and then you get strong by leaving it and doing something else."

No! We are strengthened by God through the gospel every day, till the day we drop.

You never outgrow the need to preach to yourself the gospel...

Note: Piper mentions his prostate cancer that occurred in 2006 (that was successfully treated by surgery).

The Resurrection Argument That Changed a Generation of Scholars - [Gary](#)

[Habermas](#) at UCSB (2002):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ay_Db4RwZ_M [Video] [Recommended]

(includes discussion of basic Gospel from 1 Cor. 15 of D-D-R-B = Deity, Death, Resurrection, Belief)

See also: [What is the Gospel \(Various Video Presentations\)](#)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

The Bible: Gospel, Guide, or Garbage? (2013)

Veritas Forum: NT Wright and Sean Kelly at Harvard University

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CTpgvI_vUjc [Video]

The Bible: Gospel, Guide, or Garbage? (2014)

Veritas Forum: NT Wright and Sean Kelly at Univ. of Texas, Austin

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w1wqG2PbwNQ> [Video]

How God Became King : Why We've All Misunderstood the Gospels | N. T. Wright

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mks4gYcjpXc> [Video] (2012) (Calvin College) [Recommended]

You're Included: How God Became King (N.T. Wright, interviewed by Dr. [Gary Deddo](#))

Part 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IEHliSDNxa4> [Video] (2016)

Part 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FEmIQspS6xc> [Video]

N.T. Wright: Imagining the Kingdom: Mission and Theology in Early Christianity

<http://ntwrightpage.com/2016/07/12/imagining-the-kingdom/> (2011)

See also: [Jesus: Christ](#)

For information on the writings of Paul and the New Perspectives on Paul, including Romans and related topics, plus various N.T. Wright (and other scholars) related resources, see my separate "[Reference Notes on Paul and Romans](#)".

NOTE: For issues and details related to Heaven and life after death, as well as covering related topics and including different perspectives (including N.T. Wright) - see my separate "[Reference Notes on Heaven](#)" (based in part on the book, *Heaven*, by Randy Alcorn).

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Synergism vs Monergism:

<https://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/onsite/whatismonegism2.html>

<https://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/onsite/twoviews.html>

(Note: from perspective of monergism)

Excerpt:

<i>View of the Gospel</i>	
The Gospel is an invitation	The Gospel is not merely an invitation, but a command (1 John 3:23)
Christ died for all our sins except unbelief	Christ died for all our sins including unbelief
<i>Sinners have the key in their hands. Man's will determines whether or not Christ's death is efficacious.</i>	<i>God has the key in his hand. God's eternal counsel determines to whom the benefits of the atonement apply.</i>
It would be unjust of God to not give everyone an equal chance .	If God exercised His justice then none of us would stand, since each of us is in active rebellion against an infinitely holy God. He owes us nothing and is under no obligation to save any person. Regeneration is, therefore, an act of pure, undeserved mercy because the justice we deserved, He poured out on His Son (thereby turning His wrath away from us).
After God makes one's heart of stone into a heart of flesh the Holy Spirit's call to salvation can still be resisted.	After God makes one's heart of stone into a heart of flesh, no person wants to resist. By definition our desires, inclinations and affections have changed so we willingly and joyfully turn in faith toward Christ.
Salvation is given to fallen sinners (unregenerate) who choose and desire Christ of their free will.	Apart from grace, there is no fallen sinner (unregenerate) who fits that description. A desire for God is not part of the old nature.
The grace of God is conferred as a result of human prayer	It is grace itself which makes us pray to God (Rom 10:20; Isa. 65:1)
God has mercy upon us when we believe, will, desire, strive, labor, pray, watch, study, seek, ask, or knock, apart from his regenerative grace.	To desire and seek God prior to the new birth is an impossible supposition. (Rom 3:11; 1 Cor 2:14) It is the infusion and quickening of the Holy Spirit within us that we even have the faith or the strength to will, desire, strive, labor, pray, watch, study, seek, ask, or knock and believe in the finished work of Christ.
Commands to repent and believe the gospel imply the ability of the sinner to do so.	The Command toward sinners to repent and believe does not imply ability. Divine intent of the Law, according to Scripture, is to reveal our moral impotence apart from grace (Rom 3:20, 5:20, Gal 3:19,24). The Law was not designed to confer any power but to strip us of our own.

God helps those who help themselves.	God only helps those who cannot help themselves. (John 9:41)
Unregenerate man contributes his little bit.	Nothing in my hands I bring, simply to Thy Cross I cling.
Repentance is considered a work of man.	Repentance is a gift of God. (2 Tim 2:25)
One of the greatest gifts God gives humans is to never interfere with their free will.	The greatest judgment which God can inflict upon a man is to leave him in the hands of his own free-will. If salvation were left in the hands of the unregenerate sinners, we would indeed despair of all hope that anyone would be saved. It is an act of mercy, therefore, that God awakens the dead in sin to life since those without the Spirit cannot understand the things of God at all. (1 Cor 2:14)
With Man's will salvation is possible.	With man's will salvation (repentance and faith) is impossible, but with God all things are possible. (Matt 19:26; Rom 9:16; John 6:64,65) "Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit." John 3:6

Five Important Biblical Doctrines Related to Predestination in Salvation

Five Important Biblical Doctrines Related to Predestination in Salvation			
Semi-Pelagian		Augustinian	
<u>Synergistic</u>		<u>Monergistic</u>	
Salvation is accomplished as man and God cooperate. Divine Grace and the human will work together for salvation to happen.		Salvation is wholly the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration. Mankind possesses no inclination toward the Gospel in his natural state and needs Divine Grace to be enabled to believe.	
Man is naturally able to understand and believe the Gospel apart from Divine enablement.	Natural Ability	Natural Inability	Man is naturally unable to understand and believe the Gospel apart from Divine enablement.
The condition for salvation is faith which man exercises of his own ability. God chooses those who choose Him.	Prescient Election	Sovereign Election	The condition for salvation is the Sovereign electing will of God alone.
Christ's redeeming work made it possible for everyone to be saved but did not actually secure the salvation of anyone.	Universal Redemption	Particular Redemption	Christ did in fact secure the salvation of His Church individually and definitely.
Man's will is free and he can successfully resist the Spirit's call.	Human Resistance	Effectual Calling	The calling of God to the elect does effect salvation infallibly.
Because faith is the necessary condition for Salvation, it can be lost when man discontinues his faith.	Falling from Grace	Eternal Security	The nature of saving faith is eternal and cannot be reversed.

<http://heavenslight.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/fiveimportantdoctrines.jpg>

For more details on Monergism, Synergism, Predestination, Free Will, etc...

See also my other separate references resource:

Reference Notes on Paul and Romans (including Galatians plus Ephesians)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

N.T. Wright, Scot McKnight and the Gospel: Compared and Contrasted (2011)

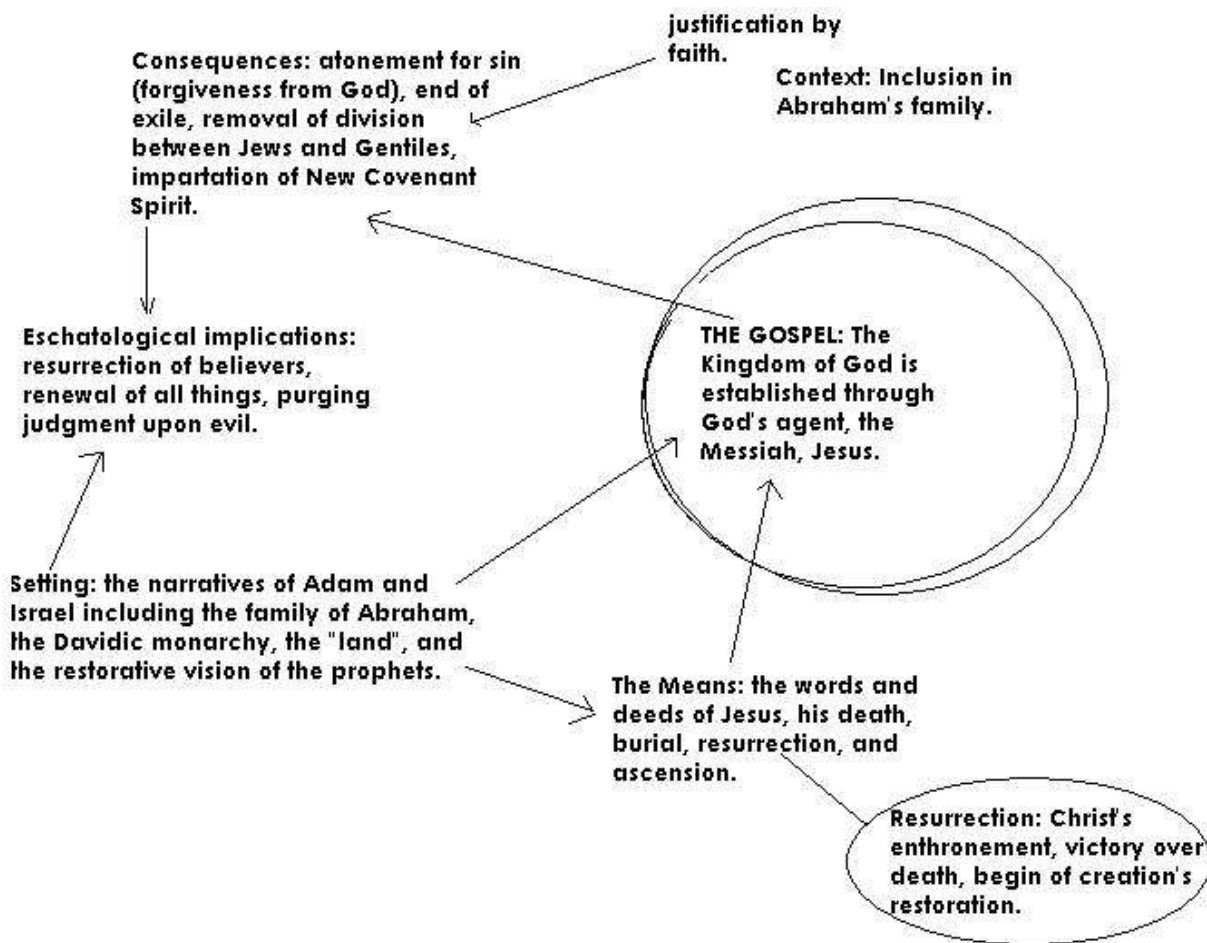
<http://www.covenantoflove.net/gospel/n-t-wright-scot-mcknight-and-the-gospel-compared-and-contrasted/>

At first glance it appears that Scot McKnight's gospel proposal in his recent book, *The King Jesus Gospel*, is very much "Wrightian". But the more I reflected on what McKnight had to say, and the more I perused much of what Wright says throughout his work, the wider a contrast between the two developed. These two scholars have many points of agreement though, and so much so that it may be suggested that McKnight's gospel proposal was an outworking of Wright's influence on his thinking. But Scot is a superb scholar in his own right, so it might simply be suggested that his understanding of the gospel developed independent of Wright, whom he sources simply as a scholar in agreement. (Note: Covers their Agreements and Disagreements)



A Gospel Diagram

<https://nearemmaus.wordpress.com/2011/10/29/a-gospel-diagram/>



Note from author: I acknowledge influence from N.T. Wright and [Scot McKnight](#) primarily.

See also: [Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#)

[Gospel of Jesus vs Paul](#)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

WHAT IS **THE GOSPEL?**

THE GOSPEL IS THE GOOD NEWS THAT GOD BECAME MAN IN JESUS CHRIST. HE LIVED THE LIFE WE SHOULD'VE LIVED AND DIED THE DEATH WE SHOULD'VE DIED...IN OUR PLACE. THREE DAYS LATER, HE ROSE FROM THE DEAD, PROVING THAT HE IS THE SON OF GOD AND OFFERING THE GIFT OF SALVATION TO ALL WHO REPENT AND BELIEVE THE GOSPEL.

Source: <http://mountzionchurchoxnard.org/the-gospel>

Defending the Resurrection

http://www.becomingcloser.org/life_of_christ_2/defending_the_resurrection.html

See also: [Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

[Occurrences of Jesus Risen/Resurrected Mentioned by Apostles in the Bible](#)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)



Source: http://www.websiteforgod.net/The_Gospel_of_Christ.html

Quote by N.T. Wright on the Bodily Resurrection of Jesus:

"You see, the bodily resurrection of Jesus isn't a take-it-or-leave-it thing, as though some Christians are welcome to believe it and others are welcome not to believe it. Take it away, and the whole picture is totally different. Take it away, and **Karl Marx** was probably right to accuse Christianity of ignoring the problems of the material world. Take it away, and **Sigmund Freud** was probably right to say that Christianity is a wish-fulfillment religion. Take it away, and **Friedrich Nietzsche** was probably right to say that Christianity was a religion for wimps. Put it back, and you have a faith that can take on the postmodern world that looks to Marx, Freud and Nietzsche as its prophets, and you can beat them at their own game with the Easter news that the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men." — [N.T. Wright, For All God's Worth: True Worship and the Calling of the Church](#)

See also: [Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

[Occurrences of Jesus Risen/Resurrected Mentioned by Apostles in the Bible](#)

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The Gospel of Jesus In Genesis 5

<http://deeprootsathome.com/the-gospel-of-jesus-in-genesis/>



<http://www.khouse.org/articles/2000/284/>

Excerpt:

The background behind the genealogy in Genesis 5 is one of our most frequently asked questions.

Since the ten *Hebrew* names are proper names, they are not translated but only *transliterated* to approximate the way they were pronounced. The meaning of proper names can be a difficult pursuit since direct translations are not readily available. Many study aids, such as conventional lexicons, can prove superficial when dealing with proper names. Even a conventional Hebrew lexicon can prove disappointing. A study of the original *roots*, however, can yield some fascinating insights. (It should be recognized, however, that the views concerning the meaning and significance of the original roots are not free of controversy and are subject to variant readings. This is why we receive so many questions or comments on variations.)

Here is a summary of God's plan of redemption, hidden here within a genealogy in Genesis! You will never convince me that a group of Jewish rabbis deliberately "contrived" to hide the "Christian Gospel" right here in a genealogy within their venerated Torah!

Evidences of Design

The implications of this discovery are far more deeply significant than may be evident at first glance. It demonstrates that in the earliest chapters of the Book of Genesis, God had already laid out His plan of redemption for the predicament of mankind. It is the beginning of a love story, ultimately written in blood on a wooden cross which was erected in Judea almost 2,000 years ago.

This is also one of many evidences that the Bible is an *integrated* message system, the product of supernatural engineering. This punctures the presumptions of many who view the Bible as a record of an evolving cultural tradition, noble though it may be. It claims to be authored by the One who alone knows the end from the beginning,¹² despite the fact that it is composed of 66 separate books, penned by some 40 authors, spanning several thousand years.

Problems with this...

<http://www.isitinthebible.com/ot/Names%20in%20Genesis%20predict%20the%20coming%20messiah%20by%20Chuck%20Missler.pdf>

<http://mayimhayim.org/Shemology/Genesis5.htm>

Remembering that the number five is the number of "grace" in the Scriptures, Mahalalel (the blessed God) is the fifth name in chapter five, and from it, we can clearly see God's grace flowing out from this chapter. Five is the Hebrew letter hey ה, and it stands for: **"to behold"** i.e., revelation in its most ancient form. It also expresses; "thought, speech and action on behalf of the Divine. We can indeed see this in this Shemology sentence as well.

This revelation came by way of a rabbi in the late eighteen hundreds. His name I do not know, however, bible teacher Chuck Missler picked up on it many years later and put it into a few of his books. It was this that started me on the road with God looking for sentences in the Biblical names. It is only thru God's leading, that I look for "Shemology" sentences in His Scriptures

<https://drmsb.com/allegorical-interpretation-names-genesis-5/>

To be direct, this conclusion doesn't follow from the data. That is, it's a non sequitur. The reason is that both the approach and the data are problematic.¹ The goal of using this analysis as some sort of proof for a "cosmic code" is also untenable

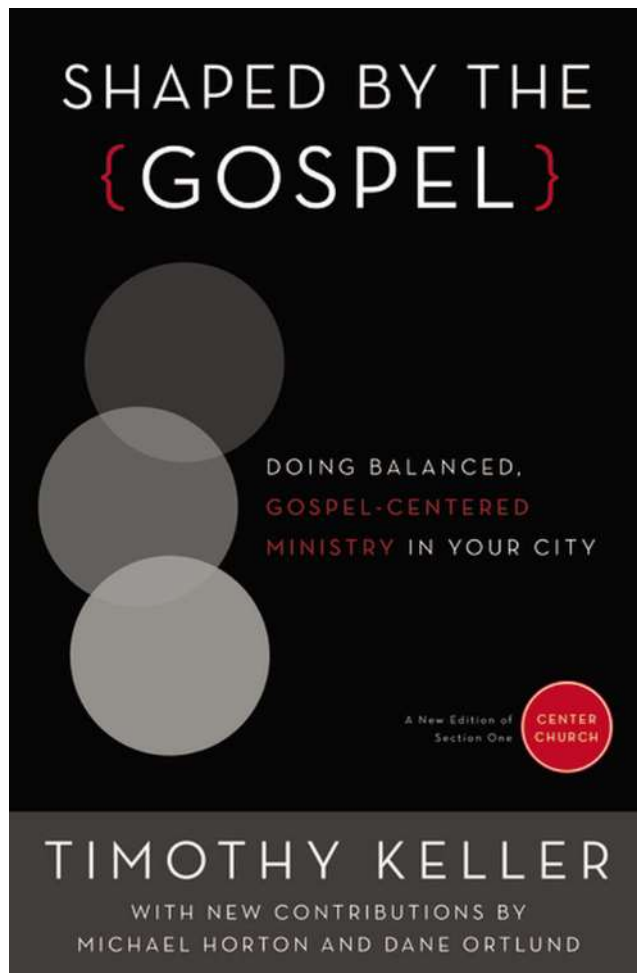
<https://christianchat.com/bible-discussion-forum/a-hidden-message-in-genesis.200747/>



Shaped by the Gospel: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City by Timothy Keller

<https://zondervanacademic.com/products/shaped-by-the-gospel>

https://www.thriftbooks.com/w/shaped-by-the-gospel-doing-balanced-gospel-centered-ministry-in-your-city_timothy-keller/9951001/item/12749043/#idiq=12749043&edition=9405804



It is easy to assume that if we understand the gospel and preach it faithfully, our ministry will necessarily be shaped by it-but this is not true. Many churches claim to be gospel-centered but do not have a ministry that is shaped by, centered on, and empowered through the gospel. The implications of the gospel have not yet worked their way into the fabric of how that church does ministry.

Gospel-centered ministry is more theologically driven than program driven. To pursue it, we must spend time reflecting on the essence, the truths, and the very patterns of the gospel itself. The gospel is neither religion nor irreligion, but something else entirely-a third way of relating to God through grace. In *Shaped by the Gospel*, bestselling author and pastor Timothy Keller addresses several current discussion and conflicts about the nature of the gospel and shows how faithful preaching of the gospel leads to individual and corporate renewal.

Timothy Keller continued next page...

Center Church:

Book Review: Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City, by Tim Keller (“lovingly” critical)

<https://www.9marks.org/review/center-church-doing-balanced-gospel-centered-ministry-your-city/>

Book Review: Timothy Keller’s Center Church (pro)

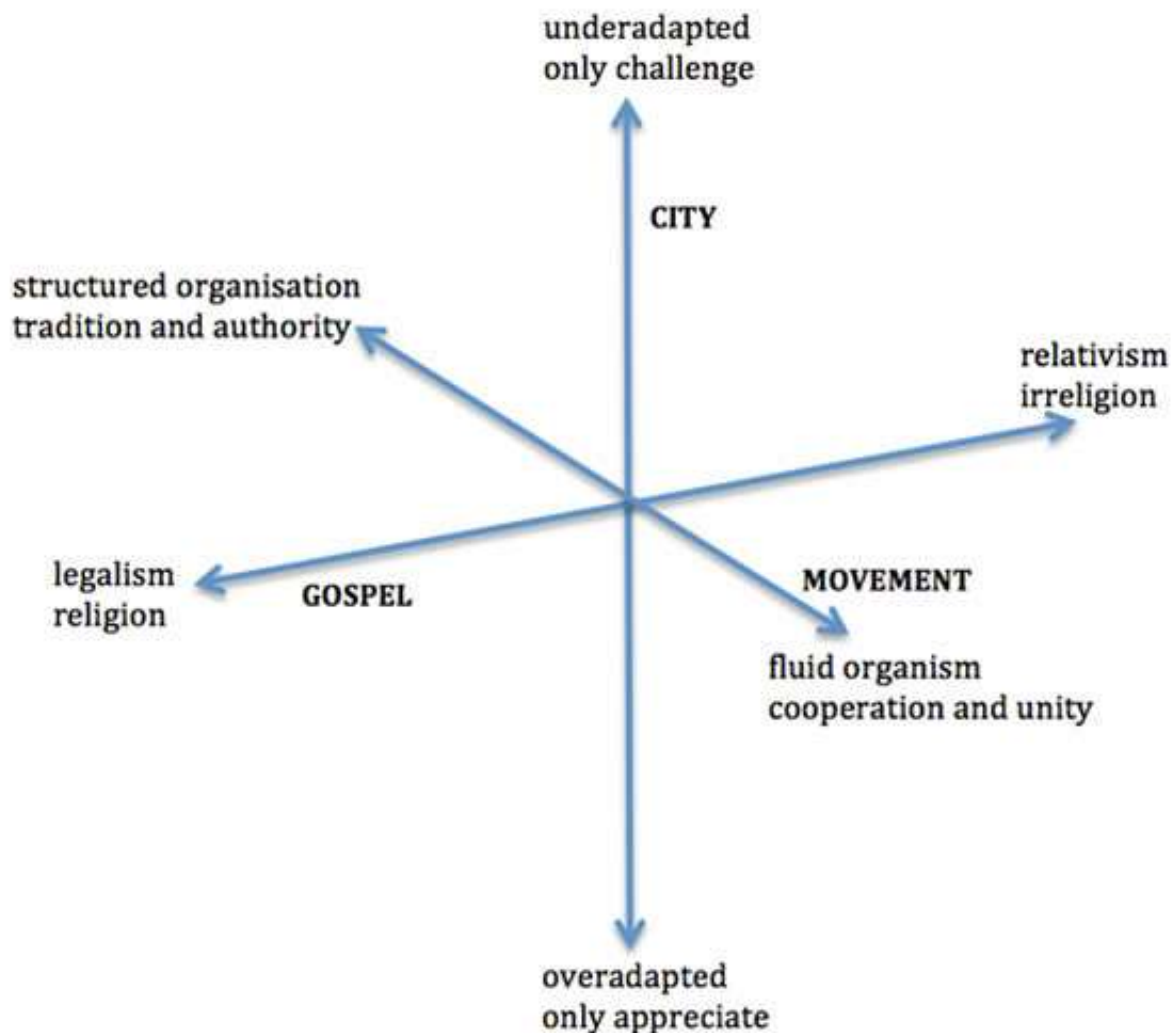
<https://www.theologyofwork.org/the-high-calling/blog/book-review-timothy-kellers-center-church>

Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City (semi-pro)

<https://www.wisluthsem.org/rewiring-your-preaching-how-the-brain-processes-sermons-2/>

A Book Review of “Center Church” by Tim Keller (very mild criticism)

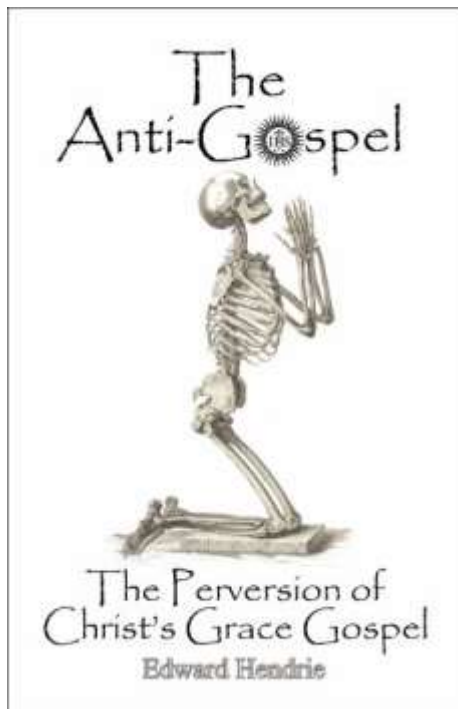
<https://stape-patterson.medium.com/a-book-review-of-center-church-by-tim-keller-32e9b547eb5e>



The Anti-Gospel – The Perversion of Christ's Grace Gospel

<http://www.antigospel.com/>

Edward Hendrie uses God's word to strip the sheep's clothing from false Christian ministers and expose them as ravening wolves preaching an anti-gospel. The anti-



gospel is based on a myth that all men have a will that is free from the bondage of sin to choose whether to believe in Jesus. The Holy Bible, however, states that all men are spiritually dead and cannot believe in Jesus unless they are born again of the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 2:1-7; John 3:3-8.

God has chosen his elect to be saved by his grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Ephesians 1:3-9; 2:8-10. God imbues his elect with the faith needed to believe in Jesus. Hebrews 12:2; John 1:12-13. The devil's false gospel contradicts the word of God and reverses the order of things. Under the anti-gospel, instead of a sovereign God choosing his elect, sovereign man decides whether to choose God.

The calling of the Lord Jesus Christ is effectual; all who are chosen for salvation will believe in Jesus. John 6:37-44. The anti-gospel has a false Jesus, who only offers the possibility of salvation, with no

assurance. The anti-gospel blasphemously makes God out to be a liar by denying the total depravity of man and the sovereign election of God. All who preach that false gospel are under a curse from God. Galatians 1:6-9.

NOTE: This kicks up another issue in the church – **sovereignty**.

See also: <https://soteriology101.com/>

Christ's Gospel is Bigger than Every Obstacle



Source: <https://www.pinterest.com/randyalcorn/>

See also: [Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#)

[Gospel of Jesus vs Paul](#)

See also: [Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

[Occurrences of Jesus Risen/Resurrected Mentioned by Apostles in the Bible](#)

Gospel: Is Jesus the Answer to Your Problems?

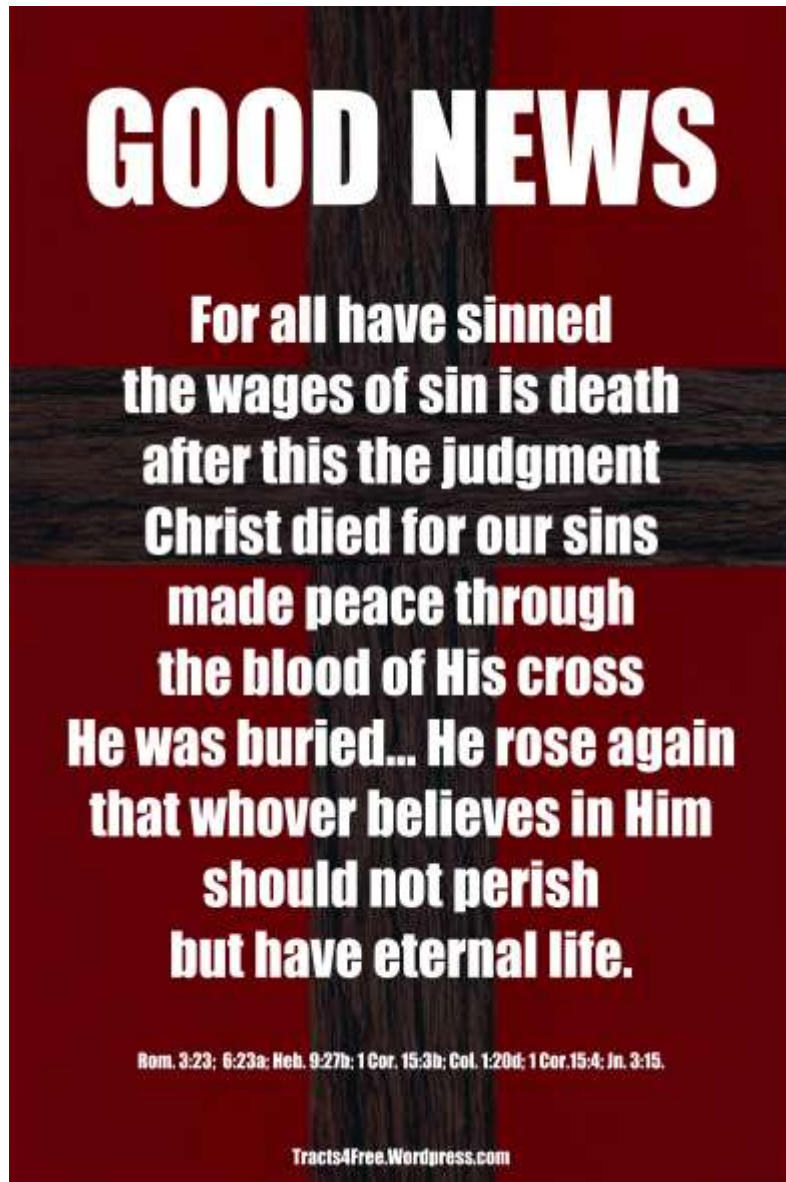
<https://christiananswers.net/gospel/>

The Gospel Story – A visual exploration of God's revelations in chronological order

<https://christiananswers.net/godstory/home.html>

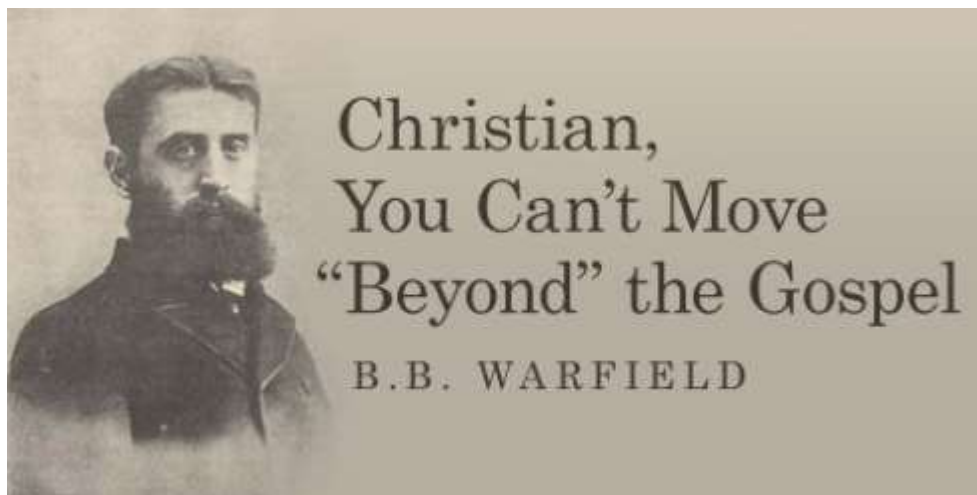
Christian Gospel Posters

<https://tracts4free.wordpress.com/christian-gospel-posters-1/>



The Gospel in 7 Minutes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cNxLDzpxsaw> [Video]



Source: <http://www.bloggingtheologically.com/2010/03/05/bb-warfield-christian-you-cant-move-beyond-the-gospel/>

James - Christian Gospel Bible Song (by Randy Vid)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5LEcytJ-xoM> [Video]

What are the essentials of the Christian faith?

<https://www.gotquestions.org/essentials-Christian-faith.html>

The Simple Gospel in 10 Points

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/adrianwarnock/2005/02/simple-gospel-in-10-points/>

The Simple Gospel Explained

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/adrianwarnock/2005/02/simple-gospel-explained/>

The Simple Gospel

<http://thesimplegospel.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/The-Simple-Gospel.pdf> [PDF]

Return to the beginning: [**Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)**](#)

What is the gospel?

<https://www.9marks.org/answer/what-gospel/>

Excerpt:

The gospel is the good news about what Jesus Christ has done to reconcile sinners to God. Here's the whole story:

1. The one and only God, who is holy, made us in his image to know him (Gen. 1:26-28).
2. But we sinned and cut ourselves off from him (Gen. 3; Rom. 3:23).
3. In his great love, God sent his Son Jesus to come as king and rescue his people from their enemies—most significantly their own sin (Ps. 2; Luke 1:67-79).
4. Jesus established his kingdom by acting as both a mediating priest and a priestly sacrifice—he lived a perfect life and died on the cross, thus fulfilling the law himself and taking on himself the punishment for the sins of many (Mark 10:45; John 1:14; Heb. 7:26; Rom. 3:21-26, 5:12-21); then he rose again from the dead, showing that God accepted his sacrifice and that God's wrath against us had been exhausted (Acts 2:24, Rom. 4:25).
5. He now calls us to repent of our sins and trust in Christ alone for our forgiveness (Acts 17:30, John 1:12). If we repent of our sins and trust in Christ, we are born again into a new life, an eternal life with God (John 3:16).

Now that's good news.

A good way to summarize this good news is to biblically unpack the words God, Man, Christ, Response.

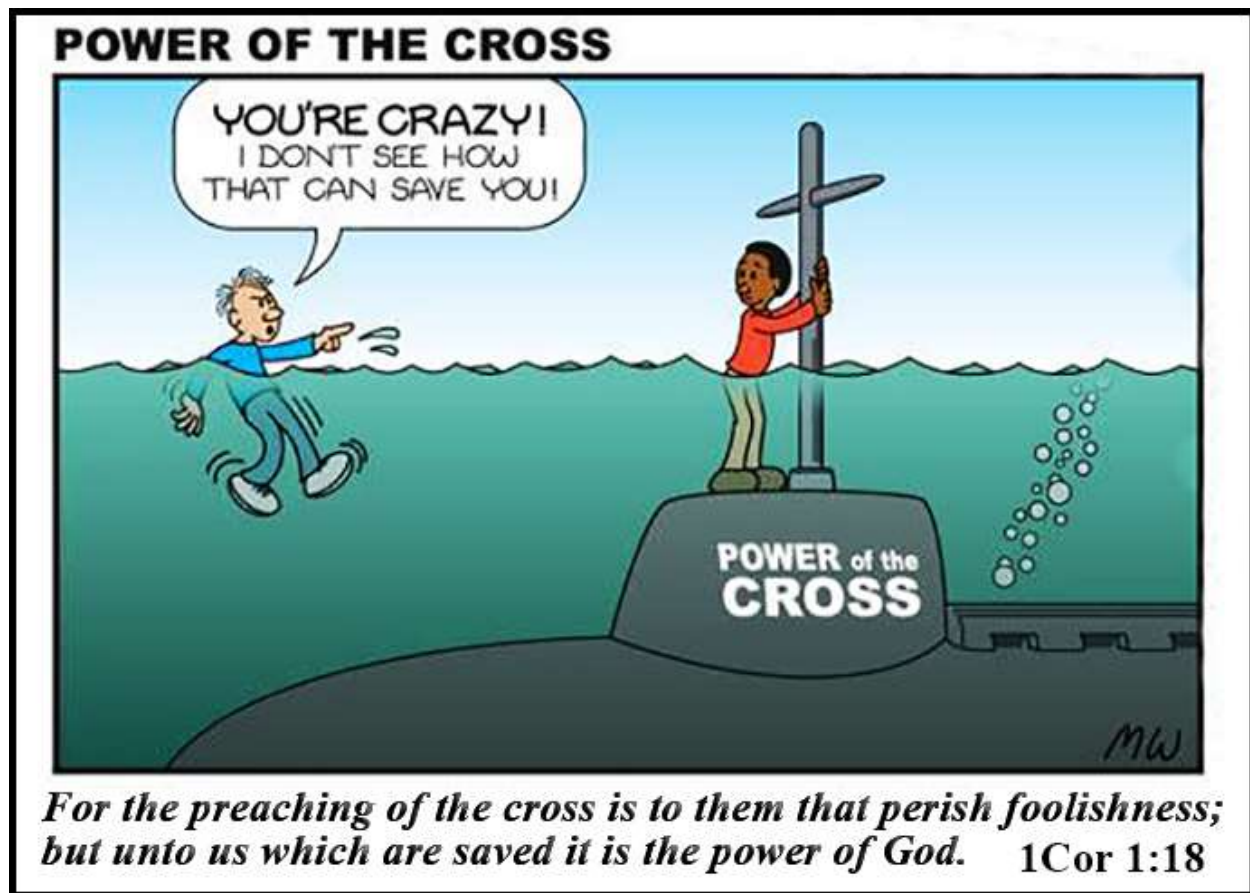
1. **God.** God is the creator of all things (Gen. 1:1). He is perfectly holy, worthy of all worship, and will punish sin (1 John 1:5, Rev. 4:11, Rom. 2:5-8).
2. **Man.** All people, though created good, have become sinful by nature (Gen. 1:26-28, Ps. 51:5, Rom. 3:23). From birth, all people are alienated from God, hostile to God, and subject to the wrath of God (Eph. 2:1-3).
3. **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 (John 1:1, 1 Tim. 2:5, Heb. 7:26, Rom. 3:21-26, 2 Cor. 5:21, 1 Cor. 15:20-22).
4. **Response.** God calls everyone everywhere to repent of their sins and trust in Christ in order to be saved (Mark 1:15, Acts 20:21, Rom. 10:9-10).

(Some of this material has been adapted from *The Gospel and Personal Evangelism* by Mark Dever, p. 43)

Lesson 1: Romans: The Gospel of God (Romans 1:1, Introduction)

<https://bible.org/seriespage/lesson-1-romans-gospel-god-romans-11-introduction>

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)



Source: <https://michaeljeshurun.wordpress.com/2014/05/09/the-gospel-a-manifestation-of-the-grace-of-god/>

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Gospel of God

(also Gospel of: Jesus Christ / Grace of God / Kingdom of God / etc.)

N.T. Wright: What is the “Gospel of God”? (in Romans)

<http://ntwrightonline.org/what-is-the-gospel-of-god/> [links to video]

What is the Gospel?

<https://bible.org/article/what-gospel>

Excerpt:

Actually, the central ingredient of the gospel message is a two-fold confession: (1) Christ died for our sins and (2) He was raised on the third day. The reality of these two elements can be verified by the Scriptures (cf. [Ps. 16:10](#); [Isa. 53:8-10](#)) and by such awesome historical evidence as the empty tomb and the eye witnesses. Thus, the other two elements mentioned here accomplish two important facts regarding the gospel. The fact that He was buried *verified His death*, and the fact that He appeared to others *verified His resurrection*.

Modifying Terms

While *gospel* is often found alone, it is very often modified by various terms that focus on a particular aspect of the gospel.

It is modified by various descriptive phrases, such as, “the gospel of God” (Mk 1:14, ASV; [Rom 15:16](#)), “the gospel of Jesus Christ,” (Mk 1:1; [1 Cor 9:12](#)), “the gospel of his Son” ([Rom 1:9](#)), “the gospel of the kingdom” ([Mt 4:23](#); [9:35](#); [24:14](#)), “the gospel of the grace of God” ([Acts 20:24](#)), “the gospel of the glory of Christ” ([II Cor 4:4](#), ASV), “the gospel of peace” ([Eph 6:15](#)), “an eternal gospel” ([Rev 14:6](#), RSV). Although distinctive aspects of the message are indicated by the various modifiers, the gospel is essentially one. Paul speaks of “another gospel” which is not an equivalent, for the gospel of God is His revelation, not the result of discovery ([Gal 1:6-11](#)).⁵

In the New Testament, the various modifiers bring out some aspect of the gospel that is being stressed in the context and is a part of the good news of what God offers us in Christ.

(1) The gospel of Jesus Christ ([Mark 1:1](#); [1 Cor. 9:12](#)) and **the gospel of His Son** ([Rom. 1:9](#)). These two descriptions speak of the good news of salvation that comes through the person and work of Jesus Christ who is the very Son of God in human flesh. Again, this is a good news of deliverance from sin’s penalty, power and presence through the two advents of Christ.

(2) The gospel of the grace of God ([Acts 20:24](#)) emphasizes that salvation in all of its aspects is on the basis of grace rather than on some meritorious system of works.

(3) The gospel of the kingdom ([Matt. 4:23](#); [9:35](#); [24:14](#)) is the good news that God will establish His kingdom on earth through the two advents of the Lord Jesus Christ.

(4) The gospel of peace ([Eph. 6:15](#)) describes how this good news of salvation in Christ brings peace in all its many aspects (peace with God, the peace of God, peace with others, and world peace) through the victory accomplished by the Savior.

(5) **The eternal or everlasting gospel** ([Rev. 14:6](#)) expands our perspective of gospel as we normally think of it. This gospel as proclaimed by the angel has several key elements of gloriously good news that are developed in three commands and two reasons:

- **Command #1: “Fear God.”** This refers to a holy reverence that recognizes the sovereign authority and power of God to deal with man in His holy wrath and thus, to bring an end to the world of sin as we now know it. To fear God is to recognize Him as the true God who can destroy the soul and not just the body as God will do with the beast of Revelation and His anti-God system.
- **Command #2: “Give Him glory.”** This refers to the praise and honor that should accrue to God from mankind due to our recognition and high estimation of God as the sovereign Creator of the universe.
- **Command #3: “And worship Him who made ...”** The word “worship” means to show reverence or respect. This word emphasizes the external display as seen in our obedience, prayer, singing, and formal worship. The word “fear” emphasizes the reverential mental attitude behind the worship. In the Tribulation people will be forced to fear and formally acknowledge the beast and his image. In this message the angel is demanding that mankind reject the beast and formally turn to God to worship Him (cf. [Rev. 14:11](#)).
- **Reason #1:** “The hour of his judgment has come” is a reference to the final judgments of the Tribulation—the bowl judgments—which are about to occur that will put an end to the system of the beast and bring the rule the Lord Jesus, the King of kings. These will conclude with the return of Christ Himself ([Rev. 19](#)) and lead to the removal of all unbelievers from the earth. The emphasis is to not delay because the time is short.
- **Reason #2:** This is seen in the reference to God as the Creator in verse 7b. Here we are called to pay attention to the ageless and universal message of the creation itself. Age after age creation has called mankind to recognize God’s existence and to seek after Him (cf. [Acts 17:26-27](#) with [Psalm 19:1-6](#)). This means people are without excuse and that, when the angel proclaims this gospel, the hour of the Creator’s judgment is about to fall (see [Rom. 1:18f](#)). Though this is the essential and primary element of the angel’s everlasting gospel, perhaps he will say more than this for from age to age a person’s capacity to reverence, glorify and worship God has come only through believing and knowing Christ (cf. [John 14:6](#) with [Acts 4:12](#); [John 4:23-24](#)).

The Gospel of the Grace of God (InTouch / Charles Stanley)

<https://www.intouch.org/read/magazine/daily-devotions/the-gospel-of-the-grace-of-god>

Excerpt:

[Acts 20:16-24](#)

The apostle Paul was consumed by a passion that was even greater than his desire for life or the dread of suffering. He had a ministry to fulfill and a message of salvation to deliver. His words in [Acts 20:24](#) help us understand the foundational concept involved in our salvation. Paul called it “the gospel of the grace of God.”

We’re saved simply because the Lord is gracious. He knew we could never be good enough to bridge the gap between our sin and His holiness. That’s why you will never hear of “the gospel of the Law of God.” That would not be good news at all! Can you imagine singing, “Amazing law, how fearful the sound, that saved a wretch like me”? We could never fulfill the requirements, especially the way Jesus enlarged the meaning of the law in the Sermon on the Mount ([Matthew 5-7](#)). But grace—that’s totally different. It has

nothing to do with our worthiness or good performance but is solely based on God's unmerited favor towards us.

What's most amazing is that the avenue for our salvation is through faith alone. The grace that God extends in saving us is His gift, and there's nothing we can add by our works ([Ephesians 2:8-9](#)). Otherwise, we'd have to clean up our lives in order to be saved, and that would nullify grace.

Lesson 1: Romans: The Gospel of God (Romans 1:1, Introduction)

<https://bible.org/seriespage/lesson-1-romans-gospel-god-romans-11-introduction>

What is the Gospel? Thabiti Anyabwile

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w79hiVcXSDc&t=229s>

Thabiti Anyabwile explains the gospel at the Desiring God 2010 National Conference.

God, Man, Christ, Response

Pastor Thabiti Anyabwile: How BET & Islam showed him to Christ | Wade-O Radio Backstage

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Y41NbXOu5M>

Who Is Jesus Christ (pbuh)? Hamed VS Anyabwile (10/16)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vrL4ViJDY8s>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t0JANMUY_yA

The Gospel Writ Large

<https://genesisfile.com/the-gospel-writ-large/>

Religion vs Gospel

<http://whatwordscannotexpress.weebly.com/blog/do-you-have-a-long-distance-one-sided-relationship-with-god-does-the-lord-seem-far-away-from-you-or-silent>

RELIGION	GOSPEL
If I obey, I'm accepted	I'm accepted so I obey
If I'm good, God will love me	I'm bad and Jesus loves bad people
All people are good and bad	All people are repentant or not
The focus is on what I do or don't do	The focus is on what Jesus did
It produces pride and despair	It produces humility and confidence
I am motivated by FEAR	I am motivated by LOVE

Do you have a long-distance, one-sided relationship with God? Does the Lord seem far away from you or silent?

<http://whatwordscannotexpress.weebly.com/blog/do-you-have-a-long-distance-one-sided-relationship-with-god-does-the-lord-seem-far-away-from-you-or-silent>

Excerpt:

Don't give up. Don't feel defeated. You may just have to tweak your views on what it means to be a Christian. Check out this chart:

RELIGION	GOSPEL
If I obey, I'm accepted	I'm accepted so I obey
If I'm good, God will love me	I'm bad and Jesus loves bad people
All people are good and bad	All people are repentant or not
The focus is on what I do or don't do	The focus is on what Jesus did
It produces pride and despair	It produces humility and confidence
I am motivated by FEAR	I am motivated by LOVE

This post is going to be far too short to address this complex topic thoroughly, but that's okay. My goal here (and bear with me, because this isn't my strongest point) is to encourage you to view this issue in a new light.

I can't even begin to tell you the number of times someone has explained to me:

I am a Christian (I believe in God/Jesus), but . . .

- God seems so far away, like He doesn't care
- God doesn't really answer my prayers; I'm not sure He listens
- I'm not super-religious (i.e. I don't go to church regularly or read my Bible)

After talking with these people, I get the sense that they just really wish God would move in power in their lives. They desire to see, feel, and hear Him in their lives (and they know this is possible because they see/hear about some other people who experience this), but **they are placing the burden to change the way things are right now on God rather than on themselves.**

Well, if He's the one being distant, shouldn't He be the One to change?!

I hear where you're coming from, so let me explain. We need to do some very basic background here before we proceed. It's important to remember that our view of things is often limited to our own experiences, knowledge & lifetime. God's view is eternal, so let's *zoom-out* for a moment to check the bigger picture.

1. God created men and women in His image to bring himself glory.
2. All people have sinned and separated themselves from God- because He is both holy & just, He cannot tolerate sin. His options are to 1) punish sin as it deserves or 2) offer forgiveness through the sacrifice Christ made on the cross.
3. Assuming you have accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and acknowledged His death, burial, resurrection and supreme Lordship:
You should have repented (turned from, changed) your former sinful ways (this doesn't mean you're perfect, but it does mean the trajectory of your life & your goals changed when you decided to follow Christ) & entered into the personal relationship with Jesus which allows you to accept His offer of forgiveness when you repent. This means you have direct access to the Lord through Jesus Christ & you will be blessed to spend eternity in His presence in Heaven after your life here on earth is over.
4. If you haven't accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, that needs to be your priority. Things of this life will pass away, but your soul (because you are created in God's image) is eternal. Where you spend that eternity is something worth considering and planning for now, because once you die, there's no longer time to change the trajectory of your soul- you will be judged according to God's standards for holiness and punished accordingly, whereas those people who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ will be judged according to Christ's righteousness because His death on the cross paid the penalty (took the punishment) for anyone who chooses to believe on & put their faith in Him.

So, the remainder of this article is written for people who have already placed their faith in Jesus Christ & accepted His free gifts of forgiveness of sin and eternal salvation (saved from punishment).

You may be thinking, "Why rehash all this stuff, I know this and I did that- I accepted Jesus, He's my Savior, He's just not really making a difference in my daily life at all. I did the right things, what went wrong? Why don't I have the kind of relationship with Jesus that I see other people can have, where they get answers to their prayers and have peace & joy in difficult circumstances?" **I guess Christianity doesn't work for me. I'm not good enough at it.**

So, I hope you can see that I'm not going to tell you to "try harder" at this Christianity thing. I want to encourage you to try *differently*. Don't work on disciplining yourself into obedience, work on cultivating a real, intimate relationship with Jesus Christ, so that you will be able to "tap in" to the grace, strength, peace, hope, joy, and wisdom that His presence offers.

Let's say there is someone you'd like to get to know better. A real person. Whether it is a coworker that seems fun, a teacher you respect, or any other person that is an acquaintance to you, whom you desire to have a friendship with. How do you do that? How *could* you do that?

You'd probably need to take the initiative to spend some time with the person, right? Ask them to catch coffee with you sometime, walk with them out to their vehicle as you leave work together, get their email address and start up a casual conversation about something you may have a common interest in. Something. You'd have to do something and you'd have to start somewhere. Same is true for Jesus Christ. He is a REAL person. He is alive. He isn't dead and He isn't far away. He is God, though, which makes things a bit different. Good thing He left an entire book for us to read so that we could learn more about His relationship with Creation.

The first step toward an intimate relationship with God may sound like a religious "to-do" list, but it's not, it's a plan to gain knowledge about the Lord. People who love music by a particular band may read every word in the CD insert. They may check out the band's website, facebook page, and/or personal blogs. They read more about someone they are interested in knowing better. Do the same for God. Read about Him to know Him better. Then you'll have more to talk about with Him. ;) Yep, read the Bible. Pick it up and read it. One book, ONE book, written by God, why would you NOT want to read it? Many people suggest beginning by reading one of the Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John, or the book of Romans. Their theory is that these will get the gospel message to you clearly. If you already know the Gospel message, dig into the nitty-gritty- read somewhere else!

The Bible actually explains why we may feel God is distant & what we can do about it.

The next step isn't fun, but it's vital. Not every Christian knows this, but there is a reason that God may seem silent in our lives- He may actually be choosing to remain "silent" despite our attempts to reach Him. The reason for that is unrepentant sin. Sin= Distance from God. ([Isaiah 59:2](#)) Plenty of churches will tell you to just "stay strong" in your faith through those difficult times, and they can give you lots of fluffy feel-good verses about Jesus never abandoning nor forsaking us. And that's true, He won't. As believers, He is always with us, but He can't always WORK with us if we are refusing to remain faithful to Him by allowing a lifestyle of sin to mar the new heart He's created in us and distract us from listening for [His still small voice](#).

If you've truly repented of your sins (meaning you've acknowledged they were wrong, confessed your sin to the Lord, asked His forgiveness and turned away from those sins- changed your lifestyle/choices so they reflect your decision to follow the Lord), [He will cast your sins as far from you as the east is from the west](#). Having done that, if you are reading in God's Word, you are on the right track to intimacy with Christ. Relationships require time and energy, and there is no relationship more worthy of either than the relationship you have with your Savior, your Father in Heaven, your Creator, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ.

Seek ye the Lord while He may be found,
call ye upon Him while He is near:
let the wicked forsake his way,
and the unrighteous man his thoughts:
and let him return unto the Lord,
and He will have mercy upon him;
and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.

Isaiah 55:6-7

The Gospel that Paul Preached

See and compare:

[The Gospel that Peter Preached](#)

also: [Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#)

Gospel of N.T. Wright / What Paul Preached – An Interview (email exchange) (2017)

<http://uncommonlegacy.com/gospel-ntw-interview/>

Excerpt:

What is the Gospel?

**The message that the crucified and risen Jesus is the world's true Lord, having overcome all other 'powers' through bearing human sin and its consequences. The early church presented this as a story about things that had actually happened, rooted in the story of Israel's scriptures, things that had changed the world (1 Cor 15.3-11)".*

1 Corinthians 15: [1] Now I want to make clear for you, brothers and sisters, the gospel that I preached to you, that you received and on which you stand, [2] and by which you are being saved, if you hold firmly to the message I preached to you – unless you believed in vain. [3] For I passed on to you as of first importance what I also received – **that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, [4] and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day according to the scriptures, [5] and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. [6] Then he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. [7] Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.** [8] Last of all, as though to one born at the wrong time, he appeared to me also. [9] For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. [10] But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me has not been in vain. In fact, I worked harder than all of them – yet not I, but the grace of God with me. [11] Whether then it was I or they, this is the way we preach and this is the way you believed. [NET Bible]

See corresponding chart in: [Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#)

See: [McKnight's 3-part separation of Gospel text in 1 Cor. 15:1-11.](#)

See chart of Paul's (above) Gospel presentation on [next page...](#)

See also:

[Paul Receives the Gospel Resurrection Creed within 5 Years of Crucifixion](#)

[Paul and the Gospel on Mars Hill \(Areopagus\)](#) (with [Chart](#))

Chart of Paul's Gospel Presentation

(For comparison with Paul, see: [Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#))

Paul (1 Corinthians 15:1-2, 3-11, 20-28)
Now I want to make clear for you, brothers and sisters, the gospel that I preached to you, that you received and on which you stand, and by which you are being saved , if you hold firmly to the message I preached to you – unless you believed in vain.
For I passed on to you as of first importance what I also received –
that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures,
and he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day according to the scriptures
he appeared to Cephas [Peter], then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.
Last of all, as though to one born at the wrong time, he appeared to me also. For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me has not been in vain. In fact, I worked harder than all of them – yet not I, but the grace of God with me.
Whether then it was I or they, this is the way we preach and this is the way you believed.
But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead also came through a man. For just as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ, the firstfruits; then when Christ comes, those who belong to him. Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, when he has brought to an end all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be eliminated is death. For he has put everything in subjection under his feet . But when it says “everything” has been put in subjection, it is clear that this does not include the one who put everything in subjection to him. And when all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will be subjected to the one who subjected everything to him, so that God may be all in all.

See and compare:

[The Gospel that Peter Preached](#)

Return to the beginning:

[The Gospel that Paul Preached](#)

Legend:

	Saved / Believes in Jesus:
	Died/Sins/Scriptures
	Buried/Resurrection
	Witnesses
	Why Preach
	Appointed by God / Lord

See also: [Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#)

[The Gospel According to Paul](#) (chart of all occurrences by Paul of “Gospel” in the Bible)

[Paul and the Gospel on Mars Hill \(Areopagus\)](#) (with [Chart](#))

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

BBC2 Commentary for 1 Corinthians 15:3-5

1Co 15:1-22. . Paul follows the standard argument technique of beginning with an agreed-on premise; the Corinthians must agree with the very gospel by which they were converted (see also 2:1-5; Ga 3:2-5).

1Co 15:3. "Handed on to you . . . what I had received" (NRSV) is the language of what scholars call "traditioning": Jewish teachers would pass on their teachings to their students, who would in turn pass them on to their own students. The students could take notes, but they delighted especially in oral memorization and became quite skilled at it; memorization was a central feature of ancient education. In the first generation, the tradition would be very accurate; some even believe that this tradition in 15:3-5 or 15:3-7 may be a verbatim citation. That Jesus died for our sins "according to the Scriptures" may refer especially to Isa 53:4-6,8,11-12 as well as the biblical pattern of the righteous suffering before exaltation.

1Co 15:4. The mention of the burial presupposes an empty tomb after the resurrection, because by definition "resurrection" meant a new body that did not leave a corpse behind; Paul's Palestinian Jewish sources could have meant the expression no other way. Unlike the Gospels, Paul does not mention the empty tomb, because the witnesses provide stronger proof of what happened to Jesus (15:5-8). "The Scriptures" probably refers to an assortment of texts, such as Ps 16 and Isa 53:12. If the "third day" is also in view in "according to the Scriptures," perhaps it alludes to Ho 6:2, Jon 1:17 or other texts, although Paul may include the phrase simply to say, according to Jewish custom, that Jesus was raised before he could "see corruption" (Ps 16:10).

1Co 15:5. Although arguments from probability counted best in ancient law courts, eyewitness accounts were also highly valued. The ancient epiphanies (revelations) of gods or spirits were normally said to have been attested by eyewitnesses, but except for dreams and deliverances, these reports rarely stem from the era that records them. (The mystery initiation at Eleusis may have climaxed with some sort of ecstatic encounter with the deity, but this event again differs significantly from the sort of concrete, unsolicited, mass revelation Paul describes here.) Multiple revelations like this one, and mass revelations as in 15:6, especially in a sect, that risked persecution to claim them are virtually unparalleled. Because by definition resurrection meant a new body, and Christians would not have been persecuted for claiming that they saw a mere spirit (most ancient people believed in ghosts), they are making a claim no one else made. "Appeared" was used in antiquity both for visions and for actual appearances (often of God or angels); but by all Jewish definitions of resurrection, especially in a Palestinian tradition such as Paul cites here, Paul must mean a literal appearance.

NIV Study Bible Notes (2008):

1 Corinthians 15:3 what I received I passed on to you as of first importance. Here Paul links himself with early Christian tradition. He was not its originator, nor did he receive it directly from the Lord. His source was other Christians. The verbs he uses are technical terms for receiving and transmitting tradition (see note on 11:23). What follows is the heart of the gospel: that Christ died for our sins (not for his own sins; cf. Heb 7:27), that he was buried (confirmation that he had really died) and that he was raised from the dead. according to the Scriptures. Paul probably had in mind Isa 53:5–6, 11–12, but he may also have been thinking of the Passover sacrifice and other sin offerings of the OT sacrificial system (see chart).

More charting continued on next page...

In addition to the above example of 1 Corinthians 15:3-11, Paul mentions aspects of the Gospel he preached numerous times in his letters (see: [The Gospel According to Paul](#) for list).

Another example is in Romans:

Romans 1:1-5

- [1] From Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God.
- [2] This gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures,
- [3] concerning his Son who was a descendant of David with reference to the flesh,
- [4] who was appointed the Son-of-God-in-power according to the Holy Spirit by the resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord.
- [5] Through him we have received grace and our apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles on behalf of his name.

The Gospel as mentioned in this example from Romans was directed to those that had already accepted the Gospel and did not need proof, just a general reminder of what they had believed. In 1 Corinthians, he was summarizing the Gospels that he had shared with them and other non-believers. The example from Acts 10 is a reporting of what Peter actually said to a Gentile who had not heard the Gospel.

Keeping that mind, here is the Romans example in similar form to the table above. Regarding “witnesses”, it may be a ‘stretch’, but since witnesses to confirm his message were not necessary to be mentioned (as they had already accepted), and were not incorporated into this letter, one might go out on a limb and use the witness to the natural law that is provided by our conscious (2:15) and the witness of the Spirit to our spirit (8:16) that Paul discusses later in the epistle.

From Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the Gospel of God.
This gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures; concerning his Son who was a descendant of David with reference to the flesh, Who was appointed the Son-of-God-in-power according to the Holy Spirit by the resurrection from the dead,
Jesus Christ [the Messiah / Anointed One] our Lord.
Through him we have received grace
And our apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles on behalf of his name.
Witness of the natural law by our conscious; the witness of the Spirit to our spirit.

Here’s another short recap of the Gospel by Paul (again, retold to believers)...

2 Timothy 2:8-10

- [8] Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of David; such is my gospel,
- [9] for which I suffer hardship to the point of imprisonment as a criminal, but God's message is not imprisoned!
- [10] So I endure all things for the sake of those chosen by God, that they too may obtain salvation in Christ Jesus and its eternal glory.

See also: [Occurrences of Jesus Risen/Resurrected Mentioned by Apostles in the Bible](#)

[The Gospel According to Paul](#) (chart of all occurrences by Paul of “Gospel” in the Bible)

Paul and the Gospel on Mars Hill (Areopagus) [Athens](#), Greece Acts 17:16-34

Luke's account of Paul's comments on [Athen](#)'s Areopagus (Mars Hill) is as much about [apologetics](#) and [evangelism](#) as it is the Gospel.

Here the basic Gospel model highlighted in previous pages needed to be 'augmented'/'adjusted' as the Greeks in Athens had no frame of reference of the Jewish scriptures from which to understand who Jesus was and what he had accomplished. Here Paul needed to adapt his presentation to the situation.

[\[Skip Mars Hill sections\]](#)

For corresponding Chart see:

[Table Breakdown of the Message by Paul on Mars Hill \(Areopagus\)](#)

Background

The Unknown God (by David Padfield)

<http://padfield.com/2000/unknown.html>

Excerpt:

Luke's estimation of the residents of [Berea](#) was that they "were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so" (Acts 17:11). Then the Jews from Thessalonica came to Berea and stirred up the crowds again and the brethren "who conducted Paul brought him to Athens" (Acts 17:15). The distance between Berea and [Athens](#) was 250 Roman miles -- a journey of three days by sea or twelve days by land.

Idolatry In Athens

Supposing Paul arrived by ship, he would have landed at Piraeus and would have gone north from the harbor and entered Athens by the "Double Gate" on the west side of the city, where four highways converged. Before passing the gate, however, he would have gone through an extensive cemetery, where he would have noticed the graves of many distinguished Athenian citizens, the most famous being [Menander](#), the son of [Diopithes](#).

Passing through the gates, Paul would have seen the Temple of [Demeter](#) with statues of the goddess and her daughter. A little further on he would have passed the statue of Poseidon hurling his trident. Beyond this, he would have seen the statues of Healing Athena, Zeus, Apollo, and Hermes standing near the [Sanctuary of Dionysus](#).

While Paul waited for Silas and Timothy, whom he had instructed to join him as soon as possible ([Acts 17:15](#)), he must have explored the city in the same manner in which tourists do today. He could have visited the [Royal Colonnade \(or Stoa\)](#), the [Metroum \(Metroon\) or Sanctuary of the Mother of the Gods](#) with her image.

In the [agora](#) the Apostle would have passed what sometimes called "the Music Hall at Athens," the odeon, a small roofed theater. In the agora the Athenians had an altar of Mercy, which stood in a grove of laurels and olives. Close to the agora, in the gymnasium of Ptolemy, there was a stone statue of Hermes, and a bronze statue of Ptolemy.

Wherever Paul turned, he must have seen statues, temples, and shrines. There was the Sanctuary of the [Dioscuri](#), the Serapeum in the lower part of this city, the Temple of Olympian Zeus southeast of the

[Acropolis](#), the Pythium on the southern side of the Acropolis, the [Sanctuary of Dionysus](#) at the foot of the Acropolis, and many more.

Entering the Acropolis he would have passed two statues of horsemen facing each other on opposite sides of the road. On his right, on the western edge of the Acropolis, was the [Temple of Victory Athena](#), the so-called Wingless Victory. Paul would have looked towards the sea and seen the Bay of Phaleron, perhaps with grain ships from Alexandria, Egypt.

He would have visited the most famous and beautiful of all Greek temples, the [Parthenon](#), and then the [Erechtheum](#) standing on the northern edge of the Acropolis. Here his eyes must have fallen on the oldest and most venerated statue of Athena, which like that of Diana of Ephesus, was believed to have fallen from heaven (cf. [Acts 19:35](#)). Finally, there was the most conspicuous statue of the [city-goddess](#), a dedication from the spoils of the [Battle of Marathon](#).

An ancient proverb declared that there were more gods in Athens than men, and wherever the Apostle looked, in niches and on pedestals, in temples and on street corners, were gods and demigods. Busts of Hermes were on every corner and statues and altars were in the courtyard of every home.

Among this forest of deities Paul discovered one altar dedicated to the "unknown god." There are many examples of similar inscriptions in the Greco-Roman world. The idea, of course, was that these altars to the "unknown gods" ensured that no deity was omitted from worship.

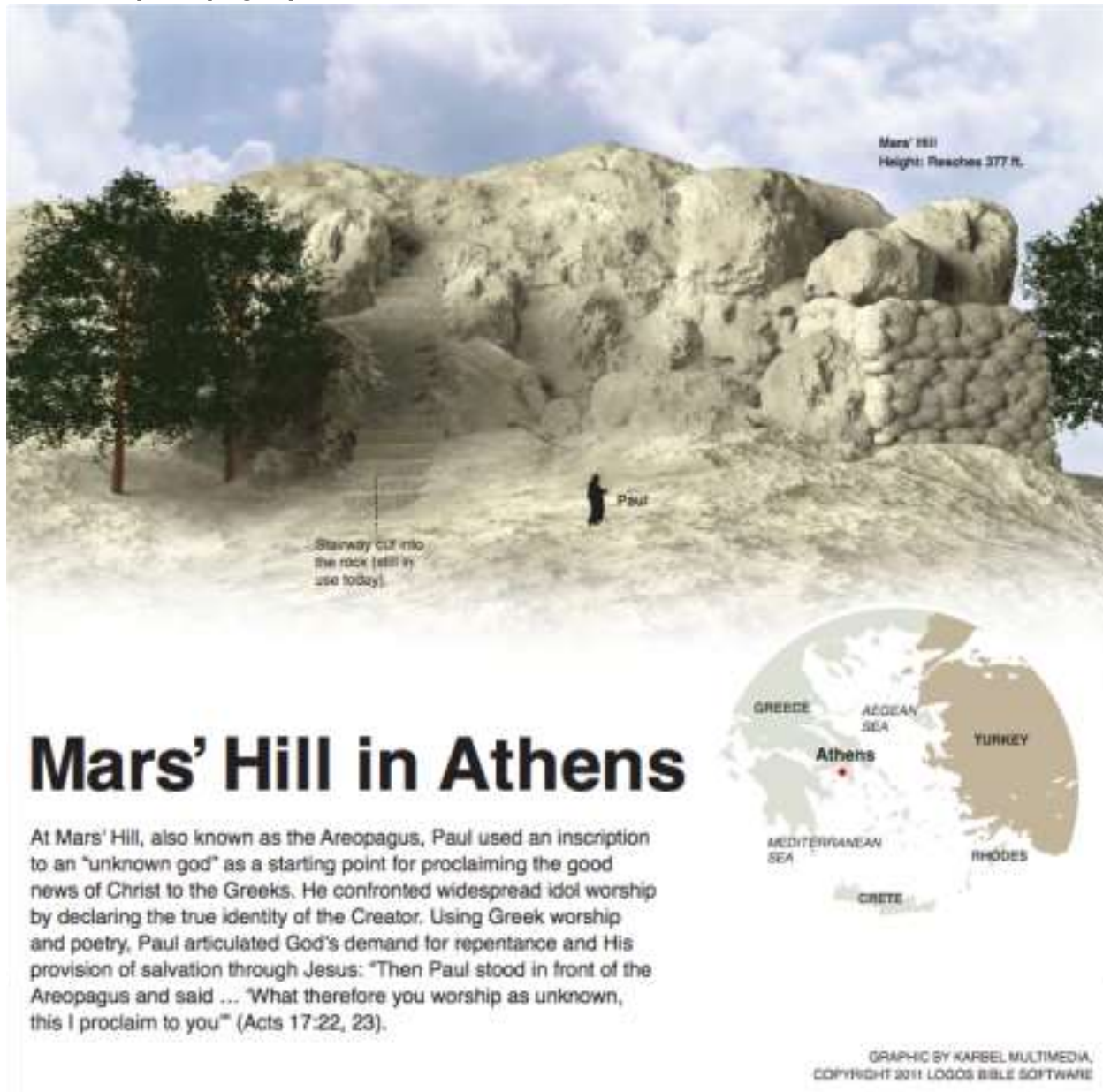
Paul In Athens

Paul must have been appalled as he looked upon all this idolatry, for "his spirit was provoked within him when he saw that the city was given over to idols" (Acts 17:16). Paul, a devout Jew, had been taught from childhood that, "You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself any carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth." (Exo. 20:3-4).

He turned to his task preaching and first went into "the synagogue with the Jews and with the Gentile worshipers," then in the marketplace (Acts 17:17-21).

Certain "Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him" and brought him to the [Areopagus](#) (Mar's Hill, KJV), where the supreme court of Athens had often met. The hill is in the middle of the city -- sixteen well worn steps lead to the summit from a plateau between the Areopagus and the Acropolis. The King James Version of the New Testament calls this place Mars Hill, while most other translations call it the Areopagus. Greeks called their god of war "Ares," while he was called "Mars" by the Romans. While on the Areopagus, in the shadow of the Acropolis, Paul preached one of the most memorable sermons recorded in the Bible (Acts 17:22-31).

Mars Hill continued on next page...



[Source: <http://cafn.us/2014/02/26/biblical-nuggets-mars-hill-in-athens/>]

Philosophy and Superstition (Paul on Mars Hill – the Areopagus)

<http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/philosophy-and-superstition/>

Excerpt:

“While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols” (v. 16). - Acts 17:16–21

The city of Athens was the seat of Greek philosophy. Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle had lived and taught there. Before them Thales, Anaximander, Parmenides, Heraclitus, and many others had practiced philosophy there. Each was seeking the one ultimate principle of which all things were supposedly composed. Thales believed that ultimately, everything is water, while in a more sophisticated way, Plato and Aristotle claimed that ultimately, everything is “being.”

By focusing on this one ultimate aspect of reality, the philosophers were pushing against the worship of particular things like idols. In time, however, idolatry returned even stronger than before. After all, if everything in the world is a piece of the Ultimate, then everything is divine to some degree. Things that have more “being” are more divine, and so for our own good we had better worship them. Eventually, Athens, the city of philosophy, also became the city of idols. Greek philosophy led straight to superstition.

The Bible has very little admiration for Greek philosophy, though unfortunately, many in the history of the Christian church have not shared the Bible's viewpoint. Paul was not impressed by what he saw in Athens. He was distressed. He did not say, “Athens, at last! The home of the wonderful philosophers Plato and Parmenides.” He did not try to meld the Gospel to the thinking of Aristotle. Instead, he confronted the Athenians head-on.

The philosophers in Athens at this time were organized into two groups. The [Epicureans](#) argued that men should seek pleasure, and that the best way to do that is to live moderately. The [Stoics](#) argued that men should seek independence and self-sufficiency, and suppress their desires. Both groups were continually seeking new things, the **Epicureans** because of their quest for new pleasures, and the **Stoics** because of curiosity about nature. Thus, when Paul arrived in their midst with a strange new teaching, they rapidly brought him to the Council of the **Areopagus**, which supervised the religions and foreign gods in Athens. They wanted to hear about this new “manifestation of being.”

[Epicurean...philosophers](#): Epicureanism was a popular school of Greek philosophy, founded by Epicurus (341-270 BC). Epicureans believed that the principal aim of life was to secure happiness. They thought of pleasure not in terms of sensual indulgence, as their critics charged, but in terms of tranquility. Their contemporaries often called them atheists; in their view, there were no gods to fear, and death simply marked the end of human existence. They sought their security in organized communities where they could live in contentment apart from society.

[Stoic philosophers](#): Stoicism was founded by Zeno of Citium (335-263 BC) and became the most influential philosophy in the Greco-Roman world. It viewed the universe as permeated by Reason (sometimes referred to as God or Providence). Stoicism saw divine Reason as expressed in human reason and held that as humans made progress, they could advance from ignorance (the source of vice) to true knowledge (the source of virtue). They developed extensive lists of virtues and vices and produced detailed household codes to guide family behavior. Paul's teaching resembles that of the Stoics in his use of household codes and lists of virtues and vices (Ga 5:19-23; Ep 5:22-33; Col 3:18-4:1; 1Ti 3:1-13; 5:1-6:1). However, the message of Good News focusing on the life, death, and **resurrection** of Jesus Christ was **strange** and **foreign** to these Greek philosophers. • The air of superiority with which they addressed Paul as **this babbler** indicates the arrogance of some of these men.

[Source: NLT Study Bible Notes]

See: [more notes related to Acts 17:18](#)

See: [Greek Philosophy](#) and [The Use of Greek Philosophy by Paul in the Bible](#)

Which are both in my other separate reference resources:

Reference Notes on Paul and Romans (and Galatians plus Ephesians)

Christian Scholarship: Biblical – Theological – Philosophical

Acts 17:15-34

[15] Those who accompanied Paul escorted him as far as Athens, ⁵⁷ and after receiving an order for Silas and Timothy to come to him as soon as possible, they left. ⁵⁸

[16] While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, ⁵⁹ his spirit was greatly upset ⁶⁰ because he saw ⁶¹ the city was full of idols. [17] So he was addressing ⁶² the Jews and the God-fearing Gentiles ⁶³ in the synagogue, ⁶⁴ and in the marketplace every day ⁶⁵ those who happened to be there. [18] Also some of the Epicurean ⁶⁶ and Stoic ⁶⁷ philosophers were conversing ⁶⁸ with him, and some were asking, ⁶⁹ “What does this foolish babbler ⁷⁰ want to say?” Others said, “He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign gods.” ⁷¹ (They said this because he was proclaiming the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.) ⁷² [19] So they took Paul and ⁷³ brought him to the Areopagus, ⁷⁴ saying, “May we know what this new teaching is that you are proclaiming? [20] For you are bringing some surprising things ⁷⁵ to our ears, so we want to know what they ⁷⁶ mean.” [21] (All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there used to spend their time ⁷⁷ in nothing else than telling ⁷⁸ or listening to something new.) ⁷⁹

[22] So Paul stood ⁸⁰ before the Areopagus and said, “Men of Athens, I see that you are very religious ⁸¹ in all respects. ⁸² [23] For as I went around and observed closely your objects of worship, ⁸³ I even found an altar with this inscription: ⁸⁴ ‘To an unknown god.’ Therefore what you worship without knowing it, ⁸⁵ this I proclaim to you. [24] The God who made the world and everything in it, ⁸⁶ who is ⁸⁷ Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by human hands, ⁸⁸ [25] nor is he served by human hands, as if he needed anything, ⁸⁹ because he himself gives life and breath and everything to everyone. ⁹⁰ [26] From one man ⁹¹ he made every nation of the human race ⁹² to inhabit the entire earth, ⁹³ determining their set times ⁹⁴ and the fixed limits of the places where they would live, ⁹⁵ [27] so that they would search for God and perhaps grope around ⁹⁶ for him and find him, ⁹⁷ though he is ⁹⁸ not far from each one of us. [28] For in him we live and move about ⁹⁹ and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we too are his offspring.’ ¹⁰⁰ [29] So since we are God’s offspring, we should not think the deity ¹⁰¹ is like gold or silver or stone, an image ¹⁰² made by human ¹⁰³ skill ¹⁰⁴ and imagination. ¹⁰⁵ [30] Therefore, although God has overlooked ¹⁰⁶ such times of ignorance, ¹⁰⁷ he now commands all people ¹⁰⁸ everywhere to repent, ¹⁰⁹ [31] because he has set ¹¹⁰ a day on which he is going to judge the world ¹¹¹ in righteousness, by a man whom he designated, ¹¹² having provided proof to everyone by raising ¹¹³ him from the dead.”

[32] Now when they heard about ¹¹⁴ the resurrection from the dead, some began to scoff, ¹¹⁵ but others said, “We will hear you again about this.” [33] So Paul left the Areopagus. ¹¹⁶ [34] But some people ¹¹⁷ joined him ¹¹⁸ and believed. Among them ¹¹⁹ were Dionysius, who was a member of the Areopagus, ¹²⁰ a woman ¹²¹ named Damaris, and others with them.

[NET Bible]

Here (next page) is a table ‘breakdown’ of the message by Paul that Luke recorded...

Table 'breakdown' of the message by Paul that Luke recorded

Acts 17: 22-31

[22] ...“Men of Athens, I see that you are very religious in all respects. [23] For as I went around and observed closely your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: ‘To an unknown god.’ Therefore, what you worship without knowing it, this I proclaim to you. [24] The God who made the world and everything in it, who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by human hands, [25] nor is he served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives life and breath and everything to everyone.
[26] From one man he made every nation of the human race to inhabit the entire earth, determining their set times and the fixed limits of the places where they would live, [27] so that they would search for God and perhaps grope around for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us.
[28] For in him we live and move about and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we too are his offspring.’ [29] So since we are God's offspring, we should not think the deity is like gold or silver or stone, an image made by human skill and imagination.
Therefore, although God has overlooked such times of ignorance, he now commands all people everywhere to repent,
[31] because he has set a day on which he is going to judge the world in righteousness, by a man whom he designated,
having provided proof to everyone by raising him from the dead.”

Notes:

Paul cited three elementary facts about God tailored for them: (1) He is the creator of everything and everyone, (2) He does not dwell in temples, and (3) He is not served by human hands.

The quotation “For we too are his offspring” is from Aratus (ca. 310-245 B.C.), *Phaenomena* 5.

Paul asserted a general relationship and accountability to God for all humanity. (It also showed he had some knowledge/understanding of their philosophy.)

Repent – God is now asking all mankind to turn to him. No nation or race was excluded.

(Implies belief/trust)

[ref: [Article](#)]

Repentance means changing your mind, turning away from our sins -- turning toward God.
We do this as Christians and as unbelievers.

That is what repentance means -- a change of mind toward God. You are responsible to change your mind and lay hold of that which God has provided in Jesus Christ [“Messiah” or “anointed one”]. Paul gives us here three great facts which underscore the importance of repentance:

First, there is an inescapable day coming. God has fixed a day when he will judge the world. Everyone knows this. You know it, don't you? You know there is a day coming when your life is going to be laid open before everyone, and all the value of it, or the lack of value, will be evident. There is coming a day when every life will be evaluated. **Second**, there is an unchallengeable Judge. The One who will do the evaluating will not be a god, remote upon Mount Olympus, but he will be a Man, someone who has lived right here with us, who knows what human life is like, who has felt everything we feel. He will be the One who passes judgment on that day. **Third**, God has made this evident to all by an irrefutable fact: He raised that Man from the dead. [i.e., Jesus – the Son of God, the Messiah (Christ)!]

See also: [Repentance](#)

IVP Bible Background Commentary 2nd Ed.: Acts 17:15-34

Ac 17:15. At least three miles inland, Athens had port towns, such as the walled seaports Piraeus and (less used in this period) Phalerum. Cf. 1Th

Acts 17:16-20 Entering Athens

Athens's fame rested mainly on the glories of its past; even as a philosophical center, its primacy was challenged by other centers in the East such as Alexandria and Tarsus. (Even in its immediate vicinity Corinth had long surpassed it in power, population and prosperity.) But Athens remained the *symbol* of the great philosophers in popular opinion, so much so that it made a useful foil for other cities or groups (for example, later rabbis liked to tell stories of earlier rabbis besting Athenian philosophers in debate). Romans did not always trust philosophers, but Acts records other speeches to appeal to those with less philosophical tastes. This speech is Paul's defense of the gospel before Greek intellectuals.

Ac 17:16. Some majestic temples on Athens's Acropolis, such as Athena's temple (the Parthenon), were visible from afar; sanctuaries and images stood even in Piraeus and other ports of Athens. The second-century travel narrator Pausanias depicts in detail the various idols that consumed much public space in Athens; one could not avoid them. Shrines filled the agora and Acropolis, city streets were often lined with statues of men and gods, and Athens was decorated with the *Hermæ*, pillars mounted with heads of Hermes; many visitors wrote of the evidences of Athenian piety. From an aesthetic standpoint, Athens was unrivaled for its exquisite architecture and statues. Paul's concern is not aesthetics, however, but the impact of idols on human lives.

Ac 17:17. Inscriptions attest the Jewish community in Athens, but it was not prominent. Those without an official post in rhetoric could at least speak in the marketplace.

Ac 17:18. Epicureans were influential only in the educated upper classes, and their views about God were similar to deism (he was uninvolved in the universe and irrelevant); if there were gods, they were only those known through sense knowledge, like stars or planets. Life's goal was pleasure, which they defined as the lack of physical pain and emotional disturbance. Stoics were more popular, opposed pleasure, and criticized Epicureans (though not as much as they had in previous times). Here, as in 23:6, Paul practices the maxim "divide and conquer": 17:22-29 is calculated to gain a Stoic hearing, but Paul and the Epicureans have much less common ground.

Although Stoics still professed belief in the gods, many philosophers were considered impious, because they questioned the old traditions, although allowing them for the masses. The charge against Paul, "proclaimer of strange deities" (NASB), would remind Greek readers of the charge of impiety against Socrates centuries earlier (cf. 17:19-20; e.g., Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 1.1.1; Dio Chrysostom, *Orations* 43.9). Others had been prosecuted for the charge in earlier centuries, and it still violated the Athenian psyche in Paul's day.

"**Babbler**" (NIV, NASB) translates a Greek expression applied originally to birds pecking up grain but which came to apply to common chatterers in the marketplace or those who simply gathered and spread scraps of others' opinions. But in the same verse Luke lets these critics demonstrate their own ignorance: they think Paul is preaching *gods* (plural), because he preaches Jesus and resurrection #8212;"Resurrection" (Anastasis) was also a woman's name.

Ac 17:19-20. Socrates had also been "led" or "brought" to the Areopagus many centuries before, as was well known. Socrates was the ideal philosopher, and Luke may portray Paul as a new Socrates for his Greek audience; given the outcome of Socrates's speech (which, like Stephen's, provoked his hearers to martyr him), this allusion builds suspense, although no one would expect the Areopagus to execute anyone for ideas in this period.

The Areopagus is here the council, not the site earlier used for this council (the literal hill of Ares). In this period the council may have met in the Stoa Basileios, in the Agora where Paul had already been

ministering (v. 17). Because Rome had made Athens a "free" city, it had its own ruling bodies: another council, the city assembly, and, highest of all, the Areopagus. It was Athens's chief court, consisting in this period of probably roughly a hundred elite members. They had authority to evaluate new cults coming to town, and city officials would also evaluate potential lecturers who sought official platforms (though mere discussion in the market would require no accreditation).

Acts 17:21-31 **Before the Areopagus Council**

Paul's views are quite different from those of the Stoics, but he emphasizes the points of contact, even when they are only verbal (e.g., Paul believed that God's presence was everywhere, but not in the Stoic sense, which could divinize creation itself)—until the climax of his sermon. Defenders of Judaism had worked for centuries to make their faith philosophically respectable, and here, as in his letters, Paul draws heavily on his Jewish predecessors' arguments. Ancients valued the rhetorical skill of being able to communicate relevantly to different audiences; Paul communicates in synagogues (13:16-41), to farmers (14:15-17), and to the philosophically educated (17:22-31). Given its brevity, this speech summary is rhetorically sophisticated, with many rhetorical devices (e.g., alliteration) in Greek, and some high-class Greek (e.g., use of the optative).

Ac 17:21. Athens was proverbial for its residents' curiosity and their captivity to novelty. By the first century, Athenian desire for entertainment also extended to gladiatorial shows, but the city was especially known for seeking intellectual stimulation.

Ac 17:22. It was customary to begin a speech by complimenting the hearers in the opening *exordium*, designed to secure their favor. Some scholars think that this practice was forbidden at the Areopagus, but numerous examples show that even in Athens, speakers usually praised their hearers. "Religious" meant that they were religiously observant, not that he agreed with their religion. Paul's hearers would naturally assume it to be a compliment; Luke's audience will recognize the term's potential ambiguity (cf. KJV: "superstitious"). Many people thought of philosophers as unreligious (even though Stoics tried to accommodate the beliefs of the masses; see comment on 17:18). But Paul is thinking of the religious interest expressed in the idols (17:16).

Ac 17:23. A visiting speaker would sometimes start by commenting on a city's splendid sites, building rapport with the audience. Paul preaches here no "foreign deities" (17:18), but a deity that was near them (17:27-28). One Athenian tradition about the altars—associated with one of the very poets Paul may quote in 17:28 (Epimenides)—would have served Paul's point. During a plague long before Paul's time, no sacrifices had successfully propitiated the gods; Athens had finally offered sacrifices to the unidentified deities of the sites where the sacrificial sheep lay down, immediately staying the plague. These altars of nameless deities were still standing, and Paul uses them as the basis for his speech. Paul does avoid, however, the practice of some of his Jewish predecessors and some second-century Christian successors of accusing pagan philosophers of plagiarizing their good ideas from Moses.

Ac 17:24. While rooted in Scripture, most of Paul's speech until the end emphasizes points of contact shared with Stoicism (his letters also reveal his familiarity with some Stoic language). For at least three centuries Jewish apologists (defenders of Judaism) had worked to make their faith respectable to Greek philosophers, so Paul is able to draw on a long heritage here. His rhetoric here is of the highest quality, as would be essential before the Areopagus. Paul preaches differently to philosophers (here) than to farmers (14:15-17) and synagogues (13:16-47); good rhetoricians were supposed to be able to adapt to their audiences. Paul's language here is fully biblical, yet chosen also to be intelligible to his audience.

Some philosophical trends in this era combined deities, moving toward a single supreme god. Non-Palestinian Jews sometimes identified their God with the supreme God of the pagans, hoping to show pagans that their highest religious aspirations were best met in Judaism. Epicureans rejected temples and sacrifices; Stoics believed that God permeated all things and therefore was not localized in temples (cf. Isa 66:1, cited in Ac 7:49), though by this period some Stoics sacrificed in them. The idea had a respectable intellectual pedigree; nevertheless, Paul's words would contrast starkly with all the temples (those of Hephaistos, Athena, Ares, Zeus and the deified Augustus) in plain sight of the council!

Ac 17:25. Stoics and Greek-speaking Jews emphasized that God "needs nothing," using the same word Paul uses here; the concept was also biblical (Ps 50:8-13), as was God giving breath to all (Ge 2:7; Isa 42:5).

Ac 17:26. For Jews, creation from "one" meant from Adam; it contradicts an Athenian tradition of a special origin of Athenians from the soil. Jews and many Greeks agreed that God was creator and divider of the earth's boundaries and of seasons' boundaries; here, however, Paul probably has in mind especially human epochs and (as in Ge 10) the boundaries of peoples. Jewish people commented especially on the four world empires of Da 2:37-44 and 7:3-8, which they believed climaxed in Rome. Stoics also believed that the universe periodically dissolved back into God, but on this belief they had no point of contact with mainstream Judaism.

Ac 17:27-28. Jewish people usually spoke of God as a father to his people (in the Old Testament , e.g., Dt 32:6; Isa 63:16; 64:8; Je 3:4). But Greeks (including some Stoic thinkers), Diaspora Jews and some second-century Christian writers spoke of God as the world's father in the sense of creator, as here. Stoics believed that deity pervaded all things, though Hellenistic Jews applied such language to God's omnipresence, not (as in many early Stoics) to pantheism. "In him we live and move and have our being" (Ac 17:28) has long been attributed to the Greek poet Epimenides (from the same poem as Tit 1:12), who in one tradition was the person who advised building altars to the unknown gods (cf. 17:23). The other quotation, "we are his offspring," is likeliest from the third century B.C. Greek poet Aratus, who was from Paul's region, Cilicia (a similar line appears in the Stoic Cleanthes). It appears in Jewish anthologies of proof texts useful for showing pagans the truth about God, and Paul may have learned it from such a text. (Greeks cited Homer and other poets as proof texts in a manner similar to how Jewish people cited Scripture; they also exhibited their education by their array of quotations.) Some philosophers criticized poets as too mythological, but others freely used their wording to prove their own case.

Ac 17:29. Many philosophers viewed images of deities as at best props to remind people of the deities; most at least retained them for their symbolic value, however, unlike Jews, including Paul (v. 30).

Ac 17:30. Speakers sometimes reserved their most controversial arguments for the end of the speech, first building agreement where possible. After building rapport with some of his hearers through much of the speech, here Paul breaks with his audience's views; although philosophers spoke of conversion to philosophy through a change of thinking, Paul here clearly communicates the Jewish doctrine of repentance toward God. Many philosophers emphasized knowledge of God; Paul's claim of their ignorance (here and in v. 23) would not be flattering.

Ac 17:31. The Greek view of time was that it would simply continue, not that history had a future climax in the day of judgment. (The closest idea, the Stoic conception of a cyclical repetition of history, is quite unlike the biblical prophets' future "day" of judgment.) Most offensive is Paul's doctrine of the resurrection; see comment on verse 32.

Acts 17:32-34

Response of the Intellectuals

Although Paul's message to the intellectual elite of his day does not produce massive immediate results, his ministry to the Areopagus is effective, apparently reaching even some of the elite.

Ac 17:32. Unlike many philosophers, Epicureans (17:18) denied the soul's immortality: they believed that the soul was material, like the body, and died with it. Greeks traditionally believed in a shadowy afterlife in the underworld (perhaps similar to the Old Testament *refa'im*); some no longer believed in afterlife; some now accepted reincarnation (found in some philosophers); under Plato's influence some Greeks sought to free the immortal soul from worldly existence so it could escape back to the pure heavens from which it was created. Stoics believed that the soul lived on after death (although, like everything else, it was cyclically resolved back into primeval fire), but like other Greeks they could not conceive of a resurrection of the body. Many Greeks believed in ghosts (disembodied souls) on the earth, but physical "resurrection" would conjure images of reconstituting corpses. Those who wanted to hear him again apparently maintained intellectual interest in something "new" (cf. 17:21); Epicureans (17:18) were likely among the mockers.

Ac 17:33-34. The Areopagus probably held about a hundred members but included only those of highest status in this university community, so the conversion of Dionysius is significant. Modern readers who judge Paul's work in Athens a failure on the basis of 1Co 2:1 have missed Luke's point (the emphasis of Acts is on his success, and the original readers of Acts could not simply turn to 1 Corinthians).

Damaris would not have been a member of the ruling Areopagus court and might have simply been listening in the marketplace (17:19-20), but she may have belonged to the elite. Although traditionally the most educated and publicly seen women in Athens were prostitutes and foreigners, some schools of philosophers (including Epicureans, Pythagoreans and some Stoics) had some women disciples, though they were always a minority. Damaris may have been a philosopher, or (more likely) the student of one.

Additional Notes from The Bible Readers Commentary (BBRCC)

More noble character (17:11). The Berean Jews were "more noble" because they valued truth and so daily tested Paul's teaching against their standard of truth, the O.T. The Thessalonian Jews had been more concerned with the number of Greeks who showed respect for Judaism! than with truth.

You and I are "more noble" when we too set aside personal considerations in order to discern, and do, God's will.

Gentile evangelism (17:22-31). Paul's address was before Athens' "Council of Ares," the government of this Gk. city-state. His strategy was: (1) seek a point of contact, which here was an altar dedicated to an "unknown god," v. 22-23; (2) discuss the nature of God and His relationship to the creation, showing that even Gk. poets and philosophers have glimpsed the truths Paul now presents, v. 24-28; and (3) affirm that God, who calls on all to reject idolatry and repent, has not only appointed a day of judgment but has proven His intervention in human affairs by the resurrection of Jesus, v. 29-31.

While the form of Paul's sermon is philosophical and ideally suited for its context, the content remains totally biblical. We can change approach to suit an audience. We can never change the message itself.

Judgment day (17:31). One basic element in the Christian message is that God, though more intent on repentance than punishment, will judge human beings (cf. 1Pe 4:5; Heb 10:30). As Ro 2:8 says, "For those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger." The fact is that as sinners every human being is already condemned, already under the wrath of God. Only trust in Christ can provide forgiveness and acquittal on judgment day.

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Wikipedia: Areopagus (Mars Hill)

[\[Skip rest of Mars Hill sections\]](#)

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Areopagus>

The Areopagus ([/ˌæriˈɒpəɡəs/](#)) is a prominent rock outcropping located northwest of the [Acropolis](#) in [Athens, Greece](#). Its English name is the composite form of the Greek name Areios Pagos, translated "[Ares](#) Rock" ([Ancient Greek](#): Ἀρειος Πάγος). In classical times, it functioned as the court for trying deliberate homicide. Ares was supposed to have been tried here by the [gods](#) for the murder of [Poseidon](#)'s son [Halirrhothius](#) (a typical example of an [aetiological](#) myth).

The origin of its name is not clear. In Ancient Greek, πάγος *pagos* means "big piece of rock". Areios could have come from [Ares](#) or from the [Erinyes](#), as on its foot was erected a temple dedicated to the Erinyes where murderers used to find shelter so as not to face the consequences of their actions. Later, the [Romans](#) referred to the rocky hill as "Mars Hill", after [Mars](#), the Roman God of War. Near the Areopagus was also constructed the basilica of [Dionysius Areopagites](#).



The Areopagus as viewed from the [Acropolis](#).

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The Areopagus, like most city-state institutions, continued to function in [Roman](#) times, and it was from this location, drawing from the potential significance of the Athenian altar to the [Unknown God](#), that the [Apostle Paul](#) is said to have delivered the famous speech, "Now what you worship as something unknown

I am going to proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands." ([Areopagus sermon](#), [Acts 17:24](#))



Engraved sermon of [St. Paul](#) on the [Areopagus](#) (Greek: Ἀρειος Πάγος) in [Athens](#). His sermon, at the suggestion of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers who encountered him, was delivered in fall of A.D. 50, or Feb/March 51. The plaque cites Acts 17:22-32: So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: "Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. ..."



[Acropolis of Athens](#) view from Areopagus hill.



[Athens](#) viewed from the Areopagus hill by day



View across the Agora area, Acropolis on left, Mars Hill on right - 2007



View across the Agora area, Acropolis on left, Mars Hill on right - 2009

The Gospel on Mars Hill: foundations for a Christian worldview, and for culture-transforming service

<http://nicensysatheol.blogspot.com/2010/11/unit-2-gospel-on-mars-hill-foundations.html>



Mars Hill, at the foot of the Acropolis in Athens (cf video tour [here](#))

Mars Hill “Tour”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sKWheEjOV_E [Video]

What happened at Mars Hill in the Bible?

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Mars-Hill.html>

Paul's Sermon on Mars Hill: A Biblical Model for Practical Apologetics [Recommended]

<http://jmsmith.org/downloads/Paul-at-Mars-Hill.pdf> [PDF]

For more details from this article see: [Apologetics – Paul’s Sermon on Mars Hill](#)



Mars Hill, Bridge Building, and the Gospel in a Pluralistic World

<http://www.paul-gould.com/2015/03/04/mars-hill-bridge-building-and-the-gospel-in-a-pluralistic-world/>

Preaching the Gospel ~ Acts 17 Bible Lesson for Kids

<https://www.futureflyingsaucers.com/preaching-the-gospel-acts-17-bible-lesson-for-kids/>

Paul's Evangelism (At Mars Hill, Athens)

<https://www.evangelicaloutreach.org/aloneinathens.htm>

(Note: Site is ultra-Free Will, but included as it makes a few interesting points about the event.)

Paul cited three elementary facts about God tailored for them: (1) He is the creator of everything and everyone, (2) He does not dwell in temples, and (3) He is not served by human hands.

Mars Hill continued on next page...

Paul's Mars Hill Appeal

<http://www.letusreason.org/Current56.htm>

Paul On Mars Hill (A Gospel of Thanksgiving)

http://www.caneybaptistchurch.org/LB_Sermons/PAUL%20ON%20MARS%20HILL.pdf [PDF]

Excerpt:

On Mars Hill Paul preached the same Gospel he had always preached, but he preached it in a new way. The *Zondervan Reference Bible* tells us: "Paul does not begin his address by referring to Jewish history or by quoting the Jewish Scriptures, as he did in the synagogue of Pisidian Antioch (cf. 13:16-41). He knew it would be futile to refer to a history no one knew or argue from fulfillment of prophecy no one was interested in or quote from a book no one read or accepted as authoritative. Nor does he develop his argument from the God who gives rain and crops in their season and provides food for the stomach and joy for the heart, as he did at Lystra (cf. 14:15-17). Instead, he took for his point of contact with the council an altar he had seen in the city with the inscription *Agnosto Theo* ("To an Unknown God").

When Paul finished his sermon some 'sneered,' some were mildly interested, but a few believed and were converted. Let us look at the audience to which Paul preached.

Paul on Mars Hill

Part 1: <https://www.minneapolischurch.net/paul-on-mars-hill-1> -- Understanding the Thinking of the Unconverted Man [Audio and PDFs and Word Doc files available for download]

Part 2: <https://www.minneapolischurch.net/paul-on-mars-hill-2> -- How to Preach the Gospel to the Heathen [Audio and PDFs and Word Doc files available for download]

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At the time of Paul's visit to Athens, that city was no longer important as a political seat; Corinth was the commercial and political center of Greece under the Roman Caesars. But Athens was still the university center of the world. It was the heir of the great philosophers, the city of Pericles and Demosthenes, of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Sophocles, and Euripides -- these men who established patterns of thought that have affected human learning for centuries. Almost all philosophies follow, in some degree, the teachings of these men. But Athens was long past its zenith when Paul visited it. It was now four hundred years after the golden age of Greece, and, though Athens was still a center of art, beauty, culture, and knowledge, the city had lost all political importance.

Remember that Paul came down from Berea with certain unnamed Christians and was left alone in Athens. He sent word back to Silas and Timothy, whom he had left in Berea, to join him there. Evidently the apostle did not intend to stay long in Athens. He was heading for Corinth, the political capital, for Paul always focused upon those areas where the commerce of life flowed and where the influence of a church would rapidly reach out into the surrounding regions. He had decided to wait for Silas and Timothy in Athens, and Luke now tells us what happened there, as doubtless it was later told to him by Paul himself:

Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols. So he argued in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the market place every day with those who chanced to be there. Some also of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers met him. (Acts 17:16-18a RSV)

This section is a powerful revelation of why the gospel needs to be presented to every culture and every age of the world. While Paul was waiting at Athens, he did what any tourist does in Athens: He went sightseeing. If you have been in Athens, you know what a striking city this is. There are the great temples of the Acropolis, crowned by the Parthenon -- now in a ruined state but nevertheless still one of the most beautiful buildings in all the world. There are many other theaters, temples, and marketplaces of ancient Athens which can still be seen.

As the apostle walked around the city he saw the gods of Athens, the idols that were being worshipped. One of the ancient writers tells us that at this time there were 30,000 gods in Athens! Many of these statues have survived and you will find copies of them everywhere as samples of ancient art. Paul recognized that these were not merely objects of art, but were actually gods being worshipped by the people of Athens. Petronius, one of the ancient historians, said that it was easier to find a god in Athens than a man! With 30,000 of them, you can see why this would be true.

Luke tells us that Paul's spirit was moved when he saw this. He was provoked. The Greek word is the word from which we get our word *paroxysm*. Paul felt an intense paroxysm of the spirit, a storm within, as he saw the city given over to idolatry. Each idol revealed that these men and women of Athens had a great capacity for God. They knew there was something beyond man, and they were seeking for it. But each idol also revealed a twisting, a distorting, of that capacity, a sabotaging of it. So, as the apostle went around the city, his spirit was greatly troubled to see men and women blasted by this prostitution of their human powers through the worship of false gods.

What Paul felt was very much akin to what must have moved a group of Christian students recently when they ran an ad in the *Stanford Daily*. I have quoted parts of this before, but I would like to read one paragraph again because it seems to me to capture the exact sense of what gripped the apostle's heart in Athens:

Why are we Christians willing to follow Jesus into suffering in order to accomplish his mission of liberation? Because Jesus has changed our minds about a lot of things, and we can no longer tolerate the foolishness and futility that is passed out as wisdom at this university. We are tired of the "enlightenment" of this age which is blindly ignorant of its intellectual slavery to materialism and its contradictory obligation to ethical relativism. We are tired of seeing people's lives wasted and unfulfilled because of their submission to the established world order.

That expresses exactly what the apostle felt as he moved about the city, and saw the cloud of idolatry that hung over this city, blotting out the truth and light, and plunging these people into the darkness of superstition. So he began to preach. He could not help it. He knew that the only message that could help people in this state was the delivering word of Jesus. There were three groups to whom he spoke:

First he went into the synagogue, as his custom was, and there spoke to the religious people, the Jews and devout persons who were there. These Jews (and the Greeks who were following Judaism) were opposed to the idolatry of the city, but could do nothing to prevent it. There was nothing they said that could help the city. They themselves were delivered from idolatry, but they were powerless to deliver the city because they were focusing on their own religious experience. To these religious persons, Paul preached the gospel with seemingly little effect.

Then there were the common citizens of the city whom he met in the marketplace, the agora of ancient Greece -- tradesmen, people going about their business, commercial people coming in with their wares to the city square. There he met them and talked with them. Here were people who were unthinking victims of the idolatry that held the city in its grip. They were sunken in superstition, gripped by fear, uncertainty, dread of darkness, and inner tensions and turmoil. These are always the results of following false gods.

Then there was a third group, the philosophers. These were men who were delivered themselves from the crass idolatry of the city, but who were offering, as an alternative, the barren concepts of pagan philosophy. There are two kinds mentioned here, the Epicureans and the Stoics. Now, do not think that we have left Epicureanism and Stoicism behind, for we have not; they are very much in evidence today.

The Epicureans were atheists; they denied God's existence. They denied a life after death. They were also materialists, and felt that this life was the only thing that really existed and that, therefore, men should get the most out of it. They felt that pleasure was the highest virtue, and that pain was the opposite. Their motto (and it still persists to this day) was "Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die." They were what we would call today "existentialists," living for the experience of the moment. This is a widespread philosophy in our day, although it is no longer called Epicureanism.

The Stoics, followers of the philosopher Zeno, were pantheists. That is, they believed that everything is God, and that he does not exist as a separate entity, but is in the rocks and trees and every material thing. Their attitude toward life was one of ultimate resignation, and they prided themselves on their ability to take whatever came. Their motto, in modern terms, was "Grin and bear it." They urged moderation: "Don't get over-emotional, either about tragedy or happiness." Apathy was regarded as the highest virtue of life. You will recognize there are many people today who feel that the best thing they can do is to take whatever comes and handle it the best they can. These Stoics were all proud fatalists, and there are many like them today. Luke gives us the initial reaction of these two philosophical groups to Paul:

And some said, "What would this babbler say?" [Those were the Epicureans.] Others said, "He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities" -- because he preached Jesus and the resurrection. [These were the Stoics.] And they took hold of him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know what this new teaching is which you present? For you bring some strange things to our ears; we wish to know therefore what these things mean." Now all the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new. (Acts 17:18b-21 RSV).

This is a very revealing reaction. The Epicureans, who were basically atheistic materialists, were contemptuous of what they heard from Paul. They treated him with utter disdain. They said, "What would this babbler say?" **The word *babbler* is literally "seed-pecker." They saw Paul as one of the little birds in the marketplace going around pecking at seeds here and there.** They regarded him as a mere collector of fragments of truth, gathering a few choice words from philosophies that he had picked up along the way and trying to impress people. They smiled and dismissed him contemptuously.

But the Stoics were interested. Yet Luke is careful to tell us that their interest did not arise out of a genuine desire to know and understand what Paul said, but out of a shallow curiosity that was intrigued by the fact that he seemed to present two new gods -- one named Jesus and the other named Resurrection.

This was not an unusual concept for Athens; throughout the city you could find altars erected to various themes. There were altars to Shame, altars to Reason, to Virtue, and to various themes. When they heard Paul speak of resurrection, they thought this was the name of a god, and that he was preaching two new deities. They pricked up their ears because, as Luke said, "All they lived for was to hear something new." That is modern too, is it not?

Here in ancient Athens were all the classes of humanity that are still with us today. There were the religious oddballs, remote from life and powerless to affect it; there were the thoughtless idolaters, sunken in superstition, living lives of quiet desperation, as do millions of people today; there were the atheistic existentialists who were priding themselves upon the rejection of all supernatural things and were focusing upon the present existenc; and there were the self-sufficient fatalists who took pride in their ability to handle whatever comes and not show too much emotion in doing so. To all these the apostle presented one thing: The delivering word of Jesus, the word of the power of God unto salvation. In due course they brought him before the Areopagus.

If you visit Athens today you will be taken up a small rocky hill without buildings, west of the Acropolis, and told that this is the Mars Hill where Paul addressed the Athenian philosophers. I question that this is so, although the word *Areopagus* does mean Mars Hill. But it was also the name given to a court of judges who had the final authority in the city of Athens at this time. It is much more likely that it was this court before whom Paul was brought. They no longer met on Mars Hill, although they had originally. By this time they were meeting in the marketplace in one of the porches surrounding the area. So it is before the court of the Areopagus that Paul appears. In the message he gave to them, we have a splendid example of just how the gospel operates to deliver men. It is a fantastic message and I urge you to give careful attention as we look at it more closely now. There are three parts to it, beginning with a most captivating introduction:

So Paul, standing in the middle of the Areopagus, said: "Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, 'To an unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you." (Acts 17:22-23)

This is a most thoughtful introduction. A good introduction always begins where people are, and this is what Paul did. He began right where these Athenians were. He did not denounce them, he did not attack their idolatry; in fact, he paid them a compliment as far as he could. He said to them "Men of Athens, as I've been walking about your city, I've noticed one thing about you: You are a very religious people." The word he used was literally, "you are god-fearers." But the word he chose for "god" was rather unusual. Instead of the common word *theos*, which means God in his greatness, he chose the word *daimon*, demon, by which he implied that the gods they worshipped were lesser concepts than the great idea of God. They understood that he meant to compliment them because they had a concept of, and a capacity for, God. They were very much involved with and interested in God.

Then he said, "As I've been walking about, I found an altar to an unknown god." There were several of these in Athens. Many centuries before, a plague had been arrested by turning loose a flock of sheep within the city. Wherever the sheep were found they were slain and offered to a god. If they were slain near the altar of a recognized god they were dedicated to it; but if they were slain apart from any of these, an altar was erected and dedicated to an unknown god! Paul found one of these, and said, "This is the God I want to talk about. What you worship ignorantly I have come to declare to you." It was a great introduction. It reveals the emptiness of paganism. If you do not worship the true God, there is no end to your search; you will keep going forever. There were 30,000 gods in Athens, but they had not had enough yet; they had also erected altars to an unknown god! How clearly this voices the agony of humanity, the cry for a God they know exists, but cannot find.

Just last week, Mr. Roper was telling the staff of a young man who came up to him at a rally at Stanford. This young man, obviously upset, his eyes wild, rushed up to him, and seizing him by the shoulders and shaking him, said, "Can you tell me where I can find Dave Roper?" Dave said he felt almost like denying he knew him, but gulped, and admitted that he was Dave Roper. The young man immediately said, "Can you tell me how I can find God?" That was the hunger of his heart. This is what Paul sensed at Athens,

the hunger for the God they cannot find. In the rest of the message, he gives just two things: He unfolds the truth about the living God which idolatry denied, and then he shows them the corresponding truth about man which followed as a logical result of the truth about God:

"The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all men life and breath and everything." (Acts 17:24-25 RSV)

What is he saying here? First, that God is the Maker and not the one who was made. God was not created by man; he is the One who makes man and everything else that exists in all the universe. He is the originator of all things.

We have not moved very far from ancient idolatry. In the ancient world, they took a piece of gold or silver or wood and carved or formed an idol, thus worshipping the works of men's hands. Today we don't use images, but we still see men worshipping themselves, projected to infinite proportions. Man simply thinks of himself, projects this into infinity, and worships that. That is his god. That is exactly what idolatry did. Paul points out that this is not in line with reality. God is not the projection of man; God is greater than man. God originated man. Everything that exists came from his hands. He is the Maker, and not the made.

Second, God is the giver, and does not have any needs himself. "The God who made the world and everything in it is not served by human hands as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all men life and breath and everything." God is not looking for anything from man, as idolatry and paganism taught. Men had to bring gifts to the gods, they had to do things for their gods, to propitiate them and sacrifice to them, and bring them all kinds of things.

Men today are still doing the same. The gods of men today still make demands upon them. Do not think that we are free from idolatry, for if a god is that which is the most important thing in your life, that to which you give your time and effort and energy, that which occupies the primary place of importance to you, the thing you live for, then men have many gods even today. Money is a god for some. Fame is a god to others. Your children can be your gods. You yourself can be your own god; you can worship yourself. I am appalled at the number of people today who worship America and enthrone it as the highest value in life, the thing for which they would give their lives, the only thing worth living for. These are the false gods that people everywhere worship. They make continual demands upon us. They do nothing for us, but we must work for them.

Paul cancels all this out. He says the real God is one who gives, who pours out. He does not need anything from you. He does not live in temples made by man. I am sure he must have pointed to the Parthenon as he said that, for it was regarded as the home of Athene, the goddess for whom the city was named. God does not live in places like that, he said, but he is the one who made you and everything about you, and there is nothing you can give him that he needs. He is, rather, giving himself continually to you.

The third great truth was to show how God draws men and does not seek to evade them. To the pagans the gods dwelt on Mount Olympus, remote from humanity. Men had to go through perilous and hazardous journeys in order to find and placate their gods, to seek them out and find them, while the gods hid themselves from men. But Paul's word is that the true God is not doing that:

"And he made from one every nation of men to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their habitation, that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel after him and find him." (Acts 17:26-27a RSV)

The true God is the God of history. He made man as one race, originating from one source. The interesting thing is that today this statement is as scientifically sound as when it was first uttered. Science today admits that there is only one race of men, one species: Homo sapiens. Despite the differences of pigment, stature, and feature that exist around the world, there is only one race of men. They all come from one source. Furthermore, he has intervened to direct their lives through the course of history. He has determined where they shall live, and how long they will live there, how long a nation or empire

should take to rise and then fall again; doing so not arbitrarily, but based upon their reaction to the one great reason for which human beings exist: That they might find God, "that they might feel after him and find him." That is why God has allowed history.

The events of human history have all been to this end -- that they might find God, that man might be motivated to search for him. Remember, Hebrews 11:6 says, "For whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him..." (Hebrews 11:6 RSV). In Jeremiah 29:13 we read, "Thus says the Lord: ... when you seek me with all your heart, I will be found by you" (Jeremiah 29:10a, 29:13b-14a RSV). God is urging men to seek him. That is why catastrophes occur. That is why wars break out. That is why violence occurs. God allows the evil in men's hearts to break out in these terrible catastrophes, these tremendously difficult events, in order to show men that they are not independent; that is a self-delusion to fancy they can live without God for in him they live and move and have their being, as the apostle will say a little later. It is ridiculous, absurd, nothing but a self-delusive, deceitful trick, and dishonest in the extreme, to think that anyone can operate, as a man or a woman, without God. Their very life and breath is coming from him.

There are many people here this morning who could stand up and testify, if we gave you opportunity, that you lived for years in the grip of this idolatrous delusion that you were sufficient in yourself until something occurred that put you flat on your back, or broke your heart, or came crashing in as some great disappointment, and made you realize for the first time that you could not live without God. That is why history exists, that God may reveal himself as the God who draws men, who awakens them, who urges them to find him, to seek him, and who will reward those who diligently seek him. Now, in the next section, the apostle concludes with a wonderful statement about man. Here we learn some new things:

"Yet he is not far from each one of us, for
'In him we live and move and have our being';
as even some of your poets have said,
'For we are indeed his offspring.'

Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the Deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, a representation by the art and imagination of man. The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all men everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all men by raising him from the dead." (Acts 17:27b-31 RSV)

What a fantastic statement! It begins with the fact of the dignity of man, recognizing that man is God's offspring. It is not Biblical to go around telling people that man is nothing, that he is vile, that he is a worm, etc. This is not the Biblical view of man as he was created.

I sometimes hear Christians talking as though they were nothing and God is everything. Now, I understand what they mean, but the truth is: Man is not a mere nothing. He can *do* nothing, but the Bible never says that he *is* nothing. What the Bible says is that man is the image of God, and that he has a capacity to respond to God. He is made for God. Everywhere you go, even among the most degraded and primitive of men, you will find this pattern of the image of God. For one thing, you will never find a man, woman, boy, or girl who does not have a passion for life, who does not want to live, who is not in revolt against death and boredom and frustration and all the other negative qualities of life. They all want to seize hold of life. And you will never find a man, woman, boy or girl who does not have a passion for dominion, who does not want to succeed, who does not want to reach out and try something new and accomplish new objectives, to conquer new territory. That is because man is made in the image of God. Further, you will never find a human being who does not have some power to create, to invent, some ability to produce or fashion or make or shape. This is inherent in the heart of man everywhere; no animal ever does that. Also men seek to communicate, animals do not. These are all part of the image of God which is widespread everywhere. That image is man's greatest dignity.

But right along with this the apostle mentions the tragedy of man. "Being God's offspring [which even your pagan poets recognize is true], we ought not to think that the Deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, a representation by the art and imagination of man." He is saying that, if it is true that we are made with a

capacity for God, if we know that we are made to contain and reflect God, then it is not only insulting to God to make an idol of him, but it is also degrading to man. It is saying that we can be satisfied with things that are less than ourselves, that we can find satisfaction in trinkets and trifles and baubles, in material values. Wherever people act on that basis, you will always find them returning to childish actions, becoming childlike. Idolatry of any kind does this to man, degrades him, makes a man act like an infant. In Edwin Markham's great poem, *The Man with the Hoe*, as he is thinking of man in his low estate, he asks the question,

Is this the thing the Lord God made, and gave
To have dominion over sea and land,
To trace the stars, and search the heavens for power
And feel the passion of eternity?

Even in that degraded estate, there is a recognizable a capacity for God. The tragedy is that this capacity is being prostituted into something less than the God for which it was designed. That is what moved Paul so strongly.

The last thing Paul points out is man's responsibility. Men have lived, he says, in "times of ignorance." Now, these "times of ignorance" need to be understood carefully. This phrase does not refer to a certain date on the calendar. It is not speaking of Old Testament times, as such, or of past dispensations, before the present era. These "times of ignorance" are related only to the individual. That is, they refer to the times in your life, or my life, when we, as the offspring of God, creatures made by God and designed for God, were trying to satisfy ourselves with things that were less than God. This is always a time of ignorance, a time when a man is operating on a level that reveals his utter ignorance of reality. Paul declares that God overlooks these times. He does not wipe us out. He does not judge us, he does not hate us and reject us, but patiently waits while we live through these struggling times.

But the apostle further declares that when a man hears about Jesus, when he hears the good news that Jesus Christ is the way to the heart of God, then he is put in a most responsible position. When he learns the truth about Jesus, he then has a responsibility before God to change his mind, to go on no longer acting as he did before. That is what repentance means -- a change of mind. You are responsible to change your mind and lay hold of that which God has provided in Jesus Christ. Paul gives us here three great facts which underscore the importance of repentance:

First, there is an inescapable day coming. God has fixed a day when he will judge the world. Everyone knows this. You know it, don't you? You know there is a day coming when your life is going to be laid open before everyone, and all the value of it, or the lack of value, will be evident. There is coming a day when every life will be evaluated. Second, there is an unchallengeable Judge. The One who will do the evaluating will not be a god, remote upon Mount Olympus, but he will be a Man, someone who has lived right here with us, who knows what human life is like, who has felt everything we feel. He will be the One who passes judgment on that day. Third, God has made this evident to all by an irrefutable fact: He raised that Man from the dead. There is where Christianity ultimately rests. If you can disprove the resurrection of Jesus, you can destroy Christianity in one blow. But as long as that fact remains unshaken, undestroyed, Christianity is indestructible. It rests upon that one great demonstrable fact -- that God raised Jesus from the dead. That is the guarantee that all God says will happen. Now you can see what a fantastic effect this message must have had. Luke gives us, in these closing words, the reaction of Athens:

Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked; but others said, "We will hear you again about this." So Paul went out from among them. But some men joined him and believed, among them Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them. (Acts 17:32-34 RSV)

Some mocked. That means their pride was threatened. Mocking is always the defense of pride when it feels itself attacked but has no logical defense; it resorts to ridicule. This is still the reaction of many today. Whenever they hear of Jesus, they begin to ridicule. But Christianity ridiculed is always a sign of weakness, an admission of defeat. Second, some delayed. They succumbed to the curse of the intellectual -- academic detachment. They viewed themselves as outside the system they were examining

and thus detached from it. "Everyone else is subject to this but us." So they said, "We will listen to you again on this; we need more evidence." These are the delaying tactics which many intellectuals are using today. But some believed. That is the great word here. Some repented, changed their minds. This indicates that among these intellectuals there are earnest, honest people who were trying to find the answers to life. When they hear the good news about Jesus, and understand what this fantastic gospel message really is, how it delivers men from their superstitious fears, how it breaks through the darkness of men's minds and opens them up to the God of glory, the God of the universe, and to a resurrected Lord who, risen from the dead, seizes the scepter of universal empire, their hearts respond, and they believe.

Here is one such, Dionysius the Areopagite. He was one of the judges, an intellectual, a ruler of the city, but he became a Christian. With him was a woman named Damaris. I am glad that Luke included the name, here, of a woman, for this indicated again that these Greek women were searching for answers in the midst of the pagan darkness in which they lived. There were others among them. We do not know how many, perhaps just a few. Athens was much more resistant than any other city would be (a university city always is), but there were some who believed.

Here then is a church planted in Athens. We never hear anything about it again, although I suspect that the letters to the Corinthians were also shared with the church in Athens, because the cities were not very far apart. Paul addresses the Corinthian letters to "all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus..." (1 Corinthians 1:2b RSV). We do not know what happened to the church at Athens except that here, in the midst of this darkness, the light of Jesus Christ began to shine, and a body was formed. From that body, power began to penetrate into the secluded areas of darkness where evil sat entrenched within this great intellectual capital of the world, and to shake men loose, and to set them free from the chains of darkness. May God grant that this may be true in our day, where there is evident so much of the same idolatry that enslaved the people of Athens.

See: [Greek Philosophy](#) and [The Use of Greek Philosophy by Paul in the Bible](#)

Which are both in my other separate reference resources:

Reference Notes on Paul and Romans (and Galatians plus Ephesians)

Christian Scholarship: Biblical – Theological – Philosophical

Return to the beginning of: [Paul and the Gospel on Mars Hill \(Areopagus\)](#)

Return to the beginning:
[The Gospel that Paul Preached](#)

Mars Hill continued on next page...

Excerpts:

Up until now, Peter and Paul had been speaking to Jews and God-fearing Gentiles. His audience already believed in the God of the Jews and was already aware of that God had promised to send a Messiah. Therefore, those presentations began with God and the prophets.

But in Athens, Paul was addressing pagans. They may have known something about the God of the Jews, but they weren't God-fearers. Therefore, Paul had to start at a very different place. And, oddly enough, First Century Athens is much closer to 21st Century America than the synagogue in Pisidia Antioch or the Temple in Jerusalem. Most Americans, even those raised in a Christian home, know about as much about the prophets as the philosophers of the Areopagus.

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24 "The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, 25 nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. 26 And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, 27 that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel their way toward him and find him.

Paul asserts that there is a god/God who is the ultimate creator — an idea not that strange to the philosophers. In fact, it's not greatly different from [Plato's teachings in *Timaeus*](#).

"Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, 28 for "In him we live and move and have our being"; as even some of your own poets have said, "For we are indeed his offspring."

Matthew Henry explains,

[T]he apostle here quotes a saying of one of the Greek poets, Aratus, a native of Cilicia, Paul's countryman, who, in his *Phenomena*, in the beginning of his book, speaking of the heathen *Jupiter*, that is, in the poetical dialect, the supreme *God*, says this of him, *tou gar kai genos esmen—for we are also his offspring*.

To this point, Paul would be speaking well within Grecian philosophical thought — not that all would agree, but he began with his feet firmly planted within Greek thought. He was speaking biblical truths within the cultural context of Athens. He was beginning with common ground.

29 "Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man.

Again, by the First Century, [many philosophers questioned the reality of the pagan gods](#). Not all philosophers rejected the gods, and certainly neither the Roman government nor most people did. But Paul was speaking among philosophers.

30 *“The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, 31 because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”*

32 *Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. But others said, “We will hear you again about this.”*

Paul now makes a major leap from Greek to Jewish thought. The Greek philosophers rejected any idea of a resurrection. They did, however, accept the notion of an afterlife. You see, “resurrection” refers to a bodily resurrection, whereas the Greeks believed that a human’s immortal soul survived as a disembodied mist and shadow. It was not a physical existence nor was it an existence of pleasure and joy.

[N. T. Wright explains,](#)

All [Greek philosophers], however, were agreed: There was no resurrection. Death could not be reversed. Homer said it; Aeschylus and Sophocles seconded it. “What’s it like down there?” asks a man of his departed friend, in a third-century B.C.E. epigram. “Very dark,” comes the reply. “Any way back up?” “It’s a lie!” ...

Thus, Christianity was born into a world where one of its central tenets, resurrection, was universally recognized as false.

Now, this is a shocking conclusion, since most modern Christians take Plato to be right: we exist after death as disembodied souls only. And that’s exactly the nature of Greek thought — and yet the philosophers rejected Paul’s teachings on the spot. The notion of a resurrection — coming back to embodied life — was absurd to their way of thinking.

This demonstrates the degree to which the early church syncretically absorbed Platonic thought into its doctrines. After all, all educated men knew Plato to be right! At least, that was the attitude of the educated, and thus his beliefs on the afterlife, women, and many other subjects was slowly incorporated into mainstream Christianity.

The Jews believed in a bodily resurrection, as did the earliest church fathers, although the Greeks did not. Indeed, [some declared acceptance of a bodily resurrection essential to salvation](#).

Now, the question of the bodily resurrection has risen in importance due to N. T. Wright’s *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church*, which I covered in some detail in the [“Surprised by Hope” series](#). Wright argues that the bodily resurrection fits well with the teaching in Revelation 21 – 22 that heaven will descend to earth, and God will renew the old heavens and earth to become the new heavens and earth. That is, we won’t “fly away” to heaven and leave this old world behind. This world will be redeemed, as also taught by Paul —

(Rom 8:20-22 ESV) 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.

The entire creation was cursed and will be “set free” from “bondage,” that is, redeemed from slavery. That will happen at the conclusion of God’s redemptive mission. It fits.

Thus, Paul contradicts the Greek notion that the world is evil and so the souls of the righteous must exist somewhere else. Rather, the Creation is good, but like humans, fallen. But God will make it all fresh and new at the same time he resurrects us, giving us new bodies to live in the new heavens and earth where will walk with God beside the Tree of Life.

At the Areopagus (Acts 17:22-31): Pauline Apologetics and Lucan Rhetoric

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/mjtm/4-5.htm>

Excerpt:

In Acts 17:22-31, Paul's description of a self-sufficient God and a dependent humanity, his condemnation of idolatry as the product of an ignorant age, and his proclamation of an age of repentance are all themes that would not have been out of place in the mouth of an Old Testament prophet. What is remarkable is the skill with which he adapted his message to a Hellenistic point of view. And equally remarkable is Luke's contextualizing of the speech to make its subversive sub-text clear to his readers. Understandably, no amount of rhetorical Hellenizing could make the resurrection palatable to the Athenians: Paul does not even try. The specifically Christian portion of Paul's proclamation was a stumbling block for the Athenians, as it has been – and continues to be – for many others. Nevertheless, this central tenet of Christianity must continue to be addressed: there are undoubtedly many ways to understand the nature and meaning of the resurrection, but for Christians there is no avoiding the necessity of confronting it.

Did Paul Make a Fundamental Mistake in Athens? – Paul the Philosopher (Part I)

<https://credohouse.org/blog/did-paul-make-a-fundamental-mistake-in-athens-paul-the-philosopher-part-i>

Bottom-line: **NO!** See details below...

Paul as a Culturally-Relevant Bridge-BUILDER: Paul the Philosopher (Part II)

<https://credohouse.org/blog/paul-as-a-culturally-relevant-bridge-builder-paul-the-philosopher-part-ii>

Paul, the New Socrates in Athens: Paul as Philosopher (Part III)

<https://credohouse.org/blog/paul-the-new-socrates-in-athens-paul-as-philosopher-part-iii>

Part 1 – Details

1. The charge is an argument from silence: We could ask why Luke would devote so much space to Paul's speech when the message ran contrary to the preaching of the cross—and could undermine Luke's own theological strategy in the book of Acts.

2. The claim reads into Acts a specific situation in Corinth: In 1 Corinthians, Paul was addressing the congregation's arrogance and one-upmanship—a complete departure from dependence on the sufficiency of Christ's cross-work and the Spirit's power. They had emphasized their giftedness in knowledge and wisdom and rhetoric. They glorified speaking in tongues, elevating this over other spiritual gifts; they considered themselves as having "arrived": "you have become kings without us," Paul told them (1 Cor. 4:8). They elevated social status so highly that they were willing to tolerate—even boast about—gross immorality in one of its prominent members (ch. 5).^[3] And the new covenant blessings through the Spirit overshadowed any sense that a future bodily resurrection was still needed (15:12). The Corinthians' skewed theological perspective emphasized the "already" but ignored the "not yet"—a view known as "over-realized eschatology."^[4]

Yes, the Corinthians believed they had *all* blessings in Christ—and nothing was left for the new heaven and new earth! The point is this: we should treat *Paul's* writing about the Corinthian situation on its own terms and not read Paul's correspondence back into Luke's theological strategy in Acts.

We could add that in 1 Corinthians itself, Paul is still quoting pagans! He cites Menander when he writes, "Bad company corrupts good character" (15:33). *Paul uses the same strategy of quoting pagans in*

Corinth—just as he did in Athens! For good measure, we could also throw in Paul's citing the Cretan thinker Epimenides in Titus 1:12.

3. A review of Paul's ministry in Acts shows this charge to be inaccurate; Paul uses the same general approach before and after Athens: Before Athens, Paul would "reason" with people in an attempt to "persuade" them (cp. 28:23). He does so in *Thessalonica* (17:2) and during his visit to *Athens* (17:19). Also, Paul continues to do so after Athens—in *Corinth* (18:4) and *Ephesus* (18:19; 19:8,9).

4. When we compare Paul's message at Lystra (Acts 14) with the one at Athens, the theological themes—rooted in the Old Testament—are the same. Paul's apologetic at Lystra includes the witness of God in creation—among other themes echoed in Athens.

PAUL AT LYSTRA: ACTS 14:15-17	PAUL AT ATHENS: ACTS 17:24-28
1. GOD AS CREATOR: "... preach the gospel to you that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them" [5] (15).	"The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands" (24). [6]
2. GOD AS LIFE-GIVER TO (NON-DIVINE) HUMANS: "We are also men of the same nature as you" (15).	"He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation. He Himself gives to all people life and breath . . ." (25-6). [7]
3. THE WITNESS OF GOD IN CREATION: "and yet He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness" (17).	"He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things; that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us" (26-7).
4. PREVIOUS IGNORANCE: "In the generations gone by He permitted all the nations to go their own ways" (16).	"Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance . . ." (30)
5. CALL TO REPENTANCE: ". . . turn from these vain things to a living God" (15).	". . . declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent" (30)

Paul used the same basic approach in both places. In fact, at Athens he even had opportunity to mention Jesus and his resurrection—which is more than he was able to do at Lystra![\[8\]](#)

5. The "failure" charge misses the point of Paul's own goal to contextualize the gospel: In 1 Corinthians itself, Paul declared himself a slave of all so that he might win some—a Jew to the Jew and a Greek to the Greeks (9:19-27). Paul adapted to his audiences. When Paul wrote to the Corinthians, the Athenian strategy would not have been far from his mind.

6. Paul's approach in Athens resulted in a far more positive response than Paul has in other places in his travels: Paul and Barnabas at Lystra were worshiped as Zeus and Hermes—and then Paul was stoned when he and Barnabas resisted (ch. 14)! Paul's speech to Jewish people would result in a riot in Jerusalem in chapter 21!

7. Luke refers to the gospel as "the word of God" throughout Acts, and this is the message of Jesus (in Luke) and his messengers (in Acts): The "word of God" (cp. the sower and the seed in Lk. 8:8; cp. Jesus' message as the "word of God" [5:2]) multiplies and bears much fruit throughout the book of Acts (5:31; 6:7; 12:24; 13:7, 15,44, 46, 48, 49; 19:20). This is the general theme of Acts, and Paul's

speech at Athens is no exception. In fact, in 17:18, we're told that Paul is *preaching the good news* about "Jesus and his resurrection." Contrary to detractors, Paul's preaching in Athens is quite orthodox.^[9]

8. Paul, who usually sought out any available *synagogues* on his journeys (where he reasoned, dialogued, and persuaded) needed to take a different strategy with pagans at Mars Hill—though he still carried out this task in dependence upon the Spirit. Notice that Paul quoted pagan thinkers, but he still ended with Christ and the resurrection, calling for repentance—the very theme that the other sermons in Acts called for.

In my experience, I regularly find Christians resistant to Christian philosophy (after all, doesn't Colossians 2 tell us to "beware of philosophy"?!), and they view [apologetics](#) as a "work" that diminishes the "grace of God." People need to hear "the gospel"—end of story. However, unless God's Spirit works, "giving the gospel" or engaging in apologetics will amount to nothing. And why can't God use objective, checkable evidences and arguments to reveal to people the intellectual integrity of the Christian faith? As we read the Scriptures, we see that proclaiming the gospel and evidences often go hand-in-hand. In the book of Acts we see the apostles engaging in a defense of the Christian faith on a regular basis, appealing to evidences and events that were not done in a corner.

And what about 1 Corinthians, which so strongly emphasizes the centrality of the cross and the Spirit's power? In chapter 15, Paul gives his strongest apologetic for the resurrection, appealing to its historicity and objectivity—complete with lists of eyewitnesses, including Paul's own testimony!

Paul's Mars Hill address truly reflects the very heart of Paul's cross-centered theological and missiological strategy. As N.T. Wright observes: "Much Pauline scholarship in the last generations has ignored this [Areopagus] speech . . . But when we begin . . . with the Jewish doctrine of monotheism and its Christian redefinition, the speech makes a great deal of sense as a summary of exactly the kind of thing Paul might well have said."

Part 2

In 1 Corinthians 9, Paul affirms the goal of becoming "all things to all people" when communicating the gospel. Providentially, Paul's own cultural background enabled him to speak with credibility *in Athens*—one of the Roman Empire's cultural centers (Alexandria and Tarsus being the other key cultural hubs at this time). According to Ben Witherington, "Paul was in the upper 1-2 percent of well-educated people of his day."^[1] For one thing, Paul had studied under the noted rabbi, Gamaliel I (Ac. 22:3). Also, being from Tarsus—"a citizen of no insignificant city" (Acts 21:39)—Paul could speak to the cultural élites of his day.

Why was Tarsus so significant philosophically, politically, and culturally?

- It was the native city of various famous philosophers, including Zeno (the founder of Stoicism), Antipater, Athenagoras, and Nestor.
- The Stoic poet Aratus (whom Paul cites [Acts 17:28]) was from Soli in Cilicia, near Tarsus.
- The noted orator Cicero governed Tarsus in the mid-50s BC.
- Mark Antony met Cleopatra here in 41 BC.
- Josephus said that the Jewish community here was quite prominent. He called it "the noblest city" the Cilicians had (Antiquities 1.6.1). It had prominent Jewish community. Jerome Murphy-O'Connor has observed: "As a centre of learning [stagnant Athens] had been surpassed even by Tarsus."^[2]

Because of his background, Paul was a Tarsian, a well-educated Jew, and a Roman citizen—a noteworthy convergence of influences vital to Paul's ministry to the Gentiles. Being an extremely well-lettered and –credentialed man (2 Cor. 11:21-22; Phil. 3:4-6), God strategically used him as an instrument in cultural centers such as Athens, Corinth, and Ephesus. This is in contrast to, say, Peter, James, and

John, who would work primarily amongst the circumcised/Jews (Gal. 2:9). Again, as Witherington points out,

No doubt [Paul's background] provided him with a broader view of Jews and Greeks, women and men, slaves and free persons (cf. 1 Cor. 9:18ff.) than would be the case if he had been raised in a cultural backwater somewhere in the rural parts of the Holy Land, as some of the early Jewish Christians apparently were.[\[3\]](#)

When Paul encountered Stoics and Epicureans at Athens, he was by no means out of his element. In fact, he has greater theological sympathy with the Stoics than the Epicureans. On the one hand, the Epicureans were atomistic materialists (all reality is comprised of atoms). Whereas Paul believed that we came from Adam, the Epicureans maintained that humans come from atoms. We come to know through our sense perceptions (and we formulate “concepts” based on those perceptions). Also, the Epicureans were concerned with a life of pleasure and an avoidance of pain. Theologically, they believed that the gods exist, but they are utterly uninvolved in the world (a perspective somewhat resembling the deistic viewpoint). There is no such thing as an active, engaged divine providence. According to the Epicureans, religion is detrimental in that (a) it creates an unhealthy fear of post-mortem uncertainties and (b) a preoccupation with the prying, interfering gods, which terrorizes humans and destroys their happiness. In terms of eschatology, there is no final judgment; death is the last word.

By contrast, the Stoics were materialistic pantheists (e.g., Marcus Aurelius, Seneca, Epictetus).[\[4\]](#) The divine pervaded everything and (in the form of fate) governed all. God was considered the Soul of the universe and the universe as the body of God. Unlike Epicurean pursuit of pleasure, the Stoics pursued self-preservation through contemplative, practical, and rational reason. There was for them a kind of divine providence, but no real judgment. At death, the individual soul was reabsorbed into the ever-living Fire.

In what ways did Paul try to connect with the Stoics? Paul was truly a discerning Christian thinker. He embraced the view that all truth is God's truth, which meant sorting out the intellectual and spiritual wheat from the chaff. For example, like Seneca the Stoic, Plutarch viewed humanity in its diversity and urged it to think of itself as one community, “even as a herd that feeds together and shares the pasturage of a common field.”[\[5\]](#) Likewise, Paul tells the Athenians, “*He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation. He Himself gives to all people life and breath . . .*” (25-6). Paul here affirms both the unity and diversity of humanity. He refers to the “harmonious patchwork of diversity” of human cultures that cover the face of the earth (Gen. 1:28; 9:1, 7; 10:5, 20, 31-2) under God's governance.[\[6\]](#)

On the other hand, though Paul quotes Aratus, the Stoic Cilician poet, he does not quote him fully. Notice how he cites the second part without quoting the first: “It is with Zeus that every one of us in every way has to do, *for we are also his offspring.*”[\[7\]](#) Also, unlike the Stoics' belief in an *impersonal fate*, Paul's affirms the biblical message of a *personal providence*. Furthermore, Paul outdoes the Stoics of his day by sending them back to their original sources and earliest beliefs. Zeno, the founder of Stoicism, rejected the building of temples to the gods. Later Plutarch would mock the Stoics for doing the opposite of what their founder said: “The Stoics, while applauding this [anti-temple building] as correct, attend the mysteries in the temples, go up to the Acropolis, do reverence to statues, and place wreaths upon shrines, though these are works of builders and mechanics.”[\[8\]](#) The Stoic Dio Chrysostom at the end of the first century would even defend the use of images.[\[9\]](#) Again, Paul is calling his Stoic hearers back to their philosophical roots—roots that are much closer to biblical revelation.

Finally, Paul's belief in the resurrection is quite a different view from that of his audience, and Paul isn't going to compromise on this fundamental point either. For Greeks, especially Epicureans, the idea of a bodily resurrection was impossible. Aeschylus said that at the inauguration of the Areopagus court, Apollo stated, “Once a man is slain, there is no resurrection.”[\[10\]](#) By contrast, Paul is not unwilling to say something that is philosophically out of vogue or disagreeable because of his commitment to the cross of Christ.

Paul's ministry at Athens reminds us that some worldviews may more closely resemble the biblical worldview than others. For example, Islam's view of God has greater similarities to the Jewish-Christian

faith than Buddhism or animism. Such similarities often make for easier bridge-building in certain respects. It appears that the mocking of Paul's being a "babbler" probably comes from the Epicureans (with whom Paul has the strongest disagreement); it is likely the *Stoics* who are open to hearing more of what he has to say.^[11]

Paul does this in a Jewish context as well. For example, Paul says that he was on trial because he affirmed his "hope of the resurrection of the dead" (23:6-7). In doing so, *he sides with the Pharisees* against the Sadducees before the Jewish Sanhedrin.

As witnesses for Christ, we should be prepared to utilize philosophical and cultural tools to build bridges while offering good reasons for our faith—just as the apostle Paul did.

[1] Ben Witherington III, *Paul's Narrative Thought World* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1994), 216.

[2] Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul: A Critical Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 108.

[3] *Ibid.*, 216.

[4] There were three phases in the development of Stoicism: the Early Stoa (300-200 BC), Middle Stoa (150-1 BC), and the Later Stoa (AD 1-180).

[5] Plutarch, *Moralia* 329B.

[6] William Larkin, *Acts* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1995), 257-8.

[7] Aratus, *Phaenomena* 5; cp. Cleanthes (c. 331-233 BC), *Hymn to Zeus* 4.

[8] Plutarch, *Moralia* 1034B.

[9] Oration 12.

[10] Aeschylus, *Eumenides* 648.

[11] G. Walter Hansen, "The Preaching and Defence of Paul," in *Witness to the Gospel: The Theology of Acts*, eds. I.H. Marshall and David Peterson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 313.

See: [Greek Philosophy](#) and [The Use of Greek Philosophy by Paul in the Bible](#)

Which are both in my other separate reference resources:

Reference Notes on Paul and Romans (and Galatians plus Ephesians)

Christian Scholarship: Biblical – Theological – Philosophical

See also: [Occurrences of Jesus Risen/Resurrected Mentioned by Apostles in the Bible](#)

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More Notes re: Acts 17:18 and related

(From various Bible commentary/notes sources)

NIV Study Bible 2008

Acts 17:18

Epicurean ... philosophers. Originally they taught that the supreme good is happiness but not mere momentary pleasure or temporary gratification. By Paul's time, however, this philosophy had degenerated into a more sensual system of thought.

Stoic philosophers. They taught that people should live in accord with nature, recognize their own self-sufficiency and independence, and suppress their desires. At its best, Stoicism had some admirable qualities, but, like Epicureanism, by Paul's time it had degenerated into a system of pride.

babbler. The Greek word meant “seed picker,” a bird picking up seeds here and there. Then it came to refer to the loafer in the marketplace who picked up whatever scraps of learning he could find and paraded them without digesting them himself. [NIVSBN08]

NET Notes

⁶⁶ sn An *Epicurean* was a follower of the philosophy of Epicurus, who founded a school in Athens about 300 B.C. Although the Epicureans saw the aim of life as pleasure, they were not strictly hedonists, because they defined pleasure as the absence of pain. Along with this, they desired the avoidance of trouble and freedom from annoyances. They saw organized religion as evil, especially the belief that the gods punished evildoers in an afterlife. In keeping with this, they were unable to accept Paul's teaching about the resurrection.

⁶⁷ sn A *Stoic* was a follower of the philosophy founded by Zeno (342-270 B.C.), a Phoenician who came to Athens and modified the philosophical system of the Cynics he found there. The Stoics rejected the Epicurean ideal of pleasure, stressing virtue instead. The Stoics emphasized responsibility for voluntary actions and believed risks were worth taking, but thought the actual attainment of virtue was difficult. They also believed in providence.

NLT Study Bible Notes

Epicurean...philosophers: Epicureanism was a popular school of Greek philosophy, founded by Epicurus (341-270 BC). Epicureans believed that the principal aim of life was to secure happiness. They thought of pleasure not in terms of sensual indulgence, as their critics charged, but in terms of tranquility. Their contemporaries often called them atheists; in their view, there were no gods to fear, and death simply marked the end of human existence. They sought their security in organized communities where they could live in contentment apart from society. • ***Stoic philosophers:*** Stoicism was founded by Zeno of Citium (335-263 BC) and became the most influential philosophy in the Greco-Roman world. It viewed the universe as permeated by Reason (sometimes referred to as God or Providence). Stoicism saw divine Reason as expressed in human reason and held that as humans made progress, they could advance from ignorance (the source of vice) to true knowledge (the source of virtue). They developed extensive lists of virtues and vices and produced detailed household codes to guide family behavior. Paul's teaching resembles that of the Stoics in his use of household codes and lists of virtues and vices (Ga 5:19-23; Ep 5:22-33; Col 3:18-4:1; 1Ti 3:1-13; 5:1-6:1). However, the message of Good News focusing on the life, death, and *resurrection* of Jesus Christ was *strange* and *foreign* to these Greek philosophers. • The air of superiority with which they addressed Paul as *this babbler* indicates the arrogance of some of these men.

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown (JFB)

18-21. certain ... of the Epicureans —a well-known school of *atheistic materialists*, who taught that pleasure was the chief end of human existence; a principle which the more rational interpreted in a refined sense, while the sensual explained it in its coarser meaning.

and of the Stoics —a celebrated school of *severe and lofty pantheists*, whose principle was that the universe was under the law of an iron necessity, the spirit of which was what is called the Deity: and that a passionless conformity of the human will to this law, unmoved by all external circumstances and changes, is the perfection of virtue. While therefore the Stoical was in itself superior to the Epicurean system, both were alike hostile to the Gospel. "The two enemies it has ever had to contend with are the two ruling principles of the Epicureans and Stoics— *Pleasure and Pride* " [Howson].

The Bible Reader's Commentary (BBRCC)

More noble character (17:11). The Berean Jews were "more noble" because they valued truth and so daily tested Paul's teaching against their standard of truth, the O.T. The Thessalonian Jews had been more concerned with the number of Greeks who showed respect for Judaism! than with truth.

You and I are "more noble" when we too set aside personal considerations in order to discern, and do, God's will.

Gentile evangelism (17:22-31). Paul's address was before Athens' "Council of Ares," the government of this Gk. city-state. His strategy was: (1) seek a point of contact, which here was an altar dedicated to an "unknown god," v. 22-23; (2) discuss the nature of God and His relationship to the creation, showing that even Gk. poets and philosophers have glimpsed the truths Paul now presents, v. 24-28; and (3) affirm that God, who calls on all to reject idolatry and repent, has not only appointed a day of judgment but has proven His intervention in human affairs by the resurrection of Jesus, v. 29-31.

While the form of Paul's sermon is philosophical and ideally suited for its context, the content remains totally biblical. We can change approach to suit an audience. We can never change the message itself.

Judgment day (17:31). One basic element in the Christian message is that God, though more intent on repentance than punishment, will judge human beings (cf. 1Pe 4:5; Heb 10:30). As Ro 2:8 says, "For those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger." The fact is that as sinners every human being is already condemned, already under the wrath of God. Only trust in Christ can provide forgiveness and acquittal on judgment day.

Jewish New Testament Commentary (JNTC)

Epicurean and Stoic philosophers . The followers of Epicurus (341-270 B.C.E.) denied the existence of a purposeful God and believed the universe originated by chance from a falling rain of atoms. They mocked the popular (pagan) gods and mythology. Their view of the soul was materialistic: it dissolved and dissipated at death. Thus the aim of life was gratification, not pursuit of higher or externally given moral and spiritual interests. Gratification could be gross and sordid if one was so inclined, or esthetic and refined. Today's successors to the Epicureans speak of "doing your own thing," and their unabashed selfishness is rarely ameliorated by the common qualification usually honored in the breach, "so long as it doesn't hurt anybody else."

Stoics were pantheists for whom "God" was merely a word standing for some vague spirit of reason in the universe. They understood the soul to be corporeal and at death somehow absorbed into this blurry "God." All the major Eastern religions and certain seemingly Western offshoots have at bottom a similar theology, that there is no transcendent God who created and rules the universe independently of human beings and their imaginings. The Stoic moral code was in some ways higher than that of the Epicureans, but for them the highest morality was an austere apathy and unconcern which regarded itself as superior to passion as well as circumstance. Many alienated people today repress the genuine hurt and guilt they

ought to feel and attempt to elevate their alienation into philosophy, thus ending up with a version of Stoicism. In this philosophy pleasure is not good and pain is not evil, for nothing really matters. “Reason” becomes a guide, but when “reason” finds nothing left to live for, suicide becomes the “reasonable” action—the first two leaders of Stoicism died by their own hand. In this century Albert Camus’s novel, *The Stranger*, and his essay, “The Myth of Sisyphus,” deal with this question from a nonbeliever’s standpoint (see my discussion in *Messianic Jewish Manifesto*, pp. 35-41, on history and the meaning of life).

Both Stoicism and Epicureanism (and their successors) oppose biblical religion. In the present verses we see how Sha’ul, expressing God’s love, dealt with people—sinners like everyone else—whose primary channel of life-expression was intellectual.

Tyndale Bible Dictionary (TBD)

Two specific philosophies are mentioned in the NT: Epicureanism and Stoicism (Ac 17:18). Epicureans followed the teachings of Epicurus (342?-270 BC), an Athenian philosopher who had taught practical ways of achieving a pleasant life through moderate behavior and stable human relationships. He believed that human beings are merely material objects produced by chance combinations of atoms—small, indestructible material pieces.

Stoics also emphasized moderate living, but they believed that there is an ultimate purpose in the world. This purposefulness is established by an all-pervading substance called Logos, or reason. However, like Epicureans, Stoics were materialists, believing all things to be made of matter, including humans, the divine, and the Logos (which they sometimes treated as God).

In Athens, Paul may have also encountered the “academic skeptics.” These philosophers emphasized the fallibility and finitude of human understanding to the point of withholding judgment whenever possible. However, they knew they had to make daily personal decisions, and they remained very curious about other people’s ideas. In fact, all the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there at the time of Paul’s visit seemed to sustain a high level of curiosity about new ideas (Ac 17:21), providing a mentally lively atmosphere.

It was only appropriate for Paul to present the gospel to these curious minds, and he was convincing enough to win some converts. He established a common ground by agreeing with ideas from two Greek philosophers: Epimenides (sixth century BC), “In him we live and move and have our being”; and Cleanthes the Stoic (third century BC), “We are his offspring.” Nevertheless, Paul inevitably offended most of his philosophic listeners by defending the uniqueness of a particular man, Jesus Christ, and by claiming that he had been resurrected from the dead—a claim that contradicted these philosophers’ materialist resignation to the finality of death. Clearly, Christianity entailed a dramatically different “philosophy.”

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City of Athens

Athens is a magic city in Greece which has 3000 years old. Athens seems like a maze when you climb up to Acropolis. Acropolis is known all over the world and that is also the most famous protected area is Because of Athens streets are intricate. Athens is the magic capital city in Greece which had adored by Gods and people along history. In addition, Athens hosts marvelous memories and Athens is also known as a place where was born civilization.



” Acropolis in ancient Athens ”

Mars Hill continued on next page...



" The Agora in Ancient Athens "

Prehistoric civilizations were generally built in Athens so the most important successful architectural buildings were constructed in Athens and it was created history of humanity.



" Acropolis And Full Moon "

Sacred Acropolis' year of built 5. Century before Christ, it means the age of the famous Periclis so Acropolis still shines as Pendelikon marble whiteness. Acropolis has a variable temple dating from 5. Century before Christ. Ancient Athens was built in that area also Athens architecture. That gorgeous landmark is seen everywhere of Athens. Starting point of Athens trips is Acropolis. Acropolis means *acro* "high place " and *polis* "city" in Greek. In Ancient Greek, the main purpose of the city planning was building place where could lived by Gods so acropolises were built in Greek. Acropolis in Ancient Age was very important in terms of Ancient Greek religion as well as military. Athena Nike (Victory) Temple, Parthenon, Erechtheion and Propylaion are also in that hill which was built in 5. Century before Christ.



” Temple of Athena Nike (Victory) ”

Mars Hill continued on next page...



"Erechtheion "



"The Parthenon Temple Acropolis, Athens"

Ancient Agora in Monastiraki, the most important place of Greek which was as politic, commercial, social and governmental centre of Greek. Shopping areas in ancient time were in also Monastiraki. Agora Museum and Stoa of Zeus Eleutherious and the others are in that ancient time bazaar.



” The Ancient Agora of Athens is located in the city center”

Mars Hill continued on next page...



" Monastirtaki "

Benaki Museum (Kolonaki), The Museum of Greek Folk Art- Plaka, Olympian Temple (Syntagma), Dionysus Theatre, National Archeology Museum (Exarhia), neoclassical houses, Turkish mosques, Byzantion churches, Plaka and Anafiotika historical centre of population are give hint rich history of Athens.

Mars Hill continued on next page...



" Temple of Olympian Zeus Athens Greece "

Mars Hill continued on next page...



” Gold jewelry from Mycenae, in the National Archaeological Museum, Athens ”

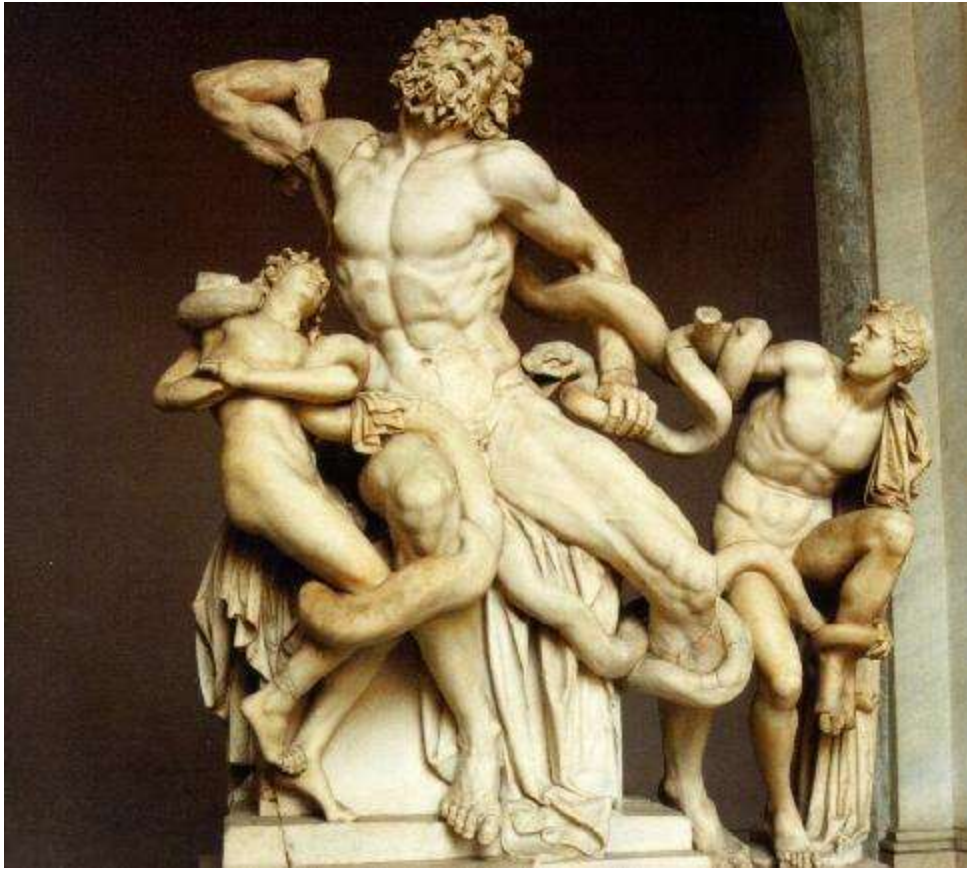
Mars Hill continued on next page...



" Plaka Anafiotika, Athens "

Athens is a cosmopolitan city which is also impressed by Hellenistic Culture. Hellen Festival is the best example of that culture. By the way, Athens is one of the symbol of European art.

More Mars Hill on Next Page...



” Greek Sculptures in Hellenistic Era “

Cine Pari Cinema in Plaka and Aigli Cinema in Zappeio are important open-air cinemas of Athens and they are very popular especially in summer. Ballet, opera, classical music, conferences and exhibitions are in Megaron Mousikis Athenon which is the one of modern concert saloon of Athens. Herodes Atticus Theatre, comedies by Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides represent from examples of Ancient Greek. Mathematician Plato, tragedy writers Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides was born in Athens.

More Mars Hill on next page...



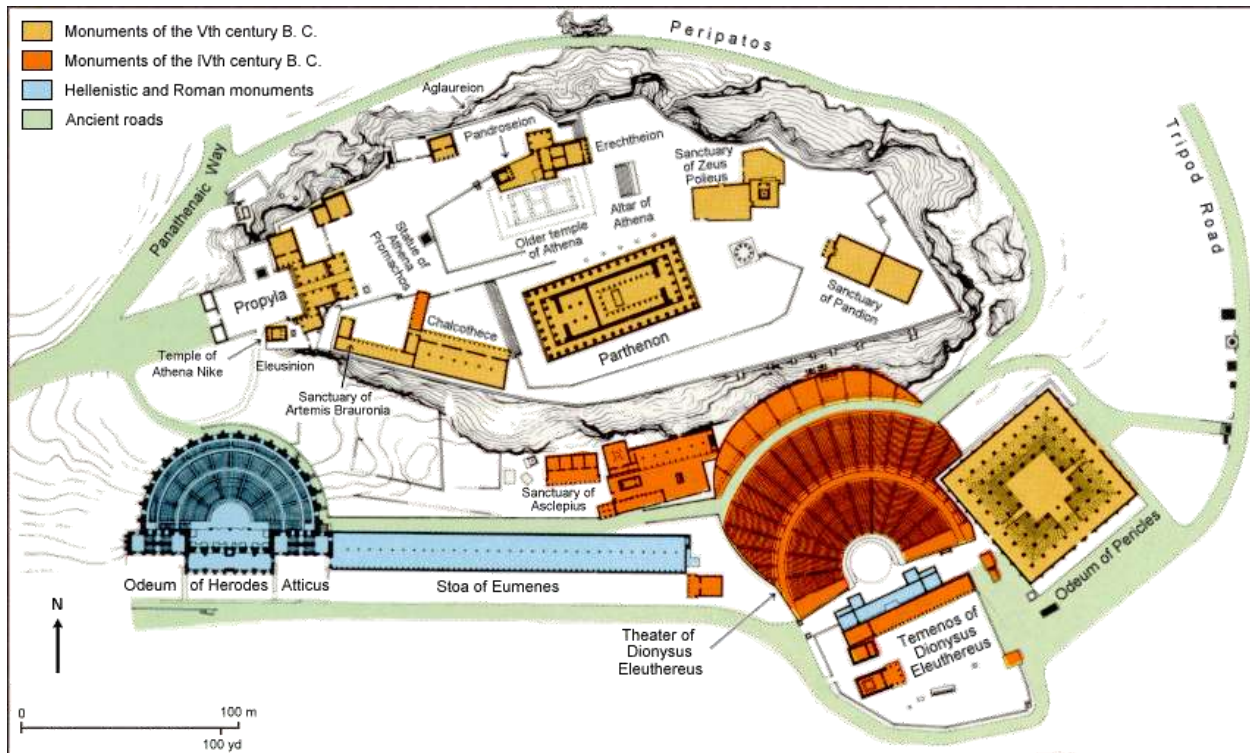
” Statues of ancient Greek philosophers Plato (left) and Socrates (right) ”

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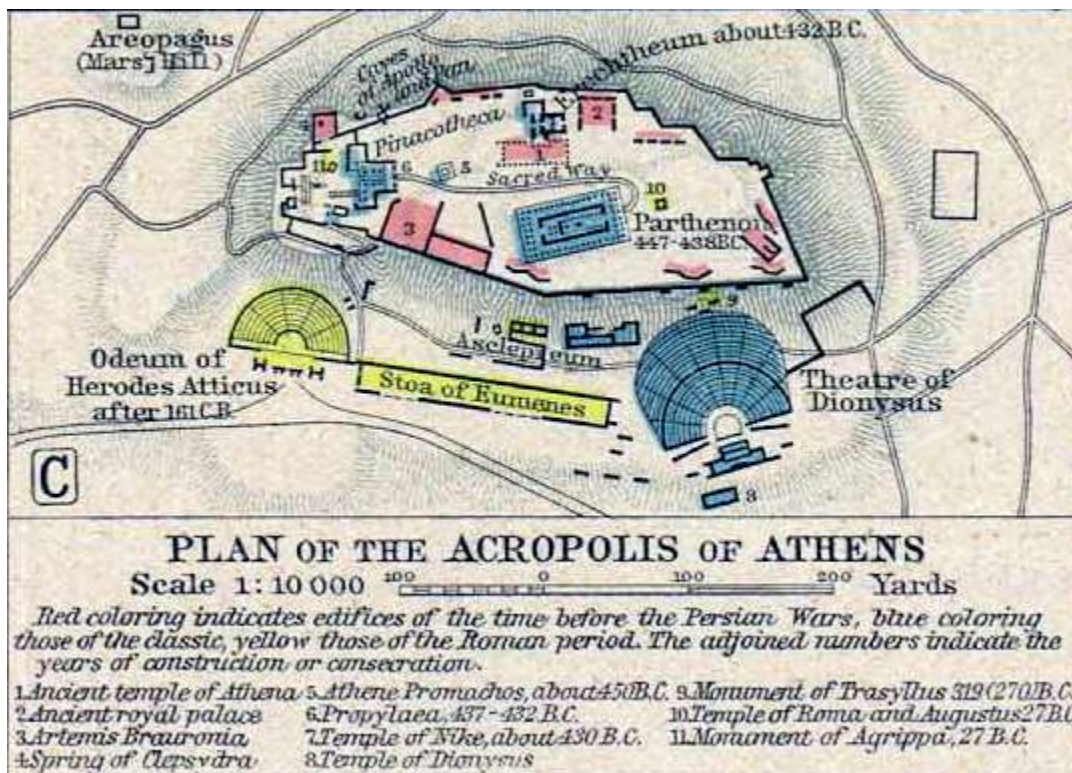
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Maps of Mars Hill (Areopagus) Area



Source: <http://www.bibleistrue.com/gna/pgna51.htm> (also following page)



http://www.emersonkent.com/map_archive/acropolis_200_ad.htm

The Sanctuary of Dionysus (or Dionysos)

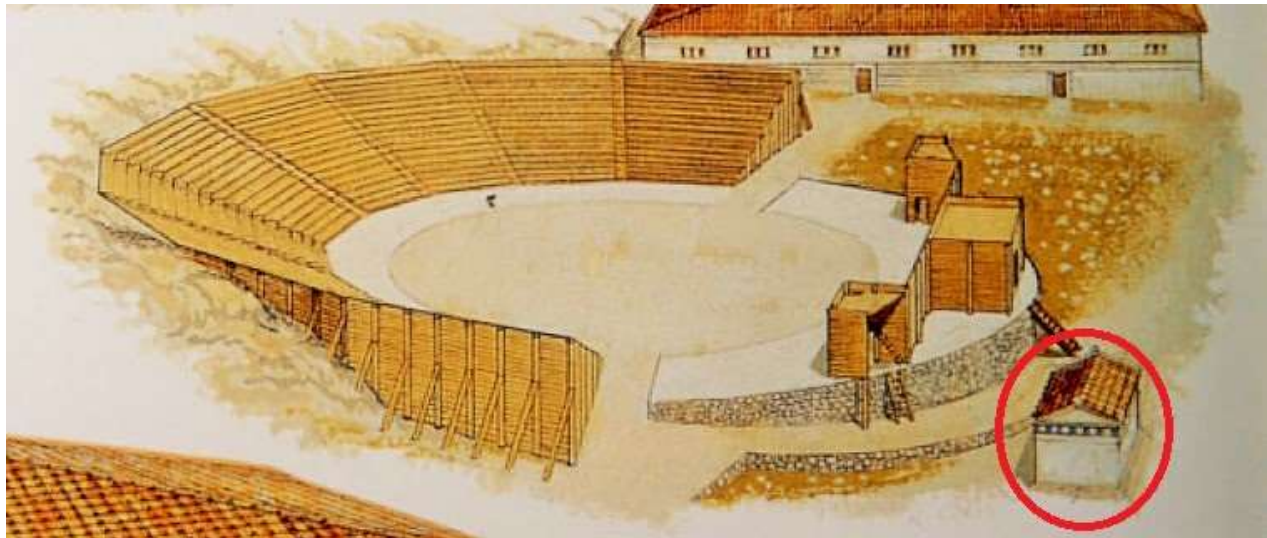
<https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/classics/students/modules/greekreligion/database/clunap/>

Dionysus (or Dionysos – Roman name: Bacchus) was the ancient Greek god of wine, merriment, and theatre. Being the bad boy of Mt. Olympus, he was perhaps the most colourful of the Olympian Gods.

In Greek mythology, despite being the son of Zeus and Semele (the daughter of Kadmos and Harmonia), Dionysus did not receive the best start in life when his mother died while still pregnant. Hera, wife of Zeus, was jealous of her husband's illicit affair and craftily persuaded Semele to ask Zeus to reveal himself to her in all his godly splendor. This was too much for the mortal and she immediately expired; however, Zeus took the unborn child and reared him in his thigh. Most accounts then attribute the satyrs and nymphs as the caregivers of Dionysus in his childhood and the wise Silenus as his chief educator on Mt. Nysa, far from Hera's wrath.

The cult of Dionysus became significant in **Athens** from the 6th century BCE and the Dionysia festival of Athens and other cities would later evolve into the Bacchanalia of Rome. The island of Naxos was a particularly important sanctuary to the god. There is evidence of a cult to Dionysus dating from the Mycenaean period (14th century BCE) and the site continued to be important right into the Roman period. There was also a sanctuary and theatre of Dionysus at Athens and a temple to the god at Dion (2nd century CE) which also had Mycenaean origins. [Source: <https://www.ancient.eu/Dionysos/>]

The Sanctuary of Dionysus was located on the southern slope of the Acropolis of Athens, in modern day Greece. The sanctuary of Dionysus incorporated the whole area of Athens' famous theatre. The seats themselves were wooden for a large part of Athenian history, but the temple of Dionysus itself was a fairly small, permanent stone structure behind the stage. The picture below shows the temple (circled) during the theatre's early period.



There isn't much evidence that tells us around when Dionysus' cult was introduced to Athens. However, the sanctuary of Dionysus, in which the famous theatre is located contains the remains of two temples. The first of these two is dated to around the 6th century BC, whilst the second of which is dated to around 350 BC.



” Theater of Dionysus, south slope of the Acropolis, Athens, 4th c. BC ”

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Paul in Athens and Ephesus

<https://www.slideshare.net/chreezmd/paul-in-athens-and-ephesus> [Slide Presentation]

PAUL AT ATHENS



TEXT: Acts 17:15-34

A. Athens

- Athens is one of the famous cities of the ancient world.
- It was the acknowledged center of intellect, culture, and religion.
- It was the seat of the prevailing **schools of philosophy**.
- It was wholly given to **idolatry**: (verse 16).
- It was said that there were more gods than men in Athens.
- *It is no different in the world today.*



- The Apostle Paul began his message on Mars Hill with this statement, *if perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious*: (verse 22).
- This may be translated, *ye are too religious*.
- They did not lack for religion, but in all of this they did not know **the one true God**.

B. Two Schools of Philosophy

1. Epicureans

- The Epicureans were materialists and atheists. They believed that the chief aim of existence is pleasure; that pleasure is the only good and pain the only evil.
- To **them there was no God** and no future existence in eternity.
- Their motto was: **Let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die**.
- There are millions of Epicureans today who have never heard of the name.
- **Men are still lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.**

2. Stoics

- The Stoics believed that God was everything and in everything, which is called **Pantheism**.
- They were fatalists and considered **apathy the highest moral attainment**. To them God was the (soul) of the universe, so that the distinction between the human and the divine **ceased to exist**.
- Man became **his own god**.
- This is the basic teaching of all spiritistic cults with certain variations as in Christian Science, Unity, Spiritualism, etc.
- These philosophers considered the simple Christian truth that Paul preached as being absurd. **They said that Paul was a babbler talking baby talk.**

Stoicism (Greek Στωικισμός) is a school of Hellenistic philosophy founded in Athens by **Zeno of Citium** in the early 3rd century BC.

- The Stoics taught that destructive emotions resulted from errors in judgment, and that a sage, or person of "moral and intellectual perfection," would not suffer **such emotions**.
- Stoics were concerned with the active relationship between **cosmic determinism and human freedom**, and the belief that it is virtuous to maintain a will (called *prohairesis*) that is in accord with nature. Because of this, the Stoics presented their philosophy as a way of life, and they thought that the best indication of an individual's philosophy was not what a person said but how he behaved.



C. Paul on Mars Hill

- The philosophers took Paul to Mars Hill in order to hear him further.
- Mars Hill was an Athenian court which met in early times on the Hill of Ares west of the Acropolis.
- It had jurisdiction over moral questions and religious matters. Another name for Mars Hill was Areopagus.
- Paul was very observant.
- He was quick to use something that was familiar to his hearers to introduce his message.

C. Paul on Mars Hill • The philosophers took Paul to Mars Hill in order to hear him further. • Mars Hill was an Athenian court which met in early times on the Hill of Ares west of the Acropolis. • It had jurisdiction over moral questions and religious matters. Another name for Mars Hill was Areopagus. • Paul was very observant. • He was quick to use something that was familiar to his hearers to introduce his message.	C. Paul on Mars Hill  • In this he was following the example of our Lord. Paul had seen the religious devotions of the Athenians and had found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. • It was this unknown God to whom they had erected an altar that Paul was going to declare.
C. Paul on Mars Hill • Paul declares Him to be the Creator and the world's moral Governor; truths which strike at the very heart of materialism, pantheism, atheism, etc. • Paul spoke to them of sin as a personal offense against a personal God and Judge, who therefore commands all men everywhere to repent. • He shows the folly of idolatry when we ourselves are the offspring of God.	D. The Result of Paul's Message The result of Paul's sermon to these intellectuals was threefold: 1. Many rejected it 2. Some procrastinated 3. A few believed • Wherever the gospel is preached today, it is followed with this same threefold result. • Thank God, for the few who believe.

***** END: Paul at Mars Hill *****

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[The Gospel that Paul Preached](#)

More regarding the Gospel that Paul Preached on the following pages...

Paul's charge from Jesus: "...*this man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before Gentiles and kings and the people of Israel.*" (Acts 9:15)

For more regard the Gospel that Paul preached see:

[The Gospel According to Paul](#) (chart of all occurrences by Paul of "Gospel" in the Bible) **[Following]**

Return to the beginning:

[The Gospel that Paul Preached](#)

The Gospel According to Paul [Recommended]

<https://www.gci.org/gospel/paul>

Excerpt:

Let us see how Paul describes the gospel. We'll proceed book by book, just skimming the surface, looking primarily at verses [source: Net Bible] that use the Greek word for *gospel* or for *preaching*...

Romans	1: 1-5	[Ro 1:1] From Paul, ¹ a slave ² of Christ Jesus, ³ called to be an apostle, ⁴ set apart for the gospel of God. ⁵ [2] This gospel ⁶ he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, [3] concerning his Son who was a descendant ⁷ of David with reference to the flesh, ⁸ [4] who was appointed the Son-of-God-in-power ⁹ according to the Holy Spirit ¹⁰ by the resurrection ¹¹ from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord. [5] Through him ¹² we have received grace and our apostleship ¹³ to bring about the obedience ¹⁴ of faith ¹⁵ among all the Gentiles on behalf of his name.
	1:15-17	[15] Thus I am eager ³² also to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome. ³³ [16] For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is God's power for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ³⁴ [17] For the righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel ³⁶ from faith to faith, just as it is written, " The righteous by faith will live . "
	2:16	[16] on the day when God will judge ³³ the secrets of human hearts, ³⁴ according to my gospel ³⁵ through Christ Jesus.
	10:11-17	[11] For the scripture says, " Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame . " ¹³ [12] For there is no distinction between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all, who richly blesses all who call on him. [13] For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved . ¹⁴ [14] How are they to call on one they have not believed in? And how are they to believe in one they have not heard of? And how are they to hear without someone preaching to them ¹⁵ ? [15] And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, " How timely ¹⁶ is the arrival ¹⁷ of those who proclaim the good news . " ¹⁸ [16] But not all have obeyed the good news, for Isaiah says, " Lord, who has believed our report ? " ¹⁹ [17] Consequently faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the preached word ²⁰ of Christ. ²¹
	15:15-16	[15] But I have written more boldly to you on some points so as to remind you, because of the grace given to me by God [16] to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles. I serve ¹³ the gospel of God ¹⁴ like a priest, so that the Gentiles may become an acceptable offering, ¹⁵ sanctified by the Holy Spirit.
	15:20-21	Christ. [20] And in this way I desire to preach where Christ has not been named, so as not to build on another person's foundation, [21] but as it is written: " Those who were not told about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand . " ¹⁸
	16:25	[25] ²⁰ Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that had been kept secret for long ages,
1 Corinthians	1:14-25	[14] I thank God ¹⁹ that I did not baptize any of you except Crispus and Gaius, [15] so that no one can say that you were baptized in my name! [16] (I also baptized the household of Stephanus. Otherwise, I do not remember whether I baptized anyone else.) [17] For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel – and not with clever speech, so that the cross of Christ would not become useless. ²⁰ [18] For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. [19] For it is written, " I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and I

		will thwart the cleverness of the intelligent .” ²¹ [20] Where is the wise man? Where is the expert in the Mosaic law? ²² Where is the debater of this age? Has God not made the wisdom of the world foolish? [21] For since in the wisdom of God the world by its wisdom did not know God, God was pleased to save those who believe by the foolishness of preaching. [22] For Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks ask for wisdom, [23] but we preach about a crucified Christ, ²³ a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles. [24] But to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. [25] For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, ²⁴ and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength. ²⁵
	2:1-5	[2:1] When I came ¹ to you, brothers and sisters, ² I did not come with superior eloquence or wisdom as I proclaimed the testimony ³ of God. [2] For I decided to be concerned about nothing ⁴ among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified. [3] And I was with you in weakness and in fear and with much trembling. [4] My conversation and my preaching were not with persuasive words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, [5] so that your faith would not be based on human wisdom but on the power of God.
	15:1-7	[15:1] Now I want to make clear for you, ¹ brothers and sisters, ² the gospel that I preached to you, that you received and on which you stand, [2] and by which you are being saved, if you hold firmly to the message I preached to you – unless you believed in vain. [3] For I passed on to you as of first importance ³ what I also received – that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, [4] and that he was buried, and that he was raised ⁴ on the third day according to the scriptures, [5] and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. [6] Then he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters ⁵ at one time, most of whom are still alive, ⁶ though some have fallen asleep. ⁷ [7] Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.
	15:12-15	[12] Now if Christ is being preached as raised from the dead, ⁹ how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead? [13] But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. [14] And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is futile and your faith is empty. [15] Also, we are found to be false witnesses about God, because we have testified against God that he raised Christ from the dead, when in reality he did not raise him, if indeed the dead are not raised.
2 Corinthians	1:19-22	[19] For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, the one who was proclaimed among you by us – by me and Silvanus ³⁸ and Timothy – was not “Yes” and “No,” but it has always been “Yes” in him. [20] For every one of God's promises are “Yes” in him; therefore also through him the “Amen” is spoken, to the glory we give to God. [21] But it is God who establishes ³⁹ us together with you in Christ and who anointed us, ⁴⁰ [22] who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a down payment. ⁴¹
	4:2-4	[2] But we have rejected ³ shameful hidden deeds, ⁴ not behaving ⁵ with deceptiveness ⁶ or distorting the word of God, but by open proclamation of the truth we commend ourselves to everyone's conscience before God. [3] But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing, [4] among whom the god of this age has blinded the minds of those who do not believe ⁷ so they would not see the light of the glorious gospel ⁸ of Christ, ⁹ who is the image of God.
	11:4	[4] For if someone comes and proclaims ⁸ another Jesus different from the one we proclaimed, ⁹ or if you receive a different spirit than

		the one you received, ¹⁰ or a different gospel than the one you accepted, ¹¹ you put up with it well enough! ¹²
Galatians	1:6-11 (added by LY)	[6] I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one ⁴ who called you by the grace of Christ ⁵ and are following ⁶ a different ⁷ gospel – [7] not that there really is another gospel, ⁸ but ⁹ there are some who are disturbing you and wanting ¹⁰ to distort the gospel of Christ. [8] But even if we (or an angel from heaven) should preach ¹¹ a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, ¹² let him be condemned to hell! ¹³ [9] As we have said before, and now I say again, if any one is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, let him be condemned to hell! ¹⁴ [10] Am I now trying to gain the approval of people, ¹⁵ or of God? Or am I trying to please people? ¹⁶ If I were still trying to please ¹⁷ people, ¹⁸ I would not be a slave ¹⁹ of Christ! [11] Now ²⁰ I want you to know, brothers and sisters, ²¹ that the gospel I preached is not of human origin. ²² [12] For I did not receive it or learn it from any human source; ²³ instead I received it ²⁴ by a revelation of Jesus Christ. ²⁵
	1:15-16	[15] But when the one ³¹ who set me apart from birth ³² and called me by his grace was pleased [16] to reveal his Son in ³³ me so that I could preach him ³⁴ among the Gentiles, I did not go to ask advice from ³⁵ any human being, ³⁶
	2:1-10 (added by LY)	[2:1] Then after fourteen years I went up to Jerusalem ¹ again with Barnabas, taking Titus along too. [2] I went there ² because of ³ a revelation and presented ⁴ to them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles. But I did so ⁵ only in a private meeting with the influential people, ⁶ to make sure that I was not running – or had not run ⁷ – in vain. [3] Yet ⁸ not even Titus, who was with me, was compelled to be circumcised, although he was a Greek. [4] Now this matter arose ⁹ because of the false brothers with false pretenses ¹⁰ who slipped in unnoticed to spy on ¹¹ our freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, to make us slaves. ¹² [5] But ¹³ we did not surrender to them ¹⁴ even for a moment, ¹⁵ in order that the truth of the gospel would remain with you. ¹⁶ [6] But from those who were influential ¹⁷ (whatever they were makes no difference to me; God shows no favoritism between people ¹⁸) – those influential leaders ¹⁹ added ²⁰ nothing to my message. ²¹ [7] On the contrary, when they saw ²² that I was entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised ²³ just as Peter was to the circumcised ²⁴ [8] (for he who empowered ²⁵ Peter for his apostleship ²⁶ to the circumcised ²⁷ also empowered me for my apostleship to the Gentiles) ²⁸ [9] and when James, Cephas, ²⁹ and John, who had a reputation as ³⁰ pillars, ³¹ recognized ³² the grace that had been given to me, they gave to Barnabas and me ³³ the right hand of fellowship, agreeing ³⁴ that we would go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. ³⁵ [10] They requested ³⁶ only that we remember the poor, the very thing I also was eager to do.
Ephesians	3:7-12	[7] I became a servant of this gospel ¹⁶ according to the gift of God's grace that was given to me by ¹⁷ the exercise of his power. ¹⁸ [8] To me – less than the least of all the saints ¹⁹ – this grace was given, ²⁰ to proclaim to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ [9] and to enlighten ²¹ everyone about God's secret plan ²² – a secret that has been hidden for ages ²³ in God ²⁴ who has created all things. [10] The purpose of this enlightenment is that ²⁵ through the church the multifaceted wisdom ²⁶ of God should now be disclosed to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly realms. [11] This was according to ²⁷ the eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, [12] in whom we have boldness and confident access ²⁸ to God ²⁹ because of ³⁰ Christ's ³¹ faithfulness. ³²
Philippians	1:12-18	[12] I want you to know, brothers and sisters, ¹⁷ that my situation has actually turned out to advance the gospel. ¹⁸ [13] The ¹⁹ whole

		imperial guard ²⁰ and everyone else knows ²¹ that I am in prison ²² for the sake of Christ, [14] and most of the brothers and sisters, ²³ having confidence in the Lord ²⁴ because of my imprisonment, now more than ever ²⁵ dare to speak the word ²⁶ fearlessly. [15] Some, to be sure, are preaching Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from goodwill. [16] The latter do so from love because they know that I am placed here for the defense of the gospel. [17] The former proclaim Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, because they think they can cause trouble for me in my imprisonment. ²⁷ [18] What is the result? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is being proclaimed, and in this I rejoice.
Colossians	1:12-20	[12] giving thanks to the Father who has qualified you to share ²³ in the saints' ²⁴ inheritance in the light. [13] He delivered us from the power of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of the Son he loves, ²⁵ [14] in whom we have redemption, ²⁶ the forgiveness of sins. [15] ²⁷ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn ²⁸ over all creation, ²⁹ [16] for all things in heaven and on earth were created by him – all things, whether visible or invisible, whether thrones or dominions, ³⁰ whether principalities or powers – all things were created through him and for him. [17] He himself is before all things and all things are held together ³¹ in him. [18] He is the head of the body, the church, as well as the beginning, the firstborn ³² from among the dead, so that he himself may become first in all things. ³³ [19] For God ³⁴ was pleased to have all his ³⁵ fullness dwell ³⁶ in the Son ³⁷ [20] and through him to reconcile all things to himself by making peace through the blood of his cross – through him, ³⁸ whether things on earth or things in heaven.
	1:21-29	[21] And you were at one time strangers and enemies in your ³⁹ minds ⁴⁰ as expressed through ⁴¹ your evil deeds, [22] but now he has reconciled you ⁴² by his physical body through death to present you holy, without blemish, and blameless before him – [23] if indeed you remain in the faith, established and firm, ⁴³ without shifting ⁴⁴ from the hope of the gospel that you heard. This gospel has also been preached in all creation under heaven, and I, Paul, have become its servant. [24] Now I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and I fill up in my physical body – for the sake of his body, the church – what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ. [25] I became a servant of the church according to the stewardship ⁴⁵ from God – given to me for you – in order to complete ⁴⁶ the word of God, [26] that is, the mystery that has been kept hidden from ages and generations, but has now been revealed to his saints. [27] God wanted to make known to them the glorious ⁴⁷ riches of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. [28] We proclaim him by instructing ⁴⁸ and teaching ⁴⁹ all people ⁵⁰ with all wisdom so that we may present every person mature ⁵¹ in Christ. [29] Toward this goal ⁵² I also labor, struggling according to his power that powerfully ⁵³ works in me.
1 Timothy	3:14-16	[14] I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these instructions ¹⁹ to you [15] in case I am delayed, to let you know how people ought to conduct themselves ²⁰ in the household of God, because it is ²¹ the church of the living God, the support and bulwark of the truth. [16] And we all agree, ²² our religion contains amazing revelation: ²³ He ²⁴ was revealed in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, ²⁵

		seen by angels, proclaimed among Gentiles, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.
2 Timothy	1:6-14	[6] Because of this I remind you to rekindle God's gift that you possess ⁹ through the laying on of my hands. [7] For God did not give us a Spirit ¹⁰ of fear but of power and love and self-control. [8] So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord ¹¹ or of me, a prisoner for his sake, but by ¹² God's power accept your share of suffering ¹³ for the gospel. [9] He is the one who saved us ¹⁴ and called us with a holy calling, not based on ¹⁵ our works but on his own purpose and grace, granted to us in Christ Jesus before time began, ¹⁶ [10] but now made visible through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus. He ¹⁷ has broken the power of death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel! [11] For this gospel ¹⁸ I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher. ¹⁹ [12] Because of this, in fact, I suffer as I do. ²⁰ But I am not ashamed, because I know the one in whom my faith is set ²¹ and I am convinced that he is able to protect what has been entrusted to me ²² until that day. ²³ [13] Hold to the standard ²⁴ of sound words that you heard from me and do so with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. ²⁵ [14] Protect that good thing ²⁶ entrusted to you, through the Holy Spirit who lives within us.
	2:8 (added by LY)	[8] Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of David; ¹¹ such is my gospel, ¹² [9] for which I suffer hardship to the point of imprisonment ¹³ as a criminal, but God's message ¹⁴ is not imprisoned! ¹⁵ [10] So I endure all things for the sake of those chosen by God, ¹⁶ that they too may obtain salvation in Christ Jesus and its eternal glory.

Comment: A more thorough study would lead to the same conclusion: The gospel that Paul preached was about Jesus Christ, specifically his death and resurrection, and the good news that we can be saved through what he has done. Whether we look at the sermons of Paul, or in his letters, we see a consistent focus on Jesus Christ.

The disciples originally did not understand everything Jesus taught, especially about his death and resurrection. Although he told them, they did not accept or understand this part of the message. His crucifixion was a tremendous shock to them. His resurrection was also a tremendous surprise.

Since Jesus was not able to teach his disciples about the fact of his death and resurrection, he could not teach them about the significance of these events, either. But after Jesus rose, and after the Holy Spirit came, the disciples understood. They saw that Jesus' death and resurrection were necessary for people to have the salvation that Jesus had taught about. His death and resurrection were the key to the kingdom of God.

Jesus preached about salvation, repentance and faith. He taught that he was the key to eternal life, and he taught about his own death and resurrection. In all these things Paul preached the same thing as Jesus did.

After his resurrection, Jesus reminded his disciples what he had taught them about himself: "This is what I told you while I was still with you: 'Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.'... This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day" ([Luke 24:44](#), [46](#)).

Jesus commissioned the apostles to preach this message about salvation through him: "Repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things" (verses 47-48).

George Ladd summarizes by saying that the message of Paul

is essentially the same as that of Jesus: that in the person and mission of Jesus, God has visited human beings to bring them the messianic salvation. But there is one great difference. Paul stands on the other side of the cross and resurrection and is able to see...that what was being accomplished in Jesus' life was incomplete apart from the cross and empty tomb. While the blessings of the Kingdom of God were present in Jesus' words and deeds, the greatest blessing of God's Kingdom was the conquest of death and the gift of life; and this was accomplished only by Jesus' death and resurrection. (G.E. Ladd, *Theology of the New Testament*, 1993, page 453)

The apostles also saw that, to bring this good news to the world, they did not have to use the word *kingdom*. That word was only one of several legitimate pictures of the good news of what God is doing. The apostles were free to use other descriptions of the salvation that Jesus makes possible through his death and resurrection.

Paul occasionally used the term "kingdom of God," but it was not his most common term for describing the gospel. He was not preaching about a future geographic territory. He was talking about an eternal kingdom that we may enter in this age ([Colossians 1:13](#)). He was talking about a King who is already ruling—a Lord who is alive and may be accepted as Lord even in this age. We do not have to wait for Jesus to return before we experience blessings in the gospel.

If we assume that God's kingdom is like human kingdoms, with a geographical base, as many first century Jews did, then we will find it difficult to understand some of Jesus' parables about the kingdom. The kingdom Jesus described doesn't fit well into a message about a territory-based kingdom, and neither does the preaching of the early church and of the apostle Paul.

If we assume that the kingdom is exclusively future, we will also find it hard to understand some of the things Jesus and Paul said. But when we understand the kingdom of God to be God's rule, not dependent on territory, then we can see how the kingdom can exist in this age as well as in the future. People who accept Jesus as Lord accept his rule over their lives, and they thereby enter his kingdom. They come willingly under his rule now, and they await the gift of immortality at the resurrection. This is what Jesus talked about—and Paul is talking about the same thing, but with more details.

In terms of God's kingdom and salvation, the most significant event of all time happened between Jesus and Paul. That event was the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. That event brought the old covenant to an end. It marked a dramatic change in the way God deals with his people.

That event marked a dramatic shift in the understanding of the apostles and of the message God inspired them to preach. That event was the key to the kingdom, the key to salvation, and it has become key to the message we preach: salvation has been made possible through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

This article was written by [Michael Morrison](#) in 1998 and updated in 2014. Copyright Grace Communion International. All rights reserved. If you'd like to learn more about the Bible, check out Grace Communion Seminary. It's accredited, affordable, and all online. www.gcs.edu ([link is external](#)).

See also: [What is the Gospel? \(Boyd\)](#)

[Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#)

[Occurrences of Jesus Risen/Resurrected Mentioned by Apostles in the Bible](#)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Return to the beginning:
[The Gospel that Paul Preached](#)

The Gospel According to Paul

http://sigler.org/walter/gospel_according_to_paul.htm

Excerpt:

The Greek word for Gospel is EU-ANGGLEION. The prefix EU means WELL or GOOD, as in Matt 25:21. The word ANGGEION means a message, and is connected with the word "LOGOS." 1Jn 1:5. So the Bible definition of the word GOSPEL is "A MESSAGE of GOOD NEWS." The first four Books in the New Testament are called "GOSPELS," but this is not to be considered an exclusive use of this word. In Rom 4:3 it speaks of the GOSPEL that God brought to Abraham. Gen 12:3. Then there is the GOSPEL Gabriel brought to Zachariah in Luke 2:10-12. Paul speaks about the GOSPEL OF THE CIRCUMCISION in Gal 2:7, and also the GOSPEL OF THE UNCIRCUMCISION. In the book of Revelation there is THE EONIAN GOSPEL, to name just a few of the Gospels that are mentioned in the Bible. How interesting it is to note that in none of these "Gospels" is there mention of judgment or a burning eternal hell as part of the message. The Gospel is all GOOD NEWS.

In this study we will deal mainly with the TWO GOSPELS mentioned in Gal 2:7-9. The Gospel of the CIRCUMCISION that was delivered by Peter to the Jewish people, who were the people of the CIRCUMCISION, and the Gospel of the UNCIRCUMCISION given to Paul for the Gentiles or nations. Because of the divergent nature of these two Gospels, it was necessary for the Lord to use two separate men to deliver these messages to men. The separation of these two messages and the men involved, is outlined for us in Gal 2:7-9. It is obvious that Peter, James and John all recognized God's choice in the matter, so that Paul was sent to the NATIONS, whilst Peter was sent to the CIRCUMCISION.

John MacArthur: The Gospel According to Paul (Interview) (links to a video)

<https://www.biblegateway.com/blog/2017/05/the-gospel-according-to-paul-an-interview-with-john-macarthur>

Excerpt:

What did the Apostle Paul mean when he wrote that Christ died for our sins? How is the gospel profound and at the same time simple? What exactly is the gospel?

In this video interview, [John MacArthur](#) talks about his book, *The Gospel According to Paul: Embracing the Good News at the Heart of Paul's Teaching* (Thomas Nelson, 2017).

Paul Preaches the Good News — Good News for Bad People

<https://www.gci.org/gospel/badpeople3>

Romans: The Gospel According to Paul (12-Part Series)

<https://gracethrufaith.com/series/romans/>

(Note: Pre-millennial, Pre-Tribulation perspective)

Excerpt:

The overriding message, woven through out, is that the Gospel is not a set of laws to be obeyed, nor is it a creed to be accepted. It's not advice to be taken, a religion to be believed, or a social order to be lived. It's a message about a person, a love story written in blood on a cross of wood. It's about God who became a man and died for us so that we could live with Him. Let's begin...

See also: [Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

[Occurrences of Jesus Risen/Resurrected Mentioned by Apostles in the Bible](#)

Return to the beginning:

[The Gospel that Paul Preached](#)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Paul Testified: Repentance Toward God and Faith in our Lord Jesus

Acts 20:13-36 – The Voyage to Miletus [NET Bible]

[13] We went on ahead ⁴⁹ to the ship and put out to sea ⁵⁰ for Assos, ⁵¹ intending ⁵² to take Paul aboard there, for he had arranged it this way. ⁵³ He ⁵⁴ himself was intending ⁵⁵ to go there by land. ⁵⁶ [14] When he met us in Assos, ⁵⁷ we took him aboard ⁵⁸ and went to Mitylene. ⁵⁹ [15] We set sail ⁶⁰ from there, and on the following day we arrived off Chios. ⁶¹ The next day we approached ⁶² Samos, ⁶³ and the day after that we arrived at Miletus. ⁶⁴ [16] For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus ⁶⁵ so as not to spend time ⁶⁶ in the province of Asia, ⁶⁷ for he was hurrying ⁶⁸ to arrive in Jerusalem, ⁶⁹ if possible, ⁷⁰ by the day of Pentecost. [17] From Miletus ⁷¹ he sent a message ⁷² to Ephesus, telling the elders of the church to come to him. ⁷³

[18] When they arrived, he said to them, “You yourselves know how I lived ⁷⁴ the whole time I was with you, from the first day I set foot ⁷⁵ in the province of Asia, ⁷⁶ [19] serving the Lord with all humility ⁷⁷ and with tears, and with the trials that happened to me because of the plots ⁷⁸ of the Jews. [20] **You know that I did not hold back from proclaiming ⁷⁹ to you anything that would be helpful, ⁸⁰ and from teaching you publicly ⁸¹ and from house to house, [21] testifying ⁸² to both Jews and Greeks about repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus.** ⁸³ [22] And now, ⁸⁴ compelled ⁸⁵ by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem ⁸⁶ without knowing what will happen to me there, ⁸⁷ [23] except ⁸⁸ that the Holy Spirit warns ⁸⁹ me in town after town ⁹⁰ that ⁹¹ imprisonment ⁹² and persecutions ⁹³ are waiting for me. [24] But I do not consider my life ⁹⁴ worth anything ⁹⁵ to myself, so that ⁹⁶ I may finish my task ⁹⁷ and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the good news ⁹⁸ of God's grace.

[25] “And now ⁹⁹ I know that none ¹⁰⁰ of you among whom I went around proclaiming the kingdom ¹⁰¹ will see me ¹⁰² again. [26] Therefore I declare ¹⁰³ to you today that I am innocent ¹⁰⁴ of the blood of you all. ¹⁰⁵ [27] For I did not hold back from ¹⁰⁶ announcing ¹⁰⁷ to you the whole purpose ¹⁰⁸ of God. [28] Watch out for ¹⁰⁹ yourselves and for all the flock of which ¹¹⁰ the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, ¹¹¹ to shepherd the church of God ¹¹² that he obtained ¹¹³ with the blood of his own Son. ¹¹⁴ [29] I know that after I am gone ¹¹⁵ fierce wolves ¹¹⁶ will come in among you, not sparing the flock. [30] Even from among your own group ¹¹⁷ men ¹¹⁸ will arise, teaching perversions of the truth ¹¹⁹ to draw the disciples away after them. [31] Therefore be alert, ¹²⁰ remembering that night and day for three years I did not stop warning ¹²¹ each one of you with tears. [32] And now I entrust ¹²² you to God and to the message ¹²³ of his grace. This message ¹²⁴ is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. [33] I have desired ¹²⁵ no one's silver or gold or clothing. [34] You yourselves know that these hands of mine ¹²⁶ provided for my needs and the needs of those who were with me. [35] By all these things, ¹²⁷ I have shown you that by working in this way we must help ¹²⁸ the weak, ¹²⁹ and remember the words of the Lord Jesus that he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’” ¹³⁰

[36] When ¹³¹ he had said these things, he knelt down ¹³² with them all and prayed. [37] They all began to weep loudly, ¹³³ and hugged ¹³⁴ Paul and kissed him, ¹³⁵ [38] especially saddened ¹³⁶ by what ¹³⁷ he had said, that they were not going to see him ¹³⁸ again. Then they accompanied ¹³⁹ him to the ship.

See also: [Repentance](#)

Note: Bolded words (above) were added by LY.

Acts 20:17-36 – The Ephesian Elders Exhorted [NKJV]

[17] From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. [18] And when they had come to him, he said to them: “You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, [19] “serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews; [20] “how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, [21] **“testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.** [22] “And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, [23] “except that the Holy

Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. [24] "But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, * so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. [25] "And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. [26] "Therefore I testify to you this day that I *am* innocent of the blood of all *men*. [27] "For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God. [28] "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God * which He purchased with His own blood. [29] "For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. [30] "Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. [31] "Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. [32] "So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. [33] "I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. [34] "Yes, * you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. [35] "I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" [36] And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. [37] Then they all wept freely, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, [38] sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they would see his face no more. And they accompanied him to the ship.

Note: Bolding of words was added by LY.

Acts 20:20-21

[YLT] [20] how nothing I did keep back of what things are profitable, not to declare to you, and to teach you publicly, and in every house, [21] testifying fully both to Jews and Greeks, toward God reformation, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

[NLTse] [20] I never shrank back from telling you what you needed to hear, either publicly or in your homes. [21] I have had one message for Jews and Greeks alike—the necessity of repenting from sin and turning to God, and of having faith in our Lord Jesus.

Acts 20:21 Commentary

[NET] ⁸³ **tc** Several mss, including some of the more important ones (*P* ⁷⁴ *κ* *A* *C* [*D*] *E* 33 36 323 945 1175 1241 1505 1739 *pm* and a number of versions), read Χριστόν (*Christon* , "Christ") at the end of this verse. This word is lacking in *B H L P Ψ* 614 *pm* . Although the inclusion is supported by many earlier and better mss, internal evidence is on the side of the omission: In Acts, both "Lord Jesus" and "Lord Jesus Christ" occur, though between 16:31 and the end of the book "Lord Jesus Christ" appears only in 28:31, perhaps as a kind of climactic assertion. Thus, the shorter reading is to be preferred.

sn *Repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus*. Note the twofold description of the message. It is a turning to God involving faith in Jesus Christ.

[JFB] **21. ...repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ** —(See note on Ac 5:31). **Repentance** , as distinguished from *faith*, is that state of the "honest and good heart" which arises from a discovery of one's contrariety to the righteous demands of the divine law. This is said to be " *toward God*, " because seeing Him to be the party dishonored by sin, it feels all its acknowledgments and compunctions to be properly due to Him, as the great Lawgiver, and directs them to Him accordingly; condemning, humbling itself, and grieving before Him, looking also to Him as its only Hope of deliverance. **Faith** is said to be " *toward our Lord Jesus Christ*, " because in that frame of mind just described it eagerly credits the testimony of relief divinely provided in Christ, gladly embraces the overtures of reconciliation in Him, and directs all its expectations of salvation, from its first stage to its last, to Him as the one appointed Medium of all grace from God to a sinful world. Thus we have here a brief summary of

all Gospel preaching. And it is easy to see why repentance is here put before faith; for the former must of necessity precede the latter. There is a repentance subsequent to faith, the fruit of felt pardon and restoration. It was this which drew the tears with which the Saviour's feet were once so copiously moistened. (Lk 7:37,38,47; and compare Eze 16:63). But that is not the light in which it is here presented.

[JNTC] Acts Chapter 20 Commentary

3 A plot against him by the unbelieving Jews . “Unbelieving” is not in the Greek text; see 9:22-23 . We have read of a number of plots, some originated by Jews, some by Gentiles. We have seen in general that sometimes people receive the Gospel and sometimes they reject it (see Yn 7:43 N). Their rejection can be either active or passive, the latter expressing itself as indifference, apathy or a feeling of superiority even while approving of the believers. The following table presents instances of each, showing the verses in the book of Acts and the locations of the Jewish and Gentile responses to the Gospel:

RESPONSE	JEWS	GENTILES
Believing the Gospel	2:41 . Jerusalem 13:43 . Pisidian Antioch 14:1 . Iconium 17:4 . Thessalonica 17:11-12 . Berea 18:8 . Corinth 19:9 . Ephesus 28:24 . Rome	14:1 . Iconium 16:14 , 30 . Philippi 17:4 . Thessalonica 17:11-12 . Berea 17:34 . Athens 18:8 . Corinth 19:17-20 . Ephesus
Rejecting the Gospel (active opposition)	4:1ff ., 5:17ff ., 6:11-14 , 7:54-8:3 , 9:29 , 12:3-4 , 21:27ff . Jerusalem 9:23-24 . Damascus 13:45 , 13:50 , 14:19 . Pisidian Antioch 14:2 , 5 , 19 . Iconium 17:5-8 , 13 . Thessalonica 18:6 , 12-13 . Corinth 19:9 . Ephesus 20:3 . Greece	12:1-4 . Jerusalem 14:5 , 19 . Iconium 16:16ff . Philippi 19:23ff . Ephesus
Rejecting the Gospel (passive opposition, indifference, etc.)	2:47 , 4:21 ? , 5:34-39 . Jerusalem 28:24 . Rome	26:24 , 28 . Caesarea 17:32 . Athens

6 After the days of Matzah , that is, after Passover. See Mt 26:2 N, 26:17 ; 1C 5:6-8 &N. Sha’ul, the observant Jew (13:9), kept *Pesach* .

7 Motza’ei-Shabbat in Hebrew means “departure of the Sabbath” and refers to Saturday night. The Greek text here says, “the first day of the *sabbaton* ,” where Greek *sabbaton* transliterates Hebrew *Shabbat* and may be translated “Sabbath” or “week,” depending on the context. Since *Shabbat* itself is only one day, “the first day of the *sabbaton* ” must be the first day of the week.

But what was meant by “the first day of the week”? Or, to make the question's relevance to Messianic Judaism clearer, were the believers meeting on Saturday night or on Sunday night? (It is clear from the verse that the meeting was in the evening.) A Saturday night meeting would fit more naturally with Jewish *Shabbat* observance, wherein the restful spirit of *Shabbat* is often preserved into Saturday evening, after the official end of *Shabbat* itself, which occurs after sunset when it gets dark enough to see three stars. It would be natural for Jewish believers who had rested on *Shabbat* with the rest of the Jewish community to assemble afterwards to celebrate their common faith in Yeshua the Messiah. The Gentile believers who came along later would join in the already established practice, especially since many of them would have been “God-fearers” (10:2) already accustomed to following the lead of the Jews in whose company they had chosen to place themselves. And since by Jewish reckoning days commence after sunset, the sense of the Greek text seems best rendered by “ *Motza’ei-Shabbat* ,” not “Sunday.”

In various places this commentary notes the Christian Church's tendency to expunge Jewish influences, and I think an instance arises when the present verse is understood to refer to Sunday night. A Sunday night meeting would imply a break of one full day of work between the Jewish *Shabbat* and the gathering at which Sha'ul spoke. Although Sha'ul cautions Gentiles against being "Judaized" into legalistic observance of the Jewish Sabbath (Co 2:16-17 &NN, and possibly Ga 4:8-10 &N), although he asks the believers in Corinth to set aside money for the Jewish poor of Jerusalem also on "the first day of the *sabbaton*" (1C 16:2 &N), and although Yochanan at Rv 1:10 speaks of what most translators render as "the Lord's day" (I translate it "the Day of the Lord"; see note there), nevertheless the meeting in Ephesus must have been on Saturday night. For in this city, as in other places, Jewish believers constituted the core of the congregation—Sha'ul "took the *talmidim* with him" from the synagogue (19:8-9), with many Gentiles coming to faith later (19:17 , 20). The Jewish believers, as explained, would have been accustomed to prolonging *Shabbat* , so that they would probably not have minded Sha'ul's **talking till midnight**. A Saturday night meeting would continue the God-oriented spirit of *Shabbat* , rather than require the believers to shift their concern from workaday matters, as would be the case on Sunday night.

I do not find the New Testament commanding a specific day of the week for worship. There can be no objection whatever to the practice adopted later by a Gentile-dominated Church of celebrating "the Lord's Day" on Sunday, including Sunday night; but this custom must not be read back into New Testament times. On the other hand, Messianic Jews who worship on Saturday night rather than Sunday can find warrant for their practice in this verse.

8-9 The many oil lamps burning made the room smoky and stuffy and depleted the oxygen. I suppose **Eutychus** was **sitting on the window sill** to get some air. Unfortunately it still didn't keep him from going **sound asleep** and falling to his death.

10 Compare Kefa's raising Tavita from the dead (9:35-41 ; see 19:11-12) and Yeshua's raising three people from the dead; see Yn 11:17 N.

16 *Shavu'ot* ("Weeks," Pentecost; see 2:1). Sha'ul's desire to hurry to Yerushalayim for *Shavu'ot* shows that as a Messianic Jew he remained devoted to the *Torah* and to Jewish practice (see 13:9). We can see this also from the fact that on another occasion he felt he had to justify a decision to remain in Ephesus and *not* go up to Jerusalem for this pilgrim festival (1C 16:8-9 &N).

18-19 You yourselves know how...I was with you...serving...with much humility. Sha'ul does not indulge in self-praise but appeals to the judgment of the Ephesian congregation's elders, who had known and experienced him for three years (v. 31). While often accused, even in the New Testament itself (2C 10:1-13:10), of pride in his accomplishments, nevertheless, like Moses, who could write that he was "the meekest of all men on the face of the earth" (Numbers 12:3 , Mt 11:28-30 &N), Sha'ul had reached a point where he could speak of himself without either undue praise or undue modesty. (He had also learned not to be unduly affected by physical circumstances and possessions, Pp 4:12 .)

21 The Gospel is the same for Jews as for non-Jews: repentance and trust in God through Yeshua the Messiah. The Two-Covenant theory (see Yn 14:6 N [\[see below\]](#)) is wrong.

22-23 See 19:21 for Sha'ul's first statement of this intention, and 21:4 , 10 -14 for further interaction with the Holy Spirit on the matter. The rest of the book of Acts deals with the dramatic outworking of this plan and premonition.

26-27 I am innocent of the blood of all. To the unbelieving Jews of Corinth Sha'ul had said, "Your blood be on your own heads; for my part, I am clean" (18:6 &N). At the outset the Corinthians had refused to hear him; these Ephesian elders, attentive till now, still risk falling away and having **blood** guilt on their heads. The serious problems that will arise in Ephesus after he leaves (vv. 28-31) he has tried to avert by proclaiming **the whole plan of God** ; their responsibility is to remain in "the care of the Lord and the message of his love and kindness" (v. 32).

33-35 Sha'ul earned his own living and did not become a burden to the Ephesians (see 18:3 &N).

35 The words of the Lord Yeshua himself, “ There is more happiness in giving than in receiving. ” These words of Yeshua's appear nowhere else in the New Testament—that is, they are not found in the Gospels. There are many apocryphal New Testament books which contain numerous purported other sayings of Yeshua. See Lk 2:52 N.

36 Sha’ul kneeled down with them all and prayed. See Lk 22:41 &N.

[JNTC] Commentary re: John 14:6

Yeshua said, “ I AM the Way—and the Truth and the Life; no one comes to the Father except through me. ” This challenge strikes at the heart of non-Messianic Judaism's denial of Yeshua as Messianic mediator. Some try to ignore this challenge by denying its authenticity: either the Gospel of Yochanan is historically untrustworthy or the words are not Yeshua's but placed in his mouth by early church theologians. This view, of course, denies the divine inspiration of the New Testament.

More interesting is Two-Covenant theology, originated by Rabbi Moshe Ben-Maimon (“The *RaMBaM*,” Maimonides, 1135-1204), pioneered in this century by the non-Messianic Jewish philosopher Franz Rosenzweig (1886-1929), and since elaborated by such liberal Christian theologians as Reinhold Niebuhr and James Parkes. This theory holds that the Jewish people were brought close to God by means of the covenant with Avraham and the *Torah* of Moshe, so that they have no need to “come” to the Father through Yeshua or anyone else, because they are already with him. Accordingly, Yeshua's word is not for Jews but for Gentiles and is to be understood thusly: “I am the way, the truth and the life; and no Gentile comes to the Father except through me.”

The Two-Covenant theory may be understood as a modern variant of the Talmudic doctrine stating that Jews are bound by the *Torah* of Moshe, but Gentiles share in the world to come if they obey the seven “Noachide laws” given after the flood to Noah for all mankind—prohibitions against idolatry, murder, incest, theft, blasphemy and eating the flesh of a living animal; and the positive command to promote justice, i.e., to institute government (Sanhedrin 56a, cited and discussed in Ac 15:20 N).

The Two-Covenant theory enables the Jewish Community to live in apparent peace (from its own point of view) with its Christian neighbors by alleviating the pressure on Judaism to downgrade Jesus, the New Testament and Christianity; for a non-Messianic Jew can say, “We Jews have our way, Judaism; and you Gentiles have your way, Christianity. We will each serve God best by following the way provided for us. It is a manifestation of God's grace that he has provided Jesus for you Gentiles and *Torah* for us Jews.” Thus Jesus can be held in high regard, because his claims are not taken as posing any threat to the structure of non-Messianic Judaism.

Unfortunately for this theory, it does not fit the New Testament facts at all. The “tolerance for Christianity” that it produces is not tolerance of what the New Testament states is true. For Yeshua was a Jew who presented himself to Jews, and these Jews remained Jewish after they came to trust in him. He rarely presented the Gospel to Gentiles; indeed, it was only with difficulty and supernatural intervention that his Jewish disciples came to realize that Gentiles could join God's people through trusting Yeshua without converting to Judaism (see Acts 10-11, 15). In the book of Acts Kefa's initial sermons presented Yeshua to Jews as the Jewish Messiah (Ac 2:14-40, 3:12-26; especially Ac 2:36 &N, 3:25-26), as did Sha’ul's (Ac 9:20-22, 13:16-43). In his letter to the Romans Sha’ul states that salvation through Yeshua is God's Good News “to the Jew especially”; however, since he is stressing that Gentiles too may be part of the people of God, he immediately adds, “but equally to the Gentile” (Ro 1:16). In sum, replacing Yeshua's “No one comes to the Father except through me” with “No Gentile comes...” does unacceptable violence to the plain sense of the text and to the whole New Testament.

Actually Rosenzweig's theory reflects his own personal history. A German Jew raised in an assimilated family, he seriously considered the claims of Christianity, particularly in an exchange of letters with a Jewish Christian named Eugen Rosenstock. He was on the verge of “converting to Christianity”—I put the phrase in quotation marks to emphasize that conversion in Europe, with its state churches, could never have been perceived as a Jewish thing to do—when he decided to give traditional Judaism one last

chance. He went to a synagogue on *Yom-Kippur*, experienced the resonant depths of meaning in the liturgy of the *Machzor* (prayer book for the High Holy Days), and decided to cast his lot with his ancient heritage and with his own people. A noble sentiment, but what a pity that there did not exist in his society a vibrant Messianic Judaism which he could have perceived as being just as Jewish as what he did participate in, while being coupled with the efficacious spiritual power that God gives only through Yeshua, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life!

If the words of this verse are authentically Yeshua's, and if the Two-Covenant theory does not fit the facts, then we are left with a statement whose audacity, breadth, apparent arrogance and sheer *chutzpah* pose a serious problem. What exclusivity, what intolerance for a religion to accept Yeshua's claim to be the only way to God! It requires a decision either to acknowledge Yeshua's position as the Messiah, the Son of God, or to reject him as a madman or a fraud and to reject religion centering on him as deceptive at best. There is no *tertium quid* (see 5:17-18). For if one holds that Yeshua was a "great teacher," the unavoidable question is, "Then why don't you believe and act on his 'great teaching,' ' **I AM the Way—and the Truth and the Life; no one comes to the Father except through me** '?"

Messianic Judaism and Christianity, which accept this teaching, are indeed in a sense exclusive, for they deny that there are other men, other religious leaders, who have come from God and paid the death penalty for mankind's sins. In this sense, then, Yeshua is *the way*; and it is not true that "on the mountaintop all paths meet," for only Yeshua's path arrives there. Nevertheless this exclusivity is tempered by three factors:

1. The path is open to everyone (Ro 10:9-13).
2. Yeshua's path sets no precondition except turning from sin to the one true God. In particular it does not require Gentiles to stop being Gentiles or Jews to stop being Jews.
3. It is God's one true path; it exists. This simply means that, rather than complaining about exclusivity, one should be profoundly grateful to God for providing a way out of the sinful condition that besets every human being.

True exclusivity would be either God's providing no path whatsoever, instead of one which suffices for all, or providing it for some but not for everyone. To want some way other than that which God has offered is simply to want to play God, to design one's own remedy for sin, and ultimately not to take the evil of sin seriously (on the New Testament's remedy for sin, see Ro 5:12-21 &N). This is true arrogance and *chutzpah*.

Messianic Judaism and Christianity, properly taught and practiced, are intolerant of sin and of the just mentioned varieties of arrogance and *chutzpah*, but not of other religions, in the sense usually meant. Messianic Jews and Gentile Christians acknowledge not only the freedom of religion guaranteed by the constitutions of nations but also the *de facto* right and capacity each individual has to seek the truth as best he can. Other religions have the right, within the framework of law, to communicate their views, to seek, gain and hold adherents, and to minister to them. This is tolerance. But tolerance does not and cannot mean agreeing that other religions are true.

The positive message of this verse is available to everyone. Yeshua is the Way by which everyone comes to the Father: his work and his very person both show us and give us all we need to be in a right personal relationship with God. More than that, he is not merely a way, a path, but the goal itself—Truth and eternal Life. And all this is conditioned only on our holding to our trust in him, so that we keep God's commands.

For more see the pamphlet by the Messianic Jew Louis Goldberg, *Are There Two Ways of Atonement?* (Baltimore: Lederer Publications, 1990).

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

The Gospel that Peter Preached

See and compare:

[The Gospel that Paul Preached](#)

also: [Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#)

Peter Preaches The Simple Gospel [Recommended]

http://www.jesusisprecious.org/articles/simple_gospel.htm

Excerpt:

...This leads me to the heart of this article that I'm writing. In a vision God appeared to Cornelius and told him to go see the Apostle Peter, so that Peter could witness the Gospel to him. Here is the Biblical account of the matter . . .

Acts 10:30-45, "And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God. Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter; he is lodged in the house of one Simon a tanner by the sea side: who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee. Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God. Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; How God anointed **Jesus of Nazareth** with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; **whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day,** and shewed him openly; Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. **To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.** While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost." [KJV] [See also: [NET version](#)]

What I want you to notice, and this is my sermon, is the simple plan of salvation that the Apostle Peter gave to Cornelius. Remember, God sent Cornelius to go find Peter, so that he could learn how to be saved and go to Heaven.



Continued...

Carefully notice that:

- Peter didn't tell Cornelius to follow Jesus.
- Peter didn't tell Cornelius to surrender all to God.
- Peter didn't tell Cornelius to get water baptized. (He did have him [baptized afterwards.](#))
- Peter didn't tell Cornelius to make Jesus his Lord.
- Peter didn't tell Cornelius to join a church.
- Peter didn't tell Cornelius to get religion.
- Peter didn't tell Cornelius to publicly confess Christ as his Savior.
- Peter didn't tell Cornelius to invite Jesus into his heart.
- Peter didn't tell Cornelius to start a relationship with Jesus.
- Peter didn't tell Cornelius to change his life.
- Peter didn't tell Cornelius to turn away from his sins.
- Peter didn't tell Cornelius to forsake the world.

In fact, Peter **DIDN'T TELL CORNELIUS TO DO ANYTHING!!!** Peter simply told the story of Jesus of Nazareth, Who went about doing good and healing the sick, but the unbelieving Jews had Him crucified on a cross for our sins. Jesus bled and **DIED** on the cross. He was **BURIED**. And then Christ miraculously **RESURRECTED** bodily from the dead three days later. This is "the Gospel" [i.e., Good News] according to the Holy Scriptures [as preached by Paul]:

1st Corinthians 15:1-4, "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." [emphasis added]

See also:
[The Gospel that Paul Preached](#)

In Acts 10:30-45 Peter said that anyone who believes on the name of Jesus, Who died on the cross for our sins and raised up the third day, shall receive a pardon for their sins. That was the simple Gospel message, which Cornelius simply and quietly **BELIEVED** and was immediately saved. Amen!!! Whew, that's good stuff! Peter **never told Cornelius to do anything to be saved**, he simply preached the Gospel of Christ's **death** on the cross for our sins, His **burial**, and bodily **resurrection** the third day. The very moment that Cornelius believed, he was forever born-again and saved. The hardest part about salvation for people to understand is that you get it by **DOING NOTHING!!!** You simply **REST COMPLETELY** in the finished work of Jesus Christ, and then God does the saving... **ALL OF IT!!!**

Every false religion in the world teaches a whole bunch of things that a person must **DO** to get to Heaven. But as we just saw for ourselves in the wonderful Scriptures in Acts 10:30-45, Peter simply preached the truth of the Gospel, and Cornelius **BELIEVED** and was instantly and forever born-again and saved. Salvation is not doing your best, it is having Christ's best put to your account through receiving Him by faith. God will not save anyone who is trying to be saved, He will only save those who are trusting to be saved. Religion is man trying to reach God through human effort, but Christianity is God trying to reach man by the sacrifice of His only begotten Son on the cross.

Peter (Acts 10:34-38, 39--45)
God does not show favoritism in dealing with people, but in every nation the person who fears him and does what is right is welcomed before him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, proclaiming the good news of peace through
Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all)—
you know what happened throughout Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John announced: with respect to Jesus from Nazareth, that God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went around doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, because God was with him.
We are witnesses of all the things he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem.
They killed him by hanging him on a tree [cross]
but God raised him up on the third day
and caused him to be seen, not by all the people, but by us, the witnesses God had already chosen, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.
He commanded us to preach to the people and to warn them that
he is the one appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead.
About him all the prophets testify, that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name

Legend:

	Saved / Believes in Jesus:
	Died/Sins/Scriptures
	Buried/Resurrection
	Witnesses
	Why Preach
	Appointed by God / Lord

Return to the beginning:

[The Gospel that Peter Preached](#)

See also and compare:

[The Gospel that Paul Preached](#)

See also: [Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

NET Version of Acts 10:30-45...

[30] Cornelius ⁷⁹ replied, ⁸⁰ “Four days ago at this very hour, at three o'clock in the afternoon, ⁸¹ I was praying in my house, and suddenly ⁸² a man in shining clothing stood before me [31] and said, ‘Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your acts of charity ⁸³ have been remembered before God. ⁸⁴ [32] Therefore send to Joppa and summon Simon, who is called Peter. This man is staying as a guest in the house of Simon the tanner, ⁸⁵ by the sea.’ [33] Therefore I sent for you at once, and you were kind enough to come. ⁸⁶ So now we are all here in the presence of God ⁸⁷ to listen ⁸⁸ to everything the Lord has commanded you to say to us.” ⁸⁹

[34] Then Peter started speaking: ⁹⁰ “I now truly understand that God does not show favoritism in dealing with people, ⁹¹ [35] but in every nation ⁹² the person who fears him ⁹³ and does what is right ⁹⁴ is welcomed before him. [36] You know ⁹⁵ the message ⁹⁶ he sent to the people ⁹⁷ of Israel, proclaiming the good news of peace ⁹⁸ through ⁹⁹ Jesus Christ ¹⁰⁰ (he is Lord ¹⁰¹ of all) – [37] you know what happened throughout Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John announced: ¹⁰² [38] with respect to Jesus from Nazareth, ¹⁰³ that ¹⁰⁴ God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power. He ¹⁰⁵ went around doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, ¹⁰⁶ because God was with him. ¹⁰⁷ [39] We ¹⁰⁸ are witnesses of all the things he did both in Judea ¹⁰⁹ and in Jerusalem. ¹¹⁰ They ¹¹¹ killed him by hanging him on a tree, ¹¹² [40] but ¹¹³ God raised him up on the third day and caused him to be seen, ¹¹⁴ [41] not by all the people, but by us, the witnesses God had already chosen, ¹¹⁵ who ate and drank ¹¹⁶ with him after he rose from the dead. [42] He ¹¹⁷ commanded us to preach to the people and to warn ¹¹⁸ them ¹¹⁹ that he is the one ¹²⁰ appointed ¹²¹ by God as judge ¹²² of the living and the dead. [43] About him all the prophets testify, ¹²³ that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins ¹²⁴ through his name.”

[44] While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell on ¹²⁵ all those who heard the message. ¹²⁶ [See [following verses 45-48, below](#)]

Some verse notes:

Return to:

[The Gospel that Peter Preached](#)

⁸⁹ **tn** The words “to say to us” are not in the Greek text, but are implied. Cornelius knows Peter is God's representative, bringing God's message.

⁹⁰ **tn** *Grk* “Opening his mouth Peter said” (a Semitic idiom for beginning to speak in a somewhat formal manner). The participle ἀνοίξας (*anoixas*) has been translated as a finite verb due to requirements of contemporary English style.

⁹¹ **tn** *Grk* “God is not one who is a respecter of persons,” that is, “God is not one to show partiality” (cf. BDAG 887 s.v. προσωπολήπτης). L&N 88.239 translates this verse “I realize that God does not show favoritism (in dealing with people).” The underlying Hebrew idiom includes the personal element (“respecter of persons”) so the phrase “in dealing with people” is included in the present translation. It fits very well with the following context and serves to emphasize the relational component of God's lack of partiality. The latter is a major theme in the NT: Ro 2:11; Ep 2:11-22; Col 3:25; Jas 2:1; 1Pe 1:17. This was the lesson of Peter's vision. (see [previous verses of chapter, below](#))

¹⁰¹ **sn** *He is Lord of all*. Though a parenthetical remark, this is the theological key to the speech. Jesus *is Lord of all*, so the gospel can go to all. The rest of the speech proclaims Jesus' authority.

¹⁰³ **sn** The somewhat awkward naming of Jesus as *from Nazareth* here is actually emphatic. He is the key subject of these key events.

¹⁰⁶ **sn** *All who were oppressed by the devil*. Note how healing is tied to the cosmic battle present in creation. Christ's power overcomes the devil and his forces, which seek to destroy humanity.

¹¹² **tn** Or “by crucifying him” (“hang on a tree” is by the time of the 1st century an idiom for crucifixion). The allusion is to the judgment against Jesus as a rebellious figure, appealing to the language of Dt 21:23. The Jewish leadership has badly “misjudged” Jesus.

¹¹³ **tn** The conjunction “but” is not in the Greek text, but the contrast is clearly implied in the context. This is technically *asyndeton*, or lack of a connective, in Greek.

¹²⁰ **tn** *Grk* “that this one is the one,” but this is awkward in English and has been simplified to “that he is the one.”

¹²¹ **tn** Or “designated.” BDAG 723 s.v. *ὁρίζω* 2.b has “*the one appointed by God as judge*” for this phrase.

¹²² **sn** Jesus has divine authority *as judge* over the living and the dead: Ac 17:26-31; Ro 14:9; 1Th 5:9-10; 1Ti 4:1; 1Pe 4:5.

¹²³ **tn** Or “All the prophets testify about him.” Although modern English translations tend to place “about him” after “testify” (so NIV, NRSV) the phrase “about him” has been left at the beginning of v. 43 for emphatic reasons.

¹²⁴ **sn** *Forgiveness of sins*. See Lk 24:47; also Ac 14:23; 19:4; 9:42; 11:17; 16:31. The gospel is present in the prophetic promise, Ro 1:1-7. The message is in continuity with the ancient hope.

Following verses 45-48:

[45] The ¹²⁷ circumcised believers ¹²⁸ who had accompanied Peter were greatly astonished ¹²⁹ that ¹³⁰ the gift of the Holy Spirit ¹³¹ had been poured out ¹³² even on the Gentiles, [46] for they heard them speaking in tongues and praising ¹³³ God. Then Peter said, [47] “No one can withhold the water for these people to be baptized, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did, ¹³⁴ can he?” ¹³⁵ [48] So he gave orders to have them baptized ¹³⁶ in the name of Jesus Christ. ¹³⁷ Then they asked him to stay for several days. [\[back\]](#)

Preceding verses 10:1-29:

[10:1] Now there was a man in Caesarea ¹ named Cornelius, a centurion ² of what was known as the Italian Cohort. ³ [2] He ⁴ was a devout, God-fearing man, ⁵ as was all his household; he did many acts of charity for the people ⁶ and prayed to God regularly. [3] About three o'clock one afternoon ⁷ he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God ⁸ who came in ⁹ and said to him, “Cornelius.” [4] Staring at him and becoming greatly afraid, Cornelius ¹⁰ replied, ¹¹ “What is it, Lord?” The angel ¹² said to him, “Your prayers and your acts of charity ¹³ have gone up as a memorial ¹⁴ before God. [5] Now ¹⁵ send men to Joppa ¹⁶ and summon a man named Simon, ¹⁷ who is called Peter. [6] This man is staying as a guest with a man named Simon, a tanner, ¹⁸ whose house is by the sea.” [7] When the angel who had spoken to him departed, Cornelius ¹⁹ called two of his personal servants ²⁰ and a devout soldier from among those who served him, ²¹ [8] and when he had explained everything to them, he sent them to Joppa.

[9] About noon ²² the next day, while they were on their way and approaching ²³ the city, Peter went up on the roof ²⁴ to pray. [10] He became hungry and wanted to eat, but while they were preparing the meal, a trance came over him. ²⁵ [11] He ²⁶ saw heaven ²⁷ opened ²⁸ and an object something like a large sheet ²⁹ descending, ³⁰ being let down to earth ³¹ by its four corners. [12] In it ³² were all kinds of four-footed animals and reptiles ³³ of the earth and wild birds. ³⁴ [13] Then ³⁵ a voice said ³⁶ to him, “Get up, Peter; slaughter ³⁷ and eat!” [14] But Peter said, “Certainly not, Lord, for I have never eaten anything defiled and ritually unclean!” ³⁸ [15] The voice ³⁹ spoke to him again, a second time, “What God has made clean, you must not consider ⁴⁰ ritually unclean!” ⁴¹ [16] This happened three times, and immediately the object was taken up into heaven. ⁴²

[17] Now while Peter was puzzling over ⁴³ what the vision he had seen could signify, the men sent by Cornelius had learned where Simon's house was ⁴⁴ and approached ⁴⁵ the gate. [18] They ⁴⁶ called out to ask if Simon, known as Peter, ⁴⁷ was staying there as a guest. [19] While Peter was still thinking seriously about ⁴⁸ the vision, the Spirit said to him, “Look! Three men are looking for you. [20] But get up, ⁴⁹ go

down, and accompany them without hesitation, ⁵⁰ because I have sent them.” [21] So Peter went down ⁵¹ to the men and said, “Here I am, ⁵² the person you’re looking for. Why have you come?” [22] They said, “Cornelius the centurion, ⁵³ a righteous ⁵⁴ and God-fearing man, well spoken of by the whole Jewish nation, ⁵⁵ was directed by a holy angel to summon you to his house and to hear a message ⁵⁶ from you.” [23] So Peter ⁵⁷ invited them in and entertained them as guests.

On the next day he got up and set out ⁵⁸ with them, and some of the brothers from Joppa ⁵⁹ accompanied him. [24] The following day ⁶⁰ he entered Caesarea. ⁶¹ Now Cornelius was waiting anxiously ⁶² for them and had called together his relatives and close friends. [25] So when ⁶³ Peter came in, Cornelius met ⁶⁴ him, fell ⁶⁵ at his feet, and worshiped ⁶⁶ him. [26] But Peter helped him up, ⁶⁷ saying, “Stand up. I too am a mere mortal.” ⁶⁸ [27] Peter ⁶⁹ continued talking with him as he went in, and he found many people gathered together. ⁷⁰ [28] He said to them, “You know that ⁷¹ it is unlawful ⁷² for a Jew ⁷³ to associate with or visit a Gentile, ⁷⁴ yet God has shown me that I should call no person ⁷⁵ defiled or ritually unclean. ⁷⁶ [29] Therefore when you sent for me, ⁷⁷ I came without any objection. Now may I ask why ⁷⁸ you sent for me?”

Return to:

[The Gospel that Peter Preached](#)

See also and compare:

[The Gospel that Paul Preached](#)

See also: [Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#) (Following)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

See more regarding the Gospels of Paul and Peter...

Gospel of Paul vs Peter

[See also: [Gospel Paul Preached](#) and [Peter Preached](#)]

In the following chart we are comparing what Paul considered to be the Gospel with the Gospel Peter preached.. (See the additional charts of what Paul also preached in the [Gospel Paul Preached section](#).)

Paul (1 Corinthians 15:1-2, 3-11, 20-28)	Peter (Acts 10:34-38, 39--45)
Now I want to make clear for you, brothers and sisters, the gospel that I preached to you, that you received and on which you stand, and by which you are being saved , if you hold firmly to the message I preached to you – unless you believed in vain.	
For I passed on to you as of first importance what I also received –	
	God does not show favoritism in dealing with people, but in every nation the person who fears him and does what is right is welcomed before him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, proclaiming the good news of peace through
	Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all)—
	you know what happened throughout Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John announced: with respect to Jesus from Nazareth, that God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went around doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, because God was with him.
	We are witnesses of all the things he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem.
that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures,	They killed him by hanging him on a tree [cross]
and he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day according to the scriptures	but God raised him up on the third day
he appeared to Cephas [Peter], then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.	and caused him to be seen, not by all the people, but by us, the witnesses God had already chosen, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.
Last of all, as though to one born at the wrong time, he appeared to me also. For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me has not been in vain. In fact, I worked harder than all of them – yet not I, but the grace of God with me.	
Whether then it was I or they, this is the way we preach and this is the way you believed.	
	He commanded us to preach to the people and to warn them that
	he is the one appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead.

	About him all the prophets testify, that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name												
But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead also came through a man. For just as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ, the firstfruits; then when Christ comes, those who belong to him. Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, when he has brought to an end all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be eliminated is death. For he has put everything in subjection under his feet . But when it says “everything” has been put in subjection, it is clear that this does not include the one who put everything in subjection to him. And when all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will be subjected to the one who subjected everything to him, so that God may be all in all.	<u>Legend:</u> <table border="1"> <tr><td></td><td>Saved / Believes in Jesus:</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>Died/Sins/Scriptures</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>Buried/Resurrection</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>Witnesses</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>Why Preach</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>Appointed by God / Lord</td></tr> </table> <u>Notes:</u> Order does not matter. No gospel presentation is complete without emphasizing the <u>resurrection</u> of Jesus and that Jesus was <u>appointed ruler (Lord) and judge over all</u>. Exact wording is not required as long as the essence of the gospel is clear and complete.		Saved / Believes in Jesus:		Died/Sins/Scriptures		Buried/Resurrection		Witnesses		Why Preach		Appointed by God / Lord
	Saved / Believes in Jesus:												
	Died/Sins/Scriptures												
	Buried/Resurrection												
	Witnesses												
	Why Preach												
	Appointed by God / Lord												

Note: Keep in mind that Paul was writing (above) to people already saved by his preaching of the Gospel and reflecting back on what he originally shared with them, while Peter was talking to those not yet saved – until he completes his presentation – whereupon they are saved.

Summary of above (and related) charts:

Everyone is saved who believes in Jesus Christ: that He...

	Died on a cross / for the Forgiveness of our Sins	[as foretold by OT Prophets in Scripture],
	He was Buried / then was Raised up on the 3 rd day (<u>Resurrection</u>)	[as per OT Prophets].
	Witnesses after Jesus arose: Apostles ate and drank with Him; over 500 men/women saw.	
	Why Preach? – commanded by Jesus; of first/highest importance; and to warn you that	
	Jesus was appointed [Lord] by God to reign over everything and to judge the living and the dead	

["Christ" = from *Christos*, the Greek word for the Hebrew "Messiah" = "Anointed One of God"; i.e., Jesus the Messiah]

See also: [Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

[Gospel of Jesus vs Paul](#)

Occurrences of Jesus Risen/Resurrected Mentioned by Apostles in the Bible

Return to:

[The Gospel that Paul Preached](#)

Return to:

[The Gospel that Peter Preached](#)

Additional Charts:

[Romans 1:1-5](#) [Acts 17:22-31](#) (Mars Hill)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Jesus Raised Up (Resurrected) from the Dead

(Sections of the Bible where the Resurrection of Jesus is Mentioned.)

[using the WEB Version]

See also: [Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Matthew	17:9-13 (Matthew)	[9] As they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, " Don't tell anyone what you saw, until the Son of Man has risen from the dead. " [10] His disciples asked him, saying, "Then why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" [11] Jesus answered them, " Elijah indeed comes first, and will restore all things, [12] but I tell you that Elijah has come already, and they didn't recognize him, but did to him whatever they wanted to. Even so the Son of Man will also suffer by them. " [13] Then the disciples understood that he spoke to them of John the Baptizer.
	27:50-54 (Matthew)	[50] Jesus cried again with a loud voice, and yielded up his spirit. [51] Behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from the top to the bottom. The earth quaked and the rocks were split. [52] The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; [53] and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection , they entered into the holy city and appeared to many. [54] Now the centurion, and those who were with him watching Jesus, when they saw the earthquake, and the things that were done, feared exceedingly, saying, "Truly this was the Son of God."
	28:6-8 (Matthew)	[6] "He is not here; for He is risen , as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. [7] "And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead , and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you." [8] So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word.
Mark	9:7-9 (Mark)	[7] A cloud came, overshadowing them, and a voice came out of the cloud, "This is my beloved Son. Listen to him." [8] Suddenly looking around, they saw no one with them any more, except Jesus only. [9] As they were coming down from the mountain, he commanded them that they should tell no one what things they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead . [10] They kept this saying to themselves, questioning what the "rising from the dead" meant.
	16:5-8, 14, 19-20 (Mark)	[5] And entering the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a long white robe sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. [6] But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him. [7] "But go, tell His disciples—and Peter—that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you." [8] So they went out quickly * and fled from the tomb, for they trembled and were amazed. And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid. ... [14] Later He appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table; and He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen [19] So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven , and sat down at the right hand of God. [20] And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with <i>them</i> and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen.

Luke	24:3-7 (Luke)	[4] It happened, while they were greatly perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling clothing. [5] Becoming terrified, they bowed their faces down to the earth. They said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? [6] He isn't here, but is risen . Remember what he told you when he was still in Galilee, [7] saying that the Son of Man must be delivered up into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again? "
	24:33-35; 44-53 (Luke)	us?" [33] They rose up that very hour, returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and those who were with them, [34] saying, " The Lord is risen indeed , and has appeared to Simon!" [35] They related the things that happened along the way, and how he was recognized by them in the breaking of the bread. ... [44] He said to them, "This is what I told you, while I was still with you, that all things which are written in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms, concerning me must be fulfilled." [45] Then he opened their minds, that they might understand the Scriptures. [46] He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day , [47] and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name to all the nations, beginning at Jerusalem. [48] You are witnesses of these things. [49] Behold, I send forth the promise of my Father on you. But wait in the city of Jerusalem until you are clothed with power from on high." [50] He led them out as far as Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. [51] It happened, while he blessed them, that he withdrew from them, and was carried up into heaven . [52] They worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, [53] and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.
John	2:19-22; 20:11-31 (John)	[19] Jesus answered them, " Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. " [20] The Jews therefore said, "Forty-six years was this temple in building, and will you raise it up in three days?" [21] But he spoke of the temple of his body. [22] When therefore he was raised from the dead , his disciples remembered that he said this, and they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.
Acts	1:15-22 (Peter)	[15] In these days, Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples (and there was a multitude of persons gathered together, about one hundred twenty), and said, [16] "Brothers, it was necessary that this Scripture should be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who was guide to those who took Jesus. [17] For he was numbered with us, and received his portion in this ministry. [18] Now this man obtained a field with the reward for his wickedness, and falling headlong, his body burst open, and all his intestines gushed out. [19] It became known to everyone who lived in Jerusalem that in their language that field was called 'Akeldama,' that is, 'The field of blood.' [20] For it is written in the book of Psalms, <i>'Let his habitation be made desolate. Let no one dwell therein;' and, 'Let another take his office.'</i> [21] "Of the men therefore who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, [22] beginning from the baptism of John, to the day that He was received up from us, of these one must become a witness with us of His resurrection. "
	2:22-39 (Peter)	[22] "Men of Israel, hear these words! Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved by God to you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, even as you yourselves

		know, [23] him, being delivered up by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by the hand of lawless men, crucified and killed; [24] whom God raised up, having freed him from the agony of death, because it was not possible that he should be held by it. [25] For David says concerning him, <i>'I saw the Lord always before my face, For he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved. [26] Therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced. Moreover my flesh also will dwell in hope; [27] because you will not leave my soul in *Hades, neither will you allow your Holy One to see decay. [28] You made known to me the ways of life. You will make me full of gladness with your presence.'</i> [29] "Brothers, I may tell you freely of the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. [30] Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, he would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, [31] he foreseeing this spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was his soul left in Hades, nor did his flesh see decay. [32] This Jesus God raised up, to which we all are witnesses. [33] Being therefore exalted by the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this, which you now see and hear. [34] For David didn't ascend into the heavens, but he says himself, <i>'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit by my right hand, [35] until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet."</i> [36] "Let all the house of Israel therefore know certainly that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified." [37] Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" [38] Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. [39] For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all who are far off, even as many as the Lord our God will call to himself."
	4:1-4 (Apostles)	[4:1] As they spoke to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came to them, [2] being upset because they taught the people and proclaimed in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. [3] They laid hands on them, and put them in custody until the next day, for it was now evening. [4] But many of those who heard the word believed, and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.
	4:10-12 (Peter)	[10] be it known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, in him does this man stand here before you whole. <i>[11] He is 'the stone which was regarded as worthless by you, the builders, which has become the head of the corner.'</i> [12] There is salvation in none other, for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, by which we must be saved!"
	5:29-32 (Peter)	[29] But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men. [30] The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you

	and the Apostles)	killed, hanging him on a tree. [31] God exalted him with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins. [32] We are His witnesses of these things; and so also is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him."
	10:34-48 (Peter)	...[40] God raised him up the third day , and gave him to be revealed,... (see Gospel of Paul vs Peter chart for details)
	13:16-41 (Paul)	[16] Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand said, "Men of Israel, and you who fear God, listen. [17] The God of this people chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they stayed as aliens in the land of Egypt, and with an uplifted arm, he led them out of it. [18] For a period of about forty years he put up with them in the wilderness. [19] When he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave them their land for an inheritance, for about four hundred fifty years. [20] After these things he gave them judges until Samuel the prophet. [21] Afterward they asked for a king, and God gave to them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years. [22] When he had removed him, he raised up David to be their king, to whom he also testified, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after my heart, who will do all my will.' [23] From this man's seed, God has brought salvation to Israel according to his promise, [24] before his coming, when John had first preached the baptism of repentance to Israel. [25] As John was fulfilling his course, he said, 'What do you suppose that I am? I am not he. But behold, one comes after me the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie.' [26] Brothers, children of the stock of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, the word of this salvation is sent out to you. [27] For those who dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they didn't know him, nor the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath, fulfilled them by condemning him. [28] Though they found no cause for death, they still asked Pilate to have him killed. [29] When they had fulfilled all things that were written about him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a tomb. [30] But God raised him from the dead, [31] and he was seen for many days by those who came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses to the people. [32] We bring you good news of the promise made to the fathers, [33] that God has fulfilled the same to us, their children, in that he raised up Jesus. As it is also written in the second psalm, <i>'You are my Son. Today I have become your father.'</i> [34] "Concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he has spoken thus: 'I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David.' [35] Therefore he says also in another psalm, 'You will not allow your Holy One to see decay.' [36] For David, after he had in his own generation served the counsel of God, fell asleep, and was laid with his fathers, and saw decay. [37] But he whom God raised up saw no decay. [38] Be it known to you therefore, brothers, that through this man is proclaimed to you remission of sins, [39] and by him everyone who believes is justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses. [40] Beware therefore, lest that come on you which is spoken in the prophets: <i>[41] 'Behold, you scoffers, and wonder, and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work which you will in no way believe, if one declares it to you.'"</i>
	17:1-3 (Paul)	[17:1] Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue.

		[2] Paul, as was his custom, went in to them, and for three Sabbath days reasoned with them from the Scriptures, [3] explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead , and saying, "This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ."
	17:16-31 (Paul)	...[31] because he has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he has ordained; of which he has given assurance to all men, in that he has raised him from the dead ." (see Paul and the Gospel on Mars Hill (Areopagus) for more details)
	24:10-22 (Paul)	[10] When the governor had beckoned to him to speak, Paul answered, "Because I know that you have been a judge of this nation for many years, I cheerfully make my defense, [11] seeing that you can recognize that it is not more than twelve days since I went up to worship at Jerusalem. [12] In the temple they didn't find me disputing with anyone or stirring up a crowd, either in the synagogues, or in the city. [13] Nor can they prove to you the things of which they now accuse me. [14] But this I confess to you, that after the Way, which they call a sect, so I serve the God of our fathers, believing all things which are according to the law, and which are written in the prophets; [15] having hope toward God, which these also themselves look for, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. [16] Herein I also practice always having a conscience void of offense toward God and men. [17] Now after some years, I came to bring gifts for the needy to my nation, and offerings; [18] amid which certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, not with a mob, nor with turmoil. [19] They ought to have been here before you, and to make accusation, if they had anything against me. [20] Or else let these men themselves say what injustice they found in me when I stood before the council, [21] unless it is for this one thing that I cried standing among them, 'Concerning the resurrection of the dead I am being judged before you today!'" [22] But Felix, having more exact knowledge concerning the Way, deferred them, saying, "When Lysias, the commanding officer, comes down, I will decide your case."
	26:1-30 (Paul)	[26:1] Agrippa said to Paul, "You may speak for yourself." Then Paul stretched out his hand, and made his defense. [2] "I think myself happy, King Agrippa, that I am to make my defense before you this day concerning all the things that I am accused by the Jews, [3] especially because you are expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews. Therefore I beg you to hear me patiently. [4] "Indeed, all the Jews know my way of life from my youth up, which was from the beginning among my own nation and at Jerusalem; [5] having known me from the first, if they are willing to testify, that after the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee. [6] Now I stand here to be judged for the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers, [7] which our twelve tribes, earnestly serving night and day, hope to attain. Concerning this hope I am accused by the Jews, King Agrippa! [8] Why is it judged incredible with you, if God does raise the dead ? [9] "I myself most certainly thought that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. [10] This I also did in Jerusalem. I both shut up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, and when they were put to

		death I gave my vote against them. [11] Punishing them often in all the synagogues, I tried to make them blaspheme. Being exceedingly enraged against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities. [12] "Whereupon as I traveled to Damascus with the authority and commission from the chief priests, [13] at noon, O King, I saw on the way a light from the sky, brighter than the sun, shining around me and those who traveled with me. [14] When we had all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.' [15] "I said, 'Who are you, Lord?' "He said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. [16] But arise, and stand on your feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose: to appoint you a servant and a witness both of the things which you have seen, and of the things which I will reveal to you; [17] delivering you from the people, and from the Gentiles, to whom I send you, [18] to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in me.' [19] "Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, [20] but declared first to them of Damascus, at Jerusalem, and throughout all the country of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, doing works worthy of repentance. [21] For this reason the Jews seized me in the temple, and tried to kill me. [22] Having therefore obtained the help that is from God, I stand to this day testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would happen, [23] how the Christ must suffer, and how, by the resurrection of the dead, he would be first to proclaim light both to these people and to the Gentiles." [24] As he thus made his defense, Festus said with a loud voice, "Paul, you are crazy! Your great learning is driving you insane!" [25] But he said, "I am not crazy, most excellent Festus, but boldly declare words of truth and reasonableness. [26] For the king knows of these things, to whom also I speak freely. For I am persuaded that none of these things is hidden from him, for this has not been done in a corner. [27] King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe." [28] Agrippa said to Paul, "With a little persuasion are you trying to make me a Christian?" [29] Paul said, "I pray to God, that whether with little or with much, not only you, but also all that hear me this day, might become such as I am, except for these bonds." [30] The king rose up with the governor, and Bernice, and those who sat with them. [31] When they had withdrawn, they spoke one to another, saying, "This man does nothing worthy of death or of bonds." [32] Agrippa said to Festus, "This man might have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar."

Romans	1:1-5 (Paul)	[Ro 1:1] Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the Good News of God, [2] which he promised before through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, [3] concerning his Son, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, [4] who was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead , Jesus Christ our Lord, [5] through whom we received grace and apostleship, for obedience of faith among all the nations, for his name's sake; ...(see Gospel – Romans 1:1-5 chart for details)
	4:13-25 (Paul)	[13] For the promise to Abraham and to his seed that he should be heir of the world wasn't through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. [14] For if those who are of the law are heirs, faith is made void, and the promise is made of no effect. [15] For the law works wrath, for where there is no law, neither is there disobedience. [16] For this cause it is of faith, that it may be according to grace, to the end that the promise may be sure to all the seed, not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all. [17] As it is written, "I have made you a father of many nations." This is in the presence of him whom he believed: God, who gives life to the dead , and calls the things that are not, as though they were. [18] Who in hope believed against hope, to the end that he might become a father of many nations, according to that which had been spoken, "So will your seed be." [19] Without being weakened in faith, he didn't consider his own body, already having been worn out, (he being about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. [20] Yet, looking to the promise of God, he didn't waver through unbelief, but grew strong through faith, giving glory to God, [21] and being fully assured that what he had promised, he was able also to perform. [22] Therefore it also was "reckoned to him for righteousness." [23] Now it was not written that it was accounted to him for his sake alone, [24] but for our sake also, to whom it will be accounted, who believe in him who raised Jesus, our Lord, from the dead , [25] who was delivered up for our trespasses, and was raised for our justification .
	6:4-11 (Paul)	[4] Therefore we have been buried with him through baptism into death, in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father , so we too may live a new life. [5] For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we will certainly also be united in the likeness of his resurrection . [6] We know that our old man was crucified with him so that the body of sin would no longer dominate us, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. [7] (For someone who has died has been freed from sin.) [8] Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. [9] We know that since Christ has been raised from the dead, he is never going to die again; death no longer has mastery over him . [10] For the death he died, he died to sin once for all, but the life he lives, he lives to God. [11] So you too consider yourselves ⁸ dead to sin, but ⁹ alive to God in Christ Jesus.
	7:4 (Paul)	[4] Therefore, my brothers, you also were made dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you would be joined to another, to him who was raised from the dead , that we might bring forth fruit to God.
	8:11 (Paul)	[11] But if the Spirit of him who raised up Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised up Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

	8:34 (Paul)	[34] Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, yes rather, who was raised from the dead , who is at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.
	9:15 (Paul)	[17] For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I caused you to be raised up, that I might show in you my power, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth."
1 Corinthians	6:14 (Paul)	[14] Now God indeed raised the Lord and he will raise us by his power.
	15:1-11 (Paul)	...[4] that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, ... (see Gospel of Paul vs Peter chart for details)
	15:12-52 (Paul)	[12] Now if Christ is preached, that he has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? [13] But if there is no resurrection of the dead, neither has Christ been raised. [14] If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain, and your faith also is in vain. [15] Yes, we are found false witnesses of God, because we testified about God that he raised up Christ, whom he didn't raise up, if it is so that the dead are not raised. [16] For if the dead aren't raised, neither has Christ been raised. [17] If Christ has not been raised, your faith is vain; you are still in your sins. [18] Then they also who are fallen asleep in Christ have perished. [19] If we have only hoped in Christ in this life, we are of all men most pitiable. [20] But now Christ has been raised from the dead. He became the first fruits of those who are asleep. [21] For since death came by man, the resurrection of the dead also came by man. [22] For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. [23] But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then those who are Christ's, at his coming. [24] Then the end comes, when he will deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father; when he will have abolished all rule and all authority and power. [25] For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. [26] The last enemy that will be abolished is death. [27] For, "He put all things in subjection under his feet." But when he says, "All things are put in subjection," it is evident that he is excepted who subjected all things to him. [28] When all things have been subjected to him, then the Son will also himself be subjected to him who subjected all things to him, that God may be all in all. [29] Or else what will they do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead aren't raised at all, why then are they baptized for the dead? [30] Why do we also stand in jeopardy every hour? [31] I affirm, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. [32] If I fought with animals at Ephesus for human purposes, what does it profit me? If the dead are not raised, then "let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." [33] Don't be deceived! "Evil companionships corrupt good morals." [34] Wake up righteously, and don't sin, for some have no knowledge of God. I say this to your shame. [35] But someone will say, "How are the dead raised?" and, "With what kind of body do they come?" [36] You foolish one, that which you yourself sow is not made alive unless it dies. [37] That which you sow, you don't sow the body that will be, but a bare grain, maybe of wheat, or of some other kind. [38] But God gives it a body even as it pleased him, and to each seed a body of its own. [39] All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one flesh of men, another flesh of animals, another of fish, and another of birds. [40] There are also celestial bodies, and terrestrial bodies; but the glory of the celestial differs from that of the terrestrial. [41] There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory. [42] So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised

		in incorruption. [43] It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. [44] It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body and there is also a spiritual body. [45] So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. [46] However that which is spiritual isn't first, but that which is natural, then that which is spiritual. [47] The first man is of the earth, made of dust. The <u>second man is the Lord from heaven</u>. [48] As is the one made of dust, such are those who are also made of dust; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. [49] As we have borne the image of those made of dust, let's also bear the image of the heavenly. [50] Now I say this, *brothers, that flesh and blood can't inherit the Kingdom of God; ne [56] The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. [57] But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. [58] Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the Lord's work, because you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.
2 Corinthians	4:14-18 (Paul)	[14] knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus, and will present us with you. [15] For all things are for your sakes, that the grace, being multiplied through the many, may cause the thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God. [16] Therefore we don't faint, but though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day. [17] For our light affliction, which is for the moment, works for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory; [18] while we don't look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.
	5:14-15 (Paul)	[14] For the love of Christ constrains us; because we judge thus, that one died for all, therefore all died. [15] He died for all, that those who live should no longer live to themselves, but to him who for their sakes died and rose again.
Galatians	1:1-5 (Paul)	Paul, an apostle (not from men, neither through man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead), [2] and all the *brothers who are with me, to the assemblies of Galatia: [3] Grace to you and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, [4] who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us out of this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father-- [5] to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.
Ephesians	1:14-23 (Paul)	[15] For this cause I also, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which is among you, and the love which you have toward all the saints, [16] don't cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers, [17] that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; [18] having the eyes of your *hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of his calling, and what are the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, [19] and what is the exceeding greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to that working of the strength of his might [20] which he worked in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, [21] far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in that which is to come. [22] He put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things for the assembly, [23] which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.
	2:4-10 (Paul)	[4] But God, being rich in mercy, for his great love with which he loved us, [5] even when we were dead through our trespasses, made

		us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), [6] and raised us up with him , and made us to sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, [7] that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus; [8] for by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, [9] not of works, that no one would boast. [10] For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared before that we would walk in them.
Philippians	3:7-12 (Paul)	[7] However, what things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ. [8] Yes most certainly, and I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and count them nothing but refuse, that I may gain Christ [9] and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own, that which is of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; [10] that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection , and the fellowship of his sufferings, becoming conformed to his death; [11] if by any means I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. [12] Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect; but I press on, if it is so that I may take hold of that for which also I was taken hold of by Christ Jesus.
Colossians	2:8-15 (Paul)	thanksgiving. [8] Be careful that you don't let anyone rob you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the elements of the world, and not after Christ. [9] For in him all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily, [10] and in him you are made full, who is the head of all principality and power; [11] in whom you were also circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the sins of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ; [12] having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead. [13] You were dead through your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh. He made you alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, [14] wiping out the handwriting in ordinances which was against us; and he has taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross; [15] having stripped the principalities and the powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.
	3:1-4 (Paul)	[1] If then you were raised together with Christ , seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God. [2] Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are on the earth. [3] For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. [4] When Christ, our life, is revealed, then you will also be revealed with him in glory.
1 Thessalonians	1:9-10 (Paul)	[9] For they themselves report concerning us what kind of a reception we had from you; and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, [10] and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead --Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come.
2 Timothy	2:8-10 (Paul)	[8] Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead , of the seed of David, <u>according to my Good News</u> , [9] in which I suffer hardship to the point of chains as a criminal. But God's word isn't chained. [10] Therefore I endure all things for the chosen ones' sake, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. (see Gospel – 2 Timothy 2:8-10 chart for details)
1 Peter	1:1-5 (Paul)	[1Pe 1:1] Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the chosen ones who are living as foreigners in the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, [2] according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, that you may obey

		Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with his blood: Grace to you and peace be multiplied. [3] Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy became our father again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead , [4] to an incorruptible and undefiled inheritance that doesn't fade away, reserved in Heaven for you, [5] who by the power of God are guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.
	1:21 (Peter)	[17] If you call on him as Father, who without respect of persons judges according to each man's work, pass the time of your living as foreigners here in reverent fear: [18] knowing that you were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, from the useless way of life handed down from your fathers, [19] but with precious blood, as of a faultless and pure lamb, the blood of Christ; [20] who was foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world, but was revealed at the end of times for your sake, [21] who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead , and gave him glory; so that your faith and hope might be in God.
	3:21-22 (Peter)	[21] This is a symbol of baptism, which now saves you--not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ , [22] who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, angels and authorities and powers being made subject to him.

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#)

[Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

[Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

The Simple Gospel According to the Bible

<http://www.jesusisprecious.org/fundamentals/gospel.htm>

Excerpt:

What exactly is the Gospel? The word "Gospel" means "Good News" or "Glad Tidings." There is no need to guess what the "Gospel" is because the Bible plainly tells us. The "Gospel" is the *Good News* of Christ's DEATH on the cross for our sins, His BURIAL and bodily RESURRECTION three days later:

*1st Corinthians 15:1-4, "**Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel** which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that **Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.**"*

We are saved by BELIEVING "the Gospel," which is the power of God unto salvation. **Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."** John 6:28-29, "Then said they unto him, **What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?** Jesus answered and said unto them, **This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.**" It is that simple to be saved. If you admit that you are a needy sinner in God's sight, and you receive Christ's sacrifice on the cross as payment for your sins, believing that He was buried and bodily resurrected three days later, YOU ARE IMMEDIATELY, SECURELY AND FOREVER SAVED!!!

What About Repentance and Salvation?

In the Gospel of John, the words “believe” and “believed” are mentioned 85 times, but the word “repent” is not mentioned even once. Clearly, the person who BELIEVES has also repented. This is not difficult to understand, when you learn the truth that the Greek meaning of “repent” in the Bible to be saved is [metanoia](#), which is simply “a change of mind.” Repentance is a change of mind unto the Gospel itself.

We learn in the Bible that God gave His law to humanity, to show us our sinnership. **Romans 3:19, “Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.”** The law of God shows us that we are guilty sinners in God's sight (see also Galatians 3:24-26). We are woeful sinners, deserving of death and punishment in the Lake of Fire (i.e., Hell). This is the BAD NEWS! No one ever got saved who didn't admit to being a sinner in God's eyes. **1st John 1:7, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”** To be saved, you MUST realize that you are a guilty sinner for breaking God's commandments. We are all horrible sinners! We've all lied! We've all coveted! We've all sinned! **Romans 3:23, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”** This is the BAD NEWS!!!

Repentance is simply the admission that I am as guilty a sinner as God has declared me to be in His Word. Let me make it very simple—YOU ARE A GUILTY SINNER IN GOD'S SIGHT, and unless you accept Christ's sacrifice on the cross as full-payment for your sins, you will spend eternity burning in the fires of Hell.

What Repentance is Not!

Repentance is NOT turning away from sinful behavior, not reformation, not a desire to clean up one's life of sin, not forsaking the world, not turning over a new leaf, not a willingness to turn away from sin, not a change of heart toward sinful bad habits, not a change of life, et cetera. As we have already learned from examining the Greek word, *metanoia*, repentance is simply a change of mind. [Acts 20:21](#), speaks of “**repentance toward God.**” Repentance is *toward God* by faith in the Gospel, evidenced by the hundreds of New Testament Scriptures that simply tell us to BELIEVE to be saved. For example: **1st Corinthians 1:21, “For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching TO SAVE THEM THAT BELIEVE.”**

Also, please notice that the entire purpose for which the Epistle of 1st John was written, is so that “**ye may know that ye have eternal life**” (**1st John 5:13**). Yet, carefully notice that the apostle John doesn't mention the word “repent” even once in all of 1st John. THAT SPEAKS VOLUMES!!! If turning away from sinful behavior was required to be saved, then no doubt John would have made a big deal of it in his Epistle.

See also: [Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#)

[Gospel of Jesus vs Paul](#)

[Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

[Occurrences of Jesus Risen/Resurrected Mentioned by Apostles in the Bible](#)

[Repentance](#)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Did Peter and Paul Preach Different Gospels? [PDF]

<https://www.bereanbiblesociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/DID-PETER-AND-PAUL-PREACH-DIFFERENT-GOSPELS.pdf>

Did Peter and Paul Preach the Same Gospel? (?? Not sure about this ???)

<https://ambassadorsfortherisenchristministries.org/2009/03/02/did-peter-and-paul-preach-the-same-gospel/>

<https://endofdaysprophecy.wordpress.com/2016/09/19/is-there-only-one-gospel-in-the-bible-did-peter-and-paul-preach-the-same-gospel/>

<https://forwhatsaiththescriptures.org/2014/01/25/peter-and-paul-same-gospel/>

(Raises some good points, but seems a little arrogant or at the least dogmatic at points to me.)

What is the Gospel?

<http://www.faithfacts.org/bible-101/what-is-the-gospel>

(Appears to have a Preterist perspective)

Did Peter and Paul Preach Different Gospels? [PDF]

<https://www.bereanbiblesociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/DID-PETER-AND-PAUL-PREACH-DIFFERENT-GOSPELS.pdf>

Return to beginning of: [Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#)

See also: [Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Occurrences of Jesus Risen/Resurrected Mentioned by Apostles in the Bible

Peter vs. Paul: Did Paul Change the Gospel Message?

<http://theheraldofgrace.blogspot.com/2012/06/peter-vs-paul-did-paul-change-gospel.html>

Excerpt:

III. The Gospel presentation of Peter Vs. the Gospel presentation of Paul

This now brings us to the issue of what was the original Gospel message and what was the Gospel message that the Apostle Paul preached. Is there any difference? If so why, and was it necessary? Does it prove the argument that Paul changed the Gospel message? In order to determine the answers to these questions we need to see the elements of the preaching of Peter in comparison with that of the Preaching of Paul. The way we must investigate this issue is comparing the Gospel elements in Peter's Preaching to the Gospel elements in Paul's preaching.

Peter's elements of the Gospel are as follows:

- 1) That Jesus is Lord [God] and Messiah [Christ] -Acts 2:36
- 2) That Jesus is God's appointed servant which was slain- Acts 3:22+23
- 3) That Jesus is God's resurrected Son- Acts 3:26
- 4) That Jesus is God's chosen Savior [Christ, Messiah]of Mankind- Acts 4:12

These listed above were the elements that made up Peter's Gospel message. So what is Paul's elements of the Gospel?

Paul's elements of the Gospel are as follows:

- 1) That Jesus is the Christ [Messiah], the Son of God- Acts 9:20, 13:33
- 2) That Jesus is the promised Messiah [Christ]- Acts 13:33
- 3) That Jesus is the slain Messiah [Christ]-Acts 13:27-29
- 4) That Jesus is the resurrected Messiah [Christ]- Acts 13:30+31

These listed above were the elements that made up Paul's Gospel message. We must note here that the Apostle Paul spent some time being discipled by the believers in Damascus before he began to make his Gospel presentation after he converted to faith in Jesus as the Messiah. The question is, is the same Gospel as the one Peter preached? When we closely compare the Gospel presentations of Peter and Paul, we find the following points between the respective elements of their Gospel messages to be similar.

1) The Divinity of Jesus

a) Peter states that Jesus' status is elevated to that of "Lord" in Acts 2:36. The Greek word that is translated to this English word "Lord", I have discovered that it also means "Supreme over all" and "God". Peter therefore testifies therefore that God elevated Jesus to divine status equal to His own divine status.

b) Paul states that Jesus' status is elevated to that of being "the Son of God" by reason of Jesus' relationship to God the Creator. God is the Father of Jesus, naturally born to Him and thereby Jesus is the only begotten Son of God. God the creator made Jesus divine, through the process of natural child birth He made him God and man -Acts 9:20, 13:33

2) The Messiah ship of Jesus

a) Peter states that Jesus was Christ. Christ is the English translation of the Greek word which is also a translation of the Hebrew word that is again translated into the English word Messiah. In other words, Christ and Messiah are terms that refer to the same thing. They are exchangeable in English. It is notable that Peter only uses the word "Christ" when speaking in reference to Jesus when he needs to communicate to an audience that knows Greek and or Hebrew.- Acts 2:36, 4:12

b) Paul also states that Jesus was Christ [Messiah] that was prophesied about by the Holy Prophets in his Gospel message.-Acts 13:23

3) The Death of Jesus, the Messiah [Christ]

a) Peter states that Jesus, the chosen Messiah [Christ] was slain -Acts 3:22+23

b) Paul also states that Jesus, the Messiah was slain-Acts 13:27-29

4) The Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah [Christ], God's Son

a) Peter states that Jesus, God's son and appointed Messiah was resurrected from the dead by God the Creator.- Acts 3:32

b) Paul also states that Jesus was raised up from the dead by God the Creator- Acts 13:30+31

As we can see, Peter and Paul used the same four elements in their Gospel presentations: 1)The Divinity of Jesus, 2)The Messiah ship of Jesus, 3) The death of Jesus, the Messiah and 4) The Resurrection of Jesus, the Messiah. Seeing that they used the same elements in their Gospel presentations, this proves again that the Apostle Paul did not change the Gospel Message in any elementary way. However, there is a noticeable difference between their Gospel presentations. The difference is seen in the perspectives they each preached from as well as the audience they preached to.

IV. The Differences Between the Gospel Presentations

When Peter preached the Gospel, he preached it from the perspective of being an eye witness. When Paul preached the Gospel, he preached it from the perspective of being a second hand witness. The difference between that being a first-hand witness and a second-hand witness is the quality and the credibility of sources. Peter quality of sources were the other Apostles who walked with Jesus, heard Jesus teach, seen Jesus suffer and seen Jesus be crucified. He and the Apostles also seen Jesus alive after his passion and fellowshiped with Jesus for 40 days (Acts 1, John 21). So Peter's sources for his Gospel presentation are of the highest quality and authenticity. Now this is important to understand, the second hand witness presentation of Paul rests upon the quality and authenticity of his sources. If there is a degree of a lesser quality of credibility, then Paul's Gospel presentation is of lesser credibility than that of Peters. So what are the Apostle Paul's sources for his Gospel presentations? They are the same Apostles of Christ and the disciples who heard Jesus speak, seen Jesus suffer and die on the cross and seen him be raised from the dead. Paul's Gospel presentation was not questioned by the Apostles of Christ when He and Barnabas made their missionary report to them. (Acts 15) After Peter presented the argument to not burden the Gentile believers in Christ with the keeping of the Law of Moses, which no one Jew of them could keep. The salvation of God was presented to the Jews not on the basis of keeping the Law of Moses' administration, but rather it was offered to them on the basis of faith on the death and resurrection of Jesus, the Messiah [Christ]. It appeared to them that God made the same offer to the Gentiles who would choose to believe in Jesus, the Christ and to make them observe the law that no one could keep except for Jesus was not just or fair or right. This was also the offer of salvation in Paul's presentation of the Gospel to the Gentiles and Jews outside of Israel. So we see here that the quality and credibility of Paul's presentation of the Gospel is equal of that of Peter's for they both testified from the same sources. Even though Paul is preaching from the perspective of a second hand witness, his Gospel presentation is equal to Peter's Gospel presentation.

Another difference between the Gospel presentations of Peter and Paul is that Peter's presentations were geared toward the Jewish audience until he was directed to make a presentation to the Gentiles in Ceasarea. Paul's Gospel presentations took on the added elements of preaching against idolatry and Paganism, elements that Peter never had the opportunity to develop in his early Gospel presentation. Peter's missionary work did not start until Paul met his end. Peter's work was more about the encouragement of the believers that Paul and Barnabas were used of God to reach with the Gospel presentation. This however does not indicate a change in the Gospel message by Paul, for Peter did not come behind Paul to change what he had preached to them for them to believe for their salvation. Peter rather came behind Paul to confirm what he taught in those fledgling churches. When Peter preached his Gospel message, he emphasized the knowledge of the ministry of God through Christ to the Jews and accused the Jews of slaying Christ. Paul used the knowledge of his audience conscience of righteousness, their spiritual awareness and revelation of the mystery of the Gospel when preaching his Gospel to the Jews and Gentiles outside of Israel.

V. The Verdict

So the question is, was this enough of a change to make Paul guilty of changing the Gospel message? The answer is no. Why? Because when Peter had to make a Gospel presentation to the Gentiles in Ceasarea under the direction of God, he adjusted his message and did not accuse the Gentiles of slaying Jesus. He left that accusation squarely up his Jewish brethren that did not believe in Christ. He rather told

the Gentiles what the Jews did to Jesus, the Messiah. They heard, and believed and thereby received Christ. Paul preached and those who heard him also believed the Gospel of Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God. Since then the Gospel message has been presented in various ways but always remaining true to the fundamental elements of the Gospel of Jesus the Christ which always contains the four elements first proclaimed by Apostles Peter and Paul. To them and the rest of the Apostles the Church of Christ owes its growth and founding beliefs that has lasted for over 2000 years without change.

Two Gospels – The Apostle Peter’s and The Apostle Paul’s (by Steve Santini)

<http://www.musterion8.com/two.html>

In the development of the first century church there were two gospels. The first gospel was that of the apostle Peter and the eleven other apostles. The second gospel was that of the apostle Paul and others who were, in time, raised up to teach this gospel with Paul. It seems to this author that the simplest and most effective manner in which to communicate this subject is to list corresponding differences in these two gospels with a concluding commentary.

Peter’s gospel was a reiteration of all Jesus said and did while in the world. It is supported by the Holy Spirit through its gift to the souls of those who believe.

Paul’s gospel was a revelation through the Spirit of Christ from the ascended Lord seated at the right hand of the Father.

Peter’s gospel is a continuation from the beginning when man was made a living soul.

Paul’s gospel has its beginnings before the foundations of the world in the generation of the mystery of the Spirit of Christ. (This Spirit of Christ was known as the Spirit of Truth in John’s gospel.)

Peter’s gospel comes from his acquired faith.

Paul’s gospel comes from his gifted inherent faith.

Peter’s gospel is from the Holy Spirit comforter.

Paul’s gospel is from the subsequent Spirit of Truth comforter.

Peter’s gospel is the foundation for the household of God.

Paul’s gospel is the edifice of the household of God.

Peter’s gospel holds the keys to the kingdom of God.

Paul’s gospel reveals the kingdom of God.

Peter’s gospel is one of entrance.

Paul’s gospel is one of establishment.

Peter’s gospel begins in spiritual power.

Paul’s gospel ends in spiritual understanding.

Peter's gospel ministers to the children coming into the family of God.

Paul's gospel brings the family of God unto maturity.

Paul was a saint

Peter became one faithful in Christ Jesus

Peter's gospel raised Paul up unto the revelation from Jesus Christ. Peter's foundational gospel was preached by Paul when he first went into a new area to establish a church. Before Peter completely relinquished his misdirected loyalty to Jewish supremacy in the church, he resisted Paul's revelation where there was no difference between Jew and Gentile. Paul's gospel was never preached by Peter. In his last epistle written near the end of his life, Peter acknowledged the validity of Paul's gospel by stating Paul had written the same things yet in a different manner.

In Paul's ministration these two gospels came together as the one contiguous gospel for the growth of the household of God.

Commentary: In the epistle to the Ephesians, Paul makes evident the sources of these two gospels. In Ephesians 2:20 he writes to the faithful in Christ Jesus:

And (ye) are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.

Then in Ephesians 3:4,5 he writes:

Whereby when you read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets.

Paul used words very purposefully. Notice this difference between verses 2:20 and 3:5. The foundation came from apostles and prophets while the mystery was revealed to "holy" apostles and prophets. There is a difference between "apostles and prophets" and "holy apostles and prophets." Understanding this difference leads to the revelation of the great mystery given to the apostle Paul.

Return to beginning of: [Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

The Gospel of Circumcision and the Gospel of the Uncircumcision

<http://rightwordtruth.com/the-gospel-of-the-circumcision-and-the-gospel-of-the-uncircumcision/>

Excerpt:

Peter preached the gospel of the circumcision and Paul the gospel of the uncircumcision. The emphasis of Peter's message was that Israel should repent and be baptized so that they would realize the fulfillment of the national blessings promised them upon the return of Christ.

Paul, on the other hand, while anxious to see Israel accept their Messiah, had as his primary concern the salvation of individuals. Paul's first concern was not the national blessings but the individual blessings that come with salvation.

Paul's charge from Jesus: "...*this man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before Gentiles and kings and the people of Israel.*" (Acts 9:15)

See also: [What is the Gospel? \(Boyd\)](#)

[Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#)

[Gospel of Jesus vs Paul](#)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

The Gospel of the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision (re: Gal. 2: 1-10)

<http://www.lavistachurchofchrist.org/LVSermons/GospelOfCircumcisionAndUncircumcision.htm>

Excerpt:

- I. I suppose a casual reader could read verse 7 from our text and come away with the idea that two different messages were being taught.
 - A. One being taught to the Gentiles and a different message being taught to the Jews.
 - B. Yet the goal of the gospel was to unite Jews and Gentiles - [Ephesians 2:11-18](#)
 - C. Yet, we also know that the Bible teaches there is one faith - [Ephesians 4:5](#)
 - D. The teaching of a different gospel was condemned - [Galatians 1:6](#)
- II. In order to effectively teach the gospel of Christ, different audiences will require different emphasis
 - A. Put yourself in the early days of the church. Where would you begin teaching about Jesus?
 1. If you were teaching a Jew, it would be best to start with a common ground, say the prophecies concerning the Messiah
 - a. The Jews had the advantage of knowing the Laws of God - [Romans 3:1-2](#)
 - b. There is already a disposition to please God
 - c. We see Philip teaching the eunuch by starting with the prophet Isaiah - [Acts 8:30-36](#)
 - (1) He started with what was accepted, taught him about Jesus, and eventually discussed salvation.
 - d. In Peter's sermon to Jews - [Acts 2:17-36](#)
 - (1) Peter started with a miracle and pointed out how this fulfilled prophecy
 - (2) He then discussed what most Jews knew about Jesus - the miracles that he did, proving that God was behind him.
 - (3) He offers testimony and prophecy to show that Jesus was resurrected
 - (4) He sums up by pointing out they were responsible for the death of their savior.
 2. If you were teaching a Gentile, it would require a different starting point, because there is no common acceptance of the Scriptures.
 - a. We see this in Paul's sermon to the Athenians - [Acts 17:22-25](#)
 - (1) Paul starts with the acceptance of higher beings – gods, and then moves quickly to the idea of a supreme God
 - (2) He then discusses how idols cannot capture the idea of such a being nor could anything made by human hands.
 - (3) He moved on to the need to serve this God and God's right to judge the world's service to him.
 - (4) He finally spoke of the proof God has given – the raising of the dead
 - (5) This was the sticking point for his audience

3. The same message is taught, but different avenues were used to present the message.
 - a. It required different starting points
 - b. It required different evidence and lines of reasoning
 - B. There is more to teaching than the words. We are also representatives of Christ to the world.
 1. How would you live to best gain the confidence of your audience, showing that you are a reliable authority for learning about God?
 2. The Jews thought they knew how to serve God.
 - a. A Gentile would be unable to teach a Jew.
 - b. Many areas of Jewish society was unreachable by a Gentile
 3. When Paul took Timothy to work with him, he had him circumcised - [Acts 16:1-3](#)
 - a. Why? Because of the Jews in Timothy's region.
 - b. Even though circumcision was of no direct profit - [I Corinthians 7:18-20](#)
 - c. It was necessary to reach the Jews with the Gospel - [I Corinthians 9:19-20](#)
 - d. Paul was not under the Law. He was not bound by its teachings, but he lived by the rules of the Law so he might reach those who lived by that Law.
 4. It went the other way as well, when Paul taught the Gentiles, he followed their customs to the extent that he could - [I Corinthians 9:21](#)
 - a. He did not act as if there was no law at all, but where he could take on the customs of the Gentiles without violating the laws of Christ, he so did.
 5. Even to new Christians, he tailored his message to benefit his audience - [I Corinthians 9:22-23](#)
 - a. We can see it in [I Corinthians 3:1-3](#). The Corinthians were not ready (mature enough) to receive all that Paul wanted to teach.
 - b. Solid food belongs to the mature - [Hebrews 5:11-14](#)
 - C. Paul specialized in teaching Gentiles about Christ. Peter specialized in teaching Jews about Christ
 1. Paul was appointed a preacher, apostle, and teacher of the Gentiles - [I Timothy 2:7](#)
 2. His purpose was to bring obedience of faith to all Gentiles - [Romans 1:5](#)
 3. It does not mean that Paul worked exclusively with the Gentiles. When he entered a new city, he generally first approach the Jews - [Acts 17:1-4](#)
 4. Peter was the first to preach to the Gentiles - Acts 10
- III. What it means to you and I
- A. We must search for the best ways to present the Gospel to our chosen audience.
 1. We do not alter the Gospel, but we do learn what is needed in our community.
 2. What are the prevalent beliefs, both true and false?

- a. What is the dominant denomination?
- b. What is the society's view about religion
 - (1) In Minnesota, a strong Catholic and Lutheran population thought that it was impolite to discuss controversial things such as politics or religion among friends.
 - (2) In North Carolina, it was common for neighborhood women of varying beliefs to have weekly Bible studies in someone's home.
 - (3) In New York, religion was treated as a social club you belonged to. Even hints of conviction in beliefs, especially Christian beliefs, were openly opposed with great hatred in public forums, such as radio or newspapers.
- 3. What is needed by the people in Harlem will differ greatly from the Amish in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.
- 4. My grandfather was a preacher. I have looked at some of his lesson notes. The topics he had to address are often quite different than what I handle.
 - a. Homosexuality was not discussed in his day. I have to address it in the pulpit.
 - b. I have to discuss tangled family and persuade young men and women not to imitate the mistakes of their parents.
 - c. My grandfather's day was more like the gospel of the circumcision. My day is more like the gospel of the uncircumcision.
- B. To teach the gospel, you need some acceptance by society.
 - 1. A flashy polyester suit among the Amish will not gain you an audience to hear the truth.
 - 2. In many parts of New England, you are considered an outsider even after living there for five years or more.
- C. One of the saddest things I saw was in the Philippines. For years preachers have traveled to this country, spending two to four weeks. Most of that time is spent hitting as many areas as possible.
 - 1. As a result, the people know the plan of salvation inside and out.
 - 2. But few have taught why fornication is wrong. Why bribery is wrong, Why lying is wrong.
 - 3. They don't understand that they should support their preachers. Money has always come from the U.S. to support their preachers. They see preachers as owning certain congregations. Few preachers preach in the town where they live.
 - 4. Why? Because the more knowledgeable among us only visit. Few stay and learn what their society needs. Almost none learn the native language.
 - a. A popular topic by visiting preachers is marriage, divorce, and remarriage, such a hot topic in the U.S. that it is now known by its initials MDR.
 - b. What is sadly humorous is that the Filipinos are most Catholic and Muslim. Their constitution makes divorce near impossible and extremely rare.

- c. What is rampant is men and women walking away from their spouses. Adultery is common, but rarely discussed.
 - 5. I suspect the same thing happens in Africa
 - D. We have a rising Hispanic population throughout the U.S. How many of us are learning Spanish so we can teach?
 - 1. When I moved to Omaha, I brushed up on ASL to be able to talk to the deaf daughter of one of our members.
 - 2. From there I was able to study with her deaf boyfriend, who obeyed the Gospel.
- IV. What is needed are preachers willing to go and learn a region's culture, to spend time developing a stable congregation.
- A. Half of a preacher's duties is to reach the lost
 - B. The other half is to see that the saved remain faithful - [Ephesians 4:11-13](#)
 - 1. First journey - [Acts 14:21-22](#)
 - 2. Second journey - [Acts 15:40-41](#)
 - 3. Third journey - [Acts 18:22-23](#)
 - C. If we are going to work among those who speak another language - learn it!
 - D. Live among those you are teaching to gain respectability and a knowledge of what they need to learn.

Differences Between Peter's and Paul's Ministry

<http://www.ephesians611.com/differences-between-peter-and-pauls-ministry/>

The difference starts in Galatians 2:7

"7 But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter;"

Paul was the apostle to the gentiles and Peter was the apostle to the Jews. Paul had a special revelation from Jesus that Peter did not have which was "The Mystery Revealed". This is the major difference between these two men.

Reference: Romans 16:26 and Ephesians 3:9

Now, it's possible to take this too far such as some people do where they only go by what Paul has written in his epistles because we are gentiles in God's "mystery program", and they ignore the rest of the Bible. Paul address this in 2 Tim 3:16:

16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

The Bible is an integrated package and although the Mystery was revealed to Paul, we have to take in the entire volume of the scripture to see how everything fits together.

In the early days of the Church which begins in Acts 2, the Christian's were primarily made up of Jews. Peter was emerging as the spokesperson for the church, then known as "The Way". Peter's message was geared towards a Jewish audience and uses much more Jewish references. Because of this, you will see a difference in approach between Peter and Paul. You will see Paul preaching against idolatry and paganism where these were things Peter didn't have to develop in his message. Peter references the "Kingdom", referring to the millennial Kingdom and Paul doesn't use this approach to the gentiles.

It's interesting to note that since Paul is the person hand-picked by Jesus to take the message of the Gospel to gentiles and Peter the one to take the Christ's message to the Jews, it doesn't follow logically that the Catholic Church refers to Peter as the first Pope. There are many more arguments to be made regarding Christ being the Rock the church is built on, but Peter being called to preach to the Jews also refutes the Catholic position.

Differences between Peter and Paul's Message (???? Not sure; needs more vetting)

<http://graceambassadors.com/midacts/list-petervspaul>

Excerpt:

Peter and Paul never taught the same gospel. When Peter taught the kingdom gospel at Pentecost, Saul was rejecting the Messiah. When Paul preached the gospel of the grace of God, Peter's gospel of the kingdom to Israel was limited to the circumcision.

Below are the six major issues of distinction between what Peter taught and what Paul taught. The main similarity between the two messages exists in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ (Eph 1:10).

See next page...

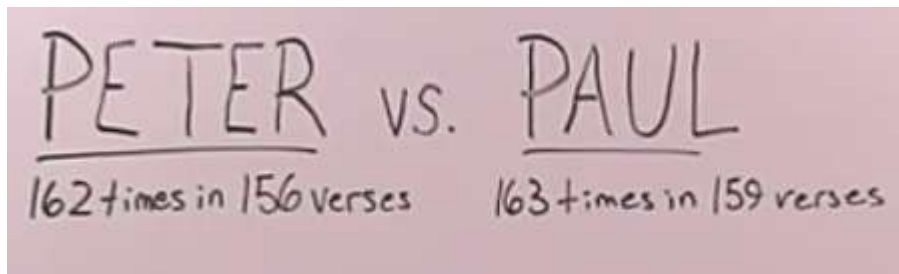
Peter* taught:	Paul taught:
1. Israel and Prophecy	
Israel is still standing and prophecy is being fulfilled. (Acts 2:16-17; 3:21,24-26)	Israel is fallen and the prophecies are postponed. (Rom 3:10,19;11:11,25; 16:25)
2. Apostolic responsibility	
Salvation is of the Jews led by the twelve apostles. (John 4:22; Mat 19:28; 1 Pet 1:10; Rev 21:14)	Salvation sent to Gentiles through Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles. (Rom 11:13; Col 1:25; 2 Tim 1:11; 1 Cor 3:10)
3. Justification	
Salvation and the law; justification by faith in Jesus as the Messiah accompanied by necessary works. (Jam 2:24; 1 John 2:5; Mat 19:27; Heb 10:26)	Salvation apart from the law; justification by grace through faith in the cross work of Jesus Christ. (Rom 4:5; Eph 2:8-9; Tit 3:5; 1 Cor 15:1-4)
4. The Church**	
Separation between the Jew and Gentile; Israel is God's chosen people. Gentiles blessed through Israel. (Mat 10:5; Luke 24:49; Acts 11:19)	No longer Jew nor Gentile but all are part of a new creature in Christ called his Body. (Gal 3:28; Col 3:11; Eph 2:15; 1 Cor 12:13)
5. God's representation	
God's holy nation, the little flock of Israel, is His earthly representation from among the world. (Isa 61:6; Rev 7:1-8; 1 Pet 2:5,9)	Gentile Ambassadors are His representation to a world in total rebellion. (2 Cor 5:20; 1 Cor 12:20; 2 Tim 2:2)
6. Destiny***	
Promised to receive an earthly inheritance in the kingdom. (1 Pet 1:4; Mat 6:10; Heb 13:14; Rev 21:2)	Promise of an heavenly position in God's universal dominion. (Phil 3:20; Eph 2:6; 1 Thess 4:17)

* Peter is used as representative of the twelve apostles during their kingdom and Pentecostal ministry.

** There are three churches mentioned by name in the Bible; listed are two.

*** In the dispensation of the fullness of times both of these things will be brought together in Christ (Eph 1:10).

How many times Peter vs Paul mentioned in the Bible:



See also: [Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#)

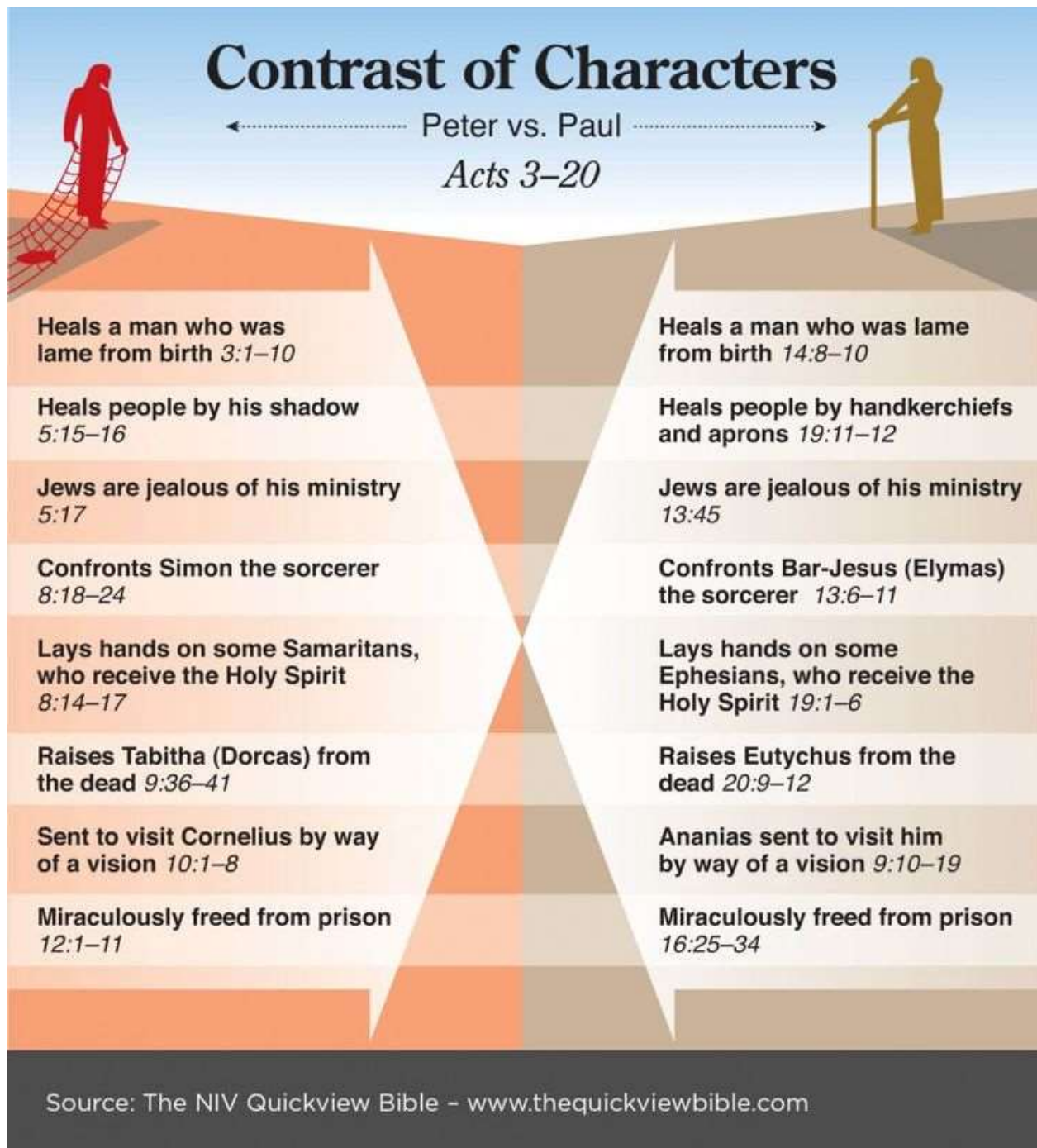
[Gospel of Jesus vs Paul](#)

See also: [Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

[Occurrences of Jesus Risen/Resurrected Mentioned by Apostles in the Bible](#)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Contrast of Characters: Peter vs Paul (Acts 3-20)



What is the Gospel for the Unsaved?

[Note: Has a dispensational perspective]

http://www.thytestimonies.com/bible_studies/what_is_the_gospel.htm

Excerpts:

The following study attempts to answer the following basic questions:

1. What is the actual content of the gospel messages recorded by the Holy Spirit in the Acts?
2. Do gospel messages preached today follow the content of the gospel messages preached by Christ's evangelists in the book of Acts? If not, should they?
3. Paul defines the gospel for believers in 1 Corinthians 15:1-3. Is this message to believers the same message we should be preaching to an unsaved public?
4. Is there any essential difference in the content of the gospel messages preached by various individuals throughout the Acts?
5. What differences, if any, mark the gospel of the circumcision versus the gospel of the uncircumcision?

To attempt to answer the above questions we will review the passages of scripture which record the theme of "Gospel Messages" God's evangelists preached to *unsaved* audiences. We encourage readers to refer to the passages indicated. We are fully aware, however, that Doctor Luke does not always give every detail of the content of some gospel messages, so we must rely on particular passages where such details are given. The list of gospel messages we will consider is:

Peter ♦ Acts 2

Peter ♦ Acts 3

Peter ♦ Acts 4

Peter & the apostles ♦ Acts 5

Stephen ♦ Acts 7

Philip ♦ Acts 8:5-7

Philip ♦ Acts 8:35-38

Saul ♦ Acts 9:20-22

Peter ♦ Acts 10:34-38

Paul at Salamis to Jews ♦ Acts 13:5

Paul at Paphas to Gentile Sergius Paulus ♦ Acts 13:6-12

Paul at Antioch to Jews ♦ Acts 13:14-51

Paul at Iconium ♦ Acts 14:1-6

Paul & Barnabas at Lycaonia to Gentiles ♦ Acts 14:15-17

Peter (rehash) to believers at Jerusalem ekklesia ♦ Acts 15:8-15

Paul to Lydia (a Jewess) ♦ Acts 16:14

Paul & Silas at Philippi to Gentiles ♦ Acts 16:27-34

Paul at Thessalonica to Jews ♦ Acts 17:1-3

Paul at Berea to Jews ♦ Acts 17:12

Paul at Athens to Gentiles ♦ Acts 17:15-32

Paul at Corinth to Jews - Acts 18:5-6

Paul at Ephesus to Jews ♦ Acts 18:19

Apollos at Achaia to Jews ♦ Acts 18:28

Paul at Ephesus (again) to Jews ♦ Acts 19:8-10 ??

Paul at Miletus (rehash) to Ephesian elders ♦ [Acts 20:20-23](#)

Paul to the Jewish multitude at Jerusalem 23:6

Paul before Felix, with the accusing Jews present ♦ Acts 24

Paul before Felix and his Jewish wife Drusilla ♦ Acts 24

Paul before Festus ♦ Acts 25

Paul at Melita ♦ Acts 28

Paul's crucial address to the chiefs of the Jews at Rome ♦ Acts 28

Summary of Gospel Message Contents

We now condense what we have gleaned from the actual messages preached by God's various evangelists in the history recorded in the book of Acts. We are aware that there must have been additional facts presented in the actual addresses that were not recorded by Luke. Nevertheless, we believe what is given is instructive to Christians who are burdened for the lost and desire to see the eternal destinies of unbelievers changed from the wages of sin (death), to the gift of God, (eternal life in Christ Jesus the Lord). (Rom. 6:23)

In the following compilation we have endeavored to cite only one reference per gospel fact presented in any one gospel address. Thus, 5 times Peter announces the Lord's resurrection, 3 times he requires repentance, etc.

Peter's Gospel Messages (36 citations of gospel facts)

- He is sent by God. He is the Christ, Messiah, Lord, Savior, Stone, etc.
 - 2:22, 2:36; 3:18; 4:11; 4:12; 5:31; 5:42; 9:34; 10:36, 38
- He was crucified, slain
 - 2:36; 3:13
- He was resurrected
 - 2:24; 3:15; 4:10; 5:30; 10:40
- He ascended, exalted, glorified
 - 2:33; 5:31
- He blames the Jews for the crucifixion
 - 2:23, 36; 3:13; 4:10; 5:30; 10:39;
- Must repent for remission of sins
 - 2:38; 3:19; 5:31
- Must be baptized for remission of sins
 - 2:38
- Baptized after belief (reason for baptism not stated)
 - 10:48
- Must believe or call upon the Lord, saved by grace, remission of sins
 - 2:21; 10:43; (15:11)
- Mention of Divine judgment

- 3:23; 10:42
- Signs and wonders accompany the message
 - 2:3; 3:7; 9:34;

Stephen's Defense (3 citations)

- The Lord Jesus was sent, appointed, approved by God
 - 7:37
- He ascended, exalted, glorified
 - 7:55
- He blames the Jews for the crucifixion
 - 7:52

Phillip's Gospel Messages (5 citations)

- The Lord Jesus was sent by God, the Christ, Messiah, Lord, Savior, Stone, etc.
 - (8:5, 32-33)
- Were baptized following belief (reason for baptism not stated)
 - 8:12; 8:38
- Signs and wonders accompany the message
 - 8:6

Apollos' Message (1 citation)

- Jesus was the Christ (18:28)

Paul's Gospel Messages (43 citations)

- The One God, God has been good to you, etc.
 - 14:17; 17:23
- He is the Christ, Messiah, Savior, Stone, Son or God
 - 9:20; 9:22; 13:23; 17:3; 18:5
- He was crucified, suffered
 - 17:3; 26:23
- He was buried
 - 13:29
- He was resurrected
 - 13:30; 17:3; 17:18; 17:31; (23:6); (24:21); 25:19; 26:8
- He blames the Jews for the crucifixion
 - 13:28
- Remission of sins through Him
 - 13:38; 26:18
- Must repent, turn from wicked ways
 - 14:15; 17:30; 20:21; 26:20
- Preaching the kingdom of God
 - 19:8; (20:25); 28:23; 28:31
- Must be baptized to receive [the] Holy Spirit or wash away sins
 - 19:1-7; 22:16

- Baptism following belief (no reason given)
 - 16:33
- Must believe or call upon the Lord to be saved
 - 13:39; 16:31; 20:21
- Threat of Divine judgment
 - 13:46; 17:31; 18:6; 24:25; 28:25-28
- Signs and wonders accompany the gospel
 - 13:11; 16:25; 28:8
- Good works
 - 24:25; 26:20

Combining all the gospel messages and defenses in the Acts there are approximately 74 reference to particular topics in these gospel messages. These are as follows:

Number of mentions	Topic
19	The Lord Jesus was the Christ, Messiah, Lord, Savior, Stone, etc., sent by and approved by God
4	He was crucified, slain
11	He was resurrected
2	He ascended, exalted, glorified
8	Jews blamed for the crucifixion
7	Must repent for remission of sins
2	Must be baptized to wash away or remit sins
4	Baptized after belief (no reason given)
3	Must believe or call upon the Lord, saved by grace,
7	Mention of Divine judgment
7	Signs and wonders accompany the message
0	God loves you
0	Christ died for 'your' sins

During the Acts era water baptism appears to have taken place immediately after a person understood and believed in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, not after a prolonged period of observation and instruction. It seems to have signified a permanent step taken away from a former manner of life. It ceremonially cleansed a person from past associations as an *integral* part of repentance. The baptized individual seemed to be getting rid of an outward defilement due to his past associations or manner of life. This ceremony is not presented in scripture as a joyous expression of new life, or a 'testimony' of belief, but as a sinful past life that the individual willingly was separating himself from.

But the subject of water baptism is a very lengthy topic in itself. Was it baptismal regeneration? A ceremony to cleanse from outward defilement? A requirement for fellowship in the local *ekklesia* (church)? An adaptation of Jewish water washings, (known today as 'Mikveh')? Was it believers' baptism? Household baptism? Is there a difference in the way scripture differentiates water baptism for the Jew versus the Gentile? Was it a kingdom ordinance for those awaiting the millennium? What is its place, if any, for those blessed in the heavenlies in Christ? The reader can appreciate why we must defer any examination of water baptism to another time.

Note the similarity between the 'gospels' preached by both Peter and Paul

Peter preaching to Gentiles	Paul preaching to Jews
◆To him all the prophets bear witness that every one that believes on him will receive through his name remission of sins.◆ (Acts 10:43)	◆Through this man remission of sins is preached... In him every one that believes is justified.◆ (Acts 13:38-39).

(See also: [The Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#))

Both Peter and Paul state that Christ is the Divinely appointed Person who can forgive sins, and that those who believe will receive remission of sins. This is very different from saying Christ has actually borne the sins of every child of Adam. He bore the sins of 'many,' not everyone (see Mat. 20:28; 26:28; Mk. 10:45; 14:24; Acts 13:48; Heb. 9:28). This blessed truth is only for the elect, those God specifically chose to receive eternal salvation.

◆And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were *ordained to eternal life* believed.◆ (Acts 13:46-48)

Once someone acknowledges his sins and his lost condition and believes in the Lord Jesus as Savior and Lord, *then* the new believer begins to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Him, and begins to learn the basis for his salvation.

◆But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.◆ (2 Pet. 3:18)

To believers both Paul and Peter could say:

◆Christ died for *our* sins....◆ (1 Cor. 15:3)

◆God commends *his* love to us, in that, while we were still sinners, Christ has died for us.◆ (Rom. 5:8)

◆knowing that you have been redeemed, not by corruptible things, as silver or gold, from your vain conversation handed down from your fathers, but by precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, the blood of Christ◆ (1 Pet. 1:18-19)

◆for Christ indeed has once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God; being put to death in flesh, but made alive in the Spirit◆ (1 Pet. 3:18)

◆Christ, then, having suffered for us in the flesh, do you also arm yourselves with the same mind; for he that has suffered in the flesh has done with sin◆ (1 Pet. 4:1)

Conclusions

It appears from a reading of the partial transcripts of 'gospel' messages spoken by God's evangelists in the book of Acts:

1. Both Peter and Paul recognized that Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God, is the Savior of sinners.
2. There is a difference between the gospel preached to unbelievers and the basis of the gospel announced to believers. The fact that Christ died for 'our' sins is a wonderful truth for believers, but *neither* Paul nor Peter preached that feature of truth to unbelievers. But *both* taught it to believers. (1 Cor. 15:3, etc. & 1 Pet. 1:2; 18-19)
3. Peter blamed the Jew for their part in the Lord's crucifixion. Paul also accused his fellow Jews with causing Christ to be slain.
4. Both Peter and Paul knew their audiences. Paul chided the Gentiles at Athens for their idolatry and pointed them to the true God. Peter could not accuse the Jew of idolatry, and Paul could not accuse the Gentiles at Athens for engineering the crucifixion. What we might see as a lack of "gospel details" in Paul's message to the Athenians and others simply reinforces the fact that

both Peter and Paul were sensitive to the spiritual awareness level of their audiences at the time their sermons were delivered. (Evangelists today also need to take account of the level of spiritual understanding of their audience and tailor the message to suite the situation). There is, therefore, no dispensational issue in this, even though to some it may still remain a primary dispensational issue.

Conspicuously absent from all of the gospel messages by Peter, Phillip, Stephen, Apollos, and Paul is any mention that "God loves you," or that "Christ died for your sins." Again, we freely acknowledge the obvious fact that there were a number of details in the gospel messages in the Acts that were not recorded by Luke, but we believe the evangelists in the Acts purposely avoided preaching either of these statements to their "mixed" audiences.

There are at least two possible reasons why none of the evangelists in the Acts mention the substitutionary work of the Lord Jesus to nonbelievers in their audiences. The first reason is doctrinal, and the second has to do with what the Holy Spirit wanted His evangelists to get across to the unsaved.

Reason #1: It is bad doctrine

At the beginning of this paper we quoted a statement that is typically believed by many evangelicals.

Because the Lord Jesus Christ has borne the sins of all, people no longer go to Hell because of their sins, but because they reject Christ, who died for their sins. . . . This is the reason your [deceased] little one is now in Heaven. Christ died for it, even as He died for you and me; and it had never become of age either to accept or reject the sacrifice which Christ made on the Cross for it. Therefore it was covered by that precious shed blood, which Christ, in His love and grace, poured out for all of us. (J. B. Marchbanks, *Your Little One Is In Heaven*, Loizeaux Brothers, 1951).

As to whether "people no longer go to Hell because of their sins," hear the word of the Lord:

"Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins. . . . I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." (John 8:21, 24)

". . . for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." (Rom. 14:23)

So, can you "die in your sins" if those sins were borne by the Savior? Also, if we say that "rejecting Christ", not "sins", is what prevents a person from becoming saved, we would need to consider why rejecting Christ would not be considered a "sin"? Our Savior clearly indicated that not believing of Him is truly a sin.

"But I say the truth to you, It is profitable for you that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Comforter will not come to you; but if I go I will send him to you.

"And having come, he will bring demonstration to the world, of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: "of sin, because they do not believe on me;

"of righteousness, because I go away to my Father, and ye behold me no longer;

"of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged." (John 16:7-11)

If, as some contend, "the Lord Jesus Christ has borne the sins of all" (i.e., "all" without exception) then He must have also borne every person's sin of unbelief, leaving no reason why anyone would "perish." Or, did the Lord on the tree only take *some* of our sins, leaving us to pay the penalty for the remaining sin of unbelief that Christ did not die for?

Think about it. Was our blessed Lord Jesus Christ the one-on-one substitute for 'most' of our sins, **but not for our sin of unbelief**? Or did He pay the judicial penalty for 'all' of 'our' (believer's) sins? The

Bible is crystal clear that there is nothing lacking in either the completeness of the atonement for believers, or as to the total efficacy of His death for us.

The late John Nelson Darby (1800 - 1882) warned about making the truth of Christ's substitution a false and non-efficacious unreality. Following are some of his thoughts on this important subject.

Substitution is one taking really the place of another. . . . Were then everybody's sins transferred to Christ? If so, all are saved, or His having borne the wrath due to them is ineffectual and reversible. (J. N. Darby, *Dr. Bonar on Christ's Work*, Collected Writings, Vol. 23, p.237, Believers Bookshelf)

Substitution is for people whom the substitute represents; it is one man or person substituted for another, and taking actually the consequences of the conduct or position of him whom he represents. . . . The propitiation refers to the holy righteous nature and glory of God; substitution, to those whose place Christ has taken. He was substituted for them and took the consequence in sovereign grace; and they are saved. He cannot charge as a judge the sins which He has Himself borne and expiated on those for whom He Himself has already borne them. (Op. cite. p. 241-242)

But some might say Christ bore the sins of all mankind without exception, but the effectiveness of the atonement is conditional upon whether particular individuals believe on Him. It is only '**available**' to them if they believe. Note Darby's reply to this theory:

If it be said, yes; but the substitution is not efficacious unless it be accepted; then there was no real transference of guilt [to Christ]. If [sin] is transferred and gone and if He has suffered, it is irreversible. The truth is, it is a denial of real substitution, and substitution is confounded with propitiation. The whole teaching is confusion and darkness.◆ (Op. cite p. 242)

To clarify the confusion between "propitiation" and "substitution" he wrote:

There is a double aspect of His sacrifice, Godward, and bearing our sins. He is the propitiation for the whole world. All has been done that is needed. His blood is available for the vilest whoever he may be. Hence the gospel to the world says, "Whosoever will, let him come." In this aspect we may say Christ died for all, gave Himself a ransom for all, an adequate and available sacrifice for sin, for whoever would come---tasted death for every man. But when I come to bearing sins the language is uniformly different. He bore our sins, He bore the sins of many. 'All' is carefully abstained from. . . . It will never be found in Scripture that Christ bore the sins of all. Had He done so they never could be mentioned again, nor men judged according to their works. That Christ died for all is, as we have seen, clearly said. Hence I go to the world with His death as their ground and only ground of approach, with the love shewn in it. When a man believes, I can say, Now I have more to tell you, Christ has borne every one of your sins, they never can be mentioned again. (J. N. Darby, *Propitiation and Substitution*, Collected Writings, p. 318-319, Believer's Bookshelf)

I say now to the sinner, Christ has died, and the blood is on the mercy-seat, and you will be received if you come. If he accepts the invitation, I can tell him more. Not only has the Lord Jesus put away sin, but He has borne all your sins, and confessed them as if they were His own; and they are all gone. It is never said Christ died for the sins of the world. (J. N. Darby, *How Are We Saved?*, Collected Writings, p. 198-199, Believers Bookshelf)

◆And these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, receiving the word with all readiness of mind, daily searching the scriptures if these things were so.◆ (Acts 17:11)

Reason #2, It is the wrong emphasis at the wrong time

Valuable lessons can be learned from God's evangelists, Peter, Stephen, Philip and Paul. The 'gospel' they preached to the *unsaved*, adjusted for some dispensational changes, is 'the gospel' for the *nonbeliever*. The nonbeliever must realize the sobering fact that he or she is a sinner, and that the wages of sin is death. He must repent of his sins and fully commit to the only Person God has commissioned to save him from his sins.

In dealing with an enquirer, a counselor may ask him if he 'believes' that Christ died for him, and that He rose again from the dead. On receiving an affirmative answer, the counselor may then 'assure' the one with whom he is dealing that, seeing he 'believes' these facts, he is now saved! But if there has been no actual turning to God from sin on the part of the person concerned, and no personal **commitment** to the living Lord Jesus Christ, . . . [the person] is given a false 'assurance' of having been saved! (Albert E. Horton, ***Some Evangelical Misapprehensions***, Christian Missions in Many Lands, p. 1)

The gospel for the unsaved **does not** include precious features of truth that a new believer later acquires as a newborn baby in the truth. Instead, **it introduces the sinner to a glorious Person**. It points the individual directly and emphatically to the God-approved, crucified, risen, and gloriously ascended Savior, the Son of God, **the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ**.

The object of saving faith is the Person of the living Lord Jesus Himself. Saving faith is toward Him personally, not merely about Him intellectually. **He** is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and it is to **Him** that we are called to yield allegiance. To bring our hearers to that decision should be the aim of all gospel preaching and personal work. The Lord Jesus is not simply incidental to our salvation; He **is** our salvation. The person who has Him has everything in **Him**. The converse is also true; he who does not have Him has nothing at all! (Op cite, p. 7)

While the works of the Lord (sacrifice for sin, etc.) are the vital legal basis for **our** salvation, an unbeliever might memorize and say yes to the details of the atonement, without that person actually having personally come to the Living Lord Himself. This is the second reason why God's evangelists directed those convicted of their sinful condition to that Living and Glorious Person, the Savior of sinners, never to the legal basis for remission of sins. May we never preach a truer gospel than was preached by God's evangelists.

✦He that believes on the Son has eternal life; but he that obeys not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.✦ (John 3:36)

✦I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and go out, and shall find pasture..✦ (John 10:7)

✦Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.✦ (John 14:6)

✦To him all the prophets bear witness that every one that believes on him will receive through his name remission of sins.✦ (Acts 10:43)

✦Be it known unto you, therefore, brethren, that through this man remission of sins is preached to you.✦ (Acts 13:38)

Gospel of Jesus vs Paul

Christianity Today: [Scot McKnight: Jesus vs Paul](http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2010/december/9.25.html) (2010) [Recommended]
(Subscription required for full article)

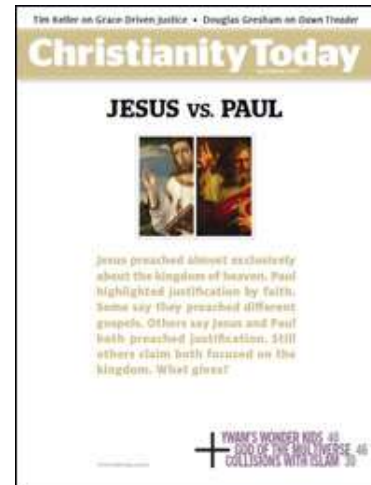
Many biblical scholars have noted that Jesus preached almost exclusively about the kingdom of heaven, while Paul highlighted justification by faith—and not vice versa. What gives?

Above CT article referenced by the following articles...

Overview

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/biblestudies/j/jesus-vs-paul.html>

Evangelical New Testament scholars (and their students) seem to be divided into two main camps: those who emphasize Jesus and the kingdom, and those who focus on Paul and justification by faith. While this seems to be a knotty problem, unprecedented in church history, such theological turf wars are all too common. As Paul disapprovingly told the Corinthians, "One of you says, 'I follow Paul'; another, 'I follow Apollos'; another, 'I follow Cephas'; still another, 'I follow Christ.' Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized into the name of Paul— (1 Cor. 1:12–13). For Paul, it's all about Jesus.



So how do we bring Jesus and Paul together, while doing justice to both? How do we hold to the doctrine of the full inspiration of Scripture, allowing Paul and Jesus to speak for themselves rather than fitting them into our preconceived theological categories? Which gets priority? Which comes first—kingdom or justification? New Testament scholar Scot McKnight says the answer is not either/or, but both/and.

Corresponding study resource [Note: includes copy of above CT Article]...

CT Bible Study: Jesus vs Paul [Recommended]
<http://stanguthrie.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/CT242-JesusvsPaul.pdf> [PDF]

Jesus vs. Paul: An Interview with Scot McKnight about the Gospel (2010) [Recommended]
<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/trevin-wax/jesus-vs-paul-an-interview-with-scot-mcknight-about-the-gospel/>

Alt. links...

Jesus vs. Paul: Scot McKnight on Justification, Kingdom, and the Gospel (2011)
<https://www.christianity.com/blogs/trevin-wax/jesus-vs-paul-scot-mcknight-on-justification-kingdom-and-the-gospel-11646019.html>

Jesus vs. Paul: An Interview with Scot McKnight about the Gospel
<https://www.biblestudytools.com/pastor-resources/archives/jesus-vs-paul-an-interview-with-scot-mcknight-about-the-gospel-11642696.html>

Excerpt:

Trevin Wax: *Scot, in your article, you write: "It is not exaggerating to say that evangelicalism is facing a crisis about the relationship of Jesus to Paul, and that many today are choosing sides." Why do you think evangelicals feel the need to choose sides in this discussion?*

Scot McKnight: You ask a genuinely interesting question and I wish I could give an answer to the “why?” question.

Instead, I see an issue here of hermeneutical inevitability. We are driven by the way we think to synthesize (or systematize) or to harmonize or to compartmentalize. These sorts of actions are inherent to how our brains work, especially for people who read the Bible as believers and who believe it is God’s Word and genuinely makes utter sense.

What I find is that many evangelicals came to faith through a Pauline-anchored set of categories. In many ways it was about the gospel of the Romans Road, and if that understanding of the gospel is repeated often enough (and just listen and you will hear it all the time) it becomes reflexive. This is the context of most evangelicals, and that context is fundamentally hermeneutical.

An analogy: the Judaizing opponents of Paul in Galatians knew how to read the Bible through a Moses lens, and Paul was teaching them to read the Bible (or Israel’s Story) through an Abraham lens. The Judaizing opponents couldn’t make sense of what Paul was saying, and that led them to say “Why then did God even give the Law?”

I see the same thing going on today. Evangelicals have grown up with a gospel, and that gospel has become their hermeneutic, and that hermeneutic is essentially derived from a specific way of reading Paul, and by that I mean a soteriological reading of Romans 1-8. It is the way we (or most of us) think.

The minute a kingdom hermeneutic comes up, one either abandons the Pauline hermeneutic or one synthesizes or — and I think this is most common — one colonizes Jesus’ kingdom hermeneutic by a justification hermeneutic. That is, we make Jesus talk Paul. Or, we colonize Paul with Jesus’ kingdom hermeneutic and make Paul talk Jesus.

Evangelicals are worried that if we colonize Paul with Jesus’ kingdom hermeneutic we will lose a Pauline soteriology. There are plenty of cases where that very thing happened. But I think many are doing the very same thing by colonizing Jesus with Paul.

What I suggest in my article is that both of these approaches fail to find the essential continuity between Jesus and Paul. Kingdom doesn’t lead to justification and justification doesn’t lead to kingdom. The unity is found through christology, not through kingdom or justification.

Trevin Wax: *What are the problems we face when we try to fit justification into Jesus’ vision of the kingdom or Jesus’ kingdom theology into Paul’s theology of justification?*

Scot McKnight: This could be a book or a brief answer, I choose the latter.

Fundamentally, these are two different (and mostly) parallel language games: the gospel of the kingdom is a way of saying the good news is that God’s promises for Israel are now coming to pass in Jesus himself; the gospel of justification (which isn’t a biblical expression) is a way of saying that the good news is that in Jesus Christ we have been declared (and made) right with God, right with ourselves, right with others and right with the world. It is forensic declaration.

Thus, the two are talking about two different things. Asking if what Jesus meant by kingdom is the same as what Paul meant by justification is like asking if a putter is a driver.

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Trevin Wax: *I thought your linking John Piper to Joachim Jeremias was interesting, particularly in the way that both scholars seek (albeit in different ways) to show how justification is present in Jesus' teaching. When you say that Paul and Jesus taught different things, you are speaking of emphasis – not that they had different (i.e. contradictory) visions at the fundamental level, right?*

Scot McKnight: You are right. It's emphasis – not different things. As the previous question showed, they are parallel lines but complementary lines.

Trevin Wax: *Your solution to this dilemma is to take 1 Corinthians 15 as primarily a statement about Jesus – who he is and what he has done. By emphasizing the centrality of Christ's person and work, you bring Paul and Jesus together. Both Paul and Jesus were all about Jesus, particularly his fulfillment of the Old Testament story. Once you've made the shift, how do kingdom and justification relate to the gospel?*

Scot McKnight: 1 Cor 15 is the gospel. Flat out simple. Paul defines it there; or he states it there. Every time Paul says "gospel" he means what he says in 1 Cor 15. That gospel is the narration of the Story of Jesus as Messiah (and Lord over all) as that Story that completes or fulfills the Story of Israel, and brings that Story to its goal. That Story is about Jesus and Jesus, who is Savior, saves through what he did — his life, his death, his burial, and his resurrection.

Now, we're back to this kingdom and justification thing again. The first way to state in the gospel in the NT, of course, is kingdom. That's how Jesus said it. He was saying the Story has now come to its completion/realization in him. When Paul talks about justification he is talking about the effects, and I prefer to say only way of speaking of those effects (others include reconciliation, redemption, etc). He's talking about the forensic-shaped effects of the Saving-ness of the Story of Jesus. To gospel is to declare this Story as the saving/justifying Story.

A problem we need to work on more is the problem: we (evangelicals) tend to think the only problem is the personal sin, personal guilt problem. Fair enough. But frankly if "Jesus is the Messiah" or "Jesus is the Lord" is the solution, then we need to reframe or expand the problem because the problem for the Story of Israel is that it is yearning for completion in God's sending of the Messiah. Messiah, then, is a Solution to a slightly different (way of expressing the) problem.

Trevin Wax: *Would it be right to say that a church without any kingdom vision or a church that denies justification by faith has – in some sense – a deficient gospel? If we say so, does it mean that there's a problem with the Christology that is then leading out to a failure to grasp kingdom or justification?*

Scot McKnight: If there is a deficiency, I want to begin with where Paul and Peter and Jesus do: with the Story of Jesus fulfilling the Story of Israel. If we don't start with Jesus (christology) we will be deficient, and I find both kingdom and justification to be tempted far too often to make christology deficient. How odd, and how tragic, but so true: we get so focused on kingdom we end up thinking only of justice, and then we think so much in terms of justification we get lost in transaction, and in both cases we aren't focusing on telling the Story of Jesus.

McKnight: Jesus v. Paul

<http://www.jrdkirk.com/2010/12/05/mcknight-jesus-v-paul/>

This month's Christianity Today cover story comes from the finger tips of [Scot McKnight: Jesus vs. Paul](#).

This subject is near and dear to my own heart, and Scot and I approach resolving the issue in a similar way: we have to define gospel in such a way that it's bigger than just what we read in any given verse or book of the New Testament. Beyond "kingdom of God" or "justification by faith," McKnight puts it like this:

the gospel is the saving story of Jesus that completes Israel's story. "To gospel" is to tell a story about Jesus as the Messiah, as the Lord, as the Son of God, as the Savior.

When attempting to summarize the gospel for *Jesus Have I Loved, But Paul?* I went this route:

the God of Israel acted decisively in the person of Jesus to restore God's rule and reconcile the whole world to Himself.

Scot's article pushes us to reconceive of the category of "gospel" beyond the stereotypical options of "Kingdom of God" (for Jesus people) or "justification by faith" (for Paul people), drawing both within the larger story of the saving work of the God of Israel.

If I have one small bone to pick with the article, though, it is that it was too nice to the "justification by faith as gospel" people. What the "kingdom of God" camp has that the "justification" camp does not is a biblical indication that their summary of the gospel is, in fact, the gospel!

Jesus comes proclaiming the good news and saying, "Repent, for the Kingdom of God has drawn near." The advent of God's dominion is the good news.

Justification is a way that Paul corrects those who get the gospel wrong. The gospel is tied to justification when Paul wants to argue that Gentiles are the result of the good news promised to Abraham about all nations being blessed in him. But justification as good news? Not so much.



Models Of The Kingdom: Eight Views (Scot McKnight)

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/jesuscreed/2017/12/06/models-kingdom-eight-views/>

When I wrote *Kingdom Conspiracy*, which I'm glad Baker turned into paperback, I found a couple academic books that sketched theories of the kingdom but I was totally unaware of a wonderful book by Howard Snyder called *Models of the Kingdom*.

I wish I had; he would have made my work easier though I am convinced we need to exploit the Constantinian temptation more and the Kuyperian-Niebuhr approaches as well.

What irritated me most when a friend pointed me to this book was that I have always enjoyed Snyder's books and knew that he would be as concerned as I am with kingdom-church relations.

Here are the eight models of Snyder:

1. The kingdom as future hope: the *future* kingdom.
2. The kingdom as inner spiritual experience: the *interior* kingdom.
3. The kingdom as mystical communion: the *heavenly* kingdom.

4. The kingdom as institutional church: the *ecclesiastical* kingdom.
5. The kingdom as countersystem: the *subversive* kingdom.
6. The kingdom as political state: the *theocratic* kingdom.
7. The kingdom as Christianized culture: the *transforming* kingdom.
8. The kingdom as earthly utopia: the *utopian* kingdom.

Snyder argues there are six tension points that need attention in any biblically-shaped kingdom theory:

1. Present versus future. Jesus said “The kingdom of God is near” (Mark 1:15), but also that we should pray for God’s kingdom to come (Matt. 6:10).
2. Individual versus social. Jesus said the kingdom is like hidden treasure an individual person might find (Matt. 13:44), but he also said, “Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12:32). He talked about being born again in order to see the kingdom (John 3:3) but also described it as a feast to be shared (Luke 13:29).
3. Spirit versus matter. Paul said, “Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God” (I Cor. 15:50), and Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world” (John 18:36). But Jesus associated himself with the healing and liberation of the Jubilee (Luke 4:18-21) and Revelation speaks of a kingdom in which God’s people “will reign on the earth” (Rev. 5:10).
4. Gradual versus climactic. Jesus said the kingdom is like grain that grows gradually in a field (Mark 4:26-28). But he also said its coming would be like the midnight cry of the arriving bridegroom (Matt. 25:1-6).
5. Divine action versus human action. The kingdom of God is like a returning king who settles accounts (Luke 19:11-27). It is God who rules and reigns (Ps. 99:1-2). Yet, the kingdom is also something we must seek (Matt. 6:33), and Christians can be “fellow workers for the kingdom of God” (Col. 4:11).
6. The Church’s relation to the kingdom; the tension between seeing the church and the kingdom as essentially the same or as clearly different. Jesus said to the Apostle Peter, “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 16:19). But he also spoke of the kingdom as future and said that not all those who worshiped him, but only those who did God’s will, would enter the kingdom (Matt. 7:21).

One of the conclusions I have come to is that with Gustav Dalman, in Germany in the 19th Century, a major shift occurred in kingdom theology. Kingdom moved away from socio-political realities toward a more inward, immanent theory of kingdom. In addition, a serious study of kingdom in the Old Testament and Josephus and the Dead Sea Scrolls leads to a commonsensical but too often ignored undeniable dimension of the term kingdom: *a kingdom is a people governed by a king*. Namely, kingdom referred to a socio-political reality and had territory inherent to it.

N. T. Wright on the Kingdom of God

http://jollyblogger.typepad.com/jollyblogger/2006/07/n_t_wright_on_t.html

See also: [Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Jesus' Gospel vs Paul's Gospel (2013) [Recommended]

<http://jonjourney.blogspot.com/2013/05/jesus-gospel-vs-pauls-gospel.html>

Excerpt:

- 1) Did Jesus preach a gospel (good news) message?
- 2) Did His disciples proclaim a gospel message?
- 3) When the gospel writers instruct us to proclaim the gospel, using how the term was used by that author, what was the good news message they were referencing?

Jesus went all through Galilee, teaching in their Synagogues, proclaiming (preaching) the gospel (good news) of the kingdom (reign, rule, authority, realm, dominion), and curing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people; Mat 4:23

Jesus went around all the towns and the villages, teaching in their Synagogues, proclaiming (preaching) the gospel (good news) of the kingdom (reign, rule, authority, dominion, realm), and curing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness. Matthew 9:35

Jesus went to Galilee, proclaiming (preaching) the gospel (good news) of God —“The time has come, and the kingdom (rule, reign, authority) of God is at hand; repent (change your way of thinking), and believe the good news.” Mar 1:14-15

Jesus, however, said to them: “I must take the good news (gospel) of the kingdom (reign, rule, authority, dominion) of God to the other town also, for that was why I was sent.” Luke 4:43

Shortly afterwards, Jesus went on a journey through the towns and villages, proclaiming (preaching) the good news (gospel) of the kingdom (rule, reign, authority, dominion) of God. Luke 8:1

Jesus sends out His 12 disciples: On your way proclaim (preach) that the kingdom (reign, rule, authority) of heaven (or God) is at hand. Matt 10:7

Shortly afterwards, Jesus went on a journey through the towns and villages, proclaiming the gospel (good news) of the kingdom (reign, rule, authority) of God. Luke 8:1

Then they (the 12 disciples) set out and went from village to village, proclaiming the gospel (good news) and curing people everywhere. Luke 9:6

Then he said to them: “Go into all the world, and proclaim the gospel (good news) to all creation. Mark 16:15

“And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.” Matthew 24:14

So we may ask the questions?

Did Jesus preach Paul's gospel?

or

Did Paul preach Jesus' gospel?

[Read the articles listed immediately above re: Jesus vs Paul]

It may be an important topic to get your head around. After all, most Christians agree we should be proclaiming the gospel. So how we define the gospel should matter. Who gets to define it? Which scripture passages are used to summarize this essential question?

I agree with the idea in this article. When Jesus proclaimed the good news of the kingdom or reign of God, he was announcing that He was the Christ, the anointed King. He was the Messiah that the Jews were waiting for. He was inviting all people to enter under the reign and authority of His kingdom. He was their savior and Lord.

When Paul defines the gospel he preached in 1 Corinthians 15 he uses very similar language.

"Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born. " (NIV)

Of first importance: that Christ (the anointed King) died for our sins...

Do you see the kingdom connection? The term Christ means the anointed one.

Jesus and Paul both preached that Jesus was king, Lord, Christ, Messiah.

Jesus and Paul both preached that Jesus died for our sins.

Jesus and Paul both preached victory that comes from our risen Lord.

Jesus and Paul both preach about requiring faith in Jesus.

I do see a different emphasis, but I don't see a different gospel message.

Scot McKnight writes:

"... when some evangelicals recently rediscovered Jesus' kingdom vision, they were frequently warned that they were on the verge of falling for a social gospel. "

This describes my experience over and over again. I admit I have been surprised and confused by this.

I'm sorry if my journey to understand and apply the teachings of Jesus has given you concern. As a follower of Jesus my desire is to become more like Jesus. I am enjoying studying the life and teachings of Jesus. It seems clear that Jesus had a favorite topic as he preached from town to town, and His disciples caught on as well. I believe the words of Jesus have meaning and power for people today as well, without taking away from the messages of Paul and other writers of Scripture.

Is it safe to say "*Jesus Christ is the gospel*"?

Did Jesus and Paul teach the same thing?

<https://carm.org/questions/other-questions/did-jesus-and-paul-teach-same-thing>

Excerpt:

Some critics of Christianity try to set Paul against Jesus. They will often claim that what Paul taught is not what Jesus said and that present-day Christianity is derived not from Jesus, but from Paul's teaching. This is an erroneous claim that does not fit the facts. It is easy to take various scriptures out of context and try and set one person against another -- as many critics of Christianity have done. Nevertheless, we can confidently expect that Jesus and Paul taught the same thing. Granted, Paul focused more on theological issues than Jesus did, but nothing Paul said is contrary to Christ.

Luke wrote both the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts. In Acts 9 Luke records the events surrounding Paul's conversion. We see that Jesus himself called Paul and sent him to be an apostle. If Paul and Jesus are not in agreement, then why would Jesus call Paul to be his apostle? Jesus is God in flesh and would, therefore, know all things. Jesus would certainly have known what Paul would teach which, it seems, is one of the reasons Jesus called him.

In addition, we can quickly see by examining what Jesus said we find parallels in what Paul said. Following is a brief alphabetical list comparing the words of Christ with the words of Paul. We can clearly see that they were indeed in agreement and that the critics who would set Paul against Christ don't know what they're talking about.

1. Alive in Christ
 1. Jesus
 1. "For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes," ([John 5:21](#)).
 2. Paul
 1. "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive," ([1 Cor. 15:22](#)).
2. Anxiety
 1. Jesus
 1. "For this reason I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, as to what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor for your body, as to what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body than clothing?" ([Matt. 6:25](#)).
 2. Paul
 1. "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God," ([Phil. 4:6](#)).
3. Atonement
 1. Jesus
 1. "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep," ([John 10:11](#))
 2. Paul
 1. "and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma," ([Eph. 5:2](#)).
4. Deity of Jesus
 1. Jesus
 1. "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am," ([John 8:58](#)). Compare with [Exodus 3:14](#), "And God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM'; and He said, 'Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"
 2. Paul
 1. "For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form," ([Col. 2:9](#)). See also, [Phil. 2:5-8](#).
5. Forgiveness
 1. Jesus
 1. "For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you," ([Matt. 6:14](#)).
 2. Paul
 1. "And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you," ([Eph. 4:32](#)).

6. Jesus is the only way
 1. Jesus
 1. "Jesus said to him, "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me," ([John 14:6](#)).
 2. Paul
 1. "For there is one God, *and* one mediator also between God and men, *the* man Christ Jesus," ([1 Tim. 2:5](#)).
7. Justification by faith
 1. Jesus
 1. "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life," ([John 5:24](#)). See also [John 3:16-18](#); [Luke 18:9-13](#).
 2. Paul
 1. "Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," ([Rom. 5:1](#)).
8. Law, the
 1. Jesus
 1. "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill," ([Matt. 5:17](#)).
 2. Paul
 1. "Do we then nullify the Law through faith? May it never be! On the contrary, we establish the Law," ([Rom. 3:31](#)).
 2. "What I am saying is this: the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise," ([Gal. 3:17](#)).
9. Law, living the
 1. Jesus
 1. "You shall not commit murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; ¹⁹ Honor your father and mother; and You shall love your neighbor as yourself," ([Matt. 19:18-19](#)).
 2. Paul
 1. "Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled *the* law. ⁹ For this, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁰ Love does no wrong to a neighbor; love therefore is the fulfillment of *the* law," ([Rom. 13:8-10](#)).
10. Predestination
 1. Jesus
 1. "Not all men *can* accept this statement, but *only* those to whom it has been given," ([Matt. 19:11](#)).
 2. "All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out," ([John 6:37](#)).
 3. "No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day," ([John 6:44](#)).
 4. "For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me, unless it has been granted him from the Father," ([John 6:65](#)).
 2. Paul
 1. "He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will... ¹¹ also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will," ([Eph. 1:5,11](#)).
11. Resurrection
 1. Jesus
 1. "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men; ²³ and they will kill Him, and He will be raised on the third day," ([Matt. 17:22-23](#)).
 2. Paul
 1. "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures," ([1 Cor. 15:3-4](#)).

12. Rewards and Punishment

1. Jesus
 1. "For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and will then recompense every man according to his deeds," ([Matt. 16:27](#)).
2. Paul
 1. "who will render to every man according to his deeds," ([Rom. 2:6](#)).

13. Sinfulness of man

1. Jesus
 1. "For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders. 20 "These are the things which defile the man; but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile the man," ([Matt. 15:19-20](#)).
2. Paul
 1. "There is none who understands, There is none who seeks for God; 12 All have turned aside, together they have become useless; There is none who does good, There is not even one,"• ([Rom. 3:11-12](#)).

14. Tradition

1. Jesus
 1. "And why do you yourselves transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?" ([Matt. 15:3](#)).
2. Paul
 1. "See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ," ([Col. 2:8](#)).

15. Works Righteousness denied

1. Jesus
 1. "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?'
²³ "And then I will declare to them, "I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness," ([Matt. 7:22-23](#)).
2. Paul
 1. "Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, "The righteous man shall live by faith," ([Gal. 3:11](#)).

As you can see, this brief list demonstrates that Jesus and Paul both taught the same thing.

See also: [Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#)

[Gospel of Jesus vs Paul](#)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Jesus vs Paul?

<https://www.whitehorseinn.org/2010/12/jesus-vs-paul/>

Excerpt:

Pitting Jesus against Paul used to be a hobby of liberal Protestants. As this story has it, Jesus proclaimed a kingdom of wide-scale world-transformation, while Paul proclaimed a gospel of personal salvation. The liberal Catholic writer [Alfred Loisy](#) once quipped that Jesus announced a kingdom, but instead it was a church that came. So on one side is Jesus, with his invitation to humanity to participate in his kingdom by bringing peace and justice, and on the other side is Paul who spoke instead of the church and personal salvation by belonging to it.

Today, however, it has become a critical question in evangelical circles. In the latest [Christianity Today cover story](#) (“Jesus vs. Paul”), New Testament scholar [Scot McKnight](#) relates, “Many of us have made a move from Paul to Jesus, and an increasing tension remains among evangelicals about who gets to set the terms: Jesus or Paul? In other words, will we center our gospel teaching and living on ‘the kingdom’ or ‘justification by faith?’” In short, “Evangelicalism is facing a crisis about the relationship of Jesus to Paul, and many today are choosing sides.”

This conundrum shouldn’t surprise us. Evangelicalism—especially its Anglo-American variety—is a confluence of Reformation, Anabaptist, and pietist streams. Even the Reformation is largely mediated through pietism in the land that Bonhoeffer dubbed “Protestantism without the Reformation.” So it’s no wonder that the Reformation gets saddled with all sorts of views that are actually more accurate descriptions of pietism. Many of us were raised in pietistic backgrounds, where the kingdom of God was basically heaven and you get there by dying. So a lot of younger Christians are reacting against this sort of privatized spirituality. Some are rediscovering the Reformation, but most are drawn toward [Anabaptism](#)—that other stream that has shaped American evangelicalism, at least indirectly. “While some Protestants seem to let Jesus be Savior, but promote Paul to lord and teacher,” writes Brian McLaren in *A Generous Orthodoxy*, “Anabaptists have always interpreted Paul through Jesus, and not the reverse. For them the Sermon on the Mount and the other words of Jesus represent the greatest treasure in the world. Jesus’ teachings have been their standard” (206).

What are we to make of this contrast?

Jesus vs. Paul—a Theological Crisis? (part 1) (2011)

<https://outlookmag.org/jesus-vs-paul-a-theological-crisis-part-1/>

Excerpt:

Did Jesus and Paul teach two different versions of the gospel? I don’t think so, but we’ve got some explaining to do.

Christianity Today’s online magazine posted an [article](#) with the intriguing and provocative title, *Jesus vs. Paul*. It points out: “Jesus preached almost exclusively about the kingdom of heaven, while Paul highlighted justification by faith—and not vice versa. What gives?”

Put simply, the dilemma is that Jesus in the Gospels doesn’t speak as much about being saved by faith as does Paul does in his epistles. Many find this confusing.

Evangelicals (who live somewhere between liberals on the left and fundamentalists on the right) historically have based soteriology (salvation teaching) upon Paul’s epistles. They proclaim that sinners are justified (pardoned and declared righteous) through faith in Christ and His righteousness. But a new generation of evangelicals embraces a more socially aware gospel that goes beyond getting forgiveness for repentant individuals. This progressive soteriology focuses less on forgiving personal guilt and more on **Christus victor**—how Christ conquered sin, death and the devil at the cross, liberating all humanity from evil powers opposed to the kingdom of God.*

We can frame these differing views of salvation in the context of the Lord's Prayer. Evangelicals have always prayed "forgive us our debts" but increasingly now are emphasizing that God's kingdom must come and His will be done on this earth as in heaven. The issue here is whether the gospel is more about Paul's justification soteriology or Christ's liberating, life-giving kingdom.

So what—does it really matter? Quite a bit, says Scot McKnight, the author of *Christianity Today's* article: "It is not exaggerating to say that evangelicalism is facing a crisis about the relationship of Jesus to Paul, and that many today are choosing sides."...

Jesus vs. Paul—a Theological Crisis? (part 3) (2011)

<https://outlookmag.org/jesus-vs-paul%E2%80%94a-theological-crisis-part-3/>

Excerpt:

The difference between Christ and Paul in how they taught the gospel is a matter of their differing contexts. Jesus Himself was the gospel in real time, day by day advancing the kingdom of God against the devil's domain of disease, dysfunction, deceit, disbelief, disobedience and death. Paul came on the scene only after Christ's life and death and resurrection had brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. His role was to proclaim that good news and defend it from counterfeit soteriology.

That's what he was doing in the book of Romans, confronting those trusted in their own keeping of God's law to be saved. His strategy was to debunk Jewish legalism before presenting the true gospel of life in Christ. This he eloquently accomplishes in the first three chapters, exploding any hope of getting good with God by meritorious law-keeping. (See Rom. 3:19, 31.) He summarizes the dismantling of legalism by pointing to the patriarch Abraham as the father of faith, declaring: "If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void" (Rom. 4:14).



Next he promotes Abraham as exhibit A of how to exercise gospel faith in "the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist" (verse 17). "He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. That is why his faith was 'counted to him as righteousness'" (verse 19-22).

Here we see that accepting God's life-giving provision of the gospel is the antidote for legalism. Believers cease trying to gain salvation through the law and instead embrace new life in Christ. This is how Abraham was saved as well.

So the solution for sinfulness is not law-keeping but life in Christ. This is because sin involves not only guilt—the death of innocence—but equally the death of relationality with God and humanity (alienation), the demise of love (character), pure motives (integrity), and ultimately the end of our very existence. Salvation restores life in all of its abundance through Christ. Although this includes forgiveness instead of condemnation, the bottom line of faith in Christ is life itself instead of death.

But wait—aren't we saved by grace through faith? Indeed. But what are we saved from? First and foremost, death. We see this in the "grace chapter," Ephesians 2, which begins by bluntly describing all humanity as "dead in trespasses and sins" (verse 1). We are lifeless outside of Christ, not just guilty and hopeless. "But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved" (verses 4, 5).

Grace, by the way, also involves much more than forgiveness of sin. The Greek word translated "grace" means undeserved favor of any kind, such as "grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:15-16; see also 1 Cor. 15:10, 2 Cor. 9:8, Eph. 4:29, Col. 4:6).

So even the evangelicals' favorite teaching chapter on grace, Ephesians 2, is set in the context of death vs. life more than guilt vs. forgiveness. If there is yet any doubt about the primacy of life vs. death in Paul's soteriology, consider his most extended and explicit definition of the gospel and its meaning—1 Corinthians chapter 15. In all of its 58 verses, in which Paul specifically identifies, defines and describes the gospel, *there is not even one mention of justification, forgiveness, pardon or guilt. It's all about life triumphing over death through Jesus. **Christus victor*** is the resurrected representative of a new humanity that replaces fallen Adam's mortal race. Saving faith involves taking our place in the Son and identifying with His accomplishments instead of trusting in our own.

"This is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. Whoever has the Son has life" (1 John 5:11-12). He preserves our names in the "Lamb's Book of Life" (Rev. 3:5) and will feed us eternally from the "tree of life" (Rev. 2:7) and give us to drink from the "water of life" (Rev. 22:17) from the "river of life" flowing out of His throne (Rev. 22:1). When everything is said and done about salvation, the bottom line is life in Christ.

To summarize: The evangelical conflict between the teaching of Jesus vs. Paul is a crisis of our own making. This is because we have overlooked the common denominator throughout the New Testament: salvation is fundamentally a matter of life in Christ vs. death—of which forgiveness vs. guilt is just a subset. Believers reign in life through the kingdom of God because Jesus conquered death and rose in victory.

See: [N.T. Wright, Scot McKnight and the Gospel: Compared and Contrasted](#)

Kingdom of God: Commonality and Consonance between Jesus and Paul (2012)

<http://www.equip.org/article/kingdom-god-commonality-consonance-jesus-paul/> [PDF] [Recommended]

Excerpt:

In an [article](#) published in *Christianity Today*, Scot McKnight helpfully raised the important question of the relationship between Jesus and Paul.¹ He suggested, "Jesus preached almost exclusively about the kingdom of heaven, while Paul highlighted justification by faith—and not vice versa." He pointed out the evangelical crisis of choosing between Jesus and Paul and came up with the solution that grounds kingdom vision and justification on the gospel of Jesus. The gospel (good news) is "the saving story of Jesus that completes Israel's story." Both Jesus' kingdom vision and Paul's justification speak of Jesus as the one who completes Israel's story. Therefore, both belong to the one gospel story of Jesus. Hence, according to McKnight, we find the unity between Jesus and Paul. But he weakens this unity by splitting Paul's justification from Jesus' kingdom vision so that in the end Jesus and Paul are still materially divided in his scheme. For him, both kingdom vision and justification speak of Jesus but they do so in very different and minimally overlapping ways. This article will show that this division between Jesus' kingdom vision and Paul's justification is not warranted by the New Testament, and that the division and so-called crisis dissolve when Jesus and Paul are interpreted in fuller manners in terms of God's kingdom.



Go to the Beginning of: [Gospel of Jesus vs Paul](#)

On “Jesus vs. Paul” a response to Scot McKnight

<http://theaquilareport.com/on-qjesus-vs-paulq-a-response-to-scot-mcknight/>

<https://zondervanacademic.com/blog/kaiser-2/> (Alt. link)

Excerpt:

The case for the Unity of the Bible grows as scholarship catches up with Biblical revelation. Instead of seeing Paul as the one responsible for founding a new offshoot of the Jesus movement or even as the alleged founder of Christianity, we take him at his word: he was a servant of Jesus Christ!

In the December 2010 issue of Christianity Today, which just arrived, the lead article was on “[Jesus vs. Paul](#),” by my friend [Scot McKnight](#). I enjoyed reading Scot’s discussion of this topic, for I had written on this topic (along with other parallel concerns about unity vs diversity) in my 2009 Zondervan book entitled Recovering the Unity of the Bible: One Continuous Story, Plan and Purpose.

Even though I admire Scot (for after all, I hired him when I was Academic Dean for the TEDS’ faculty years ago), I wish he had had the benefit of reading the fifth chapter in my new book on “The Unity of the New Testament,” where I discussed “The Relationship between Jesus and Paul” along with other topics such as the alleged tension of the Synoptic Gospels with the Gospel of John, the alleged differences between the Paul of the book of Acts and the Paul of the Epistles, and the so-called split between the book of James and the other NT writers in theology.

But more to the point Scot discussed, Paul did occasionally refer to the “kingdom of God” as Jesus did (e.g., [1 Cor 6:9](#), 10; [Gal 5:21](#)), which showed he was conversant with what Jesus said. But there were a number of other points of contact between Paul and Jesus. All will recall Paul’s inclusion of Jesus’ teaching on divorce ([1 Cor 7:10](#)), or Paul’s urging that those who teach should receive their living from the Gospel as Jesus taught ([1 Cor 9:14](#), cf. [Matt 10:10](#); [Lk 10:7](#)). Even Paul’s teaching about the “thief” in 1 Thess 5:4 may be an allusion to Jesus’ teaching on his second coming ([Matt 24:23](#)). There are more instances we could add, but the [1 Cor 11:23-26](#) institution of the Eucharist begins with those wonderful words: “For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, ‘This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.’” This too was another place where Paul depended on Jesus for his theology and praxis.

So, I agree, it is hard to make a case for a conflict between Jesus and Paul. In fact, the “Promise” plan of God incorporated both the “kingdom” aspect, as well as the “Gospel” that was announced to Abraham ([Gen 12:3](#); cf. [Gal 3:8](#)) which Gospel also embraced justification.

The case for the Unity of the Bible grows as scholarship catches up with Biblical revelation. Instead of seeing Paul as the one responsible for founding a new offshoot of the Jesus movement or even as the alleged founder of Christianity, we take him at his word: he was a servant of Jesus Christ!

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Go to the Beginning of: [Gospel of Jesus vs Paul](#)

Justification: Jesus vs. Paul (CTQ) by David P. Scaer (2011) [Lutheran Perspective]
<http://ctsfcw.net/media/pdfs/ScaerJustificationJesusvPaul.pdf> [PDF]

Excerpts:

One cannot serve God and mammon; for some, Jesus and Paul saw things differently. Gospels in the forefront of the canon followed by the epistles set the stage for pitting Jesus against Paul—or was it the other way around? In any event, it began when the church was hardly off the ground. Ebionites favored Matthew's more Jewish Jesus, and Marcion constructed Christianity out of Paul's letters. Another fork in the road came at the Reformation when Roman Catholics took the road leading to the Gospels with James as a guide and Lutherans took the Pauline option. Eighteenth-century rationalists favored the Gospels' simple moral teachings over Paul's complex dogmatic theology.⁴ Nineteenth-century classical liberalism followed suit, as did the Social Gospel by abridging Jesus' message to loving God and the neighbor.

Choosing Jesus over Paul in retrieving authentic Christianity faces an obstacle in the scholarly consensus that Paul died before the Gospels were written (A.D. 68–100).⁵ This means that the evangelists were either unaware of Paul's epistles, ignored them, or constructed their Gospels out of other sources (e.g., the Q document and the Hebrew Matthew, oral tradition, and their own creative imaginations).⁶ With this scenario, it can hardly be said that Paul reacted to Jesus; rather, Matthew reacted to Paul's antinomianism.⁷ If the Gospels preserved the authentic simple religion of Jesus, as preserved in Q, it should be explained why Paul, who defined his life as Christ's life, did not absorb more of it into his epistles. Before his conversion, he was resident in Jerusalem and made several visits afterwards. Left unexplained is how the apostles remaining in Jerusalem left Paul's newer theology, if indeed this is what it was, unanswered. Though both Gospels and Epistles were read in the worship of early churches, apparently no one recognized any discrepancies.

In having to choose between Jesus and Paul, Lutherans have come down on the side of Paul's definition of justification in setting the terms for reading and interpreting the Gospels. The law condemns and the gospel provides salvation. Francis Pieper, the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's premier dogmatician, held that justification "is the apex of all Christian teaching" and "that all other doctrines which he [Paul] preached stand in close relation to the central truth that men are saved without any merit of their own, by faith in the crucified Christ." Pieper then adds, "Thus Christology serves merely as the *substructure* of the doctrine of justification."⁸ This would sound better without the word "merely." If I read this correctly, justification is ranked higher than Christology, at which point we may want to pause. Ranking one doctrine, whichever one it is, as superior to others has consequences, especially when it is imposed on passages that speak of other matters.⁹ With their commitment to the Pauline doctrine of justification, Lutherans have had difficulty in coming to terms with James and, more seriously, with the Sermon on the Mount and its supposedly impossible requirements and subsequent penalties. Relief is then provided by Paul, who is assigned the enviable role of the purveyor of the sweet gospel. Thus, preachers looking for a passage on the law's impossible demands find it in Jesus' command to be perfect (Matt 5:48), an impossibility resolved by Paul's doctrine that we are justified by grace without the works of the law—a close call indeed if one only had to rely on Jesus.

This bifurcation between Jesus and Paul leads to a new kind of *homologomena* and *antilegomena* division of the canon, with Lutherans following the reformer in favoring Romans, Galatians, 1 Peter, and John and with Roman Catholics leaning towards the Gospels—especially Matthew—and James. This does not mean that either faith community uses only its favored books, but each picks and chooses isolated passages from its less-favored books to support views derived from the favored ones. A case in point: in 2010, Roman Catholics commemorated the bimillennial of Paul's birth at St. Peter's Cathedral in Scranton, PA. Lay members read selections from Paul's epistles that dealt with the indwelling of Christ. Noticeably absent were those passages that Lutherans use for their understanding of justification. Not heard was Rom 1:17, "The righteous man shall live by faith alone."¹⁰ This may have been coincidental, or perhaps not. Each faith community has its favorites.

What is the Gospel? (Various presentations)



Scot McKnight: What is the Gospel? [Recommended] (2017)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-HdyhUQ3Krs> [Video]

Ref: Paul: 1 Cor. 15: 1-11; 2 Tim. 2:8; Peter: Acts 2, 10

Gospel: Tells the story of Jesus:

Jesus lived, died at the hands of sinners unjustly, God overturned his death and raised him from the dead, he ascended and he is coming back to rule. Jesus is the King, Jesus is the Lord.

Everyone that believes in him receives forgiveness for their sins through his name.

See: [McKnight's 3-part separation of Gospel text in 1 Cor. 15:1-11.](#)

See also: [Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#)

[What is the "Gospel"? \(Summary\)](#)

What is the Gospel? NT Wright (2013)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICHovRHJAYY>

Ref: Rom. 1:3-4 (below); 1 Cor. 15:1-11 (see: [The Gospel that Paul Preached](#))

[2] This gospel he [God] promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures,
[3] concerning his Son who was a descendant of David with reference to the flesh,
[4] who was appointed the Son-of-God-in-power according to the Holy Spirit by the resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord.
[5] Through him we have received grace and our apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles on behalf of his name.

re: Paul's charge from God: Acts 9:15 "...this man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before Gentiles and kings and the people of Israel."

[DA Carson](#) - How do you Explain the Gospel in Five Minutes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0RImYisUYxM> [Video]

Dr. [Ravi Zacharias](#): What is the Gospel?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=enXBnnFbDpM> [Video]

What Is the Gospel? [Recommended]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0maL4cQ8zuU> [Video]

Just what is the GOSPEL? [Recommended]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i6ZX7ui0Dfo> [Video]

Romans 8:9-13

[9] because if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. [10] For with the heart one believes and thus has righteousness and with the mouth one confesses and thus has salvation. [11] For the scripture says, “Everyone **who believes in him will not be put to shame.**” [12] For there is no distinction between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all, who richly blesses all who call on him. [13] For **everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.**

It Will Cost You Everything

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5JQOBMi4QS8> [Video]

See also: [Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#)

[Gospel of Jesus vs Paul](#)

See also: [Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

[Occurrences of Jesus Risen/Resurrected Mentioned by Apostles in the Bible](#)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

For information on the writings of Paul and the New Perspectives on Paul, including Romans and related topics, plus various N.T. Wright (and other scholars) related resources, see [“Reference Notes on Paul and Romans”](#)

NOTE: For issues and details related to Heaven and life after death, as well as covering related topics and including different perspectives (including N.T. Wright) - see my separate [“Reference Notes on Heaven”](#) (based in part on the book, *Heaven*, by Randy Alcorn)

This page is taken from Fellowship Greenville's "What Is The Gospel?" section of an information page from their web site and thought it would be worthwhile to include here...

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

We all put our hope in something but often realize those things are temporary. That's a hard reality because, in this upside-down world, the questions so many of us have about God, life, and faith are all too often met with unclear answers and clichés—questions like...

"Why is the world so messed up? Isn't there more to life than this? Why isn't God doing more to make this world a better place? And, is there REALLY any hope?"

The Good News is that Jesus really does offer us hope, and it's a certain hope that goes beyond the things this world offers.

These are the kinds of things we talk about here, so we invite you to join us soon.

If you want to know more about the hope Jesus offers, [click here](#). Additionally, these videos from Spread Truth offer a clear explanation of the story, including a version for kids...

This film by *Spread Truth* provides a clear explanation of God's story for mankind and how Jesus is our hope in that story (< 6 min.):



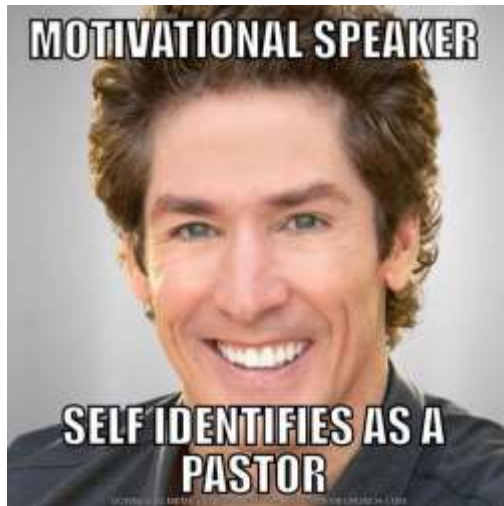
This animated children's film is a *Spread Truth* project aimed at helping children understand the story of Jesus (< 8 min.):



Another two-part video that clearly explains the hope Jesus offers us all is [The Big Story Part 1](#) and [The Big Story Part 2](#). See also source site: [True Story resources](#)

Paul Washer vs Joel Osteen

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OqGw3H8Z86I> [Video]



Paul Washer | Confronted with a question

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ydGprxNHjik> [Video]

Full Version:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g9rUe-Wcjvk> [Video]

What is the Gospel? - Paul Washer

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9mMQ12nmDow> [Video]

Jack Chick's False Gospel

<http://www.soulwinning.info/tracts/chick.htm>

How Do You Present the Gospel? By Dr. Bob Wilkin (2012)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9nUQhpAZqFw> [Video]

From GES web site: <https://faithalone.org/video/how-to-present-the-gospel/>

How to Present the Gospel

<https://redeeminggod.com/sermons/miscellaneous/how-to-present-the-gospel/> [Text and Audio]

See also: [Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#)

[Gospel of Jesus vs Paul](#)

See also: [Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

[Occurrences of Jesus Risen/Resurrected Mentioned by Apostles in the Bible](#)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Bible Verses that Summarize the Gospel

<https://jamesmirror.com/2011/12/12/bible-verses-that-summarize-the-gospel/>



Excerpt:

Scripture verses that summarize the Gospel are sprinkled throughout the Bible. Here are some cited by [J.I. Packer](#) in the book, *Grounded in the Gospel*:

- He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed (Isa. 53:5)
- For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and give his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45)
- God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16)
- All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name (Acts 10:43)
- Through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. Through him everyone who believes is justified from everything you could not be justified from by the Law of Moses (Acts 13:38-39)
- He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification (Rom. 4:25)
- But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Rom. 5:8)
- Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures ... he was buried. . . . The third day he rose again from the dead, according to the Scriptures . . . and he appeared (1 Cor. 15:3-6). Paul writes that this is the Gospel “I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this Gospel you are saved” (1 Cor. 15:1-2). In outlining it here, Paul asserts that “what I received I passed on to you is of first importance” (1 Cor. 15:3)
- God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, not counting men’s trespasses against them (2 Cor. 5:19)
- God made him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in him (2 Cor. 5:21)
- Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David: this is my Gospel (2 Tim. 2:8)
- He gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good (Titus 2:14)
- But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (Titus 3:4-7)
- Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him (Heb. 9:28)
- He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed (Peter 2:24)
- Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God (1 Peter 3:18)

- This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins (1 John 4:10)

Follow these links to learn more about the [Gospel](#), answer the question “[Am I a good person](#)” and see a [contrast between the true and false Gospel](#)

See also: [Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

[Occurrences of Jesus Risen/Resurrected Mentioned by Apostles in the Bible](#)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

The Gospel in One Word, Two Words...

<https://escapetoreality.org/2011/03/22/the-gospel-in-one-word-two-words/>

Excerpt:

Throughout the Bible you will find short declarations of the Good News. Below I have listed short gospels from Paul, Peter, James, John and Jesus. I also have one each from Spurgeon and Calvin...

1 word: Jesus! You cannot improve upon perfection and there's no other name by which we're saved (Acts 4:12). Grace and truth are found in Jesus. Jesus saves sinners and keeps Christians. Whatever your need, the answer is Jesus. Are you struggling with sin? Jesus is your victory. Are you suffering with illness? Jesus is your healing. Are you bound up with depression? Jesus is your freedom.

2 words: Christ alone! If we must add one word to the name "Jesus" or His proper title "Christ," let it be the qualifier "alone." He alone saves us. He doesn't need our help, just our trust.

3 words: None but Jesus! If this was good enough for [Spurgeon](#)...

4 words: "Mercy triumphs over judgment!" ~ James 2:13. And just so you have no doubt as to where mercy comes from, James tells us: "The Lord is full of compassion and mercy" (Jas 5:11).

5 words: "Jesus Christ and Him crucified." That's all Paul needed to know (1 Cor 2:1-5).

6 words: Saved by Christ; kept by Christ. Many Christians believe only the first part of that statement. They believe that Jesus gave them a fresh start, but not a new life. Instead of [confessing their sonship](#), they are still confessing their sins. Instead of resting in the gift of his righteousness, they are striving to make themselves righteous through their good works, their self-denial, or their observance of traditions, rules and regulations. The good news is better than they think!

7 words: "Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" ~ John 1:17. Think of a firefighter smashing through a concrete wall to save trapped orphans. That's what Jesus did for us. When all hope was lost, He came. Now that's good news!

8 words: "Christ died, was buried, then rose. He reigns!" ~ Paul (1 Cor 15:3-4,25). Everyone quotes the first 3 bits of Paul's gospel and misses the punch-line. Read the whole chapter of 1 Corinthians 15. The good news is not just about what He's done, but what He's doing (He's reigning!) and yet to do (until all His enemies have been put under His feet).

9 words: "I want to come in and be with you." ~ Jesus (Rev 3:20). Religion offers carrots and sticks, but Jesus offers invitations.

10 words: "I am the way and the truth and the life." ~ Jesus (Jn 14:6). As the song says, without the way there is no going, without the truth there is no knowing, and without the life, there is no living.

11 words: "When you ascended on high, you led captives in your train." ~ David (Ps 68:19). Ever seen those movies where the good guy beats the bad guy but then foolishly forgets to check whether the villain's really been neutralized? Jesus is not like that! He has enslaved slavery, bound bondage, and captured captivity. Where are Jesus' foes? They're in His train – shackled and disarmed!

12 words: "God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." ~ Peter (Acts 2:36). The Messiah whom the Jews looked for, has been exalted, made supreme, so that our sins might be forgiven and the Holy Spirit given (see Acts 2:38)

20 words: "The Son of God became the Son of Man that the Sons of Men might become the Sons of God." John Calvin may or may not have said this – I can't verify the source – but it's true and it's good news.

Jesus – Christ / Messiah, Lord and Judge

[Christ](#)

[Lord](#)

[Judge](#)

Christ

See also: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What does *Christ* mean?

<https://www.gotquestions.org/what-does-Christ-mean.html>

Question: "What does *Christ* mean?"

Answer: To the surprise of some, "Christ" is not Jesus' last name (surname). "Christ" comes from the Greek word *Christos*, meaning "[anointed](#) one" or "chosen one." This is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word *Mashiach*, or "Messiah." "Jesus" is the Lord's human name given to Mary by the angel Gabriel ([Luke 1:31](#)). "Christ" is His title, signifying Jesus was sent from God to be a King and Deliverer (see [Daniel 9:25](#); [Isaiah 32:1](#)). "Jesus Christ" means "Jesus the Messiah" or "Jesus the Anointed One."

In ancient Israel, when someone was given a position of authority, oil was poured on his head to signify his being set apart for God's service (e.g., [1 Samuel 10:1](#)). Kings, priests, and prophets were anointed in such fashion. Anointing was a symbolic act to indicate God's choosing (e.g., [1 Samuel 24:6](#)). Although the literal meaning of *anointed* refers to the application of oil, it can also refer to one's consecration by God, even if literal oil is not used ([Hebrews 1:9](#)).

There are hundreds of prophetic passages in the Old Testament that refer to a coming Messiah who would deliver His people (e.g., [Isaiah 61:1](#); [Daniel 9:26](#)). Ancient Israel thought their Messiah would come with military might to deliver them from decades of captivity to earthly kings and pagan nations. But the New Testament reveals a much better deliverance provided by Jesus the Messiah—a deliverance from the power and penalty of sin ([Luke 4:18](#); [Romans 6:23](#)).

The Bible says Jesus was anointed with oil on two separate occasions by two different women ([Matthew 26:6–7](#); [Luke 7:37–38](#)), but the most significant anointing came by way of the Holy Spirit ([Acts 10:38](#)). Jesus' title of "Christ" means He is God's Anointed One, the One who fulfills the Old Testament prophecies, the Chosen Savior who came to rescue sinners ([1 Timothy 1:15](#)), and the [King of kings](#) who is coming back again to set up His Kingdom on earth ([Zechariah 14:9](#)).

Christ [\[N\]](#) [\[H\]](#) [\[S\]](#)

<https://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionary/christ/>

anointed, the Greek translation of the Hebrew word rendered "Messiah" (q.v.), the official title of our Lord, occurring five hundred and fourteen times in the New Testament. It denotes that he was anointed or consecrated to his great redemptive work as Prophet, Priest, and King of his people. He is Jesus the Christ ([Acts 17:3](#); [18:5](#); [Matthew 22:42](#)), the Anointed One. He is thus spoken of by ([Isaiah 61:1](#)), and by ([Daniel 9:24-26](#)), who styles him "Messiah the Prince."

The Messiah is the same person as "the seed of the woman" ([Genesis 3:15](#)), "the seed of Abraham" ([Genesis 22:18](#)), the "Prophet like unto Moses" ([Deuteronomy 18:15](#)), "the priest after the order of Melchizedek" ([Psalms 110:4](#)), "the rod out of the stem of Jesse" ([Isaiah 11:1](#) [Isaiah 11:10](#)), the "Immanuel," the virgin's son ([Isaiah 7:14](#)), "the branch of Jehovah" ([Isaiah 4:2](#)), and "the messenger of the covenant" ([Malachi 3:1](#)). This is he "of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write." The Old Testament Scripture is full of prophetic declarations regarding the Great Deliverer and the work he was to accomplish. Jesus the Christ is Jesus the Great Deliverer, the Anointed One, the Saviour of men. This

name denotes that Jesus was divinely appointed, commissioned, and accredited as the Saviour of men ([Hebrews 5:4](#) ; [Isaiah 11:2-4](#) ; [49:6](#) ; [John 5:37](#) ; [Acts 2:22](#)).

To believe that "Jesus is the Christ" is to believe that he is the Anointed, the Messiah of the prophets, the Saviour sent of God, that he was, in a word, what he claimed to be. This is to believe the gospel, by the faith of which alone men can be brought unto God. That Jesus is the Christ is the testimony of God, and the faith of this constitutes a Christian ([1 Corinthians 12:3](#) ; [1 John 5:1](#)).

What does “Christ” actually mean?

<https://ourrabbiJesus.com/articles/what-does-the-word-christ-actually-mean/>

What does it mean to speak of Jesus as the “Christ”?

This word is one of the most important, basic words in a Christian’s vocabulary. But it isn’t until you dig into the Bible’s ancient context that you that see its surprising imagery and some of its most important implications.

First of all, the word “Christ” comes from *christos*, a Greek word meaning “anointed.” It is the equivalent of the word *mashiach*, or Messiah, in Hebrew. So, to be the Christ, or Messiah, is to be “the anointed one of God.”

But what does that mean?

To be anointed, literally, is to have sacred oil poured on one’s head, because God has chosen the person for a special task. Priests and kings were anointed, and occasionally prophets. Kings were anointed during their coronation rather than receiving a crown.

Even though prophets and priests were anointed, the phrase “anointed one” or “the Lord’s anointed” was most often used to refer to a king. For instance, David used it many times to refer to King Saul, even when Saul was trying to murder David and David was on the verge of killing Saul to defend himself:

Far be it from me because of the LORD that I should do this thing to my lord, the LORD’S anointed (*mashiach*), to stretch out my hand against him, since he is the LORD’S anointed (*mashiach*). (1 Samuel 24:6)

The overriding biblical imagery of the word “Messiah” or “Christ” is that of a king chosen by God. Often in the Old Testament, God would tell a prophet to go anoint someone and proclaim him king. The act of anointing with sacred oil emphasized that it was *God himself* who had ordained a person and given him authority to act as his representative.



I remember being quite surprised when I first learned this. If you would have asked me to describe Jesus’ identity, “Son of God” or “Suffering Savior” would have been my two best guesses. “King” didn’t even make the list. While Jesus also has a priestly and a prophetic role, the prominent idea within the title “Christ” is actually that of a king.

Hints of a Coming King

If you look more closely, you’ll see that this is indeed the messianic idea throughout the Bible. Throughout the Old Testament, we see little hints that God would send a great king to Israel who would someday rule the world. In Genesis, when Jacob blesses each of his sons and foretells his future, he says of Judah:

The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his. (Genesis 49:10)

This is the first hint that they were expecting a great king to arise out of Israel who would be king over the whole earth.



The clearest prophecy about the future messianic king comes from King David's time. David earnestly desired to build a temple, a "house" for God, but God responded that his son Solomon would be the one to build his temple. But then God went on to promise he would build a "house" for David, meaning that God would establish his family line after him. He further promised that from David's family would come a king whose kingdom will have no end:

When your days are over and you go to be with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, one of your own sons, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for me, and I will establish his throne forever. I will be his father, and he will be my son. I will never take my love away from him, as I took it away from your predecessor. I will set him over my house and my kingdom forever; his throne will be established forever. (1 Chronicles 17:11-14)

This prophecy has been understood as having a double fulfillment. It is first fulfilled in Solomon, who built the temple, but did what God forbade—amassed a great fortune and married foreign wives. His kingdom broke apart a few years after his death. But this prophecy looks forward to a "Son of David" who would come, who would have a kingdom without end. This, in fact, is the seedbed of all of the messianic prophecies that speak of the "son of David" and the coming messianic king.

Jesus as the Christ

Often the gospels use cultural images of kingship to proclaim Jesus as the Christ, God's anointed King who has come. When a king arose with great power, other kingdoms would send emissaries with lavish gifts to establish a friendly relationship with the future leader. This is what is happening in Matthew 2, when wise men come to bring gifts to Christ, the newborn king whose star they have seen in the east.



This was a fulfillment of Numbers 24:17, Isaiah 60, and Psalm 72. The latter two passages both describe the coming of a great king and describe how representatives from nations everywhere would come to give him tribute:

The kings of Tarshish and of distant shores will bring tribute to him; the kings of Sheba and Seba will present him gifts. All kings will bow down to him and all nations will serve him. Psalm 72: 10-11

We see yet another picture of Jesus as King when he rode on a donkey into Jerusalem. This was often part of the annunciation of a new king, as it was for Solomon in 1 Kings 1:38-39. It is the fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9, the triumphal entry of the messianic king.

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you! He is just and endowed with salvation; humble, and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

And, during Jesus' trial, the main question that he is asked is "Are you the King of the Jews?", which he answered affirmatively:

And they began to accuse him, saying, "We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ, a King." So Pilate asked him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" And he answered him and said, "It is as you say." (Luke 23:2-3)

What are the implications of Jesus as King?

When you think about Jesus' time on earth, the last thing you may think of is of a reigning king. But Jesus explained that his kingdom was not of this world (John 18:37). Rather, Jesus was talking about the

kingdom of God, the major focus of his preaching. The kingdom of God is made up of those who submit their lives to God to reign over them.



As the King that God has sent, and of course because he is God, the kingdom of God is Jesus' kingdom. He speaks about how it is expanding like yeast or mustard seed as the news goes forth that he has arrived and people accept him as King. When he returns in glory, every knee on earth will bow to honor him as King (Philippians 2:9).

Did the people around him see him as a king? The fact that Jesus' disciples and others who believed in him referred to him as "Lord" suggests that they were giving him great honor, with the understanding that he was the Messianic King. To call Jesus "Lord" was to use a term for addressing royalty, like saying "Your Majesty" or "Your Highness." It is also a common term for addressing God himself, and hints of worshiping Jesus as God.

To use the word "Lord" displays an attitude of obedient submission to a greater power. Jesus seems even to expect that those who call him Lord obey him. To his listeners he asked, "Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?" (Luke 6:46). To call him "Lord" or to call him Jesus "Christ" is to say that he is the King that God has sent who has a right to reign over us.

This has implications about how we define ourselves as Christians. Usually, we talk in terms of doctrines and beliefs, but the very word "Christ" calls us to more than assenting to a creed. If Christ means King, a Christian is one who considers Jesus his Lord and King, and submits to his reign.

Paul too proclaims that salvation comes through faith in the atoning work of Jesus, as well as a commitment to honor him as one's personal Lord and King:

If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (Romans 10:9)

Strong's Concordance

Christos: the Anointed One, Messiah, Christ

Original Word: Χριστός, οὔ, ὁ

Part of Speech: Noun, Masculine

Transliteration: Christos

Phonetic Spelling: (khris-tos')

Definition: the Anointed One, Messiah, Christ

Usage: Anointed One; the Messiah, the Christ.

5547 *Xristós* (from [5548](#) /*xríō*, "anoint with olive oil") – properly, "the Anointed One," the *Christ* (Hebrew, "Messiah").

See also: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Χριστος

<http://www.abarim-publications.com/Meaning/Christ.html>

The name Christ: Summary

Meaning

Anointed, Sovereign

Etymology

From the noun χριστος (*christos*), anointed or sovereign.

The name Christ in the Bible

Christ, or *christos* is not really a name but an appellative, or even a title. It describes an appointment; a function in the theocratic structure of [Israel](#), namely that of high priest, prophet or king; anybody who had no earthly superior and worked directly for God.

There were quite a few "Christs" at large in Israel at any given time, and although [Matthew](#) mentions that [Jesus](#) of [Nazareth](#) was called Christ ([Matthew 1:16](#)), he was never the only one.

The word χριστος (*christos*) occurs 565 times in the New Testament; [see full concordance](#).

Etymology and meaning of the name Christ

The noun χριστος (*christos*), meaning anointed, comes from the Greek verb χρίω (*chrio*), meaning to smear or anoint:

Excerpted from: Abarim Publications' Biblical Dictionary

χρίω

The verb χρίω (*chrio*) means to smear or anoint. Ritualistically, the act of anointing was performed upon people who had no earthly superior and were as such sovereigns (kings, priests, prophets).

This verb's most striking derivation is the noun χριστος (*christos*), which describes someone who is a sovereign: someone who answers only to the Creator and not to any human.

In Hebrew this verb is מָשַׁח (*mashah*), and the noun is the familiar word מָשִׁיחַ (*mashiah*).

So yes, the literal meaning of the name Christ is **Anointed**, but practically it means much rather **Inaugurated** or even **Highest Earthly Rank**. Politically speaking, it describes the **Individual's Autonomy**, as opposed to a political system in which one person or a few people exert absolute power over the rest (read our article on the name Antichrist).

There were many more phrases and names from the Old Testament to label the Son of God with (Branch, Prince of Peace, Corner Stone), but the label Christ became such a hit probably because of its political implications.

The Christ and Rome

In their wonderful book *In Search Of Paul*, authors Crossan and Reed argue that much of Paul's signature theological phraseology was in fact a direct response (and insurrectionary response) to Roman imperial theology. Since in Rome, politics and theology were the same, calling Jesus the Christ (or the Hebrew equivalent [Messiah](#) — [John 1:41](#)) was not so much an act of worship to God but much more an act of

high treason against Roman imperial theology. Subsequently, the proclaimed Christ died a political death: on the cross.

To modern readers the name Christ doesn't mean anything other than it being the surname of Jesus, but in the time that the Bible was written it was a commonly understood title of the rightful king of Israel. The phrases "Son Of God," Redeemer, and "Savior of the World" came straight from the Romans and were originally applied to Caesar Augustus, son of the deified Julius Caesar.

Even the title "son of God" and the word *monogenes*, meaning only-begotten, a word made famous by [John 3:16](#), is applied in the Bible to quite a few others (see below). And to make matters worse: even the name Jesus was quite common in the time of the Bible and there are five separate individuals named Jesus mentioned in the Bible (see our article on the name Jesus).

Title flexibility

It seems that there are not many titles of Christ that are exclusively his. After his death and resurrection, the apostle Paul depicted him mostly as the Crucified Christ (where the English word crucify is also a misnomer, since the Greek word that Paul uses means "lifted up" — Paul speaks of the Elevated Christ).

When under emperor Constantine Christianity became the empire's main religion, Christ quickly became known as [Pantokrator](#), or All-Ruler, a phrase drawn from the Septuagint (and please read our article on the name [Nazarene](#) for a closer look at this). During the time of the great plague, Christ became the Man of Sorrows. The Reformation brought the Bible into the common home, and Jesus became mostly depicted as one of us, a sympathetic teacher with his friends and followers.

In our day and age of individual freedom, Christ is depicted in all possible ways, with all available skin colors and attire, even up to Catholicism Wow's nice tried but still wholly atrocious Buddy Christ.

Since Paul says that the Spirit searches all things ([1 Corinthians 2:10](#)), perhaps we should start calling him the Great Search Engine. Or since in him and by him everything was made, and in him all things hold together ([Colossians 1:17](#)), perhaps The Great Server would apply. Perhaps not. But all these various depictions show that no matter how intimate Christ is experienced, or how much reverence we feel for him, his ultimate personality or even most fundamental function is utterly difficult to grasp.

The great uniqueness of Jesus Christ is not that he is the Christ, or that he is a teacher or even a son of God; his ultimate uniqueness is that he died but wouldn't stay dead. And that not just because he rose (because even that has a few Biblical precedents in [Lazarus](#) and the widow's son of [Luke 7:11-16](#), the boy whom [Elijah](#) the [Tishbite](#) raised in 1 Kings 17:17-24 and the Shunammite's son whom [Elisha](#) raised in 2 Kings 4:35) but because there was nothing in this world that could keep him dead. His victory over death at [Golgotha](#), by the sheer merit of his identity, is big enough for us all to enjoy. In Christ, all of us are immortal.

So yes, the name Christ means Anointed, but with a very big footnote.

See also: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

[Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Lord

The Difference Between “LORD” and “Lord” and “lord”

<http://jimmyakin.com/the-difference-between-lord-and-lord>

Q: When the Bible uses the word “lord,” sometimes it is all in capital letters (“LORD”), sometimes only the first letter is capitalized (“Lord”), and sometimes no letters are capitalized (“lord”). Why is this?

A: When you encounter the word in all lower case — lord — it is simply a reference to a human ruler.

When you encounter the word with the first letter only capitalized — Lord — it is either because it is at the front of a sentence or because it is a reference to one of the three divine Persons of the Godhead (the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit) or to the entire Godhead.

When you see the term entirely capitalized — LORD — it will be in the Old Testament and is translating the Hebrew word for the name of God — YHWH, or Yahweh (Biblical Hebrew has no vowels, only consonant letters). The reason for this is that the Ten Commandments forbid anyone to misuse the name of Yahweh, stating:

“You shall not misuse the name of Yahweh your God, for Yahweh will not hold anyone who misuses his name guiltless.” (Ex. 20:7; cf. Deut. 5:11).

Although the name Yahweh was used freely in the early history of Israel, by the time of Jesus the Jews (especially the Pharisees) had become hyper-scrupulous about breaking the Mosaic Law and, in an attempt to “build a wall” around the commandments of the Law so that no one could even get *close* to breaking them, they ruled that no one should speak the name of the Yahweh *ever*. The only exception to this was during one feast day of the year when the priest would intone the actual name Yahweh *once* during the liturgy.

This prohibition on saying “Yahweh” created a problem for people reading the Bible out loud in synagogue liturgies. Since the name of Yahweh was freely used in the Scripture texts, what were they to say in its place as they read the Bible out loud? The answer that was reached was that they were to say the word “Adonai” instead. *Adonai* is the Hebrew word for “lord,” or actually “my lord.”

When the Septuagint (the Greek version of the Old Testament) was translated, it replaced the Hebrew word YHWH with the Greek word for “lord” (*kyrios*).

Thus the New Testament writers, because they were both devout Jews and people who were quoting the Septuagint in their writings, never used the name “Yahweh” in the New Testament, but consistently used “Kyrios” in its place. ... In reality, *the Apostle Paul himself* used “Kyrios” instead of “Yahweh.”

...when vowels were eventually introduced into the Jewish alphabet, they came in the form of vowel points above and below the consonant letters that were written on the page of Scripture. Because the custom of saying “Adonai” instead of “Yahweh” was already in place, when the Jews added vowel points to the Old Testament, they used the vowel points for “Adonai” (*a-o-aī*) whenever they encountered the word “YHWH,” giving us “Yahowaiḥ,” which is transliterated into English as “Jehovah.” “Jehovah” is not God’s true name. Based on the patristic and other evidence available, the actual way the divine name was pronounced was “Yahweh,” not “Jehovah.”

Continued on next page...

Jesus Christ-Lord God of the Old Testament and Son of God

<https://www.churchathome.org/articles/jesus-christ-lord-god-of-the-old-testament-and-son-of-god.html>

In order to truly understand the Scriptures, it is critical to realize that the Lord God of the Old Testament was the one Who was *made flesh* and became Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As we will see, "God" in the Old Testament is frequently translated from the Hebrew word *elohim*, which is a collective *plural* noun that refers to a holy *family* of spirit beings. Scripture reveals that there are at present *two* Who are *Elohim*—members of the **God Family**: **God**, Who is called **the Father** in the New Testament, and the one Who became Jesus Christ, and is thus now **God the Son**.

"There Is One God, the Father...and One Lord, Jesus Christ"

<https://www.ucg.org/bible-study-tools/booklets/is-god-a-trinity/there-is-one-god-the-fatherand-one-lord-jesus-christ>

How many times is Jesus called Lord in the New Testament?

[https://www.answers.com/Q/How many times is Jesus called Lord in the New Testament](https://www.answers.com/Q/How_many_times_is_Jesus_called_Lord_in_the_New_Testament)

According to Charles T. Carter in his article "Preaching: the Lordship of Jesus Christ" (posted on preachingpoint.org) "The term "lord" occurs over 600 times in the New Testament. It is true that sometimes it is merely a term of address or respect or affection. However, at least 150 of these times it is used of God Himself, and nearly 250 times it is used to describe Jesus."

Where Is Jesus in the Old Testament?

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/where-is-jesus-in-the-old-testament>

See also: [Christ](#)

Judge

19 Bible Verses about Jesus Christ, Judge

<https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/topics/Jesus-Christ,-Judge>

24 Bible Verses about Christ Judging

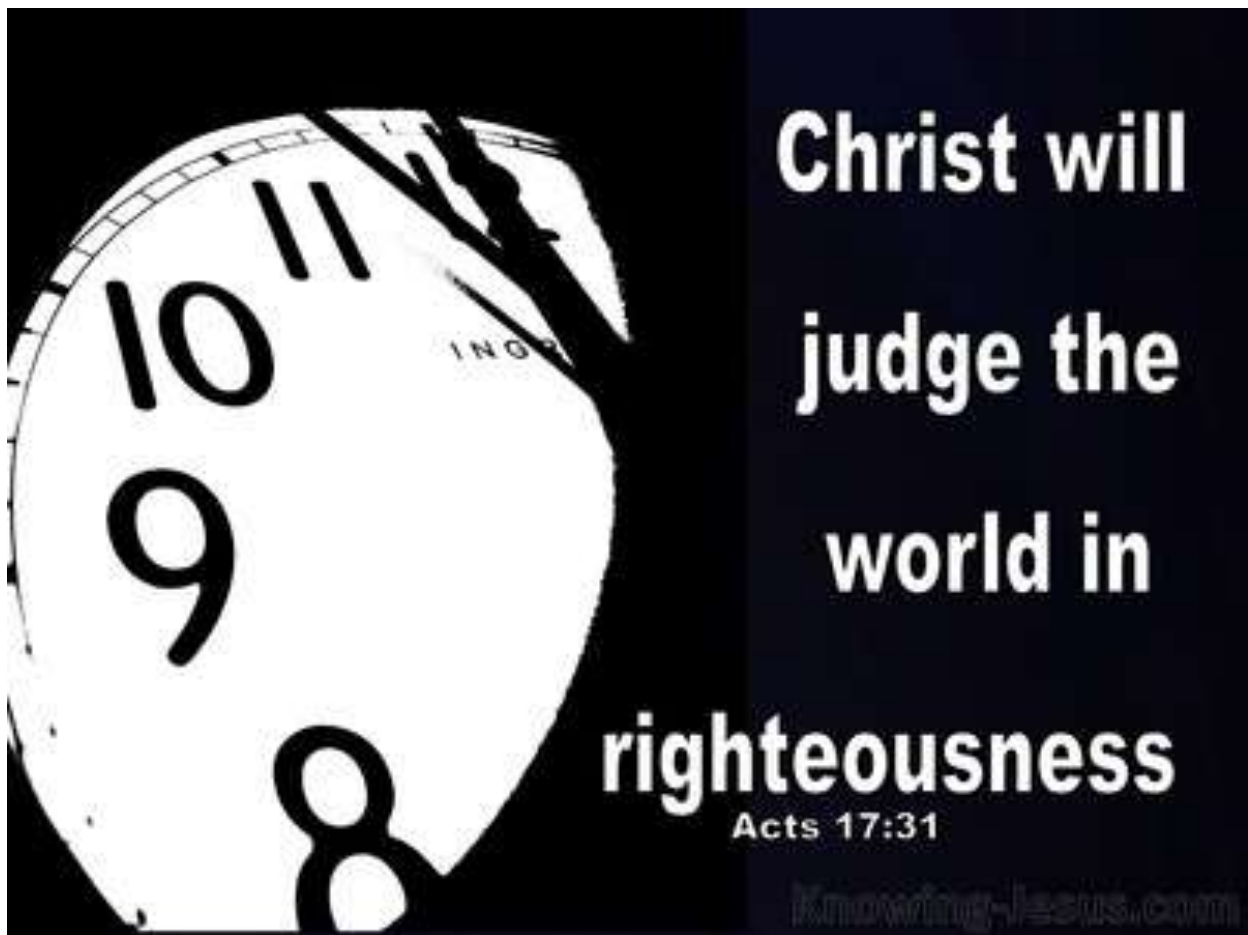
<https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/topics/Christ-Judging>

93 Verses about Jesus Will Judge

https://www.openbible.info/topics/jesus_will_judge

Jesus Christ as Judge (references)

<https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/dictionary-of-bible-themes/2309-Jesus-Christ-as-judge>



Jesus Will Be Our Judge

<https://truthfortheworld.org/jesus-judge>

The story is told about a man who came before a judge after he had committed a crime. When the man saw the judge, he was happy. The judge had been his defender in an earlier case. When the judge sentenced the man to prison, he asked: "Don't you remember who I am? I am the man you defended many years ago. How can you sentence me to prison now? The judge replied: "In the earlier case, I was your defender. It was my desire to set you free. Now, I am your judge and I must judge you fairly according to the law."

The same is true of Jesus. Now He is our Saviour and Mediator ([Matthew 1:21](#); [Luke 19:10](#); [1 Timothy 2:5](#)). His salvation is available to all who are willing to obey His will ([Matthew 7:21-23](#); [Hebrews 5:8-9](#)). However, the time is coming when He will be our Judge. The first time, Jesus came to save. The next time He will come to judge ([Hebrews 9:27-28](#)).

John the baptizer was the first to tell us Jesus would be our judge ([Matthew 3:12](#)). Paul tells us every person will stand before Christ to be judged ([2 Corinthians 5:10](#)). Whether we are rich or poor, black or white, short or tall, Asian, African, European, or American, we will all be judged ([2 Timothy 4:8](#)). Paul also tells us that Christ is a righteous judge ([2 Timothy 4:8](#)). The Bible says all judgment has been given to him ([John 5:22](#)). The Bible also shows us a picture of the Judgment ([Matthew 25:31-46](#)). The fact that Jesus will be our Judge must be preached to the world ([Acts 10:42](#); [Romans 2:9-16](#)). Jesus will judge us according to the Gospel ([John 12:48](#); [Romans 2:9-16](#)). All people will be judged fairly ([Acts 10:34-35](#); [Colossians 3:24-25](#)).

Jesus is qualified to be our Judge. He knows what is in our hearts ([John 2:24-25](#); [Revelation 2:23](#)). Because Jesus is God and knows our hearts, He is able to be a just and righteous Judge of all the world ([Acts 17:30-31](#)).

There is a great day coming! It is a day when everyone in the world will be judged. Jesus will be the Judge. In order for us to go to Heaven, we must obey God's will ([John 14:15](#); [Romans 6:17-18](#); [1 John 5:3](#)). By the grace and mercy of God we can be saved ([Ephesians 2:8-9](#); [Titus 3:5](#)). If we do not obey, we will be sent to Hell ([Matthew 7:13-14](#); [2 Thessalonians 1:7-9](#); [Matthew 25:46](#)).

What does the Bible say about when God will judge us?

<https://www.gotquestions.org/judgment.html>

Question: "What does the Bible say about when God will judge us?"

Answer: There are two separate judgments. Believers are judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ ([Romans 14:10-12](#)). Every believer will give an account of himself, and the Lord will judge the decisions he made—including those concerning issues of conscience. This judgment does not determine salvation, which is by faith alone ([Ephesians 2:8-9](#)), but rather is the time when believers must give an account of their lives in service to Christ. Our position in Christ is the "foundation" spoken of in [1 Corinthians 3:11-15](#). That which we build upon the foundation can be the "gold, silver, and precious stones" of good works in Christ's name, obedience and fruitfulness—dedicated spiritual service to glorify God and build the church. Or what we build on the foundation may be the "wood, hay and stubble" of worthless, frivolous, shallow activity with no spiritual value. The Judgment Seat of Christ will reveal this.

The gold, silver, and precious stones in the lives of believers will survive God's refining fire (v. 13), and believers will be rewarded based on those good works—how faithfully we served Christ ([1 Corinthians 9:4-27](#)), how well we obeyed the Great Commission ([Matthew 28:18-20](#)), how victorious we were over sin ([Romans 6:1-4](#)), how well we controlled our tongues ([James 3:1-9](#)), etc. We will have to give an account for our actions, whether they were truly indicative of our position in Christ. The fire of God's judgment will completely burn up the "wood, hay and stubble" of the words we spoke and things we did which had no

eternal value. “So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God” ([Romans 14:12](#)).

The second judgment is that of unbelievers who will be judged at the Great White Throne Judgment ([Revelation 20:11-15](#)). This judgment does not determine salvation, either. Everyone at the Great White Throne is an unbeliever who has rejected Christ in life and is therefore already doomed to the lake of fire. [Revelation 20:12](#) says that unbelievers will be “judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.” Those who have rejected Christ as Lord and Savior will be judged based on their works alone, and because the Bible tells us that “by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified” ([Galatians 2:16](#)), they will be condemned. No amount of good works and the keeping of God’s laws can be sufficient to atone for sin. All their thoughts, words and actions will be judged against God’s perfect standard and found wanting. There will be no reward for them, only eternal condemnation and punishment.

NOTE: For issues and details related to Heaven and life after death, as well as covering related topics and including different perspectives (including N.T. Wright) - see “[Reference Notes on Heaven](#)” (based in part on the book, *Heaven*, by Randy Alcorn).

Did Jesus Judge? (How Seeing Red Misses the Black and White)

<https://couragematters.com/2017/07/did-jesus-judge/>

We’ve all heard it. We may even believe it: “Jesus didn’t judge.” It’s a huge claim, considering the life and teachings of Jesus. But is it true? The word “judge” means to “give an authoritative opinion.” For those who keep reciting the mantra that “Jesus didn’t judge,” and that his followers shouldn’t either, I have a humble message to deliver: Merriam Webster called. She wants her dictionary back. Did Jesus judge? *All the time*. In fact, you’ll never be able to love God, people, or yourself until you learn how to judge as Jesus did.

Stay with me, because what you’re about to read could forever change your life.



The “Jesus didn’t judge” argument is typically made by people who want to justify attitudes and behaviors long prohibited in the Bible. If you don’t know your Bible (and Jesus), the statement can freeze you, rendering you incapable of saying anything further — because it seems, on the surface, to be such a powerful statement of truth. *In fact, it’s entirely false*. When people use it, they reveal their lack of Bible knowledge — and lack of knowing the *biblical* Jesus. Notice I say “biblical

Jesus.” It’s so important to do this nowadays, because so many have recreated Jesus in their own image. The end result is a Jesus who isn’t the Jesus of Scripture at all. In 1 Corinthians 11:4 (ESV) Paul warns us to resist this practice:

“For if someone comes and proclaims another Jesus than the one we proclaimed, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or if you accept a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it readily enough.”

FAKE vs. REAL JESUS

A non-judging Jesus isn’t Jesus. As a matter of historical fact, Jesus did judge — *continually*. He still does. The coy lie that Jesus didn’t judge, or that His followers should not judge, can only lead to the

conclusion of tossing the entire Bible out the window — along with Christianity. To follow Jesus is to be judged and to judge – *it's simply a matter of how that judgment takes place.*

The entire Bible is a book about judging attitudes and behavior in the here and now, so that they conform to what honors God. It is impossible to read or teach the Bible without quickly getting to the issue of morals — and morals deal with motives and behaviors. Passing judgment. The entire Bible is a book about reforming thoughts and behaviors so that they fall in line with God.

“God hates being separated from us, and that’s why he decided to do something about it. There has never been a more potent, simultaneous expression of hatred and love . . . justice and mercy kissed at the cross.”

What does this mean for Jesus’ followers? It means that it’s not possible to follow him without first judging ourselves. Then, and only then, can we be in position to help others change their ways, too. The key is to judge with true humility toward God and people. If you judge with arrogance, or a self-righteous attitude, you haven’t yet learned how to judge with the kind of humility Jesus calls each of us to.

Consider 2 Corinthians 10:5 (NIV), as one potent reminder: “We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” *Is it possible to demolish an argument or pretension, or to take a thought captive without judging it? And if this doesn’t lead to reining in otherwise sinful behavior, then what’s the point?*



NOT THE REAL JESUS: The idea that Jesus didn’t judge can only be supported if we throw away his teachings. To do so would give us a Jesus other than the one presented in the Bible.

THE CROSS

The cross is where God made his definitive judgment against sin. He hates it. But the cross is also his ultimate act of love toward sinners. God hates being separated from us, and that’s why he decided to do something about it. There has never been a more potent, simultaneous expression of hatred and love. In other words, justice and mercy kissed at the cross. The next time someone says, “Jesus didn’t judge,” ask them to think more — much more — about the cross.

COMING JUDGMENT — BY JESUS

In fact, one day we will all appear before Jesus — to be judged. Believers appear for a judgment of rewards. This is known as the “judgment seat” of Christ (Romans 14:10, 2 Corinthians 5:10). Unbelievers will be judged at the “great white throne” judgment spoken of in Revelation 20:11-15. The white throne judgment is not a judgment of rewards, because there is no reward for those who reject Christ. It is a judgment of eternal separation known as the “second death.” A simplified way to understand the great white throne judgment is that people who go through this life willingly rejecting God will get their desire granted, eternally, at the great white throne judgment.

The Bible presents right and wrong, good and bad. If Jesus didn’t judge, we would have no Bible — the Bible from which Jesus constantly taught. If Jesus didn’t expect us to judge each other and one another, then He would not have called anyone to preach or teach about Him. We wouldn’t even be able to read the Bible for ourselves, let alone others. If judgment weren’t part of the Christian turf, God would not have

used human beings to plant a single church, where the Bible is to be taught, embraced and applied around the world. The fulfillment of the Great Commission would be impossible.

SEEING RED?

Keep in mind that the red letters found in some publications of the New Testament (intended to help readers quickly identify the spoken words of Jesus), were non-existent in Jesus' day. He quoted and taught from the Old Testament. In light of this, it's vital to understand that Jesus' teachings go far beyond the red letters of the New Testament. They are contained *throughout* the Bible. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NIV) reminds us that it is not just parts of the Bible that matter, but all of it:

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work"

It's *all* the teachings of the Bible that are inspired, given to us by God — and continually quoted by Jesus. (Of course, some passages have a limited context in time and scope, but we must be very careful we don't dismiss the obvious, ongoing application of the overwhelming majority of the Bible).



ERASING TRUTH: To think that only the red letters in a New Testament are the teachings of Jesus is to have the most elementary misunderstanding of Jesus' words.

FOUR LETTER WORD

Think about this: the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) is to go into the world and not merely sprinkle or immerse people under water (baptize), but teach people to *obey* Jesus' commands. Here it is, in all its splendor:

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Notice the words "obey everything." If there is no difference between a person who obeys, and a person who does not, then what's the point? Obedience requires judging our thoughts and behaviors, and weighing them against God's standards. Obedience requires perpetual judgment and adjustment.

SO, WHAT DID JESUS MEAN?

When Jesus said "do not judge or you will be judged" (Matthew 7:1-6), the context was a rebuke against a critical, self-righteous, legalistic spirit, not against judging with humility, using the plumb line of God's word as the measure. Cults are formed and forge followings by taking words out of context. They lead people astray. Jesus' words, "do not judge or you will be judged" are among the most out-of-context quotes in the history of civilization — and when we misquote them, we lead people away from Jesus in droves.

Consider Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 5:9-13 (ESV):

"I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people — not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler—not even to eat with such a one. For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? God judges those outside. "Purge the evil person from among you."

Did Jesus judge? If you're still asking that question, you aren't paying attention.

Who is Jesus? Judge.

<http://www.biblestudyguide.org/articles/jesus-who-is-jesus-series/who-is-jesus-judge.htm>

Regarding the Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah (Christ)

See also: [Occurrences of Jesus Risen/Resurrected Mentioned by Apostles in the Bible](#)

Easter in Durham? N.T. Wright's *The Resurrection of the Son of God* – REVIEW

http://www.biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/anvil/21-4_285.pdf [PDF]

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/anvil/21-4_walton.pdf [PDF]

Another review: <http://jimhamilton.info/2013/05/28/review-of-n-t-wrights-the-resurrection-of-the-son-of-god/>

Negative review: http://www.robertmprice.mindvendor.com/rev_ntwrong.htm

[Alt. Link: https://www.preteristarchive.com/2003_price_wright/]

The Resurrection of the Son of God

<http://images.acswebnetworks.com/1/2320/NTWrightResurrectionNotesPartIbyDMiller.pdf>

Condensed, paraphrased, and summarized by Duncan C. Miller, Sc.D.

Why is the Resurrection So Important? (Randy Alcorn)

<http://www.christianity.com/god/jesus-christ/why-is-the-resurrection-so-important.html>

Resurrection and Rock'n'Roll: N.T. Wright's Easter Morning Sermon

<https://scottemery.wordpress.com/2010/04/11/resurrection-and-rocknroll-n-t-wrights-easter-morning-sermon/>

NT Wright: Why we can trust that Jesus was really resurrected (2017)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ln6LWHe84SQ> [Video]

T Wright: Why Jesus' resurrection really happened (2017)

<https://www.premierchristianity.com/Blog/NT-Wright-Why-Jesus-resurrection-really-happened>

N.T. Wright on the Resurrection (“Did Jesus Really Rise from the Dead?”) (2007)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KnkNKIJ_dnw [Video]

(Lecture March 16, 2007 in the Bast Center, Roanoke College; the lecture begins around the 8:40 mark)

Did Jesus Rise from the Dead? (Frank Turek of impact360institute.org/) [Recommended]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TyZ1l7faKSx> [Video] (Animated, discusses 5 points)

4 Historical Facts that Prove Jesus Really Did Rise from the Dead (2016)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RmKg62GDqF4> [Video]

Why would anyone believe that Jesus Christ was crucified, buried and then rose from the dead three days later? Dr. [William Lane Craig](#) explains four historical facts, accepted by the majority of historical scholars, that lead to the conclusion that Jesus really did rise from the dead. [John Ankerberg Show](#)

The Minimal Facts of the Resurrection

<http://pleaseconvinceme.com/2013/the-minimal-facts-of-the-resurrection/>

Quick overview of N.T. Wright's case for the resurrection

<https://winteryknight.com/2009/03/24/quick-overview-of-nt-wrights-case-for-the-resurrection/>

How every Christian can learn to explain the resurrection of Jesus to others

<https://winteryknight.com/2009/03/06/how-every-christian-can-learn-to-explain-the-resurrection-of-jesus-to-others/>

The Resurrection Argument That Changed a Generation of Scholars - [Gary Habermas](#) at UCSB (2002): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ay_Db4RwZ_M [Video] [Recommended]

[Gary Habermas](#) explains the earliest source of resurrection facts

<https://winteryknight.com/2009/04/03/gary-habermas-explains-the-earliest-source-of-resurrection-facts/>

Paul Receives the Gospel Resurrection Creed within Five Years of the Crucifixion...

Excerpt:

Timeline of New Testament sources

[\[Minimal Facts Argument\]](#) [\[Also\]](#)

You can only use the data that pass these criteria when you are constructing historical hypotheses in a debate setting. But the passage of [1 Corinthians 15:3-7](#) is special, because it has the markings [of] an ancient creed. As Habermas explains, [Paul received this creed within five years of the crucifixion](#). [Paul verified this creed twice with eyewitnesses, Peter, John and James, in Galatians 1:11-24 and Galatians 2:1-10.](#)

So, let's set the date of Jesus' death as being 30 AD. Then ask the question: what sources are closest to the event? We need to have multiple early sources in order to be able to surface minimal facts that can be used when debating skeptics and atheists. Here's the timeline, using the absolute latest possible dates for the sources:

- 30 A.D.: Jesus is crucified. (+0)
- 31 A.D.: The early creed originates around this time
- **35 A.D.: Paul receives the early creed from Peter, John and James in Jerusalem**
- 55 A.D.: 1 Corinthians (+25)
- 70 A.D. Mark (+40)
- 80 A.D. Matthew (+50)
- 85 A.D. Luke (+55)
- 95 A.D. John (+65)

My preferred dates on the gospels are at least 5 years earlier than the skeptical dates. So, your earliest source for minimal facts about the resurrection is [1 Corinthians 15:3-7](#). I [explained before](#) how to leverage the facts in 1 Cor 15, and other minimal facts, into a case for the resurrection.

The Resurrection of Resurrection - N.T. Wright (2000)

<http://ntwrightpage.com/2016/04/05/the-resurrection-of-resurrection/>

See also:

[Galatians](#)

[The Gospel](#)

Christian Origins and the Resurrection of Jesus: The Resurrection of Jesus as a Historical Problem (1998) [Recommended]

<http://ntwrightpage.com/2016/07/12/christian-origins-and-the-resurrection-of-jesus-the-resurrection-of-jesus-as-a-historical-problem/>

Jesus' Resurrection and Christian Origins (review) (2002)

<http://ntwrightpage.com/2016/07/12/jesus-resurrection-and-christian-origins/>

Excerpt (Intro):

The question of Jesus' resurrection continues to haunt the thinking and writing of many scholars. I shall not debate in detail with them here; there are other places for that. I want instead to sketch, in broad strokes, a historical argument about what happened three days after Jesus' crucifixion.

The question divides into four.

First, what did people in the first century, both pagans and Jews, hope for? What did they believe about life after death, and particularly about resurrection?

Second, what did the early Christians believe on the same subjects? What did they hope for?

Third, what reasons did the early Christians give for their hope and belief, and what did they mean by the key word 'resurrection' which they used of Jesus?

Finally, what can the historian say by way of comment on this early Christian claim?

Quote by N.T. Wright on the Bodily Resurrection of Jesus:

"You see, the bodily resurrection of Jesus isn't a take-it-or-leave-it thing, as though some Christians are welcome to believe it and others are welcome not to believe it. Take it away, and the whole picture is totally different. Take it away, and Karl Marx was probably right to accuse Christianity of ignoring the problems of the material world. Take it away, and Sigmund Freud was probably right to say that Christianity is a wish-fulfillment religion. Take it away, and Friedrich Nietzsche was probably right to say that Christianity was a religion for wimps. Put it back, and you have a faith that can take on the postmodern world that looks to Marx, Freud and Nietzsche as its prophets, and you can beat them at their own game with the Easter news that the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men." — [N.T. Wright, For All God's Worth: True Worship and the Calling of the Church](#)

Note: For details on Freud, Nietzsche, Marx and philosophies critical to Christianity, see my separate resource: [Christian Scholarship: Biblical – Theological – Philosophical](#)

The Resurrection and the Postmodern Dilemma – N.T. Wright (1998)

<http://ntwrightpage.com/2016/04/05/the-resurrection-and-the-postmodern-dilemma/>

N.T. Wright on the Enlightenment, postmodernism, and common misreadings of scripture (2012)

<https://rachelheldevans.com/blog/wright-common-misreadings-scripture?rq=wright>

The Bible for the Post Modern World – N.T. Wright (1999)

http://www.biblicaltheology.ca/blue_files/The%20Bible%20for%20the%20Post%20Modern%20World.pdf [PDF]

N.T. Wright on Post-Modernity and the Enlightenment (links to Video)

<http://benwitherington.blogspot.com/2009/05/nt-wright-on-post-modernity-and.html>

Eric Metaxas: Science Increasingly Makes the Case for God (2014)
<http://ericmetaxas.com/media/articles/science-increasingly-makes-case-god/>

Can a Scientist Believe in the Resurrection? (2007)
<http://www.jamesgregory.org.uk/series-1/can-a-scientist-believe-in-the-resurrection/>

Here is a lecture (that link has PDF transcript, audio and videos) that Wright gave on the resurrection as part of the “[James Gregory](#) public lectures on Science, Religion, and Human Flourishing” (Univ. of St. Andrews, Scotland)

N.T. Wright explains seven “mutations” caused by the resurrection
<https://winteryknight.com/2011/08/05/n-t-wright-explains-seven-mutations-caused-by-the-resurrection/>

Excerpt:

N.T. Wright's historical case for the bodily resurrection of Jesus

Wright basically argues that the resurrection cannot have been a myth invented by the early Christian community, because the idea of the Messiah dying and being bodily resurrected to eternal life was completely unexpected in Jewish theology, and therefore would not have been fabricated.

In Judaism, when people die, they stay dead. At the most, they might re-appear as apparitions, or be resuscitated to life for a while, but then die again later. *There was no concept of the bodily resurrection to eternal life of a single person, especially of the Messiah, prior to the general resurrection of all the righteous dead on judgment day.*

Wright's case for the resurrection has 3 parts:

- The Jewish theological beliefs of the early Christian community underwent 7 mutations that are *inexplicable* apart from the bodily resurrection of Jesus
- The empty tomb
- The post-mortem appearances of Jesus to individuals and groups, friends and foes

Here's the outline of Wright's case:

...the foundation of my argument for what happened at Easter is the reflection that this Jewish hope has undergone remarkable modifications or mutations within early Christianity, which can be plotted consistently right across the first two centuries. And these mutations are so striking, in an area of human experience where societies tend to be very conservative, that they force the historian... to ask, “Why did they occur?”

The mutations occur within a strictly Jewish context. The early Christians held firmly, like most of their Jewish contemporaries, to a two-step belief about the future: first, death and whatever lies immediately beyond; second, a new bodily existence in a newly remade world. ‘Resurrection’ is not a fancy word for ‘life after death’; it denotes life after ‘life after death’.

And here are the 7 mutations:

1. Christian theology of the afterlife mutates from multiples views (Judaism) to a single view: resurrection (Christianity). When you die, your soul goes off to wait in Sheol. On judgment day, the righteous dead get new resurrection bodies, identical to Jesus' resurrection body.

2. The relative importance of the doctrine of resurrection changes from being peripheral (Judaism) to central (Christianity).
3. The idea of what the resurrection would be like goes from multiple views (Judaism) to a single view: an incorruptible, spiritually-oriented body composed of the material of the previous corruptible body (Christianity).
4. The timing of the resurrection changes from judgment day (Judaism) to a split between the resurrection of the Messiah *right now* and the resurrection of the rest of the righteous *on judgment day* (Christianity).
5. There is a new view of eschatology as collaboration with God to transform the world.
6. There is a new *metaphorical* concept of resurrection, referred to as being “born-again”.
7. There is a new association of the concept of resurrection to the Messiah. (The Messiah was not even supposed to die, and he certainly wasn’t supposed to rise again from the dead in a resurrected body!)

There are also other historical puzzles that are solved by postulating a bodily resurrection of Jesus.

1. Jewish people thought that the Messiah was not supposed to die. Although there were lots of (warrior) Messiahs running around at the time, whenever they got killed, their followers would abandon them. Why didn’t Jesus’ followers abandon him when he died?
2. If the early Christian church wanted to communicate that Jesus was special, despite his shameful death on the cross, they would have made up a story using the existing Jewish concept of *exaltation*. Applying the concept of bodily resurrection to a dead Messiah would be a radical departure from Jewish theology, when an invented exaltation was already available to do the job.
3. The early church became extremely reckless about sickness and death, taking care of people with communicable diseases and testifying about their faith in the face of torture and execution. Why did they scorn sickness and death?
4. The gospels, especially Mark, do not contain any embellishments and “theology historicized”. If they were made-up, there would have been events that had some connection to theological concepts. But the narratives are instead bare-bones: “Guy dies public death. People encounter same guy alive later.” Plain vanilla narrative.
5. The story of the women who were the first witnesses to the empty tomb cannot have been invented, because the testimony of women was inadmissible under almost all circumstances at that time. If the story were invented, they would have invented male discoverers of the tomb. Female discoverers would have hampered conversion efforts.
6. There are almost no legendary embellishments in the gospels, while there are plenty in the later gnostic forgeries. No crowds of singing angels, no talking crosses, and no booming voices from the clouds.
7. There is no mention of the future hope of the general resurrection, which I guess they thought was imminent anyway.

To conclude, Wright makes the argument that the best explanation of all of these changes in theology and practice is that God raised Jesus (bodily) from the dead. There is simply no way that this community would have made up the single resurrection of the Messiah – who wasn’t even supposed to die – and then put themselves on the line for that belief.

And remember, the belief in a resurrected Jesus was something that the earliest witnesses could really assess, because they were the ones who saw him killed and then walking around again

after his death. They were able to confirm or deny their belief in the resurrection of Jesus based on their own *personal experiences* with the object of those beliefs.

Can a Scientist Trust the New Testament? (2014)

<http://www.jamesgregory.org.uk/series-2/can-a-scientist-trust-the-new-testament/>

Here is another lecture (that link has PDF transcript, audio and videos) that Wright as part of the “[James Gregory](#) public lectures on Science, Religion, and Human Flourishing” (Univ. of St. Andrews, Scotland)

Jesus Bodily Resurrection vs Greek philosophy - N.T. Wright

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jzWgcRFaOpw> [Video]

For more information on Greek Philosophy during Jesus’ and NT times and Paul’s use of Greek philosophy in his epistles, see my separate references resource: “[Reference Notes on Paul and Romans \(and Galatians plus Ephesians\)](#)”.

Did Jesus Really Rise from the Dead? Dr. N.T. Wright ([Bast Center](#)) (2007)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KnkNKIJ_dnw

(@ about 13min, he briefly talks about “Kingdom of Heaven” in Matthew and then “Life after Life after Death” followed by history of concept of death in pagan and Jewish worlds.)

N.T. Wright - Death, Resurrection, and Afterlife (2003)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HXAc_x_egk4 [Video]

Resurrection is the point at which God’s creation (mercy) and God’s justice meet.

Return to the beginning: [Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

See also: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

[Occurrences of Jesus Risen/Resurrected Mentioned by Apostles in the Bible](#)

Additional Proof of the Resurrection of Jesus (Part 1 of 2)



The Case for the Resurrection (Part 1)

www.ColdCaseChristianity.com www.str.org

Did Jesus Really Die on the Cross?

1. Many first-century and early second-century unfriendly Roman sources (i.e., Thallus, Tacitus, Mara Bar-Serapion, and Phlegon) and Jewish sources (i.e., Josephus and the Babylonian Talmud) affirmed and acknowledged that Jesus was crucified and died.
2. The Roman guards faced death if they allowed a prisoner to survive crucifixion. Would they really be careless enough to remove a living person from a cross?
3. Jesus would have to control His blood loss from the beatings, crucifixion, and stabbing in order to survive, yet was pinned to the cross and unable to do anything that might achieve this.
4. Jesus displayed wounds following the resurrection but was never observed to behave as though He was wounded, in spite of the fact that He appeared only days after his beating, crucifixion, and stabbing.
5. Jesus disappeared from the historical record following His reported resurrection and ascension and was never sighted again (as one might expect if He recovered from His wounds and lived much beyond the young age of thirty-three).

Were the Disciples Lying About the Resurrection?

1. The Jewish authorities took many precautions to make sure the tomb was guarded and sealed, knowing that the removal of the body would allow the disciples to claim that Jesus had risen (Matt. 27:62–66).
2. The people local to the event would have known it was a lie (remember that Paul told the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 15:3–8 that there were still five hundred people who could testify to having seen Jesus alive after His resurrection).
3. The disciples lacked the motive to create such a lie (more on this in chapter 14).
4. The disciples' transformation following the alleged resurrection is inconsistent with the claim that the appearances were only a lie. How could their own lies transform them into courageous evangelists?

Did the Disciples Hallucinate the Resurrection?

1. While individuals have hallucinations, there are no examples of large groups of people having the exact same hallucination.
2. While a short, momentary group hallucination may seem reasonable, long, sustained, and detailed hallucinations are unsupported historically and intuitively unreasonable.
3. The risen Christ was reported seen on more than one occasion and by a number of different groups (and subsets of groups). All of these diverse sightings would have to be additional group hallucinations of one nature or another.
4. Not all the disciples were inclined favorably toward such a hallucination. The disciples included people like Thomas, who was skeptical and did not expect Jesus to come back to life.
5. If the resurrection was simply a hallucination, what became of Jesus's corpse? The absence of the body is unexplainable under this scenario.



COLD-CASE CHRISTIANITY:

A Homicide Detective Investigates the Claims of the Gospels

The Case for the Resurrection (Part 2 of 2)



The Case for the Resurrection (Part 2)

www.ColdCaseChristianity.com www.str.org

Were the Disciples Fooled by an Imposter?

1. The impersonator would have to be familiar enough with Jesus's mannerisms and statements to convince the disciples. The disciples knew the topic of the con better than anyone who might con them.
2. Many of the disciples were skeptical and displayed none of the necessary naïveté that would be required for the con artist to succeed.
3. The impersonator would need to possess miraculous powers; the disciples reported that the resurrected Jesus performed many miracles and "convincing proofs" (Acts 1:2–3).
4. Who would seek to start a world religious movement if not one of the hopeful disciples? This theory requires someone to be motivated to impersonate Jesus other than the disciples themselves.
5. This explanation also fails to account for the empty tomb or missing body of Jesus.

Were the Disciples Influenced by Limited Spiritual Sightings?

1. The theory fails to account for the numerous, divergent, and separate group sightings of Jesus that are recorded in the Gospels. These sightings are described specifically with great detail. It's not reasonable to believe that all these disciples could provide such specified detail if they were simply repeating something they didn't see for themselves.
2. As many as five hundred people were said to be available to testify to their observations of the risen Christ (1 Cor. 15:3–8). Could all of these people have been influenced to imagine their own observations of Jesus? It's not reasonable to believe that a persuader equally persuaded all these disciples even though they didn't actually see anything that was recorded.
3. This explanation also fails to account for the empty tomb or the missing corpse.

Were the Disciples' Observations Were Distorted Later?

1. In the earliest accounts of the disciples' activity after the crucifixion, they are seen citing the resurrection of Jesus as their primary piece of evidence that Jesus was God. From the earliest days of the Christian movement, eyewitnesses were making this claim.
2. The students of the disciples also recorded that the resurrection was a key component of the disciples' eyewitness testimony (more on this in chapter 13).
3. The earliest known Christian creed or oral record (as described by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15) includes the resurrection as a key component.
4. This explanation also fails to account for the fact that the tomb and body of Jesus have not been exposed to demonstrate that this late legend was false.

Were the Disciples Telling the Truth?

1. This explanation has only one liability: It requires a belief in the supernatural; a belief that Jesus had the supernatural power to rise from the dead in the first place.



COLD-CASE CHRISTIANITY:

A Homicide Detective Investigates the Claims of the Gospels

Faith: Pistis and Fides; Roman Imperial vs Christian Faith

What is Faith (Pistis / Fides)?

<http://www.truthortradition.com/articles/what-is-faith>

What is Faith? - Trust in God

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cZGbSrvEQLo> [Video]

Biblically, faith is trust, confidence in, or assurance. However, the biblical definition of faith differs from its modern definition. Before we look at the difference, let's look at why we say biblical faith is trust, confidence in, or assurance.

The New Testament was written in Greek, not English, and the Greek noun "*pistis*" is translated "faith" in many translations of the Bible. For example:

- "...If ye have faith (*pistis*) as a grain of mustard seed..."
- "...Have faith (*pistis*) in God." (Mark 11:22-KJV)
- "(For we walk by faith (*pistis*), not by sight:)" (2 Cor. 5:7-KJV)

That *pistis* means trust, confidence in, or assurance, can be checked in any good Greek lexicon ("lexicon" is a word scholars use for "dictionary."). For example, Friberg's Analytical Greek Lexicon has "confidence, faith, trust, reliance on." Vine's lexicon says, "firm persuasion," and Bullinger's lexicon says the same thing. Thayer's lexicon says, "conviction of the truth of anything."

When the people of the first century got the letters of Paul, for example, they did not say, "What is *pistis*?", as if Paul had invented a new word. *Pistis* was in common use in the Greek language, and had been for centuries. It is in the writings of the Greeks, including Aristotle, Plato, Herodotus, etc. The first definition of *pistis* in the Liddell and Scott Greek Lexicon, sold in college bookstores to students of ancient Greek, is "trust in others." That is why we say *pistis* means "trust."

When the Greek New Testament was translated into Latin, *fides* was the natural choice as a translation of *pistis*, because *fides* means "trust, confidence, reliance, belief." The Bible was then read in Latin for hundreds of years. As the English language developed, our English word "faith" came from the Latin word *fides*. There should be nothing mysterious about *pistis*, *fides*, or faith. We know what trust is. Merriam-Webster defines it as "assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something."

If both *pistis* and *fides* mean "trust," how did "faith" come to be defined in our culture as "firm belief in something for which there is no proof" (Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th edition)? To understand this, we must remember that a dictionary definition is only a record of how people are currently using the word in their speech and writing. This is why dictionary definitions change as time passes.

What happened to change the definition of faith from "trust" to "firm belief in something for which there is no proof" was: (1) people started to use "faith" as "belief in something for which there is no proof," (2) that usage was put in the dictionary as a definition of faith, (3) people who did not know what faith was looked it up in the dictionary, saw that definition, and used it that way. This process continued over time until now almost everyone thinks "faith" is "belief in something for which there is no proof." In fact, that definition of faith was used in the popular television medical series, "House," in April 2006.

Sadly, it is now safe to say that most people do not know that the biblical definition of faith is "trust," and furthermore that they do not have the knowledge or the tools to research that for themselves. Serious consequences come from believing that the Bible asks us to believe things even though there is no proof for them. Believers become confused about faith, not knowing what it is or how to get it and grow in it.

Unbelievers, thinking the Bible asks people to believe things without proof, say it is an unreasonable and illogical book, and reject it—to their own doom.

How did the idea that faith is “belief in something for which there is no proof” enter into the Christian culture in the first place? The actual historical process is long and tedious, but the concept is simple. The Church asked people to trust doctrines that were neither logical nor clearly backed up by Scripture. For example, the doctrine that the “host” (bread) and wine that are used in Roman Catholic Mass become the body and blood of Christ is not logical (for example, it still looks and tastes like bread and wine, not meat and blood), and it is not backed by solid Scriptural exegesis. Priests know this, and so they ask people to “take it by faith.”

Please understand, there is nothing wrong with “take it by faith (trust)” if there is actually something (such as a promise) to trust. When Jesus told the blind man that if he washed in the Pool of Siloam he would be healed, the blind man had faith in, trusted, Jesus and his promise, washed, and given sight by a miracle. However, if there is nothing to trust in and nothing “trustworthy” to believe, then to ask people to “take it by faith” is wrong, and contributes to the misunderstanding of God and the Bible.

No one can force trust. It develops over time. We all know this every time we have a new repairman come to our house to fix something, or have to take our car to a new mechanic. We desperately want to trust the person to be competent and honest, but that comes only in time. If he says, “Trust me,” that often only makes things worse. If, on the other hand, he does the work when he says he will, does a good job, charges what he said he would, and seems to be honest and fair, our faith (trust) in him grows. Biblical faith is the same. It is neither magic, unreasonable, nor illogical, “it is simply **trust**.”

What is the difference between belief and faith, from a Protestant perspective?

<https://christianity.stackexchange.com/questions/20278/what-is-the-difference-between-belief-and-faith-from-a-protestant-perspective> (Christian Stack Exchange)

Excerpt:

The understanding that I am most familiar with - a Protestant understanding, if it matters, is that "belief" is an intellectual belief, while "faith" is a matter of **trust** that leads to **action**.

This can be summed up in an illustration of [Charles Blondin](#), a tightrope walker who asks a crowd if they believe that he can safely walk a wheelbarrow across Niagara Falls on a tightrope. Many in the crowd ask who believes that he can do this, and of course, most say that they do. Then he asks who is willing to get into the wheelbarrow. Only those whose "belief" reaches the point of faith will get in.

This is similar to how it's explained by many, many, Christian groups, and while I can't claim that the understanding is universal, it is quite common. For example, The Feral Apologist has an article explaining the difference [here](#). They put it like this:

How are we, as Christians, to understand our faith? We need to first discover the meaning of the word “faith” in the Bible, and how that meaning is somewhat different from the meaning many attach to it today. To avoid the cultural baggage associated with the term, let’s look at the Greek words that are used in the New Testament and translated as “faith.” There are three primary forms of this word in Greek, the noun form *pistis*, the adjective form *pistos*, and the verb form *pisteuo*. Each form’s meaning is a variant of the word “trust.” Hence *pistis* is “a trust” in someone or something, *pistos* is “trusting” as applied to someone adjectivally, and *pisteuo* literally means “I trust.” It is important to keep this in mind because we have often misunderstood these words (translated as “faith”) in our culture to be, not variants of the word trust, but variants of the word belief, used in an intellectual sense. It is true that some places in scripture, such as James 2:19, the verb form is rightly translated as “believe” because of contextual issues and what James was trying to accomplish. In other places, such as John 14:1, a variant imperative form of the verb is translated as Jesus’ exhortation to “trust” in him. When we encounter the word “faith” in scripture then, our default understanding should be that it means “trust.”

Faith Baptist Church, in New Jersey also uses the Blondin story in one of their devotionals on the subject. The devotional says this:

The historical stunts of Blondin help us understand what it means to have "faith". First of all, faith is not mere intellectual assent. If anyone in the crowd truly believe that Blondin could cross the raging Niagara with someone in the wheelbarrow, he or she would have volunteered to ride along. "Faith" always means that we are really trusting someone or something. "Faith" is more than the words of mental assent as the words that were shouted by the crowds lining the shores of Niagara. To say, "We believe" means that we believe not only with our head, but with our heart and our wills. Faith means that we believe that God can do what He has said and that we believe it so thoroughly that we are willing to fully act upon it. Faith does not mean that we believe God can do it, but that God can do it with us in that "wheelbarrow".

This article differentiates Fides vs Pistis (Faith vs Trust):

<http://rogershermansociety.org/fides.htm>

Excerpt:

...The CRUX of this is, people equate faith now to Belief, not to trust. They call their church, THE FAITH, they call the Doctrines of that church they follow, THE FAITH, they have faith in the traditions and customs that the church does. They have faith in their Pastors and Elders to be correct, etc...

But HERE is the difference between fides and pistis:

Fides is belief or belief in something on the earthly realm, Pistis is trust and trust alone, in God and His promises.

We wonder why believers can't understand absolute and complete trust in God, and his promises... why they seek earthly agencies for guidance and provision or healing (why do we go to a Pastor for healing when scripture says, SPEAK THE WORD and doubt not (Mark 11:24))

It is because believers have been taught to have Fides (Faith) and not Pistis (Trust).

The Roman Concept Of Fides

<http://www.csun.edu/~hcfll004/fides.html>

Excerpt:

"FIDES" is often (and wrongly) translated 'faith', but it has nothing to do with the word as used by Christians writing in Latin about the Christian *virute* (St. Paul *Letter to the Corinthians*, chapter 13). For the Romans, FIDES was an essential element in the character of a man of public affairs, and a necessary constituent element of all social and political transactions (perhaps = 'good faith'). FIDES meant 'reliability', a sense of trust between two parties if a relationship between them was to exist. FIDES was always reciprocal and mutual, and implied both privileges and responsibilities on both sides. In both public and private life the violation of FIDES was considered a serious matter, with both legal and religious consequences. FIDES, in fact, was one of the first of the 'virtues' to be considered an actual divinity at Rome. The Romans had a saying, "*Punica fides*" (the reliability of a Carthaginian) which for them represented the highest degree of treachery: the word of a Carthaginian (like Hannibal) was not to be trusted, nor could a Carthaginian be relied on to maintain his political relationships.

Some relationships governed by *fides*:

ONE MEMBER	English	mutually related to	OTHER MEMBER	English
AMICUS	'friend'	«——»	AMICUS	'friend'
PATER	'father'	«——»	FAMILIA	'household'
PATER	'father'	«——»	FILIUS	'son'
DOMINUS	'master'	«——»	SERVUS	'slave'
PATRONUS	'patron'	«——»	LIBERTUS	'freedman'
PATRONUS	'patron'	«——»	CLIENS	'client'
RESPUBLICA	'the Roman State'	«——»	SOCIUS	'an ally of Rome'

Reviews: Roman Faith and Christian Faith: Pistis and Fides in the Early Roman Empire and Early Churches by Theresa Morgan (2015)

<http://themelios.thegospelcoalition.org/review/roman-faith-and-christian-faith-pistis-and-fides-teresa-morgan> [PDF]

<http://www.ancientjewreview.com/articles/2017/3/3/book-note-roman-faith-and-christian-faith-pistis-and-fides-in-the-early-roman-empire-and-early-churches>

<http://crossfitwellington.com/lib/roman-faith-and-christian-faith-pistis-and-fides-in-the-early-roman-empire-and>
[Introduction (Chp 1) downloadable as PDF]

Oxford Scholarship: Abstract, Overview, Highlights

<http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198724148.001.0001/acprof-9780198724148>

Excerpts:

Abstract

This study begins with the question why ‘faith’ (*pistis/fides*) was so important to very early Christians that the concept and praxis already dominate the writings of the New Testament. It argues that early Christian *pistis* owes much to both its Jewish and Graeco-Roman contexts, which makes it an intrinsically interdisciplinary subject of study. Drawing on recent work in anthropology, sociology, and modern history, the study seeks to understand the varying shapes *pistis/fides* takes in the Graeco-Roman world of the early principate, Hellenistic Judaism, and the New Testament. It develops a model of the relationship between *pistis/fides*, fear, doubt, and skepticism. It investigates where Graeco-Roman *pistis/fides* is represented as easy to practice and where difficult, where it is ‘deferred’ and ‘reified’ in practices such as oaths, proofs, and legal trusts. It shows that *pistis/fides* is more important in Graeco-Roman divine–human relationships than has been assumed, and investigates the shape of the Graeco-Roman divine–human *pistis/fides* relationship and the foundations on which it rests. The study argues that understandings of divine–human *pistis* evolve through the Septuagint, before examining *pistis* in different New Testament writers and its role in the development of early Christologies, soteriologies, and ecclesiologies. It also argues for the integration of the study of *pistis* with New Testament ethics. It investigates the interiority and emotionality of *pistis/fides*, and finally explores eschatological *pistis*: the shape of the divine–human community in the kingdom of heaven. Other topics include the interpretation of *pistis* Christou and the ‘mystery of faith’.

Introduction

This chapter begins by asking why ‘faith’ (*pistis, fides*) was so important to members of primitive churches. It argues that answering this question must be a thoroughly interdisciplinary project—a history of *mentalité* and praxis examining the operation of *pistis/fides* in the Graeco-Roman world of the early principate and Hellenistic Judaism as well as the New Testament, and not presuming that Christian *pistis* is *sui generis* from its earliest attestations. The semantic range of the *pistis* and *fides* lexica is well mapped, encompassing ‘trust’, ‘trustworthiness’, ‘faithfulness’, ‘good faith’, ‘credit’, ‘guarantee’, a legal trust, philosophical proof, and religious belief. Less well understood are the distinctive *shapes* of divine–human and intra-human *pistis/fides* in the world of the early principate. This chapter explores approaches to *pistis* and *fides* in classics, Jewish studies, and theology, and to trust and cognate concepts in sociology and history, before developing its own approach. [NOTE: Full chapter available via prior link above.]

Pistis and Fides in the World of the Early Principate I – Domestic and Personal Relations

This chapter explores the shape of *pistis* and *fides* in Greek and Roman domestic and personal social relations more widely from the first century BCE to the second century CE, arguing that Greek and Latin language and culture are sufficiently closely related, socially and geographically interpenetrative, and mutually comprehensible by this period to be treated together. It finds that *pistis/fides* towards oneself, between family members, and between masters and slaves is treated across a wide range of sources as relatively, though not wholly, unproblematic. *Pistis/fides* in public life, between patrons and clients, and particularly between friends, meanwhile, is widely presented as more difficult, even when it is desirable. *Pistis/fides* in tradition, hearsay, and all kinds of discourse, however, is radically problematic.

Pistis and Fides in the World of the Early Principate II – Structure of State

This chapter continues the examination of the distinctive shape of *pistis/fides* in Graeco-Roman society begun in the last chapter, considering *pistis/fides* in Greek and Roman structures of state, including law and government, in armies, and in political, inter-state, and economic relations between the first century BCE and the second century CE. It examines the roles of mediators in a range of public and political roles. It explores the role of *pistis/fides* at the foundations of states and its connections with justice, friendship, hope, and other socially and politically central concepts and praxeis. It discusses why *pistis/fides* is invoked above all at times of crisis, and why it is one of the few qualities which are equally applicable to domestic and public contexts and equally important in both.

Pistis and Fides in Graeco-Roman Religiosity

This chapter outlines the history of scholarship on belief in Greek and Roman religiosity, before turning to some neglected evidence for *pistis/fides* in divine–human relations in religious thinking from the first century BCE to the second century CE. It discusses divine *pistis/fides* towards human beings, human *pistis/fides* towards the divine, and the role of the gods in sponsoring *pistis/fides* between human beings. It explores the relative significance of relational and propositional belief and the range of foundations which are claimed for divine–human *pistis/fides* (including autopsy, hearsay, the written word, consequentialism, foundationalism, and coherentism), together with their tensions and fragilities. It investigates the relationship between divine–human *pistis* and *fides*, fear, doubt, and skepticism, and between divinely sponsored *pistis/fides* and justice. It discusses the analogies that are made between divine–human and intra-human *pistis/fides*, and the relationship between philosophical accounts of belief and others.

Pistis in the Septuagint

This chapter discusses the role of divine–human and intra-human *pistis* in the Septuagint, arguing that an evolution can be detected from the books of the Pentateuch to the Hellenistic wisdom tradition and Roman-period commentaries on the Book of Genesis. It discusses the role of *pistis* in the covenants which Abraham, Moses, and the Israelites make with God in Genesis and Exodus. It examines Job's understanding of *pistis* in his complaint against God, and the shape of the divine–human relationship implicit in God's response. It investigates the *pistis* of God towards the faithful and that of the faithful towards God in the Wisdom of Solomon and in Sirach. It also explores the role of God as sponsor of *pistis* between human beings, the relationship between *pistis* and truth, and the relationship between faith, fear, doubt, and skepticism.

Pistis and the Earliest Christian Preaching

This chapter examines Paul's treatment of *pistis* in 1 Thessalonians and 1 and 2 Corinthians, seeking to understand what Paul borrows from Jewish and Graeco-Roman *mentalité* and where he breaks new ground. It investigates the shape of the divine–human community in 1 Thessalonians and finds that in some ways it is highly distinctive. It explores how far *pistis* can be understood as a state of mind or an emotion, as opposed to a relationship and praxis. It considers the foundations on which Paul calls people to put their trust in God. An excursus on the origins of the terms *hoi pisteuontes* and *hoi pistoi* to mean 'Christians' considers all the passages in the New Testament in which these phrases may mean not simply 'the faithful' or 'believers' but specifically designate 'Christians'. Finally, it considers what 1 and 2 Corinthians add to our understanding of Paul's treatment of *pistis*.

Pistis in Galatians, Romans, Philippians, and Philemon

his chapter discusses Paul's treatment of *pistis* in Galatians, Romans, Philippians, and Philemon, and particularly how Paul uses *pistis* to locate Christ at the centre of the divine–human relationship of the new covenant. This leads to a discussion of *pistis Christou*, which argues that it is neither simply the faithfulness of Christ to God, nor human trust/faith in Christ, but simultaneously Christ's faithfulness to God and God's trust in him, and Christ's trustworthiness to human beings and their trust/faith in him, which enables him to act as a mediator and restore a relationship of *dikaiosynē* between God and humanity. The chapter discusses some Graeco-Roman models on which Paul may have drawn, and

considers how this development affects Paul's understanding of the shape of the divine–human community. It also explores passages in which Paul stretches the meaning of *pistis* to include 'bond of trust', 'community', and even 'new covenant'.

Pistis in Non-Pauline Letters

This chapter looks at divine–human *pistis* in the non-Pauline epistles: Ephesians, Colossians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Hebrews, James, 1 and 2 Peter, and Jude. It examines how deuterio-Pauline letters do or do not take up Paul's use of *pistis* (arguing, for instance, that Ephesians and Colossians allude to Paul's model of *pistis Christou*, but develop the idea of pre-election further than Paul). It explores some new ways in which these writers treat *pistis*: for example, the pastoral epistles develop the idea that certain groups within Christian communities (wives, children, slaves) may enact *pistis* in different ways suited to their social position. It discusses the meaning of the phrase 'the mystery of faith', arguing that *pistis* is not intended to be mysterious to community members. It examines the distinctive treatment of *pistis* in the letter to the Hebrews and argues for a new interpretation of Hebrews 11.1.

Pistis in the Synoptic Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles

This chapter examines the treatment of *pistis* in the synoptic gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. It argues that Matthew, Mark, and Luke all use *pistis* language to develop their Christologies, exploring the complexity of Jesus's identity, status, and activity between God and humanity. Like the epistles, these gospels have little interest in *pistis* between human beings, but focus on that between humanity, God, and Christ. This chapter shows how *pistis* allows the power of God to work through Jesus and, potentially, his followers, for whom he acts as a model for *imitatio* as well as the object of *pistis*. It examines the writers' treatment of doubt and fear, which are condemned in those who lack *pistis* towards Jesus, but criticized short of condemnation in those who do follow Jesus. It examines these writers' exploration of the bases for *pistis*, including encounter, report, and the written word.

Pisteuein and its Relations in the Johannine Corpus

This chapter discusses the distinctive shape of trusting/believing in the Johannine corpus. John uses *pisteuein* to emphasize both the unity of Christ with God and his faithful subordination; God is revealed uniquely through Jesus and eternal life comes through trusting/believing in Jesus as one does in God. Like the synoptic gospels, John struggles with the failure of many to recognize Jesus as Son of God in his lifetime, and explains it by developing the idea of pre-election. The chapter also discusses John's understanding of the possibility of progression in trusting/believing and of the foundations of belief. Treatment of 1 and 3 John focuses on the role of *pistis* in the community's eschatology, arguing that Christians place increasing value on statements of propositional belief in disputes between churches or believers and outsiders. It discusses the importance of faithful endurance by community members in Revelation, together with the role of *pistis Iēsou*.

Relationality and Interiority in Pistis and Fides

This chapter considers the extent to which *pistis/fides* is understood as a state of mind or an emotion in Graeco-Roman, Jewish, and Christian sources of this period. Since direct evidence is scarce, it examines passages of Greek and Latin literature where *pistis/fides* language is located in the mind or heart, investigates how closely *pistis/fides* is connected with qualities such as love that are both relational and emotional, and considers whether *pistis/fides* can be called a virtue, with the interior dimension which virtues are regularly treated as having. It argues that in Greek and Latin literature *pistis/fides*, though not explicitly called an emotion or a virtue, is often treated as a virtue and as having at least emotional dimensions. It then examines whether Jewish and Christian literature configure *pistis/fides*, ethically and emotionally, in similar ways to Greek and Latin literature, and finds that they do.

Pistis, Fides, and the Structure of Divine–Human Communities

This chapter argues that *pistis* is central not only to the shape of the divine–human community on earth but also to the eschatological kingdom or household of God, and that *pistis* and other ethical qualities not only define but structure the kingdom. It examines other cults presented as divine–human polities and

argues that ethics can also be understood as structural in these, and, indeed, in Graeco-Roman society as a whole. It draws parallels between Christian presentations of the kingdom of God, Jewish depictions of heaven, Greek and Roman myths of the golden age and the mythologized past, and the ideal societies of political theory, relating all of them to contemporary theories of natural goodness and natural law. It argues that the kingdom of God can be understood as a form of community of virtue and life in it a natural good, in accordance with divine and natural law.

Conclusion

The Conclusion sums up the main themes of the previous chapters, drawing out the implications of what has been argued for the study of Christology, soteriology, ecclesiology, eschatology, and ethics, and for future connections between the study of *pistis/fides* and these themes. It notes the scope for future studies of the connections between *pistis/fides*, understood as foundational and structural to the divine–human community, and justice, love, hope, persuasion, knowledge, truth, and the holy spirit. Finally, it looks briefly into the second century and some of the earliest surviving non-canonical letters by Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, and Polycarp of Smyrna, arguing that in most respects they understand *pistis* in terms very similar to New Testament writers, especially Paul, but that in one or two respects they develop Paul's thinking further. This begins to show how we might find Christian understandings of *pistis/fides* evolving from the second century onwards.

Christianity and the Roman Empire – Saylor [PDF]

<https://www.saylor.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/HIST101-6.4.2-ChristianityAndTheRomanEmpire-FINAL1.pdf>

See also: [Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#)

See also: [Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

[Occurrences of Jesus Risen/Resurrected Mentioned by Apostles in the Bible](#)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Roman Imperial Ideology and the Early Pronouncement of the Gospel of King Jesus

<https://theomusings.wordpress.com/2017/04/11/the-gospel-good-tidings-part-1/>

Excerpt:

What is the gospel? How would the gospel have been understood in the Greco-Roman world? Why did the Apostolic writers choose to express their message in terminology like gospel, Lord, Christ, etc.? These questions are asked by many people that I know. They ask because they all desire resources or insights that will adequately inform their understanding of the Scriptures, the Gospel, Jesus, God, and the faith in which they participate. These inquiries are not confined to small circles, rather they are quite prevalent in many congregations and settings. Because of this, I hope to bring scholarly information to everyday people that will help inform and inspire them to study, engage, and wrestle with the Scriptures and their faith. In what follows, I will investigate the “gospel” and hopefully bring this magnificent message into a new light for those who do not necessarily have the time or energy to dig into these matters in a scholarly way.

To begin, the Gospel (εὐαγγέλιον, euaggelion; “good news” or “good tidings”) has become normalized in Western Christianity so much so that the contextualized understanding of the word has seemed to be all but lost. The word “gospel” has a context that gives it meaning. Prior to the Apostolic tradition using the term gospel as connoting the message of Jesus Christ, the gospel was first found on the lips of Roman delegates (ἀπόστολο, apostolos; “sent ones”).^[1] These apostles, or “sent ones,” were commissioned by the Roman Caesar (Καῖσαρ, Kaisar; “Caesar”) to go to a conquered city and herald the gospel, good news, to the new subjects of Rome. The apostles would proclaim the good news that Caesar is lord (κύριος, kyrios; “Lord” or “King”) over the land and now that you are his people, you will be provided safety and protection from Rome’s enemies, live under the *Pax Romana* (“Roman Peace”) provided by the Emperor’s rule and reign, and your city will now be “Romanized.”^[2]

This announcement of the good news did not give the people a choice, per se. The royal pronouncement was simply that, an announcement of the way things were i.e. reality for the Roman people or newly conquered people. This announcement was a “good thing” in the eyes of the Romans heralding the message to the newly conquered people; however, the message of good news could have been taken as an oppressive message to those being conquered. One simply could not denounce this reality without committing treason. The gospel was a pronouncement of good tidings from the perspective of the Romans to a newly conquered people, with the expectation of the people living lives of fidelity (πίστις, pistis; “fidelity”) to their new lord. ^[3] The gospel was simply the announcement of what was true about reality for the Roman people. If you were to ask someone in the Roman world what the good news was, they would point to Caesar’s lordship and rule and the benefits that were derived from living under his rule and reign.

While the details of this Roman gospel are compact, the context provided is enough for the keen reader to notice many parallels between the Roman gospel and the gospel expressed in the Apostolic literature. The context for the apostolic writers was the Roman proclamation of Caesar’s rule and reign and the benefits derived from that rule. The early followers of Jesus hearing the gospel from the apostles or hearing it read in one of the four gospel accounts would have recognized the subversive, treacherous, and defiant language in their own gospel compared to the gospel of Caesar.^[4] These comparative elements are what I will be diving into in the next couple blog posts to provide an understanding about the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the context of the Roman Empire.

To begin this assessment, I will provide a list of parallel words used by the Apostolic tradition and end by providing the Apostolic Tradition’s Gospel of Jesus Christ. In the post to follow, I will first discuss the ways in which the gospel message is different from the Roman gospel. Secondly, I will provide a brief history that led to the Roman terminology being used as it was during the first century CE. Thirdly, I will engage the political nature of the gospel proclaimed by Jesus’ apostles and the nature of “religion” in the ancient Roman Empire. Lastly, I will provide a contextualized understanding of the gospel as it was presented to various groups i.e. Jews, Greeks, Philosophers, etc.,

A Few Parallels Between:

The Roman's Gospel and the Gospel of the Apostolic Tradition

Gospel (Greek εὐαγγέλιον [singular]; "good news" or "good tidings")

Apostle (ἀπόστολο, apostolos)

Son of god/God (divi filius)

God (θεός, Theos)

Lord/Christ (Messiah) (κύριος, kyrios; Χριστός, Christos)

Epiphanay (ἐπιφάνεια, epiphaneia)

Savior (σωτήρ, sôtér)

The Royal Announcement of the Good Tidings of King Jesus

For my presentation of the Gospel, I will simply cite Apostle Paul's formulation in his letter to the Corinthians. This citation is an early Apostolic Tradition of the Gospel that was passed on to Paul. The following is structured and formatted using Scot McKnight's separation of the text into three parts found in his book [*The King Jesus Gospel*](#):

A)

Brothers and sisters, I want to call your attention to the good news that I preached to you, which you also received and in which you stand. You are being saved through it if you hold on to the message I preached to you, unless somehow you believed it for nothing.

B)

I passed on to you as most important **what I also received**: Christ died for our sins in line with the scriptures, he was buried, and he rose on the third day in line with the scriptures. He appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve,

C)

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead. He's the first crop of the harvest of those who have died. Since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead came through one too. In the same way that everyone dies in Adam, so also everyone will be given life in Christ. Each event will happen in the right order: Christ, the first crop of the harvest, then those who belong to Christ at his coming, and then the end, when Christ hands over the kingdom to God the Father, when he brings every form of rule, every authority and power to an end. It is necessary for him to rule until *he puts all enemies under his feet*. Death is the last enemy to be brought to an end, since he has brought everything under control under his feet. When it says that everything has been brought under his control, this clearly means everything except for the one who placed everything under his control. But when all things have been brought under his control, then the Son himself will also be under the control of the one who gave him control over everything so that God may be all in all.

1 Corinthians 15:1-2, 3-5, 20-28 (*Common English Bible*; bold parts are my edits)[\[5\]](#)

With the Roman's gospel and the Apostolic Tradition's Gospel of Jesus, we are prepared to dive into the context and meaning of the Gospel in the next few posts.

Notes

[1] I use "Apostolic tradition" instead of "New Testament" out of respect for the Hebrew Scriptures and the Jewish people. Also, "new" can connote that what is previous is old or out of date and in the case of the biblical literature, the Hebrew Scriptures are as

far from old or out of date in comparison to the Apostolic literature as it can get. It is important to note that the Apostles and Jesus used the Hebrews Scriptures and those scriptures were their scriptures. See the following works if you wish to dig deeper into the Roman context of the gospel: for a less scholarly and readable treatment see McKnight, Scot. *The King Jesus Gospel*; Wright, N.T. *Simply Jesus*; Wright, N.T. *Simply Good News*; and for more scholarly takes on this see Campbell, Douglas. *The Deliverance of God*, 696-714; Wright, N.T. *Jesus and the Victory of God* (vol. 2 in *Christian Origins and the Question of God*); Wright, N.T. *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (vol. 3 in *Christian Origins and the Question of God*),

[2] What I mean by Romanized is that the city would undergo major transformation so much so that when the Caesar would come and visit he would feel like he was coming home to Rome.

[3] I choose to translate the word *pistis*, normally translated as “faith,” “faithfulness,” or “trust,” as fidelity because fidelity connotes the rightful response that a ruling lord expects of his subjects. This word will become important in later posts when we dig into the manner of faith

[4] The gospel accounts are not gospel(s). This is an important point because the gospel is the same message and the four gospel accounts express this message in different ways. The pronouncement of Jesus’ Lordship doesn’t change, but the way it is expressed to various audiences does change. Alongside this, I want to note my addition of hearing the gospel accounts as important to the context of understanding the gospel writings. In the first century, the papyrus was expensive, not all people were literate, and thus the people would have heard the gospel read out loud to them. Silent personal reading would have been a strange phenomenon for first century people. This is important to understand that the gospel was proclaimed and even the writing would have been proclaimed in gathered assemblies.

[5] McKnight, Scot. *The King Jesus Gospel*, 47-48.

See also: [Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#)

The ‘Gospel’ and the Emperor Cult from [Bultmann](#) to [Crossan](#) (2014)

<http://www.westarinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Forum-32-Dechow-Gospel-and-Emperor-Cult.pdf> [PDF]

The First Christians’ Responses to Emperor Worship by [Christoph Heilig](#) (Review)

<https://rbeccs.org/2016/11/30/fcrw/>

The Gospel of Caesar

<http://www.faithgateway.com/the-gospel-of-caesar/>

See also: [Repentance](#)

[Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

[Occurrences of Jesus Risen/Resurrected Mentioned by Apostles in the Bible](#)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

See next page for [185 Verses on Faith Alone in Christ Alone](#) ...

185 Verses on Faith Alone in Christ Alone

<https://redeeminggod.com/sermons/miscellaneous/185-verses-faith-alone-in-christ-alone/>

The following list of verses which teach that eternal life is by faith alone in Christ alone was compiled by Dr. John Brumett. It's not an exciting read, but it is still a good resource. Share it with others using the buttons below!

[wpsocialite]



List of Faith Alone Verses by Book of the Bible

Matthew 18:6

Mark 9:42

Luke 7:48-50; 8:12; 18:42

John 1:7, 12, 50; 2:11, 23; 3:15, 16, 18, 36; 4:39, 41, 42, 53; 5:24, 38, 45-47; 6:29, 35, 36, 40, 47, 64; 7:5, 31, 38, 39; 8:24, 28-30, 31, 45, 46; 9:35-38; 10:24-26, 37, 38, 42; 11: 15, 25, 26, 27, 42, 45; 12:11, 36, 37, 38, 42, 44, 46, 47-48; 13:19; 14:1-6, 12; 16:9; 17:20, 21; 19:35; 20:29, 31

Acts 2:44; 3:16; 4:4, 32; 5:14; 8:12, 13, 37; 9:42; 10:43, 45; 11:17, 21; 13:12, 39, 48; 14:1, 23, 27; 15:5, 7, 9; 16:1, 31, 34; 17:4, 5, 12, 34; 18:8, 27; 19:2, 4, 18; 20:21; 21:20, 25; 22:19, 24:24; 26:18; 28:24

Romans 1:16, 17; 3:22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30; 4:3, 5, 9, 11, 13, 16, 17, 23-24; 5:1, 2; 9:30, 32, 33; 10:4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 16, 17; 11:20, 30-32; 13:11

1 Corinthians 1:21; 3:5; 7:12-13; 15:2, 11

2 Corinthians 4:4; 6: 15

Galatians 2:16, 3:2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 14, 22, 24, 26

Ephesians 1:13, 19; 2:8-9

Philippians 3:9

1 Thessalonians 1:7; 2:10, 4:14

2 Thessalonians 1:10; 2:12, 13; 3:2

1 Timothy 1:16; 3:16; 4:3, 10

2 Timothy 1:12; 3:15

Hebrews 11:7, 31

James 2:23

1 Peter 1:21; 2:6, 7

1 John 5:1, 4, 5, 10, 13

Categories of Faith Alone Verses in the Bible

1. Clear verses on faith alone in Christ alone – John 1 :12; 3:15, 16, 18, 36; 5:24; 6:29, 35, 40, 47; 11 :25, 26; 12:46; 20:31; Acts 10:43; 16:31; Rom 1:16; Gal 3:22, 26; Eph 2:8-9; 1 John 5:1, 13
2. Justification by Faith – Acts 13:39; Rom. 1:17; 3:26, 28, 30; 4:5; 5:1; Gal 2:16; 3:8, 24
3. Righteousness by faith – Rom 3:22; 4:3, 9, 11, 13, 23-24; 9:30; 10:4, 6; Gal 3:6; Php 3:9; James 2:23
4. Salvation by grace through faith – Luke 8:12; Rom 1:16; 1 Cor 1:21, 15:2; Eph 2:8-9; 2 Tim 3:15
5. Faith for salvation is the only thing compatible with grace – Rom 4:16
6. The Holy Spirit convicts the unbeliever of one sin, the sin of unbelief – John 16:9
7. Holy Spirit given by faith – John 7:38, 39; Acts 19:2; Gal 3:2, 5,14
8. Individuals and groups who exercised faith alone in Christ alone.
 - A. Groups of individuals
 - a. Children – Matt 18:6; Mark 9:42
 - b. Jews – John 2:23; 8:30; 8:31; 7:31; 10:42; 11:45; 12:11; Acts 4:4,32; 9:42; 10:45; 21:20; 22:19; 28:24
 - c. Samaritans – John 4:39, 41, 42; Acts 8:12
 - d. Gentiles – Acts 11:17, 21; 13:48; 14:23; 27; 15:7; 17:4, 12; 18:27; 21:25; Rom 13:11; 1 Cor 15:11; 1 Thess 1:7; 2:10
 - e. Jews and Gentiles – Acts 14:1; 19:18
 - f. Chief rulers – John 12:42
 - g. Disciples – John 2:11; Acts 2:44
 - h. Pharisees – Acts 15:5
 - i. World – 1 Tim 3:16
 - B. Individuals
 - a. Nathaniel – John 1 :50
 - b. Royal official and household – John 4:53
 - c. Blind man – John 9:35-38
 - d. Martha – John 11:27
 - e. Simon – Acts 8:13
 - f. Ethiopian Eunuch – Acts 8:37
 - g. The proconsul – Acts 13:12
 - h. Timothy – Acts 16:1
 - i. Philippian jailer and household – Acts 16:34
 - j. Dionysius, Damaris, and others – Acts 17:34
 - k. Crispus, his household and the Corinthians – Acts 18:8
 - l. Abraham – Rom 4:17
 - m. Noah – Heb 11:7
 - n. Rahab – Heb 11:31
9. Unregenerate are called unbelievers – John 8:24,45; 10:25-26; Acts 17:5; 1 Cor 7:12,13; 2 Cor 4:4, 6:15
10. Regenerate individuals are called believers – Acts 5:14; 1 Tim 4:3,10

11. Miscellaneous verses on faith alone in Christ alone – Luke 7:48-50, 18:42; John 1 :7; 5:38, 45-47; 6:36, 64; 7:5; 8:46; 10:37, 38; 11:15, 42; 12:36, 37, 38, 44, 47-48; 13:19; 14:1-6, 12; 17:20, 21; 19:35; 20:29; Acts 3:16; 15:9; 19:4; 20:21; 24:24; 26:18; Rom 3:25, 27; 5:2; 9:32, 33; 10:8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 16, 17; 11:20, 30-32; 1 Cor 3:5; Gal 2:7, 9, 11; Eph 1:13, 19; 1 Thess 4:14; 2 Thess 1:10; 2:12, 13; 3:2; 1 Tim 1:16; 2 Tim 1:12; 1 Pet 1:21; 2:6, 7; 1 John 5:4, 5, 10

Faith Alone – A Catholic Perspective

<http://swordofpeter.blogspot.com/2016/03/faith-alone.html>



Journal GES: Faith in Christ Does Not Mean Faithfulness or Fidelity (p. 22-24) (2018)

https://faithalone.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/GIF_JanFeb2018_forweb.pdf

Excerpt:

Unlikely Definitions

hat if you were debating someone about the merits of home schooling, and your opponent said, “Home schools are bad, because, as the Oxford English Dictionary defines ‘school,’ it’s a ‘group of people gambling together,’ and we certainly don’t want our children to do that.”

What would your response be?

Mine would be “What?”

But sure enough, when I whip out my handy copy of the OED, there it is among the definitions: an infrequent British usage—a school is “a group of people gambling together.”

So where does our debate go from here? Answer: nowhere. Our opponent has illegitimately changed the meaning of one of the most significant terms of the debate.

This is what has recently been happening in the theological discussion of the meaning of “faith in Christ.”

Opponents of the free grace of God have decided that “faith” cannot mean simply “faith” or “belief.” It must include some kind of obedient activity and be translated as “faithfulness” or “fidelity” or, most recently, “allegiance.”¹

Debating Faith

Recently Bob Wilkin debated Matthew Bates concerning the latter’s new book, *Salvation by Allegiance Alone*,² in which Bates claims that most Christians have misunderstood the meaning of “saving faith.” During the debate, Bates made a number of Biblical and historical assertions that were, in my opinion, either totally misguided or misapplied toward erroneous conclusions. I’ll discuss the three most significant ones here.

First, the best Greek lexicon says that the noun *pistis* (“faith”) can mean allegiance, fidelity, or loyalty; therefore, when the NT says that salvation is by faith, it includes “faithfulness” or “allegiance” to Christ.

Second, we need to look at Greco-Roman texts (outside the NT) in order to define NT words because there are many words that occur in the NT only a few times. When we do that, we discover that ancient Greco-Roman literature has many examples of this “loyalty” meaning of *pistis*.

Third, there are a large number of examples of *pistis* in the NT that cannot mean “faith” or “trust,” but have to mean “faithfulness” or “fidelity” (e.g., Matt 23:23; Rom 3:3; Gal 5:22; 2 Thess 1:4; Titus 2:10). About 20% of the occurrences of *pistis* in the NT are translated in contemporary translations as “faithfulness” or “trustworthiness.”

All of these assertions ignore the best Biblical and lexical evidence, and are examples of bad exegesis. Let’s look at each of them in order.

Evidence from Greek Lexicons

BDAG, considered the best Greek lexicon for NT scholarly study, gives three basic categories of meanings for *pistis*: (1) “that which evokes trust and faith,” such as “faithfulness” and “fidelity” (it cites six NT passages with this specific meaning); (2) “believing on the basis of the reliability of the one trusted,” meaning “trust” or “confidence” or “faith” (more than 180

NT passages are cited with this meaning, almost all of which refer to faith in God, Christ, the Gospel, or God’s promises—this is by far the dominant meaning of *pistis* in the NT according to BDAG); and (3) “that which is believed”—the body of faith or belief (thirteen passages are cited with this meaning).

Exegetes often come to Biblical texts with a set of theological presuppositions that drive their exegesis, with the result that “if there is an available meaning for a word that better serves the researcher’s own theological paradigm, that person favors the more obscure definition over the common definition.”³ In the case of *pistis*, any occurrence in the NT can theoretically have any one of the above three meanings. But the burden of proof would appear to be on the interpreter to demonstrate how the specific context would make the common definition unlikely. There are very few instances in which Bates can show this for *pistis*.

Sometimes interpreters suggest that the first definition given in a lexicon must be the preferred or most important one. Bates implies that since “faithfulness” is the first meaning given for *pistis* in BDAG, it should be taken as the most pervasive meaning. But this is not the case at all. In BDAG, the first listing is generally the meaning that is most similar to the meaning used in ancient or classical Greek. For an example of this, look at the word *ekklesia*. Three basic meanings are given: (1) legislative body/assembly; (2) gathering of people; and (3) congregation/church. One NT occurrence is cited for the first listing (Acts 19:39); two are given for the second listing (Acts 19:32, 40); and about 110 for the third (mainly “church”).

So if you meet the word *ekklesia* in the Greek text and wonder which meaning is most likely (if all fit the context), which would you choose?

The order of presentation in BDAG has nothing to do with the “most likely” or “preferred” meaning in any particular passage. There are more than 180 references in the NT to “salvation by *pistis* (faith),” and none of them refer to “faithfulness” on the part of the believer.

Evidence from Greco-Roman Texts

Bates says that we need to look at Greco-Roman texts (outside the NT) in order to define NT words because there are many words that occur in the NT only a few times. The only way we can discover what those words mean is by looking outside the NT.

However, the word *pistis* is not one of the words that occurs only a few times in the NT. It appears 243 times, from Matthew to Revelation, in so many different contexts that scholars and translators have never had a problem translating it.

Bates says that the literature of the ancient Greco-Roman world has many examples of the “loyalty” meaning of *pistis*. First Maccabees 10:27 quotes King Demetrius as saying, “Continue still to keep *pistis* (loyalty) with us and we will repay you with good for what you do for us.”

More examples are possible.

However, BDAG gives almost as many examples from this literature with the meaning “faith” or “trust” as it does with “loyalty” or “faithfulness.”

The “loyalty” examples tend to be mostly from texts that pre-date the NT (from classical Greek and the LXX), but the examples cited with the meaning “faith” are mostly from Josephus, Philo, and the time period of the NT and the early church. This probably indicates that the predominant meaning of *pistis* gradually changed from ancient Greek to NT Greek, which may explain why its use in the NT reflects almost entirely the “faith/trust” emphasis.

In the LXX (an early Greek translation of the OT), which was composed from about 250 BC to 130 BC, the word *pistis* appears 59 times. It carries the meaning “faithfulness” or “fidelity” in less than half (44%) of these occurrences. Eight times (14%) it definitely has the meaning “faith,” another eight times (14%) the meaning could go either way, and seventeen times (29%) the term has to be translated in a different way entirely. The use of *pistis* in the LXX illustrates the change of meaning that was going on in early Koine Greek, and by the time of its NT usage the focus on the concept of “faith” or “trust” was almost complete.

Evidence from New Testament Translation

Bates claims that a “large number” of uses of *pistis* in the NT cannot mean “faith” or “trust,” but have to mean “faithfulness” or “fidelity” (including Matt 23:23; Rom 3:3; Gal 5:22; 2 Thess 1:4; Titus 2:10), and that about 20% of its occurrences are rendered in contemporary translations as “faithfulness” or “trustworthiness.”

Both of these statements are false.

Of the five passages specifically mentioned by Bates, only three are translated by almost all recent versions as “faithfulness” or “fidelity”: Rom 3:3, Gal 5:22, and Titus 2:10. The Romans passage speaks of the “faithfulness of God” (God’s “faith” wouldn’t fit the context). The Galatians passage speaks of *pistis* as a fruit of the Holy Spirit, among which “faithfulness” makes good sense (the KJV has “faith,” which also makes sense). Titus 2:10 says that slaves should “show all good fidelity” or “faithfulness,” which certainly fits the context; many recent translations have “showing all good faith,” which has a related idea. In Matt 23:23 Jesus tells the scribes and Pharisees that they have neglected justice, mercy, and *pistis*. Only about half of the best recent translations use the word “faithfulness” or the equivalent here. And only one major contemporary translation uses something other than “faith” in 2 Thess 1:4. Bates’s use of this passage is thus counter-productive to his case.

It’s no exaggeration, then, to say that major contemporary English versions translate *pistis* as “faithfulness” or “fidelity” in only three or four NT verses. Yet Bates says that 20% of the total occurrences are rendered in contemporary translations as “faithfulness” or “trustworthiness.” How many occurrences

of *pistis* are there in the NT? The answer is 243. So in reality, recent translations use “faithfulness” (or the equivalent) for *pistis* only 1.2% of the time.

To get an understanding of how far from the truth Bates’s claims on this subject have gone, let’s take a quick look at what are probably the top eight recent Bible translations, and how they translate the word *pistis*. I will list how many times, out of 243 total occurrences, each version translates *pistis* as “faith”: ESV=238, NASB=237, NKJV=237, HCSB=233, RS=237, NRSV=232, NET=228, NIV=226. The percentages for these translations range from 98% of the total (ESV) to 93% (NIV).⁴

The average percentage of translation of *pistis* by “faith” among these top eight versions is 96%. Clearly there is no way one can reasonably claim that *pistis* in the NT regularly means “faithfulness, not faith.” It does so in very few contexts, but that’s all. The context must drive the translation and interpretation in every occurrence. And NT translators have consistently rendered *pistis* as “faith” throughout the NT in almost every instance.

Conclusion

Bates claims that *pistis* should be thought of as “embodied action,” not an “interior disposition” (as in trust or persuasion or faith). Therefore, he says, justification is actually by works. This, of course, would have been strange news to the Apostle Paul, who argued against works-salvation at every opportunity (see Rom

3:28; 4:5; 5:1; Gal 2:16; 3:24; Eph 1:13; 2:8-9; Phil 3:9). It also runs completely counter to the Gospel of John, in which the Greek verb *pisteuo*, (believe) always means to believe or trust in or have the conviction that some- thing is true. Passages like John 3:16, 11:25-27, and 20:30-31 make it clear that both Jesus and John taught salvation by faith alone and not by works.

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1. Lordship Salvation asserts that one must “believe in Christ” AND “follow Him as Lord” in order to be saved; this “allegiance” view says that having faith in Christ means to be faithful and loyal to Him.
2. Michael W. Bates, *Salvation by Allegiance Alone: Rethinking Faith, Works, and the Gospel of Jesus the King* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017).
3. Craig L. Blomberg with Jennifer Markley, *A Handbook of New Testament Exegesis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010), 138.
4. In the case of the NIV, the lower percentage is due to the fact that in six occurrences of *pistis*, the NIV translates it verbally as “believe” or “believing” or “those who believe” (the same idea as “faith”—not “faithfulness”); if these were added in, the NIV’s percentage would be 95.5%.

See also: [Repentance](#)

[Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

[Occurrences of Jesus Risen/Resurrected Mentioned by Apostles in the Bible](#)

[Saving Faith in Focus](#)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Repentance

Warning: There are a variation of perspectives/opinions about repentance and its role in eternal salvation included in this section. Please do not rely on any one article for making a decision. (Some of the series of articles also show a progression of thinking, so the first occurrence may not reflect current thinking of the writer.)

If you believe that eternal salvation is by faith alone, there are mainly three possibilities regarding the role of repentance in eternal salvation. These options are:

- 1 Repentance is a condition of eternal salvation since it is a synonym for faith in Christ. Thus "he who believes in Me has everlasting life" is identical to "he who repents has everlasting life."
- 2 Repentance is a condition of eternal salvation since it is a necessary precursor to faith in Christ. Thus one cannot believe in Christ until he first repents, that is, until he first recognizes his sinfulness and need of a Savior.
- 3 Repentance is not a condition of eternal salvation since repentance is neither a synonym for faith in Christ nor a necessary precursor to faith in Christ.

You will encounter examples of all three options in the following section articles.

Repent – God is now asking all mankind to turn to him. No nation or race is excluded. (Implies belief/trust) [ref: [Article](#)]

Repentance means changing your mind, turning away from our sins -- turning toward God.

We do this as Christians and as unbelievers.

That is what repentance means -- a change of mind toward God. You are responsible to change your mind and lay hold of that which God has provided in Jesus Christ (i.e., the "Messiah" or "anointed one"); for the forgiveness of sins. Paul gives us in his [speech at Mars Hill \(Acts 17:15-34\)](#) three great facts which underscore the importance of repentance:

First, there is an inescapable day coming. God has fixed a day when he will judge the world. Everyone knows this. You know it, don't you? You know there is a day coming when your life is going to be laid open before everyone, and all the value of it, or the lack of value, will be evident. There is coming a day when every life will be evaluated.

Second, there is an unchallengeable Judge. The One who will do the evaluating will not be a god, remote upon Mount Olympus, but he will be a Man, someone who has lived right here with us, who knows what human life is like, who has felt everything we feel. He will be the One who passes judgment on that day.

Third, God has made this evident to all by an irrefutable fact: He raised that Man from the dead: i.e., Jesus – the Son of God, the Messiah (Christ)!

There Must Be Repentance

There Must Be Repentance

■ **REPENT** COMES FROM THE GREEK WORD **METANOEAO** WHICH LITERALLY MEANS TO THINK DIFFERENTLY.

■ **REPENTANCE** IS A CHANGE OF MIND THAT BRINGS ABOUT A CORRESPONDINGLY CHANGE OF LIFE.

Luke 13:3
... Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

Acts 17:30
And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent.

Acts 2:38
... Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins ...



Acts 3:19
Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be botted out ...

2 Peter 3:9
The Lord is ... not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance

CONCERNING REPENTANCE . . .

Repentance is turning to God Acts 26:20

Repentance includes: - Regret - Reformation
 - Resolution - Restoration

Repentance is:

- Not sorrow alone
- Not Just quitting the sin
- Not just beginning new
- Not sorrow alone



I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance. Luke 15:7

GENUINE REPENTANCE INVOLVES:

Acknowledging, I have sinned ——— 2 Samuel 12:13

Willingness to say, I am sorry ——— Psalm 51:6

Determination to live right ——— Acts 26:20

Request of Please forgive me ——— Psalm 51

Barnes Bible Charts

25 Repentance Bible Verses

<https://www.biblestudytools.com/topical-verses/repentance-bible-verses/>

Repentance – CRU (Formerly Campus Crusade for Christ) (4-week bible study)

<https://www.cru.org/content/dam/cru/communities/inner-city/sayyesforms/Repentance-1.pdf> [PDF]

Atl Source: <http://www.urbanministry.org/files/First%20EV%20Free%20Repentance.pdf> [PDF]

Repentance

http://amazingdiscoveries.org/S-deception-conversion_repentance_sin_salvation

Excerpt:

Some people ask if repentance is necessary for salvation. The Bible says “yes.” The only type of people who feel the need for repentance, however, are people who realize their sinful state—those who are sick of themselves, sick of messing up their lives. Repentance involves a genuine sorrow for sin that includes a turning away from the sin.



There is a **false sorrow for sin** that is more of a sorrow for the consequences of the sin, like a thief that is not sorry that he stole, but that he got caught and is now in jail. There are many people who have a false sorrow for their misdeeds. How many stories do we read of cold-blooded people who have destroyed children or families through their heartless acts, and who are not repentant?

Genuine repentance comes from God. This is a point on which many err, and as a result they lack the faith to receive the help that Christ desires to give them. They think that they cannot come to Christ unless they first repent and that repentance prepares them for the forgiveness of their sins.

The Bible does not teach that we must repent before we can heed the invitation of Christ. We can no more repent without the Spirit of Christ to awaken the conscience than we can be pardoned without Christ.

We cannot repent of anything until we come to Christ. Repentance is something we receive. It is a gift from God. We come to Jesus and He grants us repentance and then forgives our sin. We do not cleanse ourselves in order to come to Christ. Instead, we come to Christ and then He does the job of cleansing us. Romans 2:4 tells us that it is the goodness of God that leads us to repentance. We cannot turn away from sin in our own strength but we can seek the Lord to do those things for us. God delights to help those who cannot help themselves. That is one of the points of difference between Jesus Christ and the gods of other religions.

Christianity is the only religion in which the God offered Himself, died, and rose again in order to deliver humankind from its desperate state. Christianity is also the only religion in which God, and God alone, is the Saviour. All other religions, including Catholicism, teach that we have to do something in order to earn redemption. This is wholly against the Bible.

Our part is only always to come to Jesus.

Remorse and Penance vs Remorse and Repentance

<http://www.oakhillchristian.org/documents/Godly%20Repentance.pdf> [PDF]

NBD: Repentance

In the OT two words are regularly translated 'repent' or some near equivalent— *nāḥam* ('be sorry, change one's mind') and *šûb* (in the sense, 'turn back, return').

nāḥam is used infrequently of man (Ex 13:17; Job 42:6; Je 8:6; 31:19), but regularly of God, where it is often said that God 'repents of evil' proposed or initiated. This vigorous speech arises out of Israel's understanding of God's attitude to men in terms of personal relationship. The language of course did not imply anything fickle or arbitrary on God's side, but simply that the *relation* was a changing one. In particular, when man removes himself by his self-will from God's direction and care he finds that the God-willed consequence of his evil is more evil (Ge 6:6f.; 1Sa 15:11,35; 2Sa 24:16; Je 18:10). But whoever repents, even at the eleventh hour, whoever turns (again) to God, finds a God of mercy and love, not of judgment (Je 18:8; 26:3,13,19; Jon 3:9f.; the importance of the intercessor who is willing to stand before God on behalf of his people is emphasized in Ex 32:12-14 and Am 7:3,6). So even though God's firmness of judgment against SIN is in no doubt (Nu 23:19; 1Sa 15:29; Ps 110:4; Je 4:28; Eze 24:14; Zec 8:14), he has shown himself more often as a gracious God, faithful to his people even when they are faithless—a God, in other words, 'who repents of evil' (Ex 32:14; Dt 32:36; Jdg 2:18; 1Ch 21:15; Ps 106:45; 135:14; Je 42:10; Joe 2:13f.; Jon 4:2).

The call for repentance on the part of man is a call for him to return (*šûb*) to his creaturely (and covenant) dependence on God. Such calls are particularly frequent in the pre-exilic prophets. Am 4:6-11 makes it clear that the evil that God intends as a consequence of Israel's sin is not malicious or vindictive, but rather is intended to bring Israel to repentance. He who commits evil finds further evil willed by God. But he who repents of his evil finds a God who repents of *his* evil. One of the most eloquent pleas for repentance comes in Ho 6:1-3 and 14:1-2—a plea alternating with hope and despair (3:5; 5:4; 7:10), with 11:1-11 particularly poignant. Equally moving are the hopes of Isaiah expressed in the name of his son, Shearjashub ('a remnant shall return', 7:3; see also 10:21f.; 30:15; cf. 19:22) and the pleadings of Jeremiah (3:1-4:4; 8:4-7; 14:1-22; 15:15-21), both mingled with foreboding and despair (Isa 6:10; 9:13; Je 13:23).

Other powerful expressions are Dt 30:1-10; 1Ki 8:33-40,46-53; 2Ch 7:14; Isa 55:6-7; Eze 18:21-24,30-32; 33:11-16; Joe 2:12-14. See also particularly 1Sa 7:3; 2Ki 17:13; 2Ch 15:4; 30:6-9; Ne 1:9; Ps 78:34; Eze 14:6; Da 9:3; Zec 1:3f.; Mal 3:7. The classic example of national repentance was that led by Josiah (2Ki 22-23; 2Ch 34-35).

In the NT the words translated 'repent' are *metanoeō* and *metamelomai*. In Gk. they usually mean 'to change one's mind', and so also 'to regret, feel remorse' (i.e. over the view previously held). This note of remorse is present in the parable of the tax collector (Lk 18:13), probably in Mt 21:29,32; 27:3 and Lk 17:4 ('I am sorry'), and most explicitly in 2Co 7:8-10. But the NT usage is much more influenced by the OT *šûb*; that is, repentance not just as a feeling sorry, or changing one's mind, but as a turning round, a complete alteration of the basic motivation and direction of one's life. This is why the best translation for *metanoeō* is often 'to convert', that is, 'to turn round' (CONVERSION). It also helps to explain why John the Baptist demanded BAPTISM as an expression of this repentance, not just for obvious 'sinners', but for 'righteous' Jews as well—baptism as a decisive act of turning from the old way of life and a throwing oneself on the mercy of the Coming One (Mt 3:2,11; Mk 1:4; Lk 3:3,8; Ac 13:24; 19:4).

Jesus' call for repentance receives little explicit mention in Mk. (1:15; cf. 6:12) and Mt. (4:17; 11:20f.; 12:41), but is emphasized by Lk. (5:32; 10:13; 11:32; 13:3, 5; 15:7, 10; 16:30; 17:3f.; cf. 24:47). Other sayings and incidents in all three Gospels, however, express very clearly the character of the repentance which Jesus' whole ministry demanded. Its radical nature, as a complete turning round and return, is emphasized by the parable of the Prodigal Son (Lk 15:11-24). Its unconditional character appears from the parable of the Pharisee and tax collector—repentance means acknowledging that one has no possible claim upon God, and submitting oneself without excuse or attempted justification to God's mercy (Lk 18:13). The 'turn round' in previous values and life-style is highlighted by the encounter with the rich young man (Mk 10:17-22) and Zacchaeus (Lk 19:8). Above all, Mt 18:3 makes it clear that to convert is to become like a child, that is, to acknowledge one's immaturity before God, one's inability to live life apart from God, to accept one's total dependence on God.

The call for repentance (and promise of forgiveness) features regularly in Luke's record of the preaching of the first Christians (Ac 2:38; 3:19; 8:22; 17:30; 20:21; 26:20). Here *metanoeō* is complemented by *epistrephō* ('to turn round, return'— Ac 3:19; 9:35; 11:21; 14:15; 15:19; 26:18,20; 28:27), where *metanoeō* means more a turning away (from sin) and *epistrephō* a turning to (God) (see particularly Ac 3:19; 26:20), though each by itself can embrace both senses (as in Ac 11:18; 1Th 1:9).

It is clear from Ac 5:31 and 11:18 that no difficulty was felt in describing repentance both as God's gift and as man's responsibility. At the same time Isa 6:9-10 is cited several times as an explanation of men's failure to convert (Mt 13:14f.; Mk 4:12; Jn 12:40; Ac 28:26f.).

The writer to the Hebrews also indicates the importance of initial repentance (6:1), but whereas he questions the possibility of a second repentance (6:4-6; 12:17), others are even more emphatic in their belief that *Christians* can and need to repent (2Co 7:9f.; 12:21; Jas 5:19f.; 1Jn 1:5-2:2; Rev 2:5,16,21f.; 3:3, 19).

There are only a few other references to repentance in the NT (Ro 2:4; 2Ti 2:25; 2Pe 3:9; Rev 9:20f.; 16:9, 11). We should not assume that talk of repentance and FORGIVENESS invariably featured in the earliest preaching. In particular Paul rarely uses either concept, and they do not occur at all in the Gospel and Epistles of John, whereas both strongly emphasize that the Christian life starts from the **positive commitment of FAITH**.

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Source: New Bible Dictionary: J.D.G.D.

NDT: Repentance

The OT often speaks of repentance to describe Israel's turning back to their God (e.g. 2Ch 7:14), in response to a promise of restored fortunes for the nation. In the NT, however, the preaching of repentance is greatly heightened and given specific content for the individual. This feature starts with the preaching of John the Baptist (Mt 3:5-12; Lk 3:7-14). The Gk. words used throughout the NT are mainly forms related to the verb *metanoein*, 'to change one's mind'. This small phrase, however, describes a radical change in the individual's *disposition*, for the change of mind concerns his judgment upon himself and his sin together with an evaluation of God's demands upon him. The transformation implied, therefore, is not a matter merely of mental judgment, but of new religious and moral attitudes (a turning to God, 1Th 1:9) and of new behaviour (Ac 26:20), as John's preaching spelt out.

Since repentance is God-directed and affirms newly received principles, it is inseparable from faith by which alone comes the knowledge of God. It is a serious misrepresentation of Scripture to separate repentance and faith as if the former were in any sense a condition of receiving the latter. This is clear from the fact that apostolic preaching sometimes summoned people to repent (Ac 2:38; 17:30; 26:20) but on other occasions to believe (Ac 13:38-41; 16:31). Equally, forgiveness of sins follows upon either repentance or faith (Ac 2:38; 3:19; 10:43). Repentance and faith, therefore, are simply two aspects of the same movement, though it is true that, in the case of faith, the NT emphasizes consciousness of Christ (Ac 20:21). Hence repentance, like faith, is regarded as a gift of God (Ac 5:31; 11:15-18; 2Ti 2:25).

The importance of repentance is seen from the early preaching of the apostles and from its place as a first principle of the Christian message (Heb 6:1). Although there is in conversion a decisive change of mind, the renewing of the mind towards God is a *continuous* process (Ro 12:2; Ep 4:23) just as faith is to

be increased. Turning, and renewal of faith in the Christian's life, are the active side of the process called sanctification, of which regeneration and preservation are the passive aspects.

Due to the increased emphasis on penitence (sorrow for sin) associated with repentance, the idea of confession and penance came to overshadow the sense of 'changing one's mind', and it was Luther who rediscovered the NT Gk. word, *metanoein*. With this he replaced the prevailing Latin Vulgate rendering of 'do penance', and allied repentance closely to faith.

It cannot be stressed too much that repentance is a moral act involving the turning of the whole person in spirit, mind and will to consent, and subjection, to the will of God. It is in a very real sense a moral miracle, a gift of grace. Terms often confused with repentance, such as penitence, remorse or penance, do not do justice to the impact of grace which we call repentance.

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Source: New Dictionary of Theology: R.Kearsley.

TBD: Repentance

Literally a change of mind, not about individual plans, intentions, or beliefs, but rather a change in one's attitude about God. Such repentance accompanies saving faith in Christ (Ac 20:21). It is inconsistent and unintelligible to suppose that anyone could believe in Christ yet not repent. Repentance is such an important aspect of conversion that it is often stressed rather than saving faith, as when Christ said that there is joy in heaven among the angels over one sinner who repents (Lk 15:7). The apostles described the conversion of the Gentiles to Christ as God granting them "repentance unto life" (Ac 11:18). Evangelical repentance and faith in Christ are in fact inseparable, though a convert may be aware of one aspect more than another.

Such penitence is not an isolated act but a disposition of the mind, providing a spur for behavior that accords with God's declared will. Recognition of daily sins and shortcomings provides the occasion for renewed acts of penitence and for fresh exercises of faith in Christ. One of the deepest and most noteworthy expressions of such penitence is David's account of his adultery with Bathsheba (Ps 51). Whole churches are, on occasion, called to repent (Rev 2:5). 2Co 7 contains an interesting and full description of such corporate repentance involving the elements of sorrow for sin and a determined resolve to forsake old sinful ways and to behave properly. While repentance is often accompanied by deep feelings, it is not equivalent to such feelings but is rooted in convictions about the sinner's own need before a holy God.

Both John the Baptist (Mt 3:2; Mk 1:4) and Christ (Mk 1:15) were preachers of repentance, calling not the righteous but sinners to repent. And in accordance with the Great Commission (Lk 24:44-49), the apostles continued the same kind of preaching—beginning with Peter's preaching on the Day of Pentecost (Ac 2), with noteworthy results. See Confession; Conversion; Forgiveness; Regeneration; Salvation.

Source: Tyndale Bible Dictionary

NDBT: Repentance

The biblical notion of repentance refers to the radical turning away from anything which hinders one's wholehearted devotion to God, and the corresponding turning to God in love and obedience.

Repentance in the OT

With only a few exceptions (* e.g. Jon 3:10; Isa 19:22), repentance is associated in the OT with God's chosen people. Thus one should understand the concept, usually expressed metaphorically by the Hebrew verb 'to turn' (*šûb*), to be grounded in the gracious covenant that God had previously established with Israel (Da 9:3-14; 2Ch 7:14a,17-18; Ne 1:5-7). Since the people who entered into this covenant were to reflect God's nature (Lev 19:2; 20:22-26; Dt 10:12-13), their turning away in unbelief and unfaithfulness implies a personal rejection of him (Dt 4:23; 11:16; 1Sa 15:11; 1Ki 9:6; 2Ch 7:19,22; Ps 51:4; Je 11:10; 34:13-16). In response to the people's sin, God is presented as similarly turning away from them, bringing about the realization of the covenant curses (* e.g. Dt 4:15-28; 30:15-20; Da 9:11-14). But these curses are ultimately intended to move his people to repentance once again (Dt 4:29-30; 1Ki 8:33,48). Thus, God initiates repentance both through the call to remember the blessings of the covenant and through the outworking of his covenantal justice (see Righteousness, Justice, and Justification) (Isa 44:22; 55:1-3; Ne 9:26-31; Je 5:3; 29:10-14; 44:4-6).

Repentance therefore involves the turning away from those actions and attitudes that are offensive to God and his nature (1Sa 7:3; Je 4:1; Eze 14:6). It naturally includes the confession of sin, appropriately accompanied by mourning and regret (Joe 2:12-13; Je 3:13). Given the covenantal context, this is often expressed as 'turning back' to God, (which explains the frequent translation of *šûb* as 'return': Dt 30:2; 2Ch 30:6-9; Isa 31:6; Je 3:22; 31:18-19; La 3:40; Ho 6:1; 14:1-2, NIV). While the condition of the heart is hardly ever explicitly discussed in the legislation governing sacrifices for sin, the implicit assumption is that the offerers have humbled their hearts before God. This is confirmed elsewhere in the OT, where a sacrifice without a contrite heart is considered to be offensive to God and even sin (Am 4:4-6; Ho 6:6; Ps 40:6-8; 51:16-17; 1Sa 15:22; Pr 15:8; 21:3). Conversely, true repentance generates acceptable sacrifice (Ps 51:18-19).

The behaviour resulting from true repentance is covenant love, purity and obedience that comes from the heart (see e.g. Dt 30:6,8,10). The merciful divine benefits given in response to repentance include the forgiveness (see Mercy) of sin and the restoration of the covenant relationship (Dt 4:30-31; 2Ch 7:13-16; Ps 51:7-12; Isa 55:7; Je 15:19-21; 32:31-41; Eze 18:21-23; Ho 14:5-8; Mal 3:7,10-12).

Repentance in the NT

John the Baptist and Jesus repeat the OT covenantal call for repentance. In the NT the scope of this call becomes universal as the church goes out in mission to all nations (Mt 28:18-20; Ac 1:8; 17:30; 2Pe 3:9). All have turned away from God (Ro 3:9-18), so there is a universal need for the corresponding turning away from sin (Ro 2:5-10; 2Co 12:21) and to God (1Th 1:9; Ac 14:15; 15:19; 1Pe 2:25). This notion is communicated principally through cognate words (*metanoō* / *metanoia*) which express the complete reorientation of the person, although a verb which means 'turning' (*epistrephō*) is also used. As in the OT, God is understood to be the initiator of repentance both through the threat of judgment and the gift of his grace (* cf. 2Ti 2:24-25).

Both John the Baptist and Jesus proclaim the need for repentance in light of the impending judgment associated with the kingdom's arrival (Lk 3:7,9,17; 13:1-5; Mt 11:20-24; 12:39-42)—only those who have turned from their sinful ways will be forgiven (Lk 3:3; 7:47-50; 19:9; Mk 1:4; 9:45; cf. Ac 3:19; 5:30-31; 2Ti 2:24-25). Similar calls for repentance from sin can be found throughout the NT, often associated with the threat of judgment (Ac 3:19-26; 8:21-24; 14:15; 17:30-31; Rev 2:5,16; 3:3; 9:20-21; 16:9-11; cf. also Heb 6:4-6).

But Jesus frequently presents the gracious goodness of God as the reason for repentance. Since with him the kingdom had already arrived in an inaugurated form (Mt 12:28; 13:24-30,33; Mk 4:21-32), salvific power was being mediated through his ministry, liberating people from Satan's stronghold (Mt 12:29). Thus, Jesus' demand for repentance stresses God's covenantal grace, for he is its fulfilment and

embodiment. Accordingly, Jesus' association with such despised groups as the tax collectors and harlots (Lk 7:37-50; 19:1-10; Mk 2:13-17) shows that he has come to seek out the lost (Lk 19:10; 15:4-32; Mk 2:17). Appropriately, then, joy and celebration are often associated with repentance in Jesus' proclamation, evincing the grace which is its context (Mt 13:44; 22:1-10; Lk 5:27-29; 19:6,8; cf. also Ro 2:4; Ac 9:35; 11:18,21). Mourning and regret are also found, however (Lk 7:37-50; 15:17-20; 18:13-14; cf. 2Co 7:9-10).

See also: Hardening .

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Source: New Dictionary of Biblical Theology: J. M. Lunde

Repentance vs Faith [Recommended]

http://www.4himnet.com/bnyberg/The_Free_Grace_Gospel-Repentance_vs_Faith-Nyberg.pdf [PDF]

See: [Paul Testified: Repentance Toward God and Faith in our Lord Jesus](#)

See also: [Faith](#)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

The Simple Gospel According to the Bible

<http://www.jesusisprecious.org/fundamentals/gospel.htm>

Excerpt:

What exactly is the Gospel? The word “Gospel” means “Good News” or “Glad Tidings.” There is no need to guess what the “Gospel” is because the Bible plainly tells us. The “Gospel” is the *Good News* of Christ's DEATH on the cross for our sins, His BURIAL and bodily RESURRECTION three days later:

*1st Corinthians 15:1-4, “**Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel** which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that **Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.**”*

We are saved by BELIEVING “the Gospel,” which is the power of God unto salvation. **Romans 1:16, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”** John 6:28-29, “Then said they unto him, **What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.**” It is that simple to be saved. If you admit that you are a needy sinner in God's sight, and you receive Christ's sacrifice on the cross as payment for your sins, believing that He was buried and bodily resurrected three days later, YOU ARE IMMEDIATELY, SECURELY AND FOREVER SAVED!!!

What About Repentance and Salvation?

In the Gospel of John, the words “believe” and “believed” are mentioned 85 times, but the word “repent” is not mentioned even once. Clearly, the person who BELIEVES has also repented. This is not difficult to understand, when you learn the truth that the Greek meaning of “repent” in the Bible to be saved is [metanoia](#), which is simply “a change of mind.” Repentance is a change of mind unto the Gospel itself.

We learn in the Bible that God gave His law to humanity, to show us our sinnership. **Romans 3:19, “Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.”** The law of God shows us that we are guilty sinners in God's sight (see also Galatians 3:24-26). We are woeful sinners, deserving of death and punishment in the Lake of Fire (i.e., Hell). This is the BAD NEWS! No one ever got saved who didn't admit to being a sinner in God's eyes. **1st John 1:7, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”** To be saved, you MUST realize that you are a guilty sinner for breaking God's commandments. We are all horrible sinners! We've all lied! We've all coveted! We've all sinned! **Romans 3:23, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”** This is the BAD NEWS!!!

Repentance is simply the admission that I am as guilty a sinner as God has declared me to be in His Word. Let me make it very simple—YOU ARE A GUILTY SINNER IN GOD'S SIGHT, and unless you accept Christ's sacrifice on the cross as full-payment for your sins, you will spend eternity burning in the fires of Hell.

What Repentance is Not!

Repentance is NOT turning away from sinful behavior, not reformation, not a desire to clean up one's life of sin, not forsaking the world, not turning over a new leaf, not a willingness to turn away from sin, not a change of heart toward sinful bad habits, not a change of life, et cetera. As we have already learned from examining the Greek word, *metanoia*, repentance is simply a change of mind. [Acts 20:21](#), speaks of “**repentance toward God.**” Repentance is *toward God* by faith in the Gospel, evidenced by the hundreds of New Testament Scriptures that simply tell us to BELIEVE to be saved. For example: **1st**

Corinthians 1:21, “For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching TO SAVE THEM THAT BELIEVE.”

Also, please notice that the entire purpose for which the Epistle of 1st John was written, is so that **“ye may know that ye have eternal life” (1st John 5:13)**. Yet, carefully notice that the apostle John doesn't mention the word “repent” even once in all of 1st John. THAT SPEAKS VOLUMES!!! If turning away from sinful behavior was required to be saved, then no doubt John would have made a big deal of it in his Epistle.

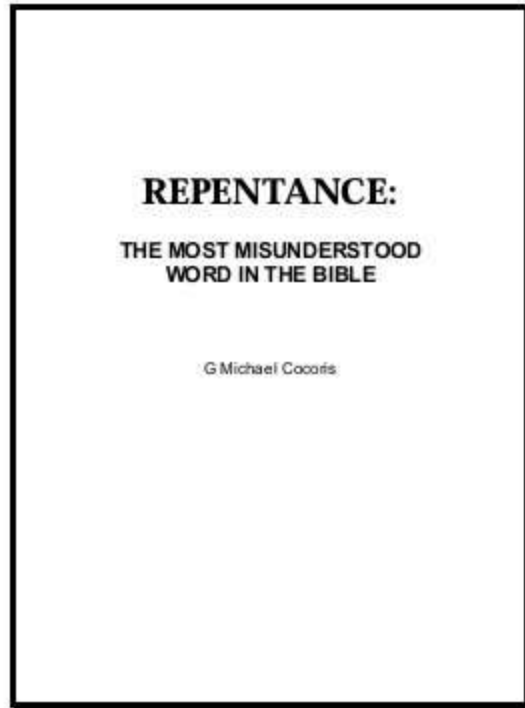
See also: [Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#)

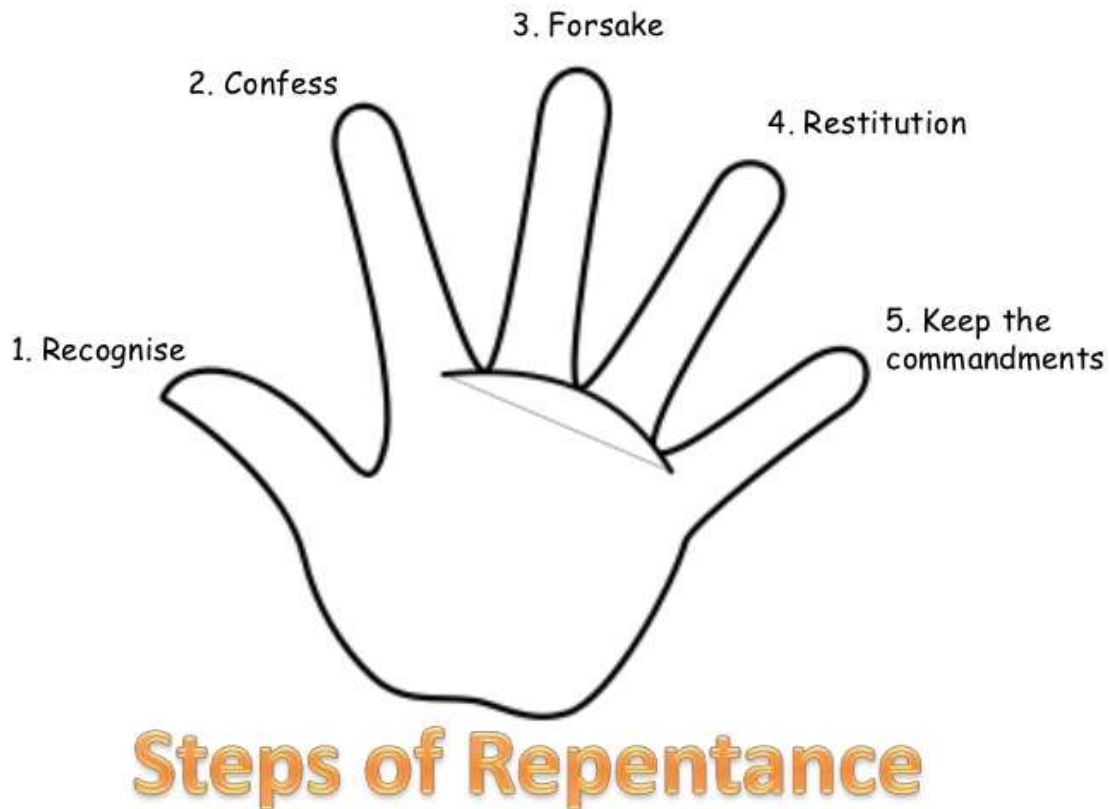
[Faith](#)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Repent

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http://gospeltruth.net/1836LTPC/ltpc09_tandf_repentance.htm

The Wesleyan Imperative (Salvation Army) [PDF]

<https://www.sarmy.org.au/Global/SArmY/Resources/training/call-to-arms/cta-repentance-faith-regeneration-worksheets-2015-7.pdf>

Excerpt:

Wesley's delineation of Prevenient Grace ('enough light to see the hand of God and enough strength to grasp it!') offered a salvation available to all, opening wide the door to the Wesleyan *ordo salutis*: conviction, **repentance**, saving faith, regeneration, consecration, sanctification, and glorification. The goal of redemption is transformation into likeness to Christ resulting in lives that glorify God. In a word, holiness—becoming like and living like who we are in Christ, who is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption (1 Corinthians 1:30). The Holiness God desires is expressed in disciplined and godly lives of Christ-like virtue: purity, humility, and integrity, compassionate action, and commitment to mission. Sanctification is that heart-cleansing, empowering, and engraving work of the Spirit, through the merits of the shed blood of the Savior and the power of His risen life, that makes such a transformation possible.

Salvationists believe that Scripture teaches that all can be saved 'completely,' through and through and for all time (Hebrews 7:25 ESV). We believe it is possible to live above the power of sin as we are transformed into Christlikeness from 'one degree of glory to another' (2 Corinthians 3:18). Our founders, William and Catherine Booth, required a salvation from sin and from sinning—a Gospel for the sin-enraptured, addicted, and depraved, among whom they had been called to pursue their mission. With a mandate to 'Go for souls and go for the worst!' they required a message of hope. Their Gospel was one of 'Apostolic Optimism,' proffering a life of victory and faithfulness. It included a call to arms for every redeemed person, enlisting them in the conflict that they believed would end in final victory and the reign of Christ.

Repentance is for All Men

[Recommended]

<https://faithalone.org/journal/1998i/Anderson.html>

Excerpt:

In his book *I Call It Heresy!* A. W. Tozer makes his position of [Lordship salvation](#) clear when he says, "...true obedience is one of the toughest requirements of the Christian life. Apart from obedience, there can be no salvation, for salvation without obedience is a self-contradictory impossibility...we need to preach again...a Christ who will either be Lord of all or he will not be Lord at all!"¹ In the same chapter he reveals his understanding of the [repentance](#) in the Luke 15 parable of the "Prodigal Son" when he writes:

...the first thing the returning sinner does is to confess: "Father, I have sinned against heaven and in Thy sight, and I am no more worthy to be called Thy son. Make me as one of Thy hired servants."

Thus, in repentance, "we...fully submit to the Word of God and the will of God, as obedient children...and if we do not give Him that obedience, I have reason to wonder if we are really converted!"²

Tozer is not alone in his convictions concerning repentance and its role in salvation.³ In John MacArthur's classic "line in the sand" development of the salvation message in *The Gospel According to Jesus*, he states in no uncertain terms:

"From His first message to His last, the Savior's theme was calling sinners to repentance-and this meant not only that they gained a new perspective on who He was, but also that they turned from sin and self to follow Him."⁴

Another who sees repentance as an essential part of the salvation process is D. L. Bock, who says that "repentance...is an appropriate summary for the offer of the gospel today."⁵ He comes to this conclusion largely from Jesus' use of the term in Luke 24:47, which is Luke's version of the Great Commission.

Clearly these men understand repentance to be a requirement for justification. In other words, in their discussions, repentance is for unbelievers. But others think repentance is for believers. John Calvin wrote: "Now it ought to be a fact beyond controversy that repentance not only constantly follows faith but is also born of faith."⁶ And C. H. Spurgeon said, "All the fruits meet for repentance are contained in faith itself. You shall never find that a man who trusts Christ remains an enemy to God, or a lover of sin."⁷

And so it is fair to say that some Christian teachers believe that repentance is for unbelievers, while others think repentance is for believers. Which view is correct?⁸ Both are right. In other words, repentance is for all men, unbelievers and believers alike. However, we will try to demonstrate that repentance is not a prior condition for unbelievers to come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. The procedure for this study will be to review in more detail the positions taken on repentance throughout church history while categorizing those who thought repentance was for unbelievers and those who thought it was for believers. Then from scriptural examples we will try to show that repentance is for all men...

Note: This article briefly traces the theological concept of repentance from Early Church Fathers on thru Augustine, the Reformers to the post-Reformers. Discusses Believer and Non-believer repentance; the meaning of repentance, whereby it determines it to be "an internal resolve to turn from one's sins"; then concludes:

Once again, we ask the question, if repentance is the internal resolve to turn from one's sins, is repentance a condition for receiving eternal life? And once again, we conclude, no. Repentance is not a condition for receiving eternal life, but it is a condition for possessing eternal life. By possessing eternal life, we refer to enjoying a quality of life that only the believer in fellowship with God can have. Repentance is not about relationship, but it is about fellowship. In order to "get right with God," one must repent. If an unbeliever is in view, he must believe to receive the free gift of eternal life. He might repent before he believes or after he believes. It is his faith that saves him eternally, but it is his repentance which allows him to enjoy his faith. Repentance concerns fellowship.

So, who is right? Is repentance for believers or for unbelievers? Both parties are right in that repentance is for both believers and unbelievers. Repentance is for all men. But repentance is not a condition for salvation; it is a condition for sanctification. It is not a condition for relationship, but it is a condition for fellowship. To establish an eternal relationship with God, one must believe only once. But to enjoy ongoing fellowship with God, one needs to live a life punctuated by repentance.

See also: [Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#)

[Faith](#)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

From N.T. Wright: **Believing and Belonging** [re: the Church], *Simply Christian* (2006)

<http://ntwrightpage.com/2016/04/04/believing-and-belonging/>

Excerpt:

When we see ourselves in the light of Jesus's type of kingdom, and realize the extent to which we have been living by a different code altogether, we realize, perhaps for the first time, how far we have fallen short of what we were made to be. This realization is what we call "**repentance**," a serious turning away from patterns of life which deface and distort our genuine humanness. It isn't just a matter of feeling sorry for particular failings, though that will often be true as well. It is the recognition that the living God has made us humans to reflect his image into his world, and that we haven't done so. (The technical term for that is "sin," whose primary meaning is not "breaking the rules" but "missing the mark," failing to hit the target of complete, genuine, glorious humanness.) Once again, the gospel itself, the very message which announces that Jesus is Lord and calls us to obedience, contains the remedy: forgiveness, unearned and freely given, because of his cross. All we can say is, "Thank you."

To believe, to love, to obey (and to **repent** of our failure to do those things): faith of this kind is the mark of the Christian, the one and only badge we wear. That is why, in most traditional churches, the community declares its faith publicly in the words of one of the ancient creeds. This is the stamp of who we are. When we declare our faith, we are saying yes to this God, and to this project. That is the central mark of our identity, of who and what the church is. This, by the way, is what St. Paul meant when he spoke of "justification by faith." God declares that those who share this faith are "in the right." He intends to put the whole world to rights; he has already begun this process in the death and resurrection of Jesus, and in the work of his Spirit in the lives of men and women, bringing them to the faith by which alone we are identified as belonging to Jesus. When people come to Christian faith, they are "put in the right" as an advance sign, and as part of the means, of what God intends to do for his whole creation.

Christian faith isn't a general religious awareness. Nor is it the ability to believe several unlikely propositions. It is certainly not a kind of gullibility which would put us out of touch with any genuine reality. It is the faith which hears the story of Jesus, including the announcement that he is the world's true Lord, and responds from the heart with a surge of grateful love that says: "Yes. Jesus is Lord. He died for my sins. God raised him from the dead. This is the center of everything." Whether you come to this faith in a blinding flash or by a long, slow, winding route, once you get to this point you are (whether you realize it or not) wearing the badge which marks you out as part of the church, on an equal footing with every other Christian who ever lived. You are discovering what it means to wake up and find yourself in God's new world.

What's more, you are giving clear evidence that a new life has begun. Somewhere in the depths of your being something has stirred into life that was previously not there. It is because of this that many early Christians reached for the language of *birth*. Jesus himself, in a famous discussion with a Jewish teacher, spoke of being born "from above": a new event similar to, though distinguished from, ordinary human birth (John 3). Many early Christians picked up and developed this idea. As a newborn baby breathes and cries, so the signs of life in a newborn Christian are faith and **repentance**, inhaling the love of God and exhaling an initial cry of distress. And at that point what God provides, exactly as for a newborn infant, is the comfort, protection, and nurturing promise of a mother.

N.T. Wright: What Is The Gospel? (2013)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICHovRHJAYY> [Video]

<https://vimeo.com/54601664> [Video]

Excerpt:

Here's a transcription of what is **repentance** as it relates to the gospel (from 5:05 min. into the video):

When Jesus says "Repent and believe in the good news" towards the beginning of his ministry in Mark chapter 1, there's almost an exact parallel to that in the Jewish writer, Josephus. He talks about a time when he went to Galilee in the 60's of the first century and he said to one of the brigand leaders, "Repent and believe in me!" What Josephus was saying was, "Give up your way of doing stuff...I've got a better idea...Come with me!" That's what those words sounded like in Galilee in the first century! **When Jesus told people to repent, he didn't mean "Have some kind of sad religious experience."** He meant "You're going the wrong way! You're going to have to turn around because God is doing a new thing. If you're going to part of that new thing, you're going to have to give up the way you've been going."

Repentance and forgiveness, the Wright way (2013)

<http://www.walkingwithgiants.net/bible/gospels/repentance-and-forgiveness-the-wright-way/>

Summary and Critique

Balancing Out (W)Right: Jesus' Theology of Individual and Corporate Repentance and Forgiveness in the Gospel of Luke (2012)

http://www.etsjets.org/files/JETS-PDFs/55/55-2/JETS%2055-2_299-321_Chattraw.pdf [PDF]

The Relationship Between Faith and Repentance (2016)

<https://theologymix.com/biblical-interpretation/relationship-faith-repentance/>

Before embarking on a discussion on the relationship between any two things, it is important to define the meaning of the two things we are discussing. In this particular case, our question deals particularly with the terms "faith" and "repentance," and how the two relate to one another specifically in the process of salvation.

Faith and repentance are both completely necessary for the salvation of the sinner. Faith involves both a mental assent to the truths of the Gospel and an embracing of those truths personally by the person who assents to them. Repentance is a change of mind, whereby the sinner agrees with God regarding sin, turns from sin, despises sin, hates sin, and rejects sin. The relationship between faith and repentance as it pertains to salvation is that repentance is an integral part of saving faith. We agree with Barackman here when we say saving faith consists of "assent, repentance, and trust."^[41] One cannot properly repent unless they first believe the facts of the Gospel, or have mental assent regarding those truths. Further, one cannot logically turn to God without first, logically speaking, turning from sin.

The act of "turning" is very appropriate in illustrating why the Biblical authors can speak of either faith, or repentance, as being singularly essential for salvation. They can do this because in order to "turn" one must by necessity turn away from something, and toward another thing. I cannot "turn" north, without turning away from the south, east, and west. So when the Biblical authors use these terms, individually, or together, they carry the same meaning for whether one repents, or believes, they cannot do either, without doing the other. I can say to a man heading south on a particular street "Stop heading south, you must go north." I can also say "you need to go north" or "south is the altogether wrong direction." Each of these statements carry the same exact meaning.

So too, whether the Scriptures say "...*repent* and *believe* in the gospel" (Mark 1:15), "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household" (Acts 16:31), or "*Repent* therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3:19), they are saying precisely the same thing for repentance and faith are, as we have seen, inseparable pieces of a faith that saves.

Repentance

http://getgodsgift.org/index.php?p=1_12_Repentance

Excerpt:

"Repent of Sin." This often-quoted phrase "repent of sin" does not even occur in the Bible. Most people are quite shocked to find that it does not appear in the Scripture. Nowhere does the Scripture use the phrase, "repent of sin" to be saved. Scripture does say in [Acts 20:21](#), "repentance toward God" (change of mind), and "faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

Repentance is the translation of the Greek word "metanoia". The literal meaning of "metanoia" is "a change of mind". "Meta" means "change". "Noia" means "mind". So, therefore, "metanoia" means a "change of mind". Before learning about metanoia, I am sure that you are already familiar with a Greek word with the prefix "meta". That word is "metamorphosis". "Meta" means "change", and "morphosis" means "form or structure". This word metamorphosis is used to describe the change a caterpillar goes through to become a beautiful butterfly. I am sure that you have studied about this change of form. Repentance, therefore, (metanoia) is a change of mind.

This misuse of the word repentance has caused untold confusion among believers and unbelievers alike. Satan, the author of confusion (I Corinthians 14:33), has delighted in this misuse of the word repentance. One of the counterfeits Satan is using today is the misuse of the word repentance. To insist upon a repentance that in any sense includes a demand for a change of conduct either toward God or man is to add an element of works or human effort to faith.

Let's define. Penance is payment for sin. Penitence is sorrow for sin. Works and something of self is turning from sin. But repentance (metanoia) means a change of mind. Repentance in salvation means a change of mind from any idea of religion that man might have and accepting God's way of salvation. Man's great need is to understand God's way of salvation and accept His sacrifice. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life (John 3:16)."

Why do we have the problem? The problem has come about because "metanoia" should never have been translated into the English word "repent". "Repent" (English word) does not mean the same thing as "metanoia" (Greek word). Perhaps what the translators should have done was a "transliteration" of the Greek word. For example: the translators of the King James Bible took the Greek word "baptizo", dropped the "o", and replaced it with an "e". They brought the new word "baptize" into the English language. This is called transliteration. They should have done this with "metanoia", and the problem would have been eliminated. Can you imagine preachers saying 'METANOIA' to their congregations? At least the correct meaning would be known.

Understanding the doctrine may relieve some of the confusion you or your friends may have had concerning repentance. Here is a way to get a handle on it. Remember this, "A person may 'repent' without 'believing', but a person cannot 'believe' without 'repenting'." A person may "repent" (change their mind) without "believing" (trusting Christ), but a person cannot "believe" (trust in Christ) without repenting (having changed their mind).

Repentance is necessary for salvation, but keep in mind that it means "a change of mind". ..

Is repentance necessary for salvation?

<https://carm.org/repentance-necessary-salvation>

Excerpt:

The answer to the question "Is [repentance](#) necessary for salvation?" is both yes and no. It depends on what is meant by the question. If by asking "Is repentance necessary for salvation?" the person means that the sinner must first [repent](#), have a change of mind, and stop sinning in order to get saved, then the answer would be no. The reason would be that we are not saved from the righteous judgment of [God](#) by stopping sin and doing good - that would be [salvation](#) by works. We are saved from our sins by trusting in Christ, who bore our sins in his body on the cross ([1 Pet 2:24](#)) - not by ceasing sin and doing what is right. When we receive Christ ([John 1:12](#)), we are then justified by faith ([Rom. 3:28](#); [4:5](#); [5:1](#)); and it is the work of God to [regenerate](#) us which then enables us to turn from our sins. Therefore, repentance is the result of regeneration (salvation)--not the cause of it.

- "Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 "And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances," ([Ezekiel 36:26-27](#)).
- "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, 13 who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," ([John 1:12-13](#)).
- "The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit," ([John 3:8](#)).
- "Every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation, or shifting shadow. 18 In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures," ([James 1:17-18](#)).

On the other hand, repentance is necessary for salvation in the sense that we cannot be saved from God's righteous judgment without changing our minds about sin--without turning from it and seeking to honor God.

- "I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish," ([Luke 13:3](#)).
- "And Peter said to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit," ([Acts 2:38](#)).
- "Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent," ([Acts 17:30](#)).

Repentance is most definitely part of the [gospel](#) message, but we have to make sure that we do not make the mistake of saying that our [salvation](#) is because of our [repentance](#). Again, we do not want to say that our salvation is a result of our stopping the doing of what is wrong and turning to do what is right. This would be salvation by works. This is a tricky issue among Christians as to whether or not the unbeliever who is a slave of sin ([Romans 6:14-20](#)), who cannot understand spiritual things ([1 Cor. 2:14](#)) and can do no good ([Romans 3:10-12](#)), is able to make a choice to stop sinning based on his sinful nature. It would seem that the ability to repent must be granted by God ([Phil. 1:29](#); [Acts 11:18](#); [2 Tim. 2:25](#)).

So we have to be careful when we ask if repentance is necessary for salvation. The real question is: "Is repentance the result of salvation?" And the answer to that is yes. But repentance is also part of the message of salvation that commands people to repent because turning from sin is what is right to do. Sin is against the [nature](#) of God, and that is why God always commands everyone everywhere to repent ([Acts 17:30](#)). Just as he also commands that you will be [holy](#) ([1 Peter 1:16](#)) even though we cannot be holy. God is the standard of perfection, and that standard is not lessened because of our inability. Therefore, repentance is commanded, as is holiness; and we have to depend on God for both.

REPENTANCE

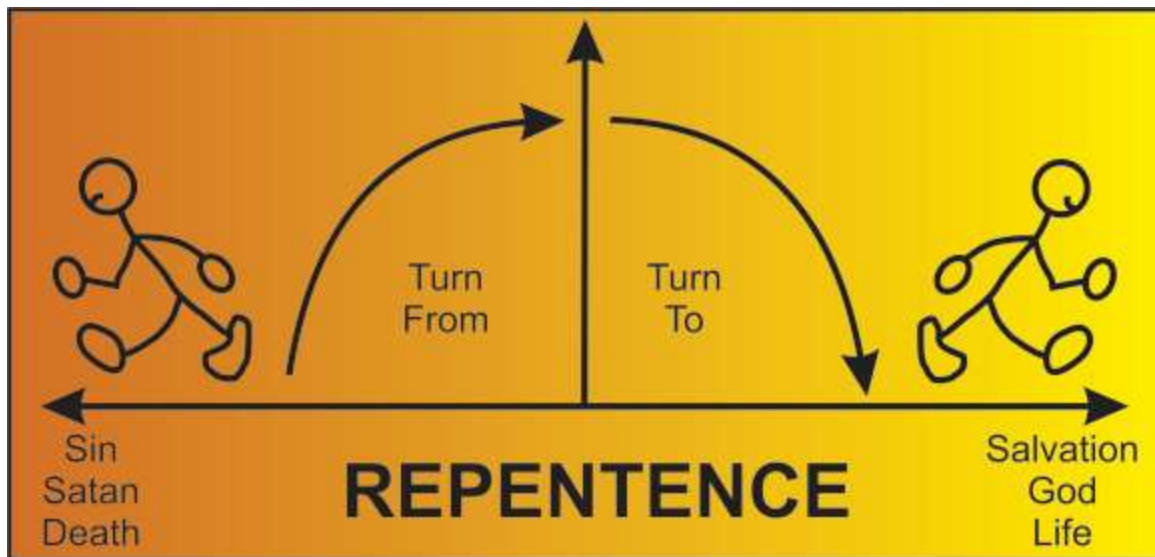
=Turn From Evil Ways



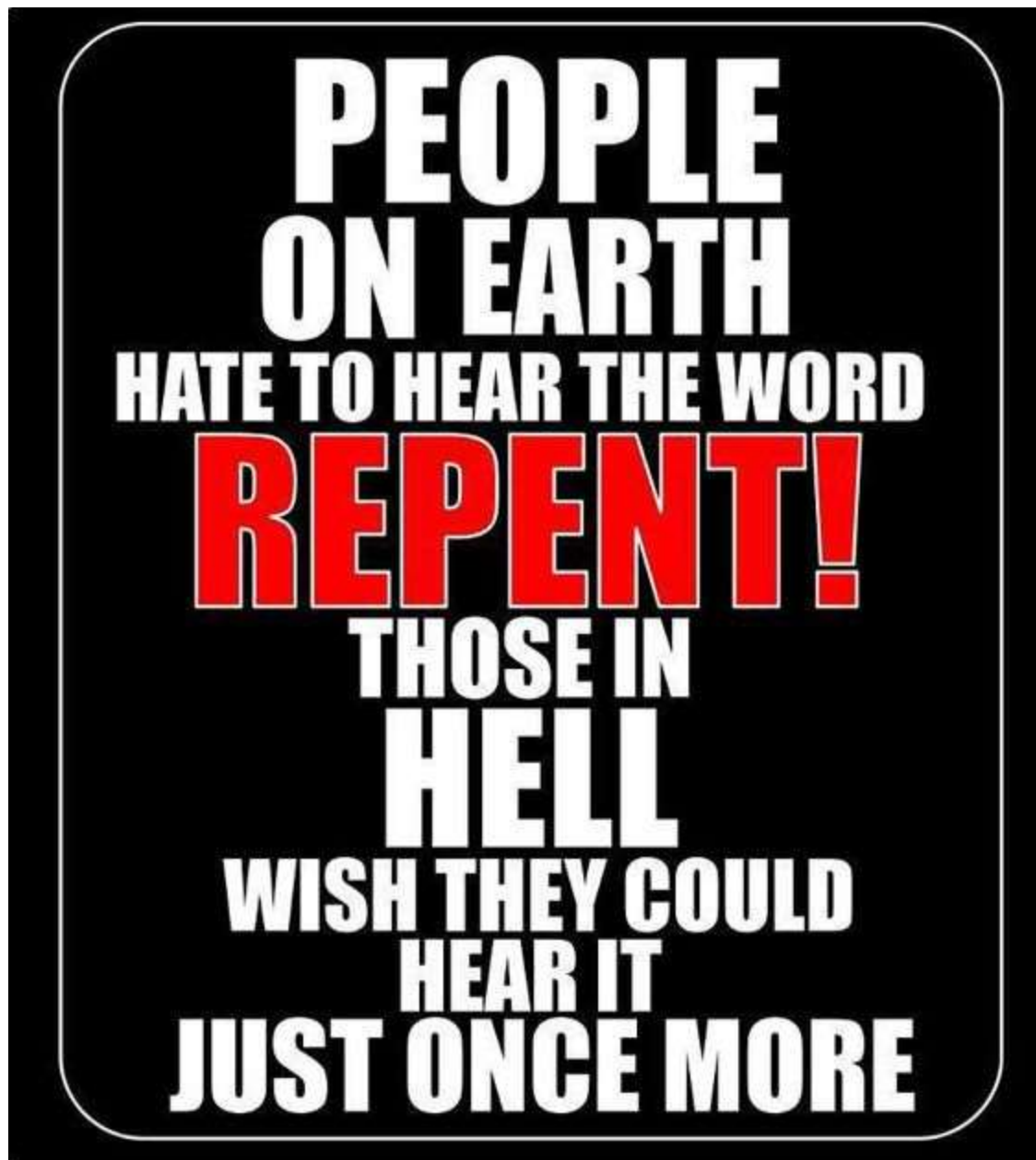
Jesus taught that the Ninevites
REPENTED at the preaching of
Jonah (Mt 12:41). Jonah 3:10
shows they **TURNU FROM**
THEIR EVIL WAYS. Hence, to

TURN FROM EVIL WAYS = REPENTANCE

EternalLifeBlog.com ◆ EvangelicalOutreach.org



Source: <https://testimoniesofhisgoodness.wordpress.com/2013/07/26/testimony-true-repentance-is-key/>

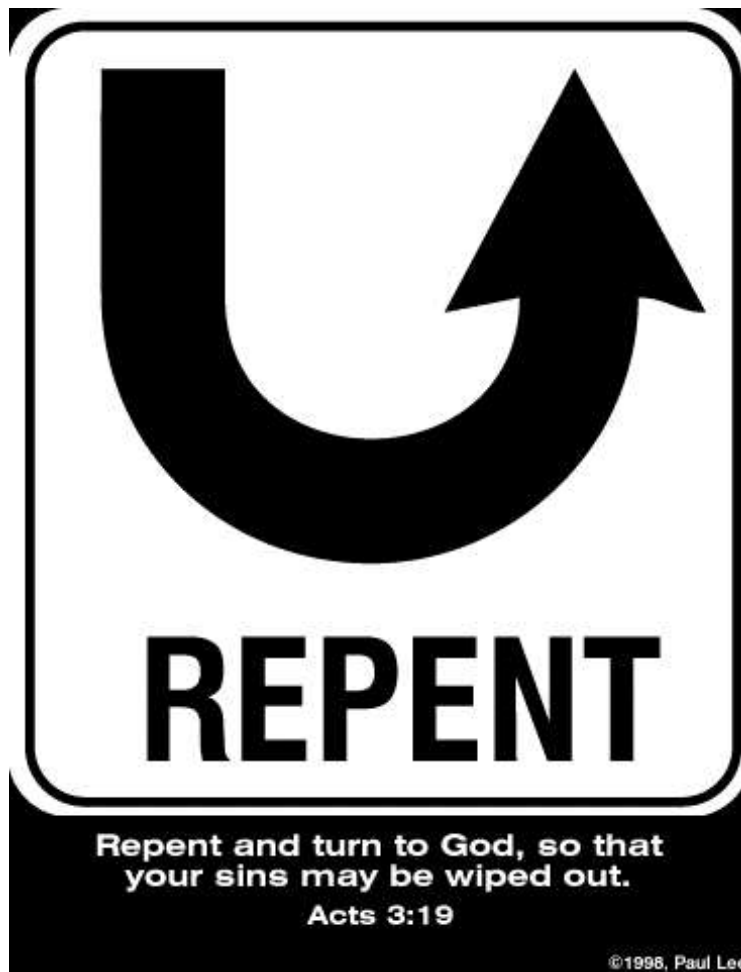


Luke 13:3 NET – “No, I tell you! But unless you repent, you will all perish as well! “ - Jesus repeats the same thing again in Luke 13:5 - No, I tell you! But unless you repent, you will all perish as well! ”



"To *repent*, literally means to have a change of mind or spirit toward God and toward sin. It means to turn from your sins, earnestly, with all your heart"

~ Dr. John R. Rice



Source: <https://benevolentbaptist.wordpress.com/2013/05/22/what-is-repentance/>

Repentance

<http://www.layevangelism.com/greference/doctrines-&-beliefs/8.htm>

Salvation Is Not Received Through: 1. Repenting of Your Sins 2. Works 3. Water Baptism 4. Or Receiving the Holy Spirit or Speaking in Tongues	Jesus' Forgiveness through His death and shed blood on the Cross for our sins repented of is received through <i>faith</i> and THROUGH FAITH ALONE 

See also: [Faith](#)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What is repentance and how does it relate to salvation? (John MacArthur, GTY)

<https://www.gty.org/library/Questions/QA163/What-is-repentance-and-how-does-it-relate-to-salvation>

Excerpt:

The meaning of the word repentance has been twisted in recent years to the point that its biblical meaning is now obscured in the minds of many. The idea that genuine repentance could result in anything but a change of life is completely foreign to Scripture.

What does the Bible teach about the relationship between salvation and repentance? First, it teaches that **repentance is essential to salvation**. One cannot truly believe unless he repents, and one cannot truly repent unless he believes. **Repentance and faith are two sides of the same coin** (but they are not synonymous terms). [Acts 11:18](#) and [2 Peter 3:9](#) are two of the many verses that teach that repentance is necessary for salvation. Perhaps [2 Timothy 2:25](#) best sums up the relationship between repentance and saving faith when it speaks of "repentance to the acknowledging of the truth" (see also [Acts 20:21](#)).

Second, the Greek word for repentance (*metanoia*) means "to have another mind," but it cannot properly be defined to exclude a sense of hatred of and penitence for sin. The biblical concept of repentance involves far more than merely a casual change of thinking. Biblically, a person who repents does not continue willfully in sin. **Repentance is a turning from sin, and it always results in changed behavior** ([Luke 3:8](#)). While sorrow from sin is not equivalent to repentance, it is certainly an element of scriptural repentance ([2 Corinthians 7:10](#)).

Finally, despite what is being widely taught today, affirming that repentance and acknowledgement of **Jesus' lordship** are necessary to salvation does not "add" anything to the requirement of faith for salvation. It is not "faith plus repentance" that saves, but rather a **repentant faith**. The notion that salvation is possible apart from a genuine, heartfelt repentance, which includes a deep hatred of sin, is a relatively new one, neither believed nor taught by the people of God until the twentieth century.

Is repentance necessary for salvation? What is repentance?

<https://www.compellingtruth.org/repentance-and-salvation.html>

Excerpt:

Confusion sometimes arises from how repentance is explained. Many teach repentance as the works that we do to show we are sorry for wrong. In other words, many see repentance as the changes we make as a result of our conviction of sin. In passages where repentance and salvation appear in the same context (i.e., [Acts 2:38](#); [3:19](#); [11:18](#), and others), some begin to understand salvation as something that is in some way earned. Yet the intended meaning of "repentance" in these passages does not imply a works-based salvation.

Biblical repentance is the changing of one's mind. How does this change take place? Ultimately, God must convict by His Spirit. That conviction leads to a change of mind and faith in Jesus that we call salvation. The changed life we live as a result is not just repentance; it is the new life we have in Jesus Christ.

John the Baptist spoke very clearly about the true role of repentance when he said, "Bear fruit in keeping with repentance" ([Matthew 3:8](#)). A repentant person will live differently. A changed mind will lead to a changed life. In fact, it is God's kindness that leads us to repentance or a changed mind that we may live for Him ([Romans 2:4](#)).

Biblical repentance, to change one's mind, is part of salvation. Repentance, when defined as works we do to show we are sorry, is not part of salvation. This important distinction must be understood so that true

salvation is clearly communicated. Salvation is not something we do, but something God does within us. We are saved by God's grace through faith, not by our works ([Ephesians 2:8-9](#)).

The Doctrine of Repentance in Salvation

<http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/Introduction/repent.htm>

Excerpt:

Sinners Commanded To Repent and Believe

Jesus soundly declared the message in His day: "repent ye, and believe the gospel." Repentance and faith are inseparable and occur simultaneously in a sinner's heart; you cannot have one without the other. The order as given in the Bible is repentance and faith (Mark 1:15; [Acts 20:21](#); 26:20; 2 Tim. 2:25; Heb. 6:1).

Repentance is turning from sin; and faith is turning to Christ. Repentance comes about through the convicting power of the Spirit of God using the Word of God to cause a change of attitude, action, and affection.

Saving faith is trust in and reliance on the Lord Jesus Christ as one's personal Lord and Saviour. Saving faith is believing with your heart; it is coming to Christ, receiving Christ, looking to Christ, calling upon Christ to save your soul.

Yes, Jesus said you must repent and believe the gospel, because the gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believes (Rom. 1:16). The gospel, the good news for every sinner, is that Christ died on the cross for our sins, as our Substitute, and shed His precious blood to wash away our sins, and arose from the dead on the third day in order that we might have the forgiveness of sins and have eternal life through Him. Salvation of one's soul is the most important thing in this whole world.

But repentance without faith is nothing more than remorse or regret. And faith without repentance makes Christ nothing more than a fire escape. There must be a work of repentance and faith upon the sinner's heart before salvation can become a reality. Repentance is caused by the working of the Holy Spirit who takes the Sword of the Spirit and slays the sinner's self-righteousness, self-goodness, self-decency, self-esteem, and causes him to cry out: "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18:13) and "what must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30).

Serious Questions To Consider

Is the preaching of repentance important?

Jesus thought so enough that He preached it. John the Baptist preached it (Matt. 3:1-2). The apostles were commanded to preach it: "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47).

Who is commanded to repent?

"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:" (Acts 17:30).

The good, the bad, the rich, the poor, the old, the young, the educated, the uneducated -- every man must repent because we are all sinners. Notice it is God's command that is to be obeyed, now.

What happens if you don't repent?

"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3,5).

The worst thing in the world for any person is to perish in their sins without Christ as their Saviour and spend an eternity in the lake of fire, to be tormented and suffer forever and ever.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (John 3:16-17).

Turn from yourself and sin and turn to the Lord Jesus Christ to save your soul -- that is the sinner's only hope.

What is Repentance?

<http://www.letusreason.org/Biblexp241.htm>

Ten Facts You Should Know About Repentance

<http://cgi.org/ten-facts-you-should-know-about-repentance/>

Whatever Happened To Repentance? (David Wilkerson) (1999)

<http://tscpulpitseries.org/english/1990s/ts990802.html>

Whatever happened to repentance? You rarely hear the word mentioned in most churches today — even in Baptist, Pentecostal or evangelical circles. Pastors nowadays seldom call for their congregations to sorrow over sin — to mourn and grieve over wounding Christ by their wickedness.

Instead, the message we hear from many pulpits today is, "Just believe. Accept Christ, and you'll be saved." The text used to justify this message is Acts 16:30-31.

In this passage, the apostle Paul was being held in jail when suddenly the earth shook and all the cell doors opened. The jailer immediately thought all the prisoners had fled, which meant he faced execution. In despair, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself when Paul and Silas stopped him, assuring him no one had escaped.

Seeing this, the man fell down before the apostles and cried out, "...Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:30-31).

As we read this passage, it's important to remember that the jailer was on the verge of suicide, with sword in hand. He was already at a point of repentance — on his knees, broken and trembling, before the apostles. So his heart was truly prepared to accept Jesus in genuine faith.

In the gospel of Mark, Christ tells his disciples, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). It's clear from what Jesus says here that salvation is found in simply accepting him and being baptized.

However, Jesus prefaces his statement with this word: "...Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (verse 15). He's saying, in essence, that before people can believe in him, the gospel must first be preached to them.

And what is this gospel Jesus refers to? It's the gospel that Jesus himself preached — the gospel of repentance!

Think about it — what was the first message Jesus delivered, after he emerged from the temptation in the wilderness? Scripture says, "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17).

Jesus called people to repent before he even called them to believe! Mark writes, "...Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:14-15). Christ preached, "Repent first — and believe."

Elsewhere Jesus says of his mission, "...I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Matthew 9:13). And he told the Galileans, "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3).

Jesus' gospel was all about repentance!

John the Baptist Also Preached Repentance, to Prepare Israel for the Coming of Christ.

John's message to the Jews was simple and straightforward: "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 3:1-2).

People came from everywhere to hear John preach. And he told them in no uncertain terms: "The messiah is soon to appear in your midst — so, you'd better get ready to meet him! You may feel excited that he's coming. But I'm telling you, your hearts are not prepared — because you're still holding onto your sins!

"Outside you appear clean and holy. But inside, you're full of dead men's bones! You're a generation of vipers, snakes, with absolutely no fear of God. Yet you have no concept that you're even sinners. I warn you — you must deal with your sin before you can believe on the savior and follow him. So, repent, turn from your sin -- and live in a way that reflects genuine change!"

What gospel did Peter preach to the masses on the day of Pentecost? The Bible tells us that when the people heard the apostle testify, "...they were pricked in their heart, and said...Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:37-38).

Peter didn't tell these people just to "believe and be saved." He didn't ask them to merely make a decision, to cast a vote for Jesus. No -- he told them to repent fast, and then be baptized in obedience to Christ!

What gospel did Paul preach to the pagan Athenians on Mars Hill? He told them very directly, "...God...now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30).

These Greek intellectuals had no trouble believing in God. In fact, you could say their very pastime was "believing." They believed in many gods -- first this one, then that one. Whenever someone came along preaching a god persuasively, they believed in it. So, they believed -- but they did it while living in sin. Simple belief wasn't enough!

Paul told these men, "No, no -- that's not, Christ! Jesus can't simply be added to your list of gods. You may believe in them all, but you can't merely do that with Jesus. He has come to save you from your sins. And he commands all his followers to repent and be cleansed!"

Later, Paul preached the same gospel of repentance to King Agrippa: "...I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: but shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance" (Acts 26:19-20).

Paul is saying, "Everywhere I've been, I've preached repentance. And genuine repentance proves itself by its actions!"

These passages make clear to us that the apostolic church preached unabashedly the same gospel John and Jesus preached: "Repent for the remission of your sins!"

What Does It Mean To Repent?

Some Christians believe repentance means simply to "turn around" and go in the opposite direction. But the Bible tells us repentance is much more than this.

I once heard a man say, "I'm so glad I know New Testament Greek. It translates the word 'repent' as meaning, 'to change one's mind.'"

No -- this man doesn't know his Greek! The full, literal meaning of the word "repent" in the New Testament is "to feel remorse and self-reproach for one's sins against God; to be contrite, sorry; to want to change direction." The difference in meanings here rests on the word "Want." True repentance includes a desire to change!

Moreover, simply being sorry doesn't constitute repentance. Rather, true sorrow leads to repentance. Paul states, "Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death" (2 Corinthians 7:10).

Paul is speaking here of a sorrow that's without regrets -- one that's genuine, that "sticks" in the life of the repentant person. This kind of godly sorrow naturally produces a repentance that includes a hatred for sin, a righteous fear of God and a desire to right all wrongs.

It shouldn't surprise us, then, that Paul preached repentance to believers. He delivered a strong message of repentance to the Christians in Corinth. The Corinthian believers had been richly blessed by God, having sat under mighty teachers of the word. Yet their congregation remained rife with sin.

First Paul testifies to the Corinthians, "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds" (2 Corinthians 12:12). But then Paul tells them very directly: "I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would..." (verse 20).

What was Paul's fear? It was simply this: "Lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed" (verse 21).

This tenderhearted shepherd loved the compromising saints in Corinth. Yet he knew they'd been well-taught that a lifestyle of gross sin was wrong. And he told them, "When I come to visit you, you're going to see me hanging my head in grief. My eyes will flow with tears, and my voice will wail in sorrow.

"If I see you continuing to indulge in uncleanness, fornication and lust, I'll be utterly broken -- because the gospel has not done its work in your heart. You haven't yet repented of your sin. And I will call you loudly to repent!"

These Words of Paul Put Me to Shame!

As I read Paul's words, I find myself examining my own ministry And I have to ask, "Have I cut short the gospel Jesus preached -- the gospel of repentance? Have I essentially taken scissors to my Bible and removed the higher cost of following Christ? Have I lowered his standard by telling people, 'Just believe and be saved'?"

As I look at the church today, I wonder: Do we evangelicals insist on a biblical "godly sorrow" as evidence of true repentance? Or are we leading masses of unrepentant people into a false peace? Are we wrongly instructing them that all God requires of them is to say, "I believe in you, Jesus"?

Have we cut short genuine conviction for sins? Have we jumped in and offered salvation to those who haven't actually repented -- who haven't sorrowed over their trespasses, who haven't seen the exceeding sinfulness of their sins, who have sought faith so they could merely hide their lusts behind it?

We constantly hear awful exaggerations about the numbers of people who come to Jesus through various ministries. Christians report that scores of people were saved as they preached in prisons, schools, tribal meetings. They say, "Everybody in the place gave his heart to Jesus. When I finished preaching, they all came forward for salvation."

No -- that is a tragic exaggeration! All too often, what actually happens is that everyone simply repeats a prayer. They merely pray what they're told to pray -- and few of them grasp what they're saying. Then most go back to their heathen ways!

Such people never experience a deep work of the Holy Spirit. As a result, they never repent, never sorrow over their sins -- and never truly believe. Tragically, we've offered them something Jesus himself never offered -- salvation without repentance!

I believe the church has even taken the feeling out of conviction. Think about it -- you hardly ever see tears on the cheeks of those who are being saved anymore. Of course, I know tears don't save anyone. But God made us all human, with very real feelings. And any hell-bound sinner who has been moved upon by the Holy Spirit naturally feels a profound sorrow over the ways he has grieved the Lord.

The apostle Peter felt this kind of godly sorrow, when he denied knowing Jesus. Suddenly, he was flooded with the memory of what Jesus had told him: "Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he Wept" (Mark 14:72).

As Peter remembered these words, he was overcome with emotion. And suddenly, he went running through Jerusalem, weeping, "I've betrayed the Lord!"

Beloved, we simply cannot work up that kind of repentance in our own flesh. Only the Holy Spirit can reveal to us how, like Peter, we also have wounded our loving savior. And that revelation ought to fill us with deep sorrow!

I don't agree with all of the Puritan writers' doctrine, but I love their emphasis on holiness. These godly preachers called their sermons "deep ploughing." They believed they couldn't sow true seeds of faith until the soil of their listeners' hearts had been deeply plowed.

So the Puritans made sure their preaching went deep, cracking all the fallow ground of their listeners' souls. Their sermons produced genuine repentance in their congregations. And, in turn, over the years this produced strong, mature, faithful Christians.

Today, however, most preaching is all sowing with no plowing. I hear very few sermons nowadays that dig deeper than the topsoil. Deep plowing doesn't just address the disease of sin; it digs down to the very cause of the disease. Much of the preaching we hear today focuses on the remedy while ignoring the disease. It offers a prescription without providing surgery!

Sadly, we cause people to think they've been healed of sin when they never knew they were sick. We put robes of righteousness on them when they never knew they were naked. We urge them to trust in Christ when they don't even know their need to trust. Such people end up thinking, "It can't hurt to add Jesus to my life."

C.H. Spurgeon, the powerful English preacher, said the following about the need for repentance:

"I trust that sorrowful penitence does still exist, though I have not heard much about it lately. People seem to jump into faith very quickly nowadays...I hope my old friend repentance is not dead. I am desperately in love with repentance; it seems to be the twin sister of faith.

"I do not myself understand much about dry-eyed faith; I know that I came to Christ by the way of weeping-cross...When I came to Calvary by faith, it was with great weeping and supplication, confessing my transgressions, and desiring to find salvation in Jesus, and in Jesus only."

**When Times Square Church Was Founded,
We Pastors Preached the Law
for the First Few Years.**

Why did we preach the law for so long in our church? We did it because many in our congregation were calling themselves Christians -- yet their lives didn't reflect it!

In those early years, many people came forward to the altar at the end of every service. They repeated a pastoral prayer and "accepted salvation by faith." Yet, most of those people never felt any conviction for their sin. They didn't experience godly sorrow -- and so their lives didn't reveal true repentance.

Supposedly repentant theater actors professed Christ on Sunday but went back to their blasphemous shows during the week. Homosexuals prayed for salvation but still indulged in their sinful lifestyle. Others confessed Jesus at our altar yet continued their adulterous affairs, fornication or drug use.

This is why we thundered conviction from our pulpit! The Holy Ghost led our pastoral team to expose all sin, rebellion and disobedience to his word. We preached hell so hot, people got up and left our services. And we preached heaven so real, compromisers trembled at the awesome reality of Christ's holiness.

Our preaching of the law was absolutely necessary at that time. It is God's mirror, revealing every hidden, secret thing. And it brought the people in our congregation to an awareness of the exceeding sinfulness of sin.

While some people ran out, others ran forward in genuine repentance. One of these was a booming-voiced actor named David Davis. He surrendered all to Jesus in true repentance. And today, he and his wife pastor a thriving church in Israel, where they've preached Christ for almost ten years.

While the true work of repentance was accomplishing its purpose in our church, the Holy Spirit then led us to preach the glory of grace. We taught on the New Covenant, on power over sin through the Holy Spirit, on walking by faith. In short, we began to build up the saints.

Through that whole experience, we also discovered the dangers of preaching only the law and focusing primarily on sin. If people are given a steady diet of this message alone, they begin to lose hope and wallow in despair, thinking, "I'll never measure up." They constantly turn inward rather than looking to the cross for hope.

Yet when a church is the Lord's, it can trust God's Spirit to bring the message of the law whenever it's needed. If Jesus sees his people lapsing into an "easy believism," he'll once again bring the lash of the law upon them, with all mercy and grace.

You see, repentance isn't a one-time experience. It's not some hurricane that strikes once and then is gone forever. Nor do we experience repentance only in a moment of crisis, and then merely talk about it the rest of our lives. No -- sorrow for sin should be our constant teacher!

Spurgeon testified, "I freely confess that I have a very much greater sorrow for sin today than I had when I came to the savior more than thirty years ago. I hate sin more intensely now than I did when I was under conviction. There are some things that I did not know to be sin then, that I know to be sin now. I have a much keener sense of the vileness of my own heart now than when I first came to Christ...

"Sorrow for sin is a perpetual rain, a sweet, soft shower, which to a truly saved man lasts all his life long...He is always sorrowful that he has sinned...He will never stop grieving until all sin has gone."

Jesus Said Something to the Church in Ephesus That Causes Me to Tremble!

You may remember the seven churches that John mentions in Revelation 2. Among them is the church of Ephesus -- a congregation Jesus commends very highly.

I like to think of our church in Times Square as being like the Ephesian church. That body of believers labored in one of the world's most populous cities, never fainting in the midst of vile wickedness. The people lived sacrificially, hated sin and refused to accept false doctrines. They stood strong in faith, loving God with all their heart no matter what temptations Satan threw at them.

Yet Christ knew something was amiss among these people. And he so loved this church — it was such a bright lamp to the nations — he wasn't about to sit idly by and let it die. So he told the Ephesians, "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love" (Revelation 2:4).

Jesus was saying, "Your fire is going out! The love for me that once motivated your faithfulness is waning. You once bore my burden for the lost — but now you're satisfied merely to sit and listen to sermons. You've become totally engrossed in your own personal concerns, and you're ignoring mine. You've fallen far from where you once stood!"

Jesus then tells them, "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen..." (verse 5). He's saying, "Think back! You used to yearn to come to my house, to be with my saints, to bear my burden. But now an hour on Sunday morning is plenty for you!"

So, dear Christian — are you still on fire for Jesus? Are you in love with him as passionately as when you first got saved? Or have you lost interest in his concerns, forsaking all ministry? Do you have too much else going on in your life? If so, the Lord says to you, "I've got something against you. You've left your first love!"

Listen to what Jesus says to us at this point: "...repent, and do the first works..." (same verse). He's saying, "Mourn over your growing apathy. Be contrite — take it seriously. Then let your grief lead you back to where you were when you first loved me!"

Christ then gives us a word that lets us know we'd better take heed. He says, "...or else..." (same verse). He immediately spells out the consequence: "...I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick..." (same verse).

Jesus is saying here that unless we repent, he's going to remove all the spiritual authority we've been given. This includes our influence on our city, our community, our neighborhood, those in our sphere of influence. Every bit of influence we have will be taken from us, he says, "Except ye repent!"

Right now, churches across the world are shutting their doors. Their lights are literally being turned out — because that's the judgment they incur for refusing to repent! God said they would lose their discernment, their spiritual blessings, their finances, his very presence. Now they're dead, lifeless, with only memories of his past blessings.

I preached in many such churches thirty years ago. At that time they were packed with zealous believers. Today, barely a dozen people sit in their pews. Soon they'll dwindle to nothing, and their doors will shut for good. God has written "Ichabod" over their doors — meaning, "The Spirit of the Lord has departed!"

Yet, beloved, God gives this same message to every Christian individually. He says, "If you refuse to repent — if you remain in your apathy — I'll remove your lampstand. You'll no longer have any influence over your family, your coworkers — anyone!"

This is exactly what happened to the Ephesian church. God waited patiently — over 1,000 years, in fact — for that church to repent. Yet finally the time came when their backsliding was more than he could endure.

The historian Gibbon writes: "The first candlestick of Ephesus was extinguished. The barbarous lords of Ionia and Lydia trampled on the remains of Christianity. Now the Mohammedan mosques invoke the god of Mohammed. Only the church of Philadelphia still stands erect."

Yet, even as we read these words, we are not to fear. Jesus ends his admonition to us this way: "...To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God" (Revelation 2:7).

Dear saint, Jesus is that tree! He's telling us, "If you'll repent, I'll give you constant life from my very being. And as long as you continue to love me, I will provide a flow of supernatural life in you. This life will be revealed in your discernment, your love for people, your good works for my kingdom!"

This is the trait that distinguishes every Christian who's truly in love with Jesus. Such a believer is full of life — and everyone around him knows it!

Jesus promises that your godly sorrow, your repentant heart and your renewed love for him will lead you to life. So, pray to him right now: "Lord, give me a truly repentant heart. Take me back to who I was when I was first in love with you. Yet, this time take me farther, deeper in you, than I've ever been before!"

As you repent, God's Spirit will begin to produce in you a new revelation of the glory of Christ. And he'll make it known to everyone around you!

BibleStudyTools: Repentance

<https://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionary/repentance/>



**Repent, then, and turn to God, so that
your sins may be wiped out, that
times of refreshing may come from
the Lord,**

The Gospel of Resurrection and Repentance

<https://www.tvresources.net/resource-library/articles/the-gospel-of-resurrection-and-repentance>

How many times is the love of God explicitly mentioned in the book of Acts?

Zero.

Let that sink in for a moment. In all the sermons and speeches throughout 28 detailed chapters, not once do the Apostles mention the love of God. So what *do* they consistently and clearly proclaim?

Resurrection and repentance.

Unfortunately, neither resurrection nor repentance is central in the mindset of modern evangelicalism. Think about it. How often do those two words enter your head when asked to define or describe the gospel? We focus on the crucifixion, but overlook the resurrection. We love to talk about faith, but ignore repentance.

Yet, there is no gospel without resurrection and repentance.

The message of Acts is that Jesus has risen from the dead. This justifies His claim to be the Christ—not only the prophesied King of Israel—but indeed the Lord of all the world. As a consequence, He now “commands all people everywhere to repent” ([Acts 17:30](#)). The resurrection of Jesus Christ demands the response of repentance.

A Gospel of Resurrection

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the key to understanding the book of Acts. Without this reality, the book unravels into nothing more than magic and myth. Without the resurrection, we might as well seek nirvana or serve Baal, Zeus or Gozer the Gozerian. The resurrection makes futile the attempt to classify Christian faith as fantasy or fiction. Unlike the claims of Buddha, Joseph Smith and Mohammed conveniently lacking historical substantiation, Christianity alone is historically grounded in an evidential demonstration of the universal lordship of Jesus of Nazareth.

Not only is the resurrection the climax and culmination of the gospel accounts, but it forms the heart of the apostolic testimony throughout the book of Acts. Being a witness to the resurrection was a requirement for apostleship ([Acts 1:22](#)). That Christ was raised was at the crux of Peter's messages at Pentecost ([Acts 2:31-33](#)) and the Portico (3:15). It was central to the apostolic witness before the Jewish council ([Acts 4:10](#), [5:30](#)) and the summary of the apostolic witness ([Acts 4:33](#)). The resurrection was at the heart of the unifying message to the Gentiles ([Acts 10:40](#)) and Paul's missionary endeavors ([Acts 13:30-37](#), [17:3](#), [17:18](#), [17:31-32](#), [23:6](#), [24:15-21](#), [26:6-8](#), [26:23](#)). Again, without the resurrection, the book of Acts and the apostolic witness make no sense.

The testimony of the Apostles was not that God changes lives or that He loves you (as true as both of these are). The Apostles witnessed the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. They claimed to have seen, touched and heard from a man risen from the dead. He wasn't reincarnated. He wasn't a ghost. He wasn't merely resuscitated only to die again at some future time. He was resurrected, raised from the dead, clothed with a new body—incorruptible, imperishable, immortal.

The resurrection changes everything. It is a foretaste of the future—a vindication of Christ—and evidence that what is wrong will one day be made right.

A Gospel of Repentance

"Repent or face the fiery fury of a fierce God."

What do you think of when you hear that kind of message? Do you picture those wackos at Westboro who picket military funerals or the unwashed and unshaven man clinging to a sandwich board while yelling at pedestrians in Times Square?

Or do you picture Jesus?

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel" ([Mark 1:14-15](#)).

Acts picks up where the Gospels leave off, and the message of Jesus becomes the message of His Apostles: Repent, for heaven is here, and hell is coming.

Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus, whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago ([Acts 3:19-21](#)).

The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead ([Acts 17:30-31](#)).

The evangelical church does not like to talk about repentance. After all, it is politically incorrect to tell someone that they are depraved. But this only demonstrates the depths of the darkness into which we have plunged. And unless we understand how bad we are, we will never really understand how good God is.

The proper response to the gospel of resurrection is repentance. It is a call to lay down our arms, surrender to our Sovereign, humble ourselves, turn from sin and accept His peace treaty and all of its provisions.

Repentance as a Response to Resurrection

The Church was founded on the belief that the resurrection demonstrates the lordship of the Son of God. If Jesus has risen from the dead, then that historical fact is sufficient evidence that He is who He said He was. And if He is truly Lord and God, He has every right to claim absolute rule over every life. Slow down and read that sentence again, for it will truly change your life if you believe it. If Jesus is Lord, He has absolute and unbounded authority over all things—including you.

Jesus Christ has risen from the dead. Therefore, He is Lord. Therefore, He has the right to tell you what to do and what not to do with your body, money, leisure, marriage, family, possessions, speech, consumption, technology and time.

The good news of Christ's resurrection demands a response. It demands a life of repentance as we slowly but surely recognize that the reign of Christ is truly good news.

Recommended Resources:

Surprised by Hope N.T. Wright

The Doctrine of Repentance Thomas Watson

Repent and Believe the Gospel: Seven Minute Seminary (Brad Johnson)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cEsl6q7Ct-o> [Video]

Repentance Found? The Concept of Repentance in the Fourth Gospel (2013)

David A. Croteau, Ph.D. Liberty University

<https://www.tms.edu/m/msj24e.pdf> [PDF]

Advocates of No-Lordship theology often claim that since the terms “repent” and “repentance” are not found John’s Gospel this means that repentance is not required for a sinner to be saved. Yet such a view does not rightly consider that lack of a specific term does not mean that the concept is absent. A close look at the Fourth Gospel reveals that this Gospel does teach that repentance is a part of saving faith and without it salvation cannot occur.

“Repentance” Word Study

<http://www.freegraceresources.org/repentwordstudy.pdf> [PDF]

Is repentance necessary for salvation?

<https://bible.org/question/repentance-necessary-salvation>

Excerpt:

Emotions run high and opinions vary widely on this issue, but I'll share my convictions on this issue.

The word "repent" has to be understood within the context in which it is being used. In fact, very often, it should not even be translated "repent" because of the wrong preconditioned theological connotations this carries. It is a matter of what some would call, "illegitimate totality transfer." This occurs when the meaning of a word in one passage is carried over to every other place the word occurs. The Greek word for "repent" is *metanoia* (noun) or *metanoeo* (verb). It basically means a change of mind and the context must determine what is involved in that change of mind. In passages where salvation is in view it is equivalent to *believe* or *trust in* and involves a change of mind about any form of self-trust in human works, good deeds, religious tradition, etc. followed by a trust in the finished work of Christ which alone has the power to save us. It means a turning from self-trust to trust in Christ.

Believe and repent are never used together as if teaching two different requirements for salvation. When salvation from eternal condemnation is in view, repent (a change of mind) and believe are in essence used as synonyms. Lewis Chafer wrote:

Too often, when it is asserted—as it is here—that repentance is not to be added to belief as a separated requirement for salvation, it is assumed that repentance is not necessary to salvation. Therefore it is as dogmatically stated as language can declare, that repentance is essential to salvation and that none could be saved apart from repentance, but it is included in believing and cannot be separated from it (Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Vital Theological Issues*, Roy B. Zuck, General Editor, Kregel, Grand Rapids, 1994, p. 119).

Roy B. Zuck writes:

Repentance is included in believing. **Faith and repentance are like two sides of a coin. Genuine faith includes repentance, and genuine repentance includes faith.** The Greek word for repentance (*metanoia*) means to change one's mind. But to change one's mind about what? About sin, about one's adequacy to save himself, about Christ as the only way of salvation, the only One who can make a person righteous ("Kindred Spirit," a quarterly publication of Dallas Seminary, Summer 1989, p. 5).

In Luke's rendering of the Great Commission he uses repentance as a single requirement in the same sense as believing in Christ (Luke 24:46-47). As Dr. Ryrie says of this verse, "Clearly, repentance for the forgiveness of sins is connected to the death and resurrection of Christ." The repentance comes out of the recognition of one's sin, but the object of repentance is the person and work of Christ, or faith in Christ. Interestingly, in Luke 8:12 he uses believe alone, "Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved."

A comparison of other passages clearly supports the fact that repentance often stands for faith in the person and work of Christ. Compare Acts 10:43 with 11:17-18; 13:38-39 with 2:38. Also, note Acts 16:31 which uses "believe" alone.

The stated purpose of the Gospel of John is to bring men to faith in Christ (20:31), yet John never once uses the word repent, not once. If repentance, when used in connection with eternal salvation, is a separate or distinct requirement from faith in Christ, then John does not give the whole gospel. And if you can believe that, you can believe anything. Speaking of the absence of John's use of repent in his gospel, Ryrie writes:

And yet John surely had many opportunities to use it in the events of our Lord's life which he recorded. It would have been most appropriate to use *repent* or *repentance* in the account of the Lord's conversation with Nicodemus. But *believe* is the word used (John 3:12, 15). So, if Nicodemus needed to repent, *believe* must be a synonym; else how could the Lord have failed to use the word *repent* when talking to him? To the Samaritan harlot, Christ did not say repent. He told her to ask (John 4:10), and when her

testimony and the Lord's spread to other Samaritans, John recorded not that they repented but that they believed (vss. 39, 41-42). There are about fifty more occurrences of "believe" or "faith" in the Gospel of John, but not one use of "repent." The climax is John 20:31: "These have been written that you may believe . . . and that believing you may have life in His name." (Charles C. Ryrie, *So Great Salvation*, Victor Books, p. 98).

What about [Acts 20:21](#)? "... solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ." Some would say, "Doesn't this passage teach that faith and repentance are not synonymous and that repentance is a separate requirement?" No! Paul is summarizing his ministry in Ephesus and what he solemnly proclaimed to both Jews and Greeks, specifically, repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. The two words, *repentance* and *faith*, are joined by one article in the Greek text which indicates that the two are inseparable, though each focuses on a different aspect of the one requirement of salvation, namely, faith in Christ. We can legitimately translate it like this. "Solemnly testifying ... a change of mind about God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ." Repentance, *metanoia*, focuses on changing one's mind about his previous conception of God and disbelief in God or false beliefs (polytheism and idolatry) about God (see 1 Thess. 1:9). On the other hand, belief in Christ, as an expression of a change of mind, focuses on the new direction that change about God must take, namely, trusting in Christ, God's Son, as personal Savior.

It has also been suggested that in this summary Paul is emphasizing the distinction between the particular needs of Gentiles and Jews. Gentiles who were polytheistic needed to change their minds about their polytheism and realize that only one true God exists. Jews needed to change their minds about Jesus and realize that He is their true Messiah (Ryrie, p. 98).

Note: Of course, there is also a repentance needed in the Christian life in relation to specific sins (2 Cor. 7:9; Rev. 2:5) but this repentance has nothing to do with salvation (Matt. 21:28-30).

Regarding Acts 20:21: See [additional commentary](#) re: Paul's testifying

See also following resources by Dr. Bob Wilkin...

Repentance and Salvation: A Key Gospel Issue by [Robert \(Bob\) Wilkin](#) (1988)
<https://faithalone.org/magazine/y1988/88june4.html>

[Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society \(GES\):](#)
Repentance and Salvation by [Robert \(Bob\) Wilkin](#)

Part 1: The Doctrine of Salvation in Church History (1988)
<https://faithalone.org/journal-articles/repentance-and-salvation-part-1-the-doctrine-of-salvation-in-church-history/>

Alt: <https://faithalone.org/journal-articles/repentance-and-salvation-part-1-the-doctrine-of-salvation-in-church-history/>

Part 2: The Doctrine of Repentance in the Old Testament (1989)
<https://faithalone.org/journal/1989i/Wilkin.html>

Part 3: New Testament Repentance: Lexical Considerations (1989)
<https://faithalone.org/journal/1989ii/Wilkin.html>

Part 4: New Testament Repentance: Repentance in the Gospels and Acts (1990)
<https://faithalone.org/journal/1990i/wilkin.html>

Part 5: NT Repentance: Repentance in the Epistles and Revelation (1990)
<https://faithalone.org/journal/1990ii/wilkin.html>

Part 6: How to Communicate the Doctrine of Repentance Clearly (1991)
<https://faithalone.org/journal/1991i/wilkin.html>

No Second Repentance? (by Robert (Bob) Wilkin) (1992)
<https://faithalone.org/magazine/y1992/92july3.html>

Journal of the GES: Does Your Mind Need Changing? [Recommended]
Repentance Reconsidered (by Robert Wilkin) (1998) [This is update to 6-part series above]
<https://faithalone.org/journal/1998i/Wilkin.html>

[In this article Wilkin explains his progression in thinking from repentance being a “change of mind” (as in the articles from prior years above), to “repentance is not a requirement to obtain eternal life that must be added to faith alone. Repentance is also more than just a change of mind and involves work.” [See corresponding video that follows this article.]

Excerpt:

Paul's answer to the question, "What must I do to be saved?" was simple, straightforward, and clear: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:30-31). The Lord Jesus and His apostles were united on this point. There is but one condition of eternal salvation-faith in Christ (see John 3:16-18; 5:24; 6:47; 11:25-27; 20:31; Acts 10:43; Eph 2:8-9). Another way of saying this is that there is but one condition of justification before God-faith in Christ (see Rom 3:28; 4:1-8; Gal 2:16; 3:6-16). Justification is by faith alone-sola fide as the Reformers put it so succinctly in Latin.

Since eternal salvation is by faith alone, there are only three possibilities regarding the role of repentance in eternal salvation. The options are:

1. Repentance is a condition of eternal salvation since it is a synonym for faith in Christ. Thus "he who believes in Me has everlasting life" is identical to "he who repents has everlasting life."
2. Repentance is a condition of eternal salvation since it is a necessary precursor to faith in Christ. Thus one cannot believe in Christ until he first repents, that is, until he first recognizes his sinfulness and need of a Savior.
3. Repentance is not a condition of eternal salvation since repentance is neither a synonym for faith in Christ nor a necessary precursor to faith in Christ.

If we can determine what repentance is, then it will be clear which of these three possibilities is indeed correct. Let's turn now to the meaning of repentance.

III. What Is Repentance?

The meaning of words is determined by examining their usage. Thus, to determine the meaning of repentance, we need to look at the fifty-five NT uses of the words repent and repentance. Having done that, I have chosen three passages that clearly illustrate its meaning in all of its uses.

Jesus said to a Jewish audience, "The men of Ninevah will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here" (Matt 12:41).

Jesus was here rebuking the people of Israel, most of whom failed to repent even at the preaching of the Son of God! The men of Ninevah repented centuries earlier under the preaching of a much lesser prophet than Jesus. Jonah was a reluctant prophet. He didn't want the Ninevites to repent.

What the Lord Jesus means by repentance here is evident when we look at the repentance of the Ninevites in Jonah Chapter 3. In response to Jonah's proclamation of coming judgment, all of the people of Ninevah fasted and put on sackcloth (Jonah 3:5) and "turned from their evil way" (Jonah 3:10). The repentance of the Ninevites was not faith in Christ and it was not a necessary precursor to faith in Christ. They decided to turn from their sins because they hoped to escape the destruction of their city and the widespread loss of lives that Jonah had proclaimed ("who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away His fierce anger, so that we may not perish?"-Jonah 3:9).

The apostle John wrote prophetically about what will happen in the coming Tribulation: "And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts" (Rev 9:21). Once again, repentance is not faith in Christ or a necessary precursor to that, but it is a decision to turn from one's sinful ways, which the people in question did not do in spite of the terrible Tribulation judgments that they were experiencing from God.

Jesus taught the apostles about repentance when He said, "If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, 'I repent,' you shall forgive him" (Luke 17:4). Again, repentance here is neither faith in Christ, nor a necessary precursor to faith in Christ. It is a decision to turn from one's sins.

All fifty-five NT references to repentance bear this out. In each case repentance is a decision to turn from one's sins. It is never a synonym for faith in Christ or a necessary precursor to faith.

IV. Further Evidence That Repentance Isn't a Condition of Eternal Life

There are other compelling reasons to give up the belief that repentance is a condition of eternal life.

A. Repentance "Strikingly Absent" from Paul

One NT scholar wrote that whereas the Judaism of Paul's day emphasized the need to repent to get into the kingdom, the idea of repentance is "a category strikingly absent from Paul."⁸

Consider for example Gal 3:6-9:

Abraham "believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, "In you all the nations shall be blessed." So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.

Ten times in those four verses we find the words believe and faith. Not once do we find the words repent or repentance. In fact, those words are not to be found anywhere in the entire Epistle to the Galatians.

The Book of Galatians is a defense of the gospel against the attacks of the Judaizers. Paul argues that the gospel of Jesus Christ is foundational to the Christian life. There is no other gospel. It is indeed significant that repentance is absent in a book where Paul is presenting and defending the gospel message he received directly from the Lord. Surely if repentance were a part of Paul's gospel, he would have said so in his defense of his gospel in Galatians.

B. Repentance "Completely Absent" from John's Gospel

While repentance is "strikingly absent" from Paul's writings, it is "completely absent" from John's Gospel. But how can this be in a book whose primary stated purpose is evangelistic (John 20:31)?

It is not that John was unfamiliar with repentance. He was almost certainly a disciple of John the Baptist (see John 1:35-40) whom he had heard preach about repentance. He had seen John baptize people with his baptism of repentance. Later as a disciple of Jesus he no doubt heard Him call people to repentance many times. And John himself had much to say about repentance in the Book of Revelation, using the verb *metanoew* twelve times. Yet there is not a word about repentance in John's Gospel.

The obvious reason for John's omission is that repentance is not a condition of eternal life. Because of that, John took great care not to mention it.

That the only evangelistic book in the Bible fails to mention repentance is a smoking gun. It is a piece of evidence so clear and powerful that the prosecution can rest its case on this alone. Repentance is not a condition of eternal life.⁹

IV. Various Questions about Repentance

A. But Isn't the Change-of-Mind View Clear on the Gospel?

As one who held the change-of-mind view for a long time, I certainly agree that one can be clear on the gospel and hold that view. Many Free Grace people hold that view and find great comfort in it.

However, as I reflected on the way I presented the gospel when I held that view, I realized that I didn't bring up repentance. I told people that in order to have eternal life they simply had to believe in Christ. The only time I would discuss repentance with someone when witnessing would be when they brought it up. And I am far from alone in this. Many, if not most, who hold the change-of-mind view of repentance rarely mention repentance when sharing the gospel. Since believing in Christ is the sole condition of eternal salvation, it makes sense to tell people to believe.

I realized even when I held the change-of-mind view that there was a risk in even admitting to someone that they had to repent to have eternal life. Most people think of repentance as a decision to reform one's life. Thus if I would say that repentance is indeed a condition, they could quite easily reject my definition of repentance (as being clearly contradicted by the NT uses) and yet accept my conclusion that repentance is required for eternal salvation.

Therefore, while people holding the change-of-mind view may share the gospel quite clearly, often by not mentioning repentance at all, this does not mean that the change-of-mind view is correct. If it is incorrect, we should not continue to promote it, even if we find it easy to explain.¹⁰

B. But Didn't Jesus Say That Those Who Don't Repent Will Perish?

Yes, He did. In Luke 13:3, 5 He said, "Unless you repent you will all likewise perish." However, the word perish does not always refer to eternal condemnation (though it does, for example, in John 3:16). In many contexts it refers to temporal judgment and death.¹¹ That is surely the case here, as the context makes

crystal clear. Notice the word likewise in the statement by the Lord. The occasion for Jesus' remark was that some "told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices" (Luke 13:1). In other words, Pilate killed some worshipers. Perishing in Luke 13:3, 5 refers to physical destruction and death. And, in fact, Israel did not repent and experienced destruction and death during the Jewish Wars of 66-70 A.D.

C. Doesn't the Parable of the Prodigal Son Teach That Repentance Is Necessary for Eternal Salvation?

While many understand it in precisely that way, the context suggests a completely different interpretation. A fact most fail to take into account is that the prodigal was a son of his father before he went to the far country, while he was in the far country, and when he returned from the far country. He didn't become a son when he repented. Rather, by repenting this son came back into fellowship with his father.

Since the father in the parable surely represents God, the prodigal son illustrates a child of God who has strayed and who needs to repent to get back in fellowship with God.¹² Whenever a believer is out of fellowship, God waits with open arms to take him back, if he comes to his senses.

D. But Doesn't the Great Commission in Luke Include the Preaching of Repentance?

Yes. In Luke 24:47 the Lord said "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." However, we must remember the Great Commission was not merely a commission to evangelize. It was also a commission to disciple those who believe. In fact, in some expressions of the Great Commission the Lord only spoke of discipleship.

In Matt 28:18-20 the Lord told the disciples to make disciples by baptizing them and teaching them to observe all that He had taught them. We don't conclude from that, do we, that baptism and discipleship instruction are conditions of eternal life? In the same way, the Great Commission in Luke concerns discipleship. Repentance is indeed a condition of fellowship with God and of the forgiveness associated with that fellowship (e.g., Luke 5:32; 15:4-32). We know from 1 John 1:9 as well that all believers need ongoing fellowship forgiveness from God. While we are completely forgiven at the moment of regeneration positionally (Acts 10:43), we need ongoing forgiveness in our experience.¹³

E. But Didn't Paul Say That Repentance Leads to Salvation?

Yes, he did. In 2 Cor 7:10 Paul wrote, "godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation." However, we must observe the context to see what type of "salvation" or deliverance is in view. Paul was speaking of the deliverance of believers from temporal judgment, not of the deliverance of unbelievers from eternal judgment. Those whom Paul was addressing were "beloved" (v 1). He wrote them a previous letter rebuking them for tolerating blatant sin in their midst. Paul said, "even if I made you sorry with my letter, I do not regret it." Why? "Because your sorrow led to repentance...that you might not suffer loss in anything. For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death."

Paul's point is that if a person is sorry for his sins, but doesn't repent, then he is on the path of death. God judges unrepentant sin. Sorrow for sin won't win any release from the punishment. However, the person who is both sorry for his sin and repents is on the path of life. God delivers him from ongoing temporal judgment, just as He delivered the Ninevites from judgment when they repented.

F. But Didn't Both John the Baptist and Jesus Say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand"?

Yes, they did. Compare Matt 3:2 and 4:17. However, it is wrong to conclude that what they meant was that in order for an individual to enter God's kingdom, he or she must repent.

John the Baptist and Jesus were preaching to national Israel. They were calling the entire nation to repent in light of the nearness of the kingdom.

God has given only one condition for individuals to enter God's kingdom—faith in Christ. However, He has given two conditions for the kingdom to come to the nation of Israel: faith in Christ and repentance. Jesus stated both of these conditions in Mark 1:15, "Repent and believe in the gospel."

Someday national Israel will indeed respond properly to the commands to repent and believe in the gospel. At the end of the Tribulation the nation of Israel will be made up of believers who are in fellowship with God. If Israel had responded by believing in the Messiah and by repenting of its sins when it heard the preaching of Jesus and John the Baptist, then the kingdom could have come to national Israel then, rather than later.

V. What Are the Benefits of Repentance?

The passages we have considered show that repentance has a number of benefits to the believer, and to the unbeliever as well.

First, both the believer and the unbeliever may escape temporal judgment if they repent. Second, gaining fellowship with God, and the attendant blessings that come with it, is something that only a believer can experience. However, a repentant unbeliever may be more likely to come to faith in Christ and then he too can gain fellowship with God and the attendant blessings.

For example, suppose a person is lost and decides that he wants to turn to God. He stops going to bars and disassociates from his drinking buddies. He buys a Bible and begins reading it daily. He starts visiting churches in his area, looking for one that teaches the Bible. He asks friends whom he knows are churchgoers to give him some pointers on how to get closer to God.

While none of these things are necessary to be saved, they may well lead to the person hearing and believing the gospel.

Now admittedly a well-intentioned person might start looking in all the wrong places. He may visit cults. He may listen to those who proclaim a false gospel, and he may think his decision to turn from his sins to God is necessary to go to heaven. However, if the person is truly seeking God, God will eventually show him that what he is listening to is false and will lead him to the true gospel (Acts 10; Heb 11:6).

Third, the national repentance of Israel is a condition of the kingdom coming. While an individual is guaranteed kingdom entrance by faith in Christ alone, the kingdom will not come for Israel until the nation as a whole believes in Jesus Christ and repents. That is why both John the Baptist and Jesus were calling the nation to repentance and faith.

In summary, repentance is for believers and unbelievers. It can occur before or after regeneration. It can even aid a person in coming to faith in Christ. However, repentance is not a condition of eternal life.

VI. Conclusion

If one tells a person that in order to be saved he needs to believe in Christ and to repent, no matter how one defines repentance, a fuzz factor is introduced in the gospel presentation. The person will have difficulty understanding and believing the gospel. A mist in the pulpit is a fog in the pew. If some lack of clarity exists in a gospel presentation, the listener may well be in a fog.

The solution is simple: tell unbelievers to believe in Christ for eternal life, and tell believers to repent of their sins in order to be in fellowship with God. Don't confuse the two. The former is justification. The latter is progressive sanctification.

When you are talking with unbelievers, don't be afraid to ask them to read the Bible, pray, or go to church. Don't be afraid to ask them to decide to turn from their sinful ways. While those things are not conditions of eternal life, they are ways in which a person might come to understand and believe the gospel.

When telling someone what they must do to be saved, why not give the biblical answer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved"? If it was good enough for the apostles and the Lord Jesus, it should be good enough for us as well.

⁸James D. G. Dunn, "The Justice of God: A Renewed Perspective on Justification by Faith," *Journal of Theological Studies*, New Series, 43 (April 1992): 7.

⁹At the conference some objected that this is an argument from silence and that arguments from silence prove nothing. However, as Zane Hodges has since pointed out in a newsletter article (*Grace in Focus*, May-June, 1998), this is really an argument about

silence and it proves much.

¹⁰As one who has held both views, I now see that the idea that the change-of-mind view is easy to explain is not quite right. It is hard to convince someone that repentance is a change of mind about Christ when so many (actually all) NT passages clearly contradict that definition. Actually the view of repentance advocated here is much easier to explain and is much simpler.

¹¹This is true as well in 2 Pet 3:9, "God wishes that none should perish, but that all should come to repentance." That isn't talking about eternal condemnation. The only other use of the word perish in 2 Peter occurs three verses earlier and there it unequivocally refers to the physical death that occurred when God sent a worldwide flood upon Noah's generation: "by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water."

¹²The older brother thus also represents a believer, since he too is a son. However, he represents a legalistic (Pharisaic) believer who takes offense at God rejoicing in the return of an errant son.

¹³Acts 2:38 and 22:16 are both best understood in this way as well. For example, Peter's audience at Pentecost believed in Jesus as the Messiah as indicated in v 37, "they were cut to the heart." When they asked "What shall we do?" they were not asking how they could be saved eternally; they were asking how they could be saved temporally from God's wrath which should have fallen upon those who said, "His blood be on us and on our children" (Matt 27:25). For further information on this interpretation, see Lanny Tanton's articles on Acts 2:38 (*JOTGES*, Spring 1990: 27-52) and Acts 22:16 (*JOTGES*, Spring 1991: 23-40).

¹⁴I have received a number of letters and calls from people who are upset that I have abandoned the change-of-mind view. To all such people I wish to say that I personally understand their angst. I held the change-of-mind view for years, even writing a doctoral dissertation defending it. When confronted with the view that I now advocate, I was skeptical. However, I have always considered Acts 17:11 to be a vitally important attitude to have: "These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so." After following that admonition, I changed my thinking about repentance.

Wilkin - Repentance - Does your mind need changing? (1998)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r3qtC2R52Uo> [Video]

GES Conference 1998 on Repentance - Does your mind need changing? Bob Wilkin shows that repentance is not a requirement to obtain eternal life that must be added to faith alone. Repentance is also more than just a change of mind and involves work. (Coincides with above article)

Wilkin - Repentance in John's Gospel p1 (1998)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h1k6oEPxIfc> [Video]

This is follow-up lecture to above video (and was mentioned in that video)

Wilkin - Repentance - Repentance in Luke-Acts (1998)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bTEkTITSXVg> [Video]

This is follow-up lecture to the above video (and was mentioned in that video).

Bible.org: Repentance and Salvation – David N. Wilkin (GES) (2004/1988) [Recommended]

<https://bible.org/series/repentance-and-salvation>

- [1. The Doctrine of Repentance in Church History](#)
- [2. The Doctrine of Repentance In the Old Testament](#)
- [3. New Testament Repentance: Lexical Considerations](#)
- [4. New Testament Repentance: Repentance in the Gospels and Acts](#)
- [5. New Testament Repentance: Repentance in the Epistles and Revelation](#)

Wilkin - Beware of confusion about faith (Dr. Bob Wilkin) (2011) [Recommended]

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gm_rLsIAwBU [Video]

Note: In the beginning of lecture he references [James White](#)'s comments about him (see their previous debate below)

Dr. Bob Wilkin delivered this message at the GES2005 conference. He explains how that since faith is how we are saved, confusion about faith is the most serious error possible. You cannot be saved, nor can you grow as a Christian, if you are confused about how a person gets saved.

Debate: Regeneration and Perseverance (James White vs Bob Wilkin) (2005)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jOHg1FhyGOs> [Video]

Part I -- Regeneration and the *ordo salutis*: Does regeneration come before faith?

Track 1 - Introductions

Track 2 - Dr. White Affirmative (20 min)

Track 3 - Dr. Wilkin Negative (20 min)

Track 4 - Dr. White Rejoinder (10 min)

Track 5 - Dr. Wilkin Rejoinder (10 min)

Part II -- Perseverance as the evidence of saving faith: Resolved that works are (or are not) an indispensable element of true faith

Track 6 - Dr. Wilkin Negative (15 min)

Track 7 - Dr. White Affirmative (15 min)

Track 8 - Dr. Wilkin Rejoinder (10 min)

Track 9 - Dr. White Rejoinder (10 min)

Part III -- Question & Answer

Track 10 - Question & Answer

Part IV -- Summary

Track 11 - Dr. White (5 min)

Track 12 - Dr. Wilkin (5 min)

(2hrs 20 min)

Do We Have to Repent in order to be Saved? (Dr. Bob Wilkin) (2012)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EZH8Z8QLMGik>

<https://faithalone.org/video/do-we-have-to-repent-in-order-to-be-saved/>

Is Repentance the Flip Side of Faith? (by Robert (Bob) Wilkin) (2016)

<https://faithalone.org/blog/is-repentance-the-flip-side-of-faith/>

Excerpt:

It is often said that repentance is the flip side of faith. Imagine that there is a coin and the front side is faith and the back side is repentance. In this illustration you need the entire coin, front and back, in order to be born again. Repentance plus faith are said to be co-conditions of regeneration.

But wait? Where do we read in the Bible that repentance is the flip side of faith? We do not. There is not a single verse anywhere which says that.

Where in the Bible do we read that there are two conditions of the new birth, repentance and faith, not one, faith? Nowhere. As Lewis Sperry Chafer, the founder of Dallas Theological Seminary famously loved to say, there are over 150 places in the Bible which teach that the one and only condition of regeneration is faith in Christ.

What I find amazingly inconsistent is the preacher who says, "Justification is by faith alone!" and then within a sentence or two he says, "So if you turn from your sins and believe in Christ you will be justified." They don't seem to recognize that the just contradicted themselves. Nor, in many cases, do their listeners. We've heard for so long that justification is by faith alone and justification is by faith plus repentance that many of us have come to accept that as reasonable.

The purpose of John's Gospel is to lead his unbelieving readers to faith in Christ that they would have everlasting life as John 20:30-31 shows. Yet the words *repent* and *repentance* are not used even once in John's Gospel. The Lord Jesus began His ministry calling Israel to repent in light of the nearness of the kingdom (Matt 4:17). He often taught on repentance. Yet the Apostle John never cites any of His repentance teaching. Why? Because Jesus' repentance teaching was not about what one must do to have everlasting life. He taught that repentance was a condition for escaping temporal judgment. And He taught that the national repentance of Israel was a condition of Him ushering in the kingdom. But the Lord taught that the sole condition of the new birth is faith in Him, as John 3:16 and a host of other passages in John clearly show (e.g., 4:10-14; 5:24, 39-40; 6:35, 37, 39-40, 47; 11:25-27).

In his letter to the Galatians Paul defended justification by faith alone apart from works (Gal 2:16; 3:6-14; 5:4). He repeatedly indicated that the sole condition of justification is faith in Christ. Guess how many times Paul mentioned *repent* and *repentance* in Galatians. Zero. Not once in his defense of his gospel did Paul even mention repentance.

If justification is by faith alone, then it is by faith alone. If justification is by faith plus repentance, then it is not by faith alone. That is obvious.

Repentance is one thing and faith is something else. They are not joined. It is possible to repent and yet not believe. Witness the many atheists in AA who haven't had a drink in years. It is possible to believe and not to repent. Witness the sad reports of pastors of Bible-believing churches who are found to have been involved in long-term affairs. It is possible to repent and later to believe. Witness Cornelius in Acts 10. It is possible to believe, walk in fellowship with the Lord for years, and then fall away and later repent. Witness the prodigal son of Luke 15.

The next time you hear someone say that repentance is the flip side of faith, I hope you will realize that what he is saying is patently false.

To Repent or Not to Repent: John's Doctrine of Repentance (Zane C Hodge) (1998)

<https://faithalone.org/blog/to-repent-or-not-to-repent-johns-doctrine-of-repentance/>

Repentance Versus the Heresies of Curtis Hutson & Jack Hyles

(Review by Robert Wilkin) (1996)

<https://faithalone.org/journal-articles/book-reviews/repentance-versus-the-heresies-of-curtis-hutson-jack-hyles/>

Excerpt:

Having written my doctoral dissertation on repentance and salvation, I read this booklet with keen interest. As the title suggests, this booklet could hardly be described as irenic; it is a strong attack on the Free Grace view of the gospel.

Its thesis is that faith alone is not sufficient to save anyone. According to Rasmussen, sorrow for sin and turning from sins are also required for salvation.

This raises a problem for anyone who believes in justification by faith alone. How can justification be by faith alone if remorse and "abandonment of sin" (p. 13) are also required? However, seemingly unaware that what he is saying contradicts justification by faith alone, Rasmussen rebukes the late Dr. Hutson for

teaching that faith and repentance are synonyms. Hutson advocated the change-of-mind view also held by such men as Drs. Lewis Sperry Chafer and Charles C. Ryrie. Rasmussen directly states that “faith and repentance are not the same” (p. 19, though no page numbers appear in the booklet). Clearly there can be no other conclusion than that for Rasmussen there are at least two (or even three) conditions of salvation: 1) faith, and 2) remorse over—and turning from—one’s sins. Faith isn’t enough. Nor are faith and remorse enough (see p. 13). All three are required.

Rasmussen doesn’t say, but one wonders which sins must be abandoned? How would a person seeking salvation know what he or she had to give up in order to be saved? Should we carry around a list of the sins which must be forsaken? If so, where do we get this list? Does the Bible contain a list of sins that must be forsaken to gain the free gift of eternal life? Logically, if sins must be abandoned, then *all* sins must be abandoned. That would include both sins of commission—things we do which we are commanded *not* to do (such as lying, cheating, stealing, coveting, being jealous, having outbursts of anger, etc.) and sins of omission—things we fail to do but are *commanded* to do (such as praying without ceasing, giving, loving our neighbor as ourselves, owing no man anything, loving your wife as Christ loves the church, submitting to your husband, etc.).

There are many biblical difficulties inherent in the view that one must abandon his sins in order to gain eternal salvation—none of which is answered in the booklet. According to the Gospel of John, the only book in the Bible whose express purpose is evangelistic (John 20:31), the only condition of eternal life is believing in Jesus. Repentance isn’t mentioned even once.

Jesus didn’t tell the woman at the well in John 4:17-18ff that she needed to be sorry for her sins, or that she needed to resolve to give them up. Nor did John indicate that she was sorry, or that she determined to turn from her sins.

Likewise in Acts 15:7-11; 16:30-31 and Ephesians 2:8-9 there is no mention of remorse or turning from sins. Salvation is not of works, lest anyone should boast.

If even one passage in Scripture clearly shows that a person is saved by faith alone, apart from remorse or turning from sins (and many do), then we can be sure that faith is the only requirement, since Scripture is without error and doesn’t contradict itself.

This booklet contains three citations from seventeenth century Baptist creeds which adopt the view that to be saved one must have remorse for his sins and must either resolve to amend his life or else actually endeavor to do so. While this is interesting, I wonder what it proves. The issue, which surely Rasmussen would agree with, is what the Scriptures teach, not the Council of Trent, Vatican II, the Westminster Confession of Faith, or the Second London Confession of 1688 (one of the Baptist Creeds Rasmussen cites). Even if every Baptist who ever lived held Rasmussen’s view—and thank God they have not—if the Scriptures don’t teach that view, then it must be rejected.

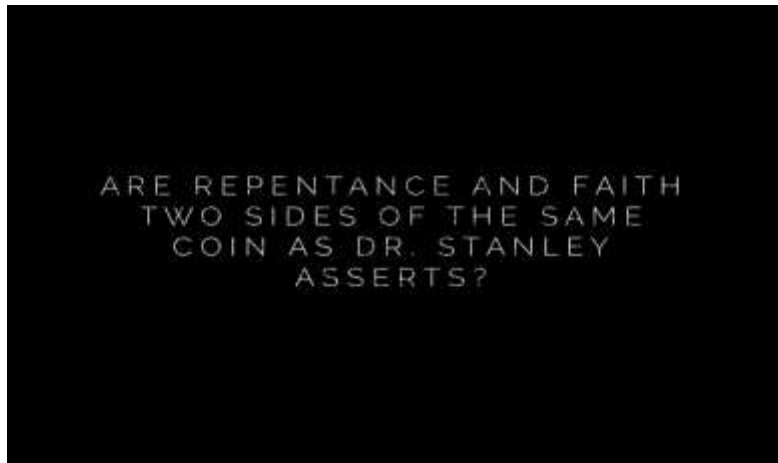
Herein lies the major weakness of Rasmussen’s presentation: The author devotes only about one page (part of pp. 15 and 16) in an effort to show that his position is biblical. Interestingly, in none of the limited passages he cites is salvation even mentioned! The closest is Luke 13:3, which says, “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” That text in no way proves Rasmussen’s view. In the first place, some commentators feel that Jesus was speaking of perishing physically. Jesus may well have been promising that, apart from national repentance, Israel would fall and be removed from the promised land and many Jews would die. (This is what happened in the Jewish Wars of A.D. 66-70.) In the second place, even if this is referring to individuals and eternal condemnation, one must still determine what Jesus meant here by “repent” (*metanoō*). Rasmussen fails to show contextual evidence that it doesn’t mean “change of mind regarding Christ,” as Hutson and Hyles would presumably argue. In fact, he merely cites the verse and moves on, with not a word of comment about it.

Rasmussen would like for *Sword of the Lord* to adopt his view of the gospel. Fortunately, that isn’t likely to happen, since *Sword of the Lord* has long stood for the clear gospel, the free gift of eternal life received by faith alone in Christ alone.

Charles Stanley's Confusing Comments on Repentance and Salvation, In Touch Ministries Broadcast, July 7, 2016 – Review by Bob Wilkin

<https://faithalone.org/blog/charles-stanleys-confusing-comments-on-repentance-and-salvation-in-touch-broadcast-july-7-2016/>

Excerpt:



A friend called me just before 10AM today: "You've got to listen to Dr. Charles Stanley on his broadcast today. I want your feedback."

I was interested to learn that Dr. Stanley spoke on repentance, the subject of my doctoral dissertation. I found his comments to be confusing, to say the least. Worst yet, Dr. Stanley, long known as a champion of the grace of God (e.g., see his book *Eternal Security: Can You Be Sure?*), here advocates Lordship Salvation.

The message only lasts for 19 minutes. I recommend you listen to it and then come back to my review of it. ([Charles Stanley's message may be found here.](#)) The numbers in parentheses below indicate the time in the message, minutes and seconds, where he said something.

Here is his thesis:

1. To believe in Jesus (John 3:16; Eph 2:8-9; etc.) "involves and includes repentance" (9:15-10:10). He argues that the reason why repentance is not found in places like John's Gospel is because the readers of John and the rest of the New Testament understood that *whoever believes in Him* means *whoever believes in Him and repents of his sins* (10:15-12:20).
2. To repent is 1) to have "heartfelt sorrow for sin" and 2) to make "a commitment to forsake sin and to walk in obedience to Christ" (5:25-33).
3. A person who truly believes and truly repents will live a changed life (8:40ff; 10:55ff.; 12:10ff; 14:28ff.). If a person's life does not give evidence of change, then he is not yet born again. This was a major emphasis in his message. He argues that there is no assurance apart from clear evidence of a transformed life.
4. While we must make a commitment to forsake our sin and to walk in obedience to Christ, we can't clean up our own lives (13:45ff; 17:50ff.). It is the Holy Spirit who cleans up our lives and who changes our lives.

Aside from point four, Dr. Stanley lays out the message of Lordship Salvation. In fact, many who hold to Lordship Salvation even embrace what he is saying in point four.

His entire message is based on flawed understandings of words and of Scripture. I could write a whole book refuting what he says in this 19 minute message. But I will spare you and just give you a few key observations/refutations.

1. The fact that repentance is not found in John's Gospel, the only evangelistic book in Scripture (John 20:30-31) or in Paul's letter to the Galatians, his defense of the gospel of grace (Gal 1:6-19; 2:16; 3:6-14), shows that repentance is not a condition of everlasting life. No first century reader of John or Galatians or the New Testament would have thought that.
2. When Jesus spoke to a notoriously sinful woman (John 4), He did not once tell her that she needed to be sorry for her sin or that she had to turn from her sin or that she had to commit to obey Him. Instead, He simply called her to faith in Him. If Stanley is correct, then the Lord Jesus shared a false message with the woman at a well. In addition, the Apostle John fails to tell us if the woman stopped living in sin. If a changed life is guaranteed and required, then why do we not learn whether she repented or not?
3. When Jesus asks Martha, "Do you believe this?" (John 11:26), He is not asking her if she has heartfelt sorrow for her sin or if she has made a commitment to forsake her sin and to walk in obedience. He is asking her if she is convinced that what He just said (John 11:25-26a) is true. Likewise, "whoever believes in Him" in John 3:16 refers to believing in Him for the everlasting life He promises, not to sorrow for sin or a commitment to turn from sin and to obey Christ.
4. There is no guarantee in Scripture that a person who is born again will live a life that is so changed that anyone can see the transformation. The verse which Stanley cites, 2 Cor 5:17, does not say that if anyone is in Christ *he is* a new creation. The words "he is" are not in the Greek. The context suggests that Paul is saying "*there is* a new creation." The "all things" that have changed are not the behavior of the believer, for that would mean sinless perfection, but a new world in which there are those who believe who have everlasting life and are our brothers and sisters and those who do not believe and who lack everlasting life and are not our spiritual brethren (see 2 Cor 5:16, 19-20).
5. Stanley's constant citing the need to have a changed life in order to be sure that you are born again actually makes certainty impossible. Unless sinless perfection is possible, and it is not (1 John 1:8, 10), then the lives of believers are imperfect. Assurance cannot be found in our works because our works are flawed. Stanley is basically moving his listeners toward despair, not toward assurance.

I love Dr. Stanley's book *Eternal Security* and I've enjoyed his preaching over the years. Sadly, I did not enjoy his message on repentance today. Today Dr. Stanley missed the mark.

False and True Repentance (Luke 3:7-14)

<https://bible.org/seriespage/lesson-12-false-and-true-repentance-luke-37-14>

Excerpt:

There are three possible responses to a straightforward message like John's: Some will be offended and walk away without any repentance. They will face God's coming wrath. Others will be superficially repentant. They will put on the cosmetics of outward change, but they won't honestly face the corruption of their hearts. They, too, will face God's coming wrath, probably with great surprise. The third response is to be truly repentant, to realize the sinfulness of your heart, to turn to God and appeal to Him for a new heart and a clean conscience through the blood of Christ. These will go on to grow the fruits of repentance.

Regret, Remorse, or Repentance? (2 Corinthians 7:10)

<http://www.bible.ca/ef/expository-2-corinthians-7-10.htm>

Excerpt:

Wiersbe suggests that a distinction can be made between regret, remorse and repentance. Regret is that activity of the mind (intellect) that causes us to say, “Why did I do that?” Remorse touches us a little deeper causing us to feel disgust and pain (involving both the intellect and the heart), but not causing us to change our ways. True repentance brings in the third aspect of our minds – our will. To truly repent one must have a change of will. “Godly sorrow” is the catalyst that brings us to true repentance.

What is repentance and is it necessary for salvation?

<https://www.gotquestions.org/repentance.html>

Excerpt:

Repentance and faith can be understood as “two sides of the same coin.” It is impossible to place your faith in Jesus Christ as the Savior without first changing your mind about who He is and what He has done. Whether it is repentance from willful rejection or repentance from ignorance or disinterest, it is a change of mind. Biblical repentance, in relation to salvation, is changing your mind from rejection of Christ to faith in Christ.

It is crucially important that we understand repentance is not a work we do to earn salvation. No one can repent and come to God unless God pulls that person to Himself ([John 6:44](#)). [Acts 5:31](#) and [11:18](#) indicate that repentance is something God gives—it is only possible because of His grace. No one can repent unless God grants repentance. All of salvation, including repentance and faith, is a result of God drawing us, opening our eyes, and changing our hearts. God's longsuffering leads us to repentance ([2 Peter 3:9](#)), as does His kindness ([Romans 2:4](#)).

While repentance is not a work that earns salvation, repentance unto salvation does result in works. It is impossible to truly and fully change your mind without that causing a change in action. In the Bible, repentance results in a change in behavior. That is why John the Baptist called people to “produce fruit in keeping with repentance” ([Matthew 3:8](#)). A person who has truly repented from rejection of Christ to faith in Christ will give evidence of a changed life ([2 Corinthians 5:17](#); [Galatians 5:19-23](#); [James 2:14-26](#)). Repentance, properly defined, is necessary for salvation. Biblical repentance is changing your mind about Jesus Christ and turning to God in faith for salvation ([Acts 3:19](#)). Turning from sin is not the definition of repentance, but it is one of the results of genuine, faith-based repentance towards the Lord Jesus Christ.

VW: Repentance vs Faith

<http://a-voice.org/portions/10-07-07.htm>

Repentance vs Faith

http://www.4himnet.com/bnyberg/The_Free_Grace_Gospel-Repentance_vs_Faith-Nyberg.pdf [PDF]

The Gospel and Repentance

<https://www.christiantruth.com/articles/gospelrepentance.html>

Excerpt:

Repentance and faith are separate concepts. But while they are distinct and different, we cannot separate them in the application and appropriation of salvation. True faith always involves repentance and true repentance always involves faith. Both to be preached when calling men to Christ. John Calvin taught that there could be no separating them...

Repentance...The Missing Message

<http://inplainsite.org/html/repentance.html>

Excerpt:

The New Testament Words "Repent" and "Repentance" are Explicitly Linked to Sin

The two words *metanoia* (repentance) and *metanoeo* (repent) collectively occur close to sixty times in the New Testament. At least half the occurrences **explicitly** link repentance to sin.

John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. (Mark 1:4 NASB)

So he began saying to the crowds who were going out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? "Therefore bear fruits in keeping with repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father,' for I say to you that from these stones God is able to raise up children to Abraham. (Luke 3:7-8 NASB) **Note:** The wrath to come is God's judgment against sin

"I have not come to call the righteous but sinner to repentance." (Luke 5:32 NASB)

"I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance. (Luke 15:7 NASB)

"Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38 NASB)

"Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; (Acts 3:19 NASB)

"He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. (Acts 5:31 NASB)

"Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours, and pray the Lord that, if possible, the intention of your heart may be forgiven you. (Acts 8:22 NASB)

"Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead." (Acts 17:30-31 NASB)

There is no salvation without forgiveness for sin, and **there is no forgiveness for sin without repentance**. Therefore, repentance is an **indispensable** part of the Gospel. Any so called Gospel message that does not include true Biblical repentance cannot be counted as the gospel at all. It is insufficient to save.

What Biblical Repentance Isn't

Pulling Up Your Socks Is Not Repentance: It certainly isn't unknown for people to turn over a new leaf.. to reform themselves. Alcoholics have stopped drinking, thieves have become honest citizens and prostitutes have become exemplary wives and mothers. This in itself is not Biblical repentance. Those that understand the term repentance to mean 'turning from sin', have the cart before the horse. Turning from sin is a result of genuine repentance.

Sorrow For Wrongdoing isn't Repentance: There are many people who feel genuine remorse for wrongs they have committed, have a real desire to change and make an often, a heroic effort to turn over

a new leaf. Some succeed admirably and go on to lead worthy lives. However, while this is certainly more than commendable, it is **not** repentance as outlined in the Scriptures, simply because people who are simply penitent for something wrong that they have done, do not usually come to God seeking forgiveness.

That true Biblical repentance is different from remorse for wrongdoing is emphasized in Paul's second letter to the Corinthians. He wrote that he was glad that a previous letter from him (in which he had chastised them for various wrong doings) produced repentance that led to salvation. He then added that the sorrow of the world produces death. (2 Corinthians 7:9-10) Biblical Repentance is completely **God centered**, and involves a totally changed life.

Confession Is Not Repentance: Simply admitting to God we have made a mistake, and vowing not to repeat the same mistake again does not constitute repentance. King Saul was a perfect Old Testament example of this. He claimed to have sinned and even, on at least one occasion, asked pardon for his sin. However his actions did not change (1 Samuel 15:24-25; 24:17; 26:21).

A second example was the Pharaoh after the 7th plague of hail and fire came upon Egypt (Exodus 9:22-27, 33-34), sparing the land of Goshen where the Israelites lived. Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "I have sinned this time; the Lord is the righteous one, and I and my people are the wicked ones" (V. 27). However this was certainly not repentance since, when the hail ceased, Pharaoh "sinned yet more; and he hardened his heart, he and his servants" (V. 34). He refused to let Israel go."

Avoiding Wrong Doing For Fear of The Consequences is Not Repentance: Adjusting our life-style, speech and conduct so as to look better in the eyes of others, or to avoid consequences does not equate to real repentance. We may have simply changed from being openly obvious sinners to hypocrites. Actually the prisons are full of people who fall into this category... they are very sorry they got caught, but if released would just go out and do it again.

NOTE: Since sin is defined as anything that falls short of the perfection of God, we probably sin far more than we ever imagined possible and are thus squarely in the cross hairs of God's justice. This knowledge should be enough to make us realize how much in need of a savior we are, and lead us to the forgiveness bought for us by Christ's death on the cross.

But we can **never forget** that repentance and salvation go hand in hand. Tragically, the word repentance is scarcely ever heard in most churches today. Instead the message heard from too many pulpits has been watered down to just 'believe' and you'll be saved. Yet repentance is presented as an **absolute requirement** for forgiveness in the Old Testament, as well as in the New. Scripture presents Repentance and Faith as two sides of the same coin. In short, you can't believe without truly repenting.

Ref: <http://inplainsite.org/html/sin.html>

Chapter 7: Repentance (Sample)

<https://faithalone.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/ten-sample.pdf> [PDF]

Justification by Faith Alone, Plus Repentance and Good Works

<https://faithalone.org/blog/justification-by-faith-alone-plus-repentance-and-good-works/>

Excerpt:

It would be humorous except that this happens all the time and it is intentional.

A preacher says, "Justification is by faith alone, apart from works. All you need to do is believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and He instantly justifies you. So if you repent and believe and then persevere in good works until death, then He will declare you to be righteous."

Surely I'm making that up. No one would so blatantly contradict himself. If justification is by faith alone, then it is not by faith plus something else.

But listen to Wayne Grudem. He says, "Justification by faith alone has been a primary belief of the Protestants since the time of Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation" (*Free Grace Theology: 5 Ways It Diminishes the Gospel*, p. 19). But then he goes on to affirm that "other human actions necessarily accompany faith (such as repentance from sin or doing good works after we are justified)" (5 Ways, p. 20).



Similarly John MacArthur affirms justification by faith alone (*The Gospel According to Jesus*, p. 14; see also pp. 194-201), but says that "As we have seen repeatedly, the gospel according to Jesus is as much a call to forsake sin as it is a summons to faith" (*The Gospel*, p. 176). He also says, "The validation of salvation is a life of obedience. It is the only possible proof that a person really knows Jesus Christ. If one does not obey Christ as a pattern of life, then professing to know Him is an empty verbal exercise" (*The Gospel*, p. 217).

John Piper says, "The connection between the sinner and the Savior is trust, not improvement of behavior. That comes later" ("Justification by Faith," at DesiringGod.org). When he says that "improvement of behavior...comes later," he has just pulled the great switch. Justification is by faith alone. But works must *come later* for justification to be valid.

In another article Piper says, "Faith is distinct from its fruit, the obedience of faith, yet faith is of such a nature that it must and will produce love for people and a life of genuine, though imperfect, holiness in this world. Therefore, as the Westminster Confession of Faith (11.2) says, the faith that alone justifies (as the instrument which unites us to Christ, not as the ground or content of our justifying righteousness) is never alone" ("What do you believe about Justification by Faith Alone?" at DesiringGod.org). If the faith that justifies "is never alone," then justification is not by faith alone, but by faith plus works.

That isn't just confusing. That is straight up contradiction.

Either justification is by faith alone or it is not by faith alone. It can't be by faith alone and not by faith alone. That is logically impossible.

Let's say that Harvard said that *the sole* requirement to get into its undergrad program was to have an SAT score of 1,500 or higher. Could the school proclaim that and then say, "A true 1,500 SAT score always results in a crime-free lifestyle. Thus if someone who received over 1,500 on his SAT has been found guilty of a crime(s), then he is not qualified for Harvard because he did not get a true 1,500 score"? Of course not. That would be silly. Anyone who had an SAT score of 1,500 or more would be admitted. Period. End of story. Because that's the sole condition.

Now no school has a one-condition only requirement for entrance into its academic family. They all consider grades, SAT scores, extra-curricular activities, integrity, ethnicity, gender, political views, and so on.

But God does have a one-condition only requirement for entrance into His family!

Since most people think that is too easy, they change the requirement into requirements. Typically they add two things: turning from sins on the front end and a life of good works on the back end.

I will close with just four major problems with this practice: 1) it contradicts God's Word (a very bad idea); 2) It makes assurance of our eternal destiny impossible prior to death (another very bad idea); 3) It gives us grounds for boasting (contra Eph 2:8-9, another terrible idea); and 4) it does not make sense, no matter how you try to explain it (a terrible thing when it comes to evangelism and discipleship).

The Trinity Foundation: When Protestants Err on the Side of Rome

<http://www.trinityfoundation.org/journal.php?id=335> (Downloadable as a PDF)

Repentance by William Wenstrom

http://www.wenstrom.org/downloads/written/doctrines/spiritual_life/repentance.pdf [PDF]

Excerpt:

Our study has revealed that repentance, whether for the non-believer or a believer has nothing to do with emoting. Rather, it is a change of attitude or change of mind. For the non-believer, they must change their attitude toward Jesus Christ and accept Him as Savior by trusting in Him as Savior. This is repentance for the non-believer. On other hand, repentance for the believer involves the confession of sins to the Father to be restored to fellowship with Him. Maintaining this fellowship demands obedience to God's Word. This is repentance for the believer. Repentance for both groups is based upon the person and work of Jesus Christ on the cross. His substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths on the cross are the basis for repentance. In other words, repentance would not be possible if not for the Lord Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross.

There are eternal consequences for the non-believer who refuses to repent by refusing to trust in Jesus Christ as their Savior, namely they will suffer eternal condemnation in the eternal lake of fire (cf. Rev. 20:11-15). This is conscience torment in the lake of fire forever.

There are also consequences for the believer who refuses to repent by refusing to confess their sins to the Father to be restored to fellowship with Him and obeying His Word to maintain that fellowship, namely, loss of rewards at the Bema Seat Evaluation of the church which immediately follows the rapture or resurrection of the church. They will not be influenced by the Spirit, and they will not experience their salvation, sanctification and eternal life. However, they do not lose their eternal salvation because they were not saved on their own merits in the first place but rather on the merits of Jesus Christ and His substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths on the cross (cf. Eph. 2:8-9; cf. 1 Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Tim. 2:11-13).

Repentance Word Study

<http://www.freegraceresources.org/repentwordstudy-1.pdf> [PDF]

Excerpt:

"Repent and believe" or "turn from your sins and believe" is a commonly heard "gospel" message today. It is confusing as the unbeliever does not quite know how much of his own goodness is required. Many have repeatedly tried and failed, then finally "threw out the baby with the bathwater." I have shared the John 3:16 message to many who had already wisely rejected the false message and then when they realized that salvation was by grace through faith, they believed in Jesus and received the gift of eternal life. *Some* of these have gone on into obedient living but all who believed in Jesus will live eternally with Him. This erroneous message confuses the unsaved and hinders reproduction of the believer. It is contrary to God's word.

The message of Acts 16:31, is "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." If we must do more of ourselves in order to merit our eternal life, we must discard this verse and many more which state that belief/faith in Jesus is the means for us to receive eternal life. Repentance does not necessarily enter

into the event of a person believing in Jesus and being saved, but it is an important doctrine to apply when a believer becomes involved in a pattern of unconfessed and unjudged sin.

May we consistently speak the good news of eternal salvation to the lost in a clear, accurate, and loving manner. This is one good way to partially fulfill the mandate of Matthew 28:19, 20, and to glorify Jesus by bearing much fruit (John 15:8).

Doctrine of Repentance by [Thomas Watson](#) [Bio] (1668) [Recommended]

<http://onthewing.org/user/Watson%20-%20Repentance%20-%20Modern.pdf> [PDF]

<https://www.monergism.com/doctrine-repentance-ebook> [ePUB, MOBI and PDF formats]

Full Audio of Text: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wj2II5_24Ow [Video]

Online Text: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1EUbvN591-7i5vbq_dpyMRhpbLGy-L23xtVjoqUrHEik/edit

<http://www.gracegems.org/Watson/repentance1.htm>

Decherd Stevens on the *Doctrine of Repentance*

<https://banneroftruth.org/us/store/christian-living/the-doctrine-of-repentance/> [Links to short video]

Direct link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VDiimpiDoLo> [Video]

Few better guides have existed in this or any other area of spiritual experience than Thomas Watson. He was a master of both Scripture and the human heart, and wrote with a simplicity and directness that keeps his work fresh and powerful for the twenty-first century.

[Review](#)

Calling and Repentance (by [Abraham Kuyper](#))

http://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/sdg/pdf/kuyper_callingrepentance.pdf [PDF]

What Is Biblical Repentance?

<http://www.jesus-is-savior.com/Believer%27s%20Corner/Doctrines/repentance.htm>

The Milk Doctrines: Repentance

http://www.iswasandwillbe.com/Milk_repentance.php

The Doctrine of Repentance – Grace to You (John MacArthur)

<https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-288/the-doctrine-of-repentance>

Doctrines – Repent

<http://www.amazingbible.org/Documents/Doctrines/Repent.htm>

Excerpt:

Some people may say, you have to do nothing to be saved except believe and say a sinner's prayer. This is not true. **Two absolutes you must do are: repent of your sins and confess Jesus Christ as your**

Lord and Savior, as the only hope you have of being saved. Yes, we are to call on the name of the Lord in prayer. Yes, we are to believe that Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God, God in the flesh. Yes, we are to believe that He died for our sins, and rose from the dead, and now sits at the right hand of God the Father. Yes, we are to believe that Jesus Christ is the Living Word and that He came to earth to redeem men from their sins. But to say that all we are to do is call on the name of the Lord and believe on Him is not all that God's Word requires. We must repent of our sins, forsake our sins, and even more, we must never be ashamed of Jesus. We are to be willing to stand up for Jesus and be willing to confess Him. Ro 10:9,10-THAT IF THOU SHALT CONFESS WITH THY MOUTH THE LORD JESUS, AND SHALT BELIEVE IN THINE HEART THAT GOD HATH RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD, THOU SHALT BE SAVED. FOR WITH THE HEART MAN BELIEVETH UNTO RIGHTEOUSNESS; AND WITH THE MOUTH CONFESSION IS MADE UNTO SALVATION. 1 Pe 3:15 tells us very clearly-BE READY ALWAYS TO GIVE AN ANSWER TO EVERY MAN THAT ASKETH YOU A REASON OF THE HOPE THAT IS IN YOU WITH MEEKNESS AND FEAR. God's Word is showing us clearly that to ask and believe is not all that is necessary for salvation.

Repentance (course syllabus, Foundational Doctrines Studies, [Chapel Library](http://www.chapellibrary.org/files/7114/4260/2072/FDR-SG_FINAL.pdf))
http://www.chapellibrary.org/files/7114/4260/2072/FDR-SG_FINAL.pdf [PDF]

Repentance – from *Great Doctrines Relating to Salvation* by John B. Marchbanks
<https://www.wholesomewords.org/etexts/marchbanks/repent.html>

Excerpt:

What relationship has repentance to faith? Must a man repent before he can be saved?

ONE OF the great and important Bible doctrines is that of repentance. Yet it is to be feared that much of the teaching on this subject, as it relates to salvation, falls into one of two extremes. Either the necessity for repentance is altogether ignored, or it is made to be a separate act from believing and the sinner is led to think that he must do two different things: repent and believe. We trust that the consideration of the subject in this article will clarify its meaning, so that we may see the teaching not only for what it means in itself but also in relation to the other great doctrines about salvation.

The salvation which God has provided for believing sinners, through the death and resurrection of His beloved Son, is of such tremendous scope that God has given us many different views of it in His Word. These come to us in the form of the great doctrines relating to salvation, of which repentance is one.

The New Testament words which are translated "repent," "repented," "repenteth," and "repentance" mean *to have another mind, to think differently, to care afterwards*. Thus such words denote a *reversal of decision*. In the Old Testament the words are, in most cases, translated from a Hebrew word which means *to ease* or *to comfort*. In the Old Testament references to repentance, however, it will be observed that it is actually a change of mind which *eases* or *comforts* the one who repents, so that the word means much the same in the Old Testament as in the New.

...

On the other hand, we have other salvation verses in which repentance is not mentioned: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31); "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. 10:9); "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). Indeed, the Gospel of John speaks about 100 times of believing on Christ for salvation whereas the word "repentance" is not found in the book.

We must therefore conclude, in the light of such passages as those quoted above, that repentance and faith are not two separate acts required of the sinner in order to be saved but that repentance is included in and is a part of saving faith. Only those who have seen their lost condition and their need of the Saviour will come to Him. The very fact that a person who is blinded by Satan (II Cor. 4:4) and dead in trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1) realizes that he needs the Saviour, is evidence that true repentance has come. Such a convicted sinner *has another mind* about himself and God. He *thinks differently* about sin. There is a reversal of decision about these things. So, though the sinner is not required to do a certain amount of repenting first and then a certain amount of believing, as two separate and distinct acts, repentance is nevertheless always included in saving faith.

Let us also notice that conviction is not repentance. It is possible for one to be convicted of sin, even to the point of trembling (as in the case of Felix [Acts 24:25]), without repentance and faith. Real repentance, like real faith, will be evidenced by heartfelt actions, the bringing forth "fruits meet for repentance" (Matt. 3:8).

Repentance then is a *reversal of decision* which Israel must yet have before she is saved nationally. It should be a continual attitude in the believer's heart. And it is included in that faith which saves the sinner.

Is Repentance Required for Eternal Life?

<https://faithalone.org/grace-in-focus-articles/repentance-eternal-life/>

Excerpt:

Scripture shows that repentance is more than a change of mind, but is a turning around or change of direction. To add repentance to belief as a condition of eternal salvation is to add works to faith. That would contradict both Paul and John who clearly teach that eternal salvation is by faith, apart from works. What, then, is repentance for? While it is not required for eternal life, it does have benefits for both unbelievers and believers, and plays an important role in making disciples.

Text of one of the comments:

The following verses in Acts demonstrate that whatever repentance is, it is meant for unbelieving Jews and Gentiles: Acts 2:38; 3:19; 5:31; 8:22; 11:18; 13:24; 17:30; 19:4; 20:21. Also, to argue that repentance is not found in the Gospel of John is like saying that the Bible doesn't teach the Trinity because the word isn't found anywhere in any book. Using the definition in this article, repentance is "a turning around or change of direction". The Apostle uses the verb *στρέφω* (to turn) in John 12:40. So then, the basis of this article is refuted by that verse alone. But if we ignore that reference, we are still faced with the idea of unbelief in John. Unbelief is sin. If repentance is turning from sin, what then is repentance for the unbelieving sinner than to turn from unbelief to belief in Christ? Ironside essentially had it right: John "does not ignore the ministry of repentance because he stresses the importance of faith. . . . he shows to repentant souls the simplicity of salvation, of receiving eternal life, through a trusting in Him who, as the true light, casts light on every man, thus making manifest humanity's fallen condition and the need of an entire change of attitude toward self and toward God."

Watchman Nee on Eternal Life and Repentance

<https://faithalone.org/blog/watchman-nee-on-eternal-life-and-repentance/>

Repentance and the Rich Man in Luke 16:30 by Bob Wilkin

<https://faithalone.org/magazine/y2002/02D1.html>

How Do You Counsel a Christian Caught Up in Habitual Sin?

<https://faithalone.org/magazine/y1989/89jan1.html>

Excerpt:

"I placed my trust in Jesus Christ and Him alone to save me when I was sixteen. He is my only hope of eternal life. My wife and I have been pretty steady members of a good church for five years now. I read my Bible some, pray occasionally, but spend most of my time at work. I'm on the road a lot. That's where I blow it. I can't seem to stop watching raunchy movies or reading smut. I feel so guilty. What should I do?"

As a pastor, what kind of advice do I give to this young executive, whom we'll call "David?" David's pain and guilt over his sin has driven him to seek spiritual counsel. He has come to me hurting and open. This is a God-given opportunity to bring change into his life. What I tell him will be dictated by my view of salvation and assurance.

If, as many are teaching today, salvation requires repentance defined as a turning from one's sinful ways and a full commitment to the Lordship of Christ, then I must conclude that David is almost certainly not saved yet. His profession of faith is surely not genuine. His addiction to pornography proves that he never truly repented. His lack of full commitment to pray, read the Word, and become active in the church reveals that he has not yet given Jesus Christ complete control of every area of his life. My task would thus be to *really* lead him to Christ. He must make a total commitment to the Lordship of Christ. He must turn away from his sinful lifestyle. Only then will he become a new creature in Christ.

If, on the other hand, salvation is a free gift requiring repentance defined as a change of mind about oneself and Jesus Christ and faith in Him, a total reliance upon Jesus Christ as one's only hope of heaven, then I must conclude that David is almost certainly saved (unless, of course, he is lying to me). Because of belief in Jesus Christ he is truly saved, but his growth as a believer has been stunted by neglect and sin on his part. My warning will be straightforward:

"Brother, you and I both know that you are living a life that is displeasing to the Lord Jesus Christ and that He is disciplining you. This discipline will continue and will actually get worse until you change your ways. Please don't misunderstand, David. It is not that Jesus has stopped loving you. It is because of His great love for you that He is disciplining you. His desire is that you will trust and obey Him in every area of your life. You need to make some significant changes in your life and I'm not just talking about the pornography. Yes, that is wrong. However, that is but a symptom of the underlying problem. You are hurting inside and you are throwing yourself into your work and into pornography to take your mind off the pain. You need to realize that you are a new creature in Christ with the Holy Spirit living within you and that you can handle that pain without being a workaholic or a sexual addict. As you cultivate your relationship with the Lord by Bible study, prayer, and active fellowship in a good church He will transform every area of your life bit by bit. It is a lifelong process with exciting possibilities. Are you ready now to commit yourself fully to Him?"

These two approaches to counseling are radically different. The question is, which one is biblically correct? ...

See also: [Sin – What is it?](#)

Wayne Grudem on Genuine Faith by Shawn Lazar (GES)

<https://faithalone.org/grace-in-focus-articles/wayne-grudem-on-genuine-faith/>

Excerpt:

Wayne Grudem is one of the best-known Evangelical theologians writing today. His *Systematic Theology* has sold over 400,000 copies. It's a model for making academic theology accessible and often the first systematic theology I consult from my library.

When Grudem speaks, people listen, including me.

That's why I'm grateful he wrote a critique of Free Grace theology. As the saying goes, there's no such thing as bad press. If Grudem's critique brings more attention to Free Grace views, then I'm glad for it.

He made at least two presentations on Free Grace theology: a shorter one given at his church ("The Historic Protestant Viewpoint and the Free Grace Viewpoint on Conversion"); and a longer one presented at the Evangelical Theological Society in 2014 ("Salvation without Repentance from Sin? A Critique of the 'Free Grace' Gospel"¹).

This article will address the longer presentation, specifically, Grudem's definition of "genuine faith."

I argue his definition is harmful, because it makes it virtually impossible for anyone to know for sure whether they believe in Jesus and are saved.

Grudem's Complaint

The main point of Grudem's longer critique was to show the Free Grace doctrine of "faith alone" is different from the Reformation doctrine of "faith alone." He believes the difference centers on the meaning of the term "alone."

The Reformers meant that faith is "alone" in the sense of being the only thing that counts in justification (pp. 3, 5), and not in the sense that faith is never accompanied by other things (like repentance, obedience, and love, etc).

By contrast, Free Gracers supposedly believe faith is "alone" in the sense of never being accompanied by other things:

So I ask Free Grace advocates: where in the entire history of mainstream evangelical Protestantism since the Reformation, did you ever find the idea that 'justification by faith alone' means 'faith that is not accompanied by repentance or good works'? It is not there (p. 5).

The better question might be, "Where in the history of the Free Grace movement has anyone taught that faith is never accompanied by other things?"²

In any case, Grudem's argument is that the only faith that justifies is one accompanied by a great many things. And that runs Grudem into some serious problems.

Of Accompaniments and Components

On first glance, you would think Grudem believes in salvation by faith apart from works. But dig a little deeper and you'll see the opposite is true.

Grudem distinguishes between what "accompanies" faith and the "components" of faith.

Grudem assures us that even though faith is accompanied by many other things, faith itself "is the only thing that God responds to with the act of justification" (p. 5), and "nothing else counts" but faith (p. 5).

Faith is "accompanied by other things," but "God does not count those other things as any part of the means of obtaining justification" (p. 6).

This is good. Very good. Faith is the only thing that counts and there is no other means of obtaining justification.

We can agree on that...if only Grudem really believed it!

Sadly, what Grudem offers with his right hand, he immediately takes back with his left. He *begins* by drawing a strong distinction between faith and the things that accompany it, but he *ends* by suggesting at least some of these accompaniments are actually components of faith. That subtle transition is apparent in his discussion of repentance.

On the one hand, Grudem says that faith is always accompanied by repentance (pp. 6-7). But later on he says that “repentance from sins is a *component* of truly turning to Christ in faith for salvation from sin” (p. 8, emphasis added).

So long as something is merely an *accompaniment* to faith, Grudem could technically claim he believed in justification by faith alone. That is, he could technically claim that, while he believed that faith is always accompanied by other things (like repentance), we aren’t justified because of those other things. (But even then, I think I would have grounds to question whether Grudem really believes in justification by faith alone. After all, if you can’t be justified by faith apart from other things, then logically, that implies those accompaniments are part of the condition of justification.)

However, if Grudem says that something is a *component* of faith, then he cannot claim to believe in justification by faith apart from those other things, because those other things are now part of what it means to believe. Hence, if the components of faith include works, then despite his claims to the contrary, Grudem would not believe in justification by faith apart from works, even in a technical sense.

Do you see why?

If not, imagine Grudem was talking about circumcision instead of repentance.

Imagine if he adamantly denied teaching we were justified by faith *plus* circumcision, but insisted that circumcision was a *component* of genuine faith. In other words, if you really believed, you’d be circumcised. I hope you see that’s a distinction without a difference, because circumcision would be part of the condition of salvation either way.

And that’s the fundamental problem with Grudem’s definition of “genuine faith.” Everything he thinks is a component of faith necessarily becomes part of the condition of salvation. If, for example, he thinks a *work* is a component of faith, then he necessarily believes that work is a condition of salvation.

So the question is, does Grudem ever make works a component of genuine faith?

The Big List

Grudem hints there are several components of genuine faith besides mental assent and repentance (e.g., “heartfelt trust,” p. 18). Unfortunately, he stops short of giving us a comprehensive list of what those might be.

That’s quite surprising.

If he believes our eternal destiny depends on having these components, shouldn’t Grudem tell us what they are? Shouldn’t they be part of an evangelistic presentation? I would certainly want to know!

I searched Grudem’s paper for hints of what these other components might be and came up with a list of 30 different possibilities. Let me emphasize that these are just possibilities. Grudem doesn’t explicitly identify these as “components,” but if you look up the references, I’m sure you’ll agree that is the impression.

Here is the list:

- Repentance from sin (p. 7)
- A sincere commitment to turn from sin (p. 8)
- Turning to Christ (p. 8)

- Heart commitment (p. 8)
- Coming into God's presence (p. 9)
- Crying out as Isaiah did (p. 9)
- Seeking forgiveness (p. 9)
- Deep, heartfelt sorrow for sin (p. 9)
- Resolving to turn from sin (p. 9)
- Giving up all our possessions (p. 9)
- Giving half of our goods to the poor (p. 9)
- Repaying fourfold the things we steal (p. 9)
- Regretting past conduct (p. 11)
- Abiding in Jesus (p. 13)
- Mental assent (p. 18)
- Coming before the person of Christ (p. 18)
- Trusting (p. 18)
- Trusting in the person of Christ (p. 18)
- Having a personal encounter (p. 18)
- Coming into Christ's presence (p. 18)
- Realizing Christ is your God (p. 18)
- Realizing He is King and Lord forever (p. 18)
- Believing in His omnipotence (p. 18)
- Believing in His omniscience (p. 18)
- Believing He is the eternal creator and sustainer of the universe (p. 18)
- Believing He is infinitely holy (p. 18)
- Not clinging to sin (p. 18)
- Having interpersonal interaction with Christ (p. 19)
- Believing with your heart (not just mental assent) (p. 21)
- Believing with deepest emotions (p. 21)
- Believing with deepest conviction (p. 21)

As you can see this is a very long list. And I'm not sure it's comprehensive. There may be more components Grudem hasn't mentioned. For example, Grudem says saving faith does not include things like:

- Absolute, total commitment of life (p. 12)
- Obedience—although true faith results in obedience (p. 12)

So, even if “absolute” commitment isn’t a component of saving faith, would Grudem say that at least *some* commitment is? After all, he denies that anyone who is still clinging to sin has genuine faith (p. 18). If you need to stop clinging to sin, then you need to obey at least a little bit to really believe, don’t you?

And think of the other work-like components in the list. Genuine faith includes repenting, committing, turning, coming, crying out, seeking, giving, and abiding. Those are not just states of mind. They’re activities. They involve changes in behavior. They’re works.

Why Grudem’s Definition of Faith Leads to Doubt

Now, I’m sure if Grudem saw my list he would quibble here and there and say I’m making distinctions that don’t really exist, or have included things he wouldn’t really include as components, or that I’ve misread him or misunderstood him.

I admit that’s all possible.

However, I would also suggest that Grudem’s presentation lends itself to those kinds of misunderstandings.

And that’s another devastating problem with his definition of faith. It’s slippery. It’s uncertain. It’s hard to pin down. It’s hard to tell what, exactly, faith is supposed to be or what components it’s supposed to have.

Anyone hearing or reading Grudem’s presentation would walk away completely confused about the condition of eternal life. Yes, they would know it was something called “faith,” but they wouldn’t know what “faith” was or if they had it.

For example, think of how highly subjective and vague most of Grudem’s implied components are, and how many unanswerable questions they raise.

Is the list exhaustive? Were some components left out? If so, what are they?

How many of the components are necessary for saving faith? Can you mix and match? Is having five enough? How about ten? Or do you need all thirty (or more) to have genuine saving faith?

Even if you have most of the components now, how do you know if you’ll have them in the future?

How intensely must you experience these components? For example, how much regret do you have to feel to have genuine faith? How much sorrow? How much resolve? Is there a percentage of intensity? If so, what is that percentage? What if you only feel 49% regret, is that enough for your faith to be genuine?

What if that intensity goes up and down over time—do you gain and lose your salvation?

What if you aren’t a very emotional person to begin with—does God judge the intensity of your regret on a sliding scale?

How can you tell when you’ve entered God’s presence, or if you’ve left it?

How do you know if you’ve stopped clinging to sin—is it a matter of behavior, attitude, a state of mind, or some combination of all three?

As I said, I think these questions are unanswerable. How could you possibly know if you had “genuine faith”?

Grudem recognizes the difficulty.

In a masterful example of understatement, he admits his understanding of faith “makes assurance more complex” and “makes the question of whether a person has genuine faith more complex” (p. 19).

I should say so!

Actually, I would say it makes the question *impossibly* complex! There’s no way anyone holding to this view of faith could ever be sure they believed or were saved.

It's ironic that Grudem thinks the Free Grace movement commits the category mistake of focusing on assurance of eternal salvation when we should be focusing on having assurance that we've genuinely believed (p. 15). It's ironic, because Grudem is projecting upon us a problem created by his own faulty theology. He's like a Freudian psychologist insisting we should all be dealing with our "mother issues" because of his own complicated relationship with his mother. Just so, Grudem has created a situation where it is impossible to know if he has really believed, and assumes we should all struggle with the same question.

Actually, Grudem's charge that we have committed a category error only illustrates why the Free Grace movement has tried so hard to move people away from basing their assurance on the kind of morbid introspection required by Grudem's theology, to the only proper grounds of assurance, i.e., to Jesus' promise of everlasting life. Assurance is only found outside of us, in simply believing Christ's promise "to me," and not found within us, in some subjective *experience* of believing.



The Joy of Clarity

Every week I get a call or an email from a Reformed (or Arminian) person who has become absolutely burned out on the assurance issue.

They're burned out because when they asked their pastor or friend how to be sure, they were given an answer like Grudem's. They're told to look to see if they have genuine faith. They're told to look for signs in their lives that indicate they have really believed (or have been given special faith from God). They were told to look for the kind of components Grudem mentions.

Did they really make a heart commitment?

Are they really relying on Jesus?

Are they still sinning?

Are their thoughts purer than before?

Did they really feel sorrow?

Have they really resolved to abandon their sins?

Basing their assurance on these types of criteria only leads to more doubt (at least, for conscientious people). Why? Because their lives are inconsistent.

Once they start introspecting, they might see some good, but they also see lots of bad. They might remember having memorable spiritual experiences that encourages them of their salvation, but time

passes and they're not so sure anymore. They see they were faithful at times, but not always, and aren't sure if they'll be faithful in the future. In fact, thinking about their future performance brings in even more

doubt than before. What if they don't continue believing? What if the "genuine faith" they seem to have now only turns out to be the faith of a so-called "reprobate"?

Instead of leading to assurance, morbid introspection leads to monstrous uncertainty. It leads to conscientious people being filled with doubts and fears of hell. It leads to getting burned out.

Then they hear the message of God's free grace.

They hear the simple message of John's Gospel, with its repeated emphasis on faith in Christ for everlasting life. Contrary to what Grudem teaches, faith in Jesus' promise is simple. It's like faith in anything else. You are presented with a proposition—in this case Jesus' promise—and you either believe it is true, or you don't.

For example, do you believe you live in the U.S.: yes or no?

Do you believe you are married: yes or no?

Do you believe you went to college: yes or no?

Do you believe you are reading this magazine: yes or no?

And how do you know if you've believed? It doesn't matter how you feel, how you've acted, if you've had an encounter, if you've felt remorse, and so on.

You either believe it is true, or not.

You know whether you believe something or not immediately. It is self-evident and automatic.

It's the same with Jesus' promise of everlasting life.

Do you believe that Jesus' promise is true for you: yes or no?

If you say "yes," or have ever said "yes," you have everlasting life that can never be lost (John 10:28-29).

If you answer, "no," or if you say, "I believe it is true for *someone*, but I'm not sure if it's true *for me*," I would urge you to read the Gospel of John until you are sure.

Read Jesus' promises out loud (John 3:16, 36; 5:24; 6:47; 11:26).

Read them a thousand times if you have to.

Faith doesn't come by looking to your emotions, behaviors, or any other subjective feelings, experiences or commitments. Rather, "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom 10:17).

That's what assurance is based on—not on what you have done, but on what Jesus has promised to do.

1. See Grudem's ETS paper here: <http://www.waynegrudem.com/salvation-without-repentance-ets-2014>. See a response to his shorter paper here: Charles C. Bing, Joseph Dillow, Roger Fankhauser, John Correia, "A Free Grace Alliance Response to Wayne Grudem's 'The Historic Protestant Viewpoint and The Free Grace Viewpoint on Conversion'" at http://www.freegracealliance.com/pdf/Response%20to%20Wayne%20Grudem_06252014fga.pdf. Accessed, April 15, 2016.

2. Grudem might simply be making the point that, unlike many Reformers, most Free Gracers are not theological determinists or monergists. We do not believe God only gives the gift of faith to the predestined few and then causes them to become spiritually mature (so that faith is always accompanied by other things). Rather, we believe that faith is a natural ability, that it's defectible, and that spiritual growth is conditional (meaning faith can and should be accompanied by other things, but not always).

"A Tale of Two Sons: MacArthur Revised (by Bob Wilkin)

<https://faithalone.org/magazine/y2009/2sons.html>

Beware of Dogmatic Assertions That Are Not Backed by Scripture

National Meeting for Bible Scholars Considers the Gospel

<https://faithalone.org/magazine/y1990/90jan1.html>

“One of the difficulties of [Lordship Salvation](#), on top of its distortion of the gospel, is that it denies people assurance of their salvation.”

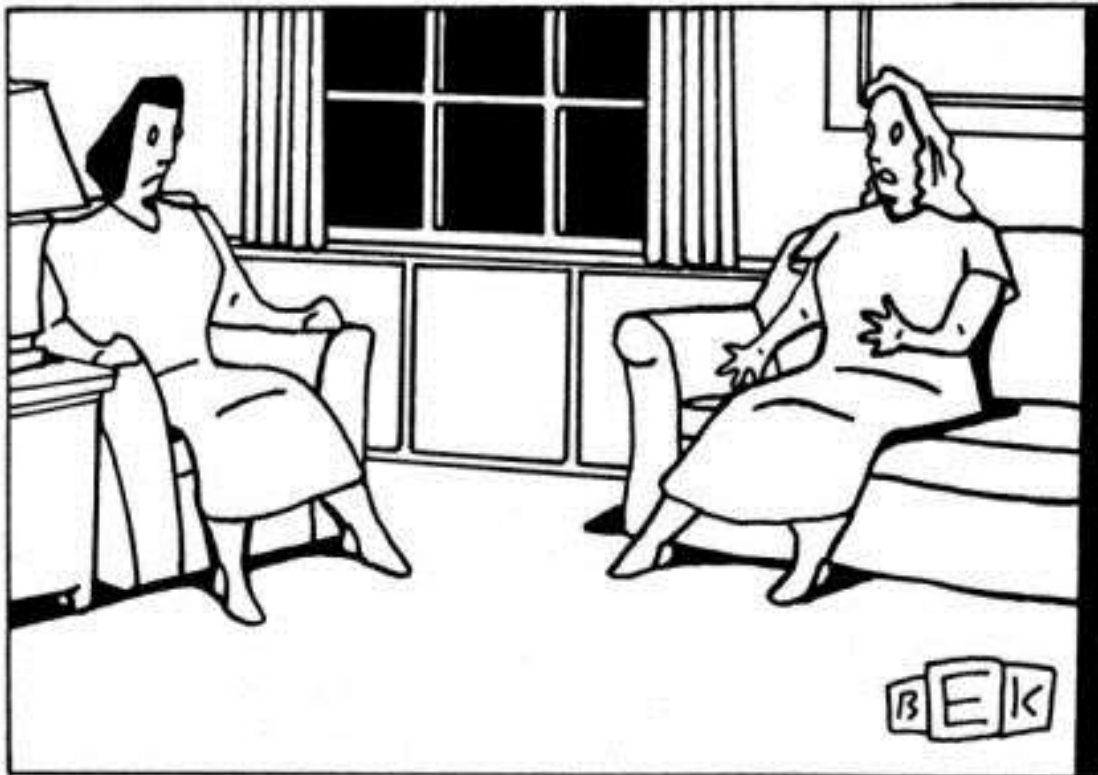
Esau-An Example of a Believer (Hebrews 12:15-17)

<https://faithalone.org/blog/esau-an-example-of-a-believer-hebrews-1215-17/>



Theology Thursday: The Law of 'I' and the Grace of God

<http://www.mbird.com/2013/09/theology-thursday-the-law-of-i-and-the-grace-of-god/>



"It's easy. The first step is to entirely change who you are."

See also: [Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#)

[Faith](#)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Forgiveness

C. FitzSimons Allison's Kitten Story

<http://www.mbird.com/2010/04/c-fitzsimons-allisons-kitten-story/>

Excerpt:

From 1962's *Fear Love and Worship*:

"One reason for the joy in heaven over a sinner's repentance is the unique power which comes with forgiveness. The repentant sinner, having been forgiven and having been taken back like the Prodigal Son, learns a lesson of love that the righteous do not know. On his return the Prodigal knows the power of the father's love much better than he did before he left. This curious and alarming spiritual fact, that a forgiven sinner has experienced a measure of God's love he did not know before he sinned, has upset many people...From the very beginning this fact led some to ask St. Paul, 'Then should we sin that grace may abound?' Of course not, but the alarming quality of this part of [the Gospel](#) has led the principle of forgiveness to be denied and the consequent power lost... Christ's burden is light and his yoke is easy only when we ourselves are carried by his forgiveness.



"A sergeant told a grim joke to his trainees during the Second World War, which shows the real flaw in the Pharisaic understanding of Christianity. a man stopped on a dirt road to help get another man's car out of the ditch. The latter was beginning to harness two small furry kittens to the bumper of this huge car when he was asked, 'Mister, you aren't going to try to get those kittens to pull that car out of the ditch, are you?' His reply was, 'Why not? I've got a whip.' The lash of the [Law](#) is used in similar spiritual situations. Without the principle of forgiveness our conscience acquires a quality of cruelty that makes the Gospel of Christ anything but the Good News.



"It is perfectly incredible how the unmistakably clear and simple fact of God's forgiveness of sinners has been so frequently denied throughout the history of Christianity. There is a story of a clergyman who had an argument with a vestryman about whether a woman of bad reputation should be made welcome in the church. Finally the minister said, 'Well, didn't the Lord forgive the woman taken in adultery?' 'Yes,' replied the old gentleman, 'but I don't think any more of him for having done it.' ...the resistance is always so great that every age needs to discover anew the experience and power of God's free forgiveness which is continually available to all. We can generally assume, regardless of our tradition, that we have not been adequately 'let in on' this part of the Good News."

Walking in Forgiveness

<http://www.focusonthefamily.com/lifechallenges/relationship-challenges/learning-to-forgive-others/walking-in-forgiveness>



What Is Forgiveness?

<https://www.jw.org/en/bible-teachings/questions/what-is-forgiveness/>

The Bible's answer

Forgiveness is the act of pardoning an offender. In the Bible, the Greek word translated “forgiveness” literally means “to let go,” as when a person does not demand payment for a debt. Jesus used this comparison when he taught his followers to pray: “Forgive us our sins, for we ourselves also forgive everyone who is in debt to us.” (Luke 11:4) Likewise, in his parable of the unmerciful slave, Jesus equated forgiveness with canceling a debt.—Matthew 18:23-35.

We forgive others when we let go of resentment and give up any claim to be compensated for the hurt or loss we have suffered. The Bible teaches that unselfish love is the basis for true forgiveness, since love “does not keep account of the injury.”—1 Corinthians 13:4, 5.

What forgiveness does not mean

- **Condoning the offense.** The Bible actually condemns those who claim that bad actions are harmless or acceptable.—Isaiah 5:20.
- **Pretending that the offense never happened.** God forgave King David of serious sins, but he did not shield David from the consequences of his actions. God even had David’s sins recorded so that they are remembered today.—2 Samuel 12:9-13.
- **Allowing others to take advantage of you.** Suppose, for example, that you loan money to someone, but he wastes it and then cannot repay you as he had promised. He is very sorry and apologizes to you. You could choose to forgive him by not harboring resentment, not rehashing the matter with him continually, and perhaps even canceling the debt altogether. However, you might also choose not to loan him any more money.—Psalm 37:21; Proverbs 14:15; 22:3; Galatians 6:7.
- **Pardoning with no valid basis.** God does not forgive people who are guilty of willful, malicious sin and who refuse to acknowledge their mistakes, change their ways, and apologize to those whom they have hurt. (Proverbs 28:13; [Acts 26:20](#); Hebrews 10:26) Such unrepentant ones

become God's enemies, and he does not require us to forgive those whom he has not forgiven.—Psalm 139:21, 22.

What if you are the victim of cruel mistreatment by someone who refuses to apologize or even admit to what he has done? The Bible advises: "Let go of anger and abandon rage." (Psalm 37:8) While not excusing the error, you can refuse to be consumed with anger. Trust that God will bring the person to account. (Hebrews 10:30, 31) You can also take comfort in knowing that God will bring a time when we will no longer feel the deep pain or hurt that may burden us now.—Isaiah 65:17; Revelation 21:4.

- "Forgiving" every perceived slight. Sometimes, rather than pardoning a so-called offender, we may need to admit that we had no valid cause for being offended in the first place. The Bible says: "Do not be quick to take offense, for the taking of offense is the mark of a fool."—Ecclesiastes 7:9, footnote.

How to forgive someone

1. **Remember what forgiveness involves.** You are not condoning the wrong or acting as if it never happened—you are simply letting it go.
2. **Recognize the benefits of forgiving.** Letting go of anger and resentment can help you to keep calm, improve your health, and increase your happiness. (Proverbs 14:30; Matthew 5:9) Even more important, forgiving others is a key to receiving God's forgiveness for your own sins.—Matthew 6:14, 15.
3. **Be empathetic.** All of us are imperfect. (James 3:2) Just as we appreciate being forgiven, we should likewise forgive the mistakes of others.—Matthew 7:12.
4. **Be reasonable.** When we have a minor cause for complaint, we can apply the Bible's counsel: "Continue putting up with one another."—Colossians 3:13.
5. **Act quickly.** Work to forgive as soon as you can rather than letting your anger fester.—Ephesians 4:26, 27.

Note: Above excerpt is from a Jehovah's Witness website...while not condoning their foundational theology, we think this is a good article, nevertheless.



Forgive One Another

STUDY / DISCUSSION GUIDE

MAIN TEXT: Ephesians 4:32

SUMMARY: We will look into forgiving one another. In the Christian life, we get, give, and live forgiveness.

OTHER THOUGHTS

Read Luke 7:36-50 and meditate on God's forgiveness provided for you and His love for you.

GETTING STARTED

Watch the video and answer the following question below:

Video: [Fellowship Alliance Chapel](#) 10/05-06/2019 Services [select time] (Skip music and start at sermon)

Question: Is forgiveness a choice regardless of feeling, or a feeling that leads to a choice? Explain.

DISCUSSING THE WORD

Read Ephesians 4:32. According to this passage, how are we to forgive others?

What is so significant about the phrase "as God in Christ forgave you."? Read Matthew 18:21-35. How does this story make it's point?

What are we giving up when we forgive others? How does this remind you of what Jesus did for you? How does forgiveness become an easier choice to make when you remember this?

What makes forgiveness so essential in relationships?

RESPONDING TO GOD

Why is Paul's instruction important for the church body?

Write on a piece of paper a person that you need to forgive (or someone that you know that needs to experience God's forgiveness). You don't need to share this with anyone. Then take time to pray silently for a minute to God for this person.

Sin – What is it?

[A Theology of Sin – What is Sin?](#) (Note: This is coming from a [Weslyan](#) perspective)
http://www.eternalsecurity.us/what_is_sin.htm

Excerpt:

Sin, as one doctrine of the Christian system, is the common denominator of the other doctrines.

[Richard S. Taylor](#) makes this point at the outset of his classic work, *A Right Conception of Sin*. [1] His argument is that any doctrine that relates to sin, is effected by our understanding and definition of sin. Most errors in theology can usually find their roots in a defective definition of sin. This I have found to be profoundly true. We have two key players in theology, and one main problem: We have *God*; we have *man*; and we have the problem of *sin*. All systematic theology comes down to this reduction.

We find in theology that God is holy, and that this holiness prevents God from being able to have the relationship with man that He desires. Man, on the other hand, is separated from God because of sin. Man can do nothing in the way of reconciling or mending the relationship, so God must be the One to find a way to bring us both together. God's holiness is spurned on by His love to make a way. Grace is God's answer through the atonement of Christ on our behalf. This is where most theologians agree. All orthodox theologians will accept these points. So why do we end up so far apart in explaining how this wonderful grace comes our way? Why are we so divided? The answer lays primarily in our definition of sin.

If our definition of sin causes Christians to view things so differently, does this not imply that the problem resides in a faulty view of what sin really is? Instead of tackling the problem of *how* God saves us through the atonement to determine our definition of sin, wouldn't it be far better to seek a definition of sin before we attempt to determine *how* the atonement works? Theologians put way too much emphasis on their theological support for their definition of sin. Sin tends to get defined by how we make the atonement work instead of what the Scriptures say that sin is. Circular reasoning makes for great arguments, but those that can differentiate between the facts, and the theories used to support those facts, will find themselves closer to common ground.

What Then Is The

"Biblical"

Definition of Sin?

While it would be desirable to come outright with a definition to work from, I believe it will be of better use to the reader to see that any definition that is arrived at must be based upon an inductive study of Scripture concerning sin.

Much of the difficulty in defining sin is that there is no universal consensus as to what the nature of sin really is. Any definition given will no doubt be scrutinized and summarily rejected by some for this very reason. Even though an attempt will be made to arrive at a usable definition, I fear that many will either outright reject the definition because it does not meet their theological presuppositions, or that a singular definition does not do justice to the whole realm of what sin is. We cannot easily gloss by this most important doctrinal theme and just rely upon our theological pillows for comfort. To have right belief we must have right understanding of fundamental truths.

Sin is generally admitted to be twofold:

1. "In sin did my mother conceive me." Ps. 51:5.
2. "He that commiteth sin is of the devil." 1 Jn. 3:8.

The first indicating a *nature* or *state* we are born with. Some call it *original sin, inherited depravity, total depravity, fallen nature, etc.* It is thought to be the result of a state in which we all inherit from Adam through birth.

The second type of sin is what we would call *actual sin*. These are sins committed as an act. It is described as *unbelief, rebellion, self-will, unrighteousness, idolatry.*

Both types can be described as *unclean, impure, unholy.*

When one reads of a statement of sin in the Bible, we are confronted with the question as to whether the passage speaks of sin as a *state*, sin as an *act*, or *both*.

Original sin, depravity, or corrupt nature, is displayed as the state in which all unregenerate people are in before salvation. Some suppose that this means that we are all guilty of the sin of Adam, some see it as something that is acquired through an act of the will after infancy, and others believe that it is an inherited nature in which each of us is born, but does not imply personal guilt for what Adam did. Depravity would not be our fault, it would be our misfortune. This misfortune makes us unfit for heaven, requiring the atonement for cleansing, but not forgiveness. The later of the views is what I see as being brought forth in the Scriptures. This will be covered in greater detail under the heading of The Depravity of Man.

Sin as an act is of more importance to us here and now. It is something that is in the realm of our responsibility, and as such, should be examined to see what, if anything can be done about it.

Two examples of sin as a verb, an act, are presented to see the elements constitute a "sin."

"Sin is the transgression of the law." 1 Jn. 3:4

In this, we see an essential element... transgression of the law.

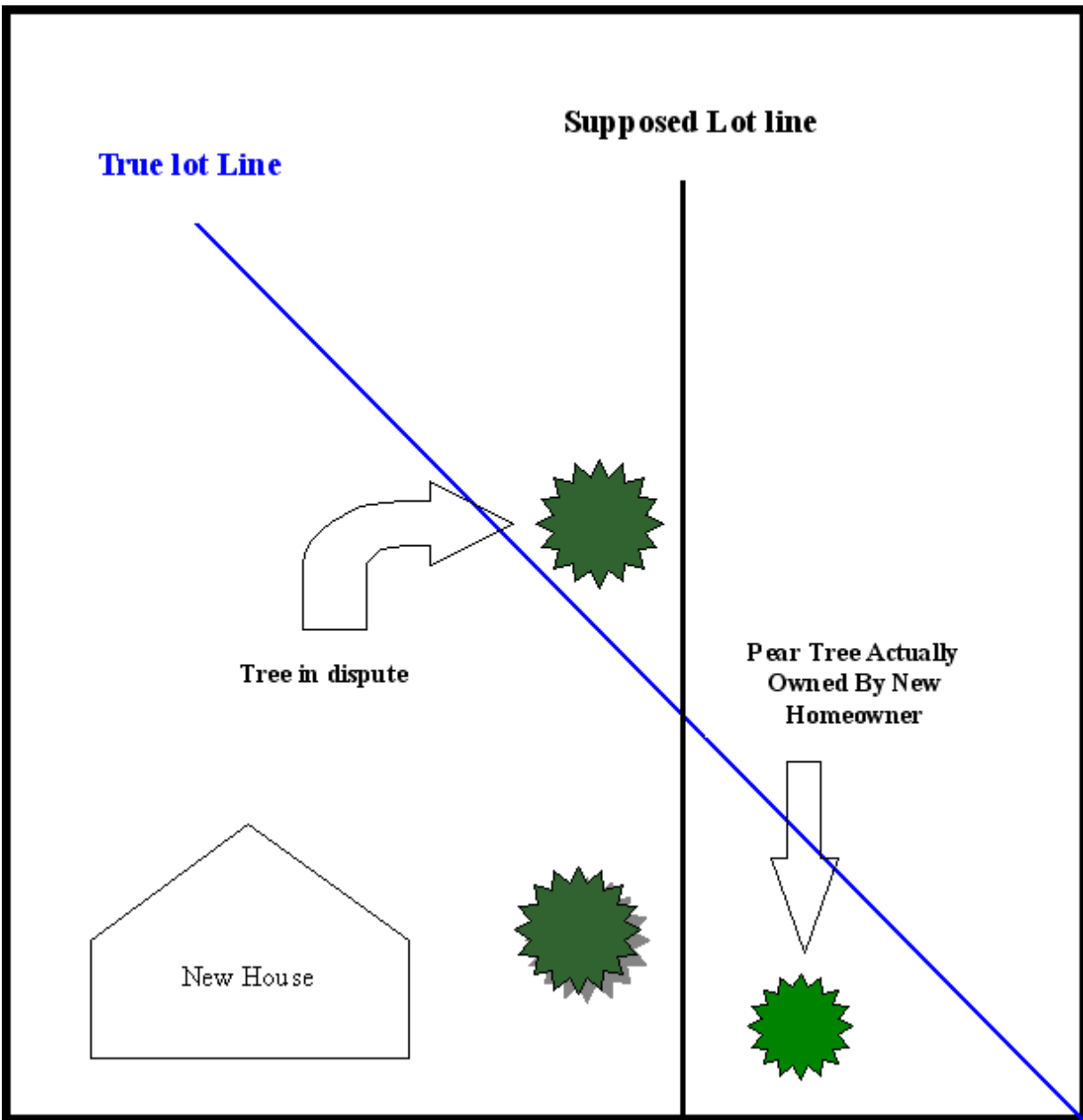
Secondly we see, "To him, therefore, that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." James 4:17

In this we see the second element... knowledge of what is wrong, and willfulness to do wrong.

Sin, as an act, is defined by Wesley as "A willful transgression of a known law." This holds to the elements in question. The idea that we gain by this is that sin, as an act of rebellion, requires that one understands that they are doing wrong.

Leslie D. Wilcox gives an example of this in volume 3 of his *Profiles in Wesleyan Theology*.^[2] He gives us an example of a man who buys a house and property. According to his understanding, the property line goes straight back from his house. On what he believes to be his land is a fruit tree, so he picks and takes the fruit. The neighbor sees this, and comes out of his house furious and screaming, accusing his new neighbor of being a thief for stealing his fruit! Unbeknownst to the new neighbor, the property line goes at an angle, and the fruit tree is clearly in the neighbor's yard.

Continued next page...



The question is, did he sin? According to Wesley's definition he did not (in the sense of an act of rebellion), for it did not carry the essential elements. First, he did not **know** he was doing wrong. Secondly, he did not **willfully** violate his neighbor, but yet, to all rights and appearances, the new neighbor broke the law and stole what was rightfully his neighbors. Now, once he was informed of the fact that he violated the law, then he owed his neighbor restitution for his loss.

Now, what if the new neighbor was taking pears from the tree that was on his property, but he thought they were on his neighbors property? Did he sin by taking fruit that was his property? Yes! Sin is a matter of the heart and intent, not necessarily the result of what occurred. If he thought that he was stealing his neighbors pears, he was committing a sin in his own heart, a *willful* transgression of a *known* law of God. This illustration helps us to rightfully differentiate between a mistake, an act of ignorance, and a willful act of sin.

This gives us insight into many passages of Scripture such as in 1 Corinthians where a man was involved with incest. Paul, a Jew who knew the Law, was in a pagan land where they knew little or nothing of the Law. Paul constantly remarks with exasperation, "Did you not know?" This is how they could be carnal, yet obedient up to the light that they had about right and wrong. Once informed of the sinfulness of this

act, Paul suggests that Church discipline be enacted as to "turn such a one over to Satan." Luke records in Acts 17:30, that, "the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." God views mistakes and "sins" of ignorance differently than willful "high-handed" sins, which is to be seen throughout Scripture. "Sin" as an act is something that the Bible asserts is unavoidable. To remain true to the Scriptures, we must differentiate between intentional sin, and "sins" of ignorance. God reveals that He makes the differentiation, so we must do so also. There is a sin which leads to death (willful sin), and that which does not, (sins of ignorance) 1 John 5:16. This is evident by the context which states, "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself..." 1 John 5:18. There is no subtle endorsement for a doctrine that Christians 'sin in word, thought, and deed everyday,' in this passage or anywhere else in Scripture.

We also have examples of the Old Testament saints who did things that would be sinful in our understanding of Christian ethics. We need you understand that many of them lived before the Law. Many of them had limited light. We can see now what they did was wrong, but we cannot say in all cases that they knew, and were willfully disobeying God. If it is not stated in Scripture, we have no right to interject willfulness where God has not.

Many already have a bias as to what sin is, and will paint the picture much broader. This idea that God judges according to a man's light and knowledge does not fit in with their current definition of sin. For those of you who feel that way, consider the following: "Jesus said unto them, if ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now you say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth." John 9:41. "if I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin." John 15:22. "And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes." Luke 12:47-48. "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." James 4:17.

I am sure that the last verse quoted has come into question as to whether that is the meaning of the passage. Most erroneously read sins of omission into the passage. The reference is not speaking of sins of omission, but sins of sinning against known light. Commentator, J.P. Lange says of this passage, "The reference is not to sins of *omission*, but to sinning against the light and knowledge, to *doing evil* the knowledge of good notwithstanding... the persons, whom James addressed *knew* well enough that they ought to do good, but separated their knowledge from their practice and *did evil*. (*Lange's Commentary*,)[3] James, pages 121-122. This observation caught me off-guard. I had been trained to read sins of omission into the passage: but Lange is right, the context speaks only of sins that they were *doing*, and not sins of leaving things undone.

It is great that we have a definition to work with, but what makes this definition any better than any other? This is a valid question in which we can derive an answer.

TESTING OF A DEFINITION

To narrow the definition of sin as a act to "a willful transgression of a known law of God," seems to not go far enough for many people. Many choose a definition of, "to deviate in any manner from an absolute standard of perfect behavior." This makes anything less than the perfection of God to be sinful. This definition, although the most commonly used one, makes the Bible out to be a book of absurdities. First, such a definition accuses Adam and Eve of sin in the garden before the fall. Any tripping over a stone, or spilling a drink would deviate from a absolute perfection. Secondly, it generally includes omissions, which condemns our Lord Himself for not healing everybody, for not visiting every prisoner, and for not caring personally for every widow. By such an absolute standard, nobody can do anything right. Doing *nothing* becomes sin. God does not command us to be God, but godly to the extent that we can in our humanity.

W.T. Purkiser in his book, *Conflicting Concepts of Holiness*,[4] suggests that we test our definition of sin by taking the verses of the Bible that speak of sin as an act, and inserting our definition in place of the term "sin." If our definition makes sense in place of the word, it is likely a good definition. If it makes the passage to be nonsense, or contradicts the passage, then it is an impossible definition.

Let's put some of the 41 references of sin as a verb to the test. As a reminder, I will state the two alternative definitions again.

Sin is:

Wesley's definition: A willful transgression of a known law of God. (Ethical definition).

Legal definition: To deviate in any manner from an absolute standard of perfect behavior.

Romans 2:12, "For as many as have *sinned* without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have *sinned* in the law shall be judged by the law."

Wesley's definition: "For as many as have *willfully transgressed a known law of God* without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have *willfully transgressed a known law of God* in the law shall be judged by the law."

Legal definition: "For as many as have *deviated in any manner from an absolute standard of perfect behavior* without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have *deviated in any manner from an absolute standard of perfect behavior* in the law shall be judged by the law."

So far, both definitions work, but it makes little sense to why God would inform us of the legal sense, for we could never do anything about such a failure.

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

Wesley's definition: "For all have *willfully transgressed a known law of God*, and come short of the glory of God."

Legal definition: "For all have *deviated in any manner from an absolute standard of perfect behavior* and come short of the glory of God."

Both seem to work here too.

1 Jn.1:10, "If we say that we have not *sinned*, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

Wesley's definition: "If we say that we have not *willfully transgressed a known law of God*, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

Legal definition: "If we say that we have not *deviated in any manner from an absolute standard of perfect behavior*, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

Both work again, but the legal definition appears to border on the lines of being awkward.

Matthew 18:15, "Moreover if thy brother shall *trespass* against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother."

Wesley's definition: "Moreover if thy brother shall *willfully transgress a known law of God*, against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother."

Legal definition: "Moreover if thy brother shall *deviated in any manner from an absolute standard of perfect behavior*, against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother."

The legal definition does not work well here. It is clearly not the intent of the passage.

John 5:14, "Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: *sin* no more, lest a worse thing come upon you."

Wesley's definition: "Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: *willfully transgress a known law of God* no more, lest a worse thing come upon you."

Legal definition: "Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: *deviate in any manner from an absolute standard of perfect behavior* no more, lest a worse thing come upon you."

The legal definition does not make any sense here either. The fact that in your humanity your next breath is not as perfect as God's, renders you a sinner. How can one who is not God, be commanded by God to be as perfect as God? The ethical definition works without a flaw.

John 8:11, "She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and *sin* no more."

Wesley's definition: "She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and *willfully transgress a known law of God* no more."

Legal definition: "She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and *deviate in any manner from an absolute standard of perfect behavior* no more."

Once again, an impossible command if we use the legal definition.

Romans 6:15, "What then? shall we *sin*, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid."

Wesley's definition: "What then? shall we *willfully transgress a known law of God* because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid."

Legal definition: "What then? shall we *deviate in any manner from an absolute standard of perfect behavior* because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid."

This is clearly speaking of avoidable sins with the exclamation of "God forbid!" The legal definition makes the passage an absurdity.

1 Corinthians 7:28, "But if thou marry, thou hast not *sinned*; and if a virgin marry, she hath not *sinned*..."

Wesley's definition: "But if thou marry, thou hast not *willfully transgressed a known law of God*; and if a virgin marry, she hath not *willfully transgressed a known law of God*..."

Legal definition: "But if thou marry, thou hast not *deviated in any manner from an absolute standard of perfect behavior*, and if a virgin marry, she hath not *deviated in any manner from an absolute standard of perfect behavior*..."

The legal definition is once again nonsense. It is an impossible definition of the verb "sin."

1 Corinthians 15:34, "Awake to righteousness, and *sin* not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame."

Wesley's definition: "Awake to righteousness, and (do not) *willfully transgress a known law of God*; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame."

Legal definition: "Awake to righteousness, and (do not) *deviate in any manner from an absolute standard of perfect behavior*; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame."

Shame because they do not exhibit absolute perfection? Such a remark would be laughed off by any audience! The legal definition fails miserably.

One last one.

1 Timothy 5:20, "Them that *sin* rebuke before all, that others also may fear."

Wesley's definition: "Them that *willfully transgress a known law of God* rebuke before all, that others also may fear."

Legal definition: "Them that *deviate in any manner from an absolute standard of perfect behavior* rebuke before all, that others also may fear."

I don't know about you, but if we take the legal definition as the Biblical definition in this case, then many would have fear; fear of having anything to do with Christianity!

My friends, more can be stated, but even one example proves the legal definition to be an impossibility. Any definition of a word that only works *some* of the time, and fails to work *most* of the time, and cannot pass the test of literal and practical application, **cannot be the right definition!** But people will still cling to their old understanding of what an act of sin is in defiance of the facts. The old definition works for them, it feeds their theology.

What Sin Is Not

Once again, we come full circle to answer our original question. We can gather some clarification of what sin *is* by observing what it is *not*. "We hold positively that sin is not only an accident or misfortune, it is not a mere stepping stone in man's moral development, but that it is a condemnable fault. The sinner is blameworthy in the sight of God. Sin has its seat in the will and is an evil thing in the world. When a man opposes his will to the perfect will of God, he is not merely unfortunate, but he is a culpable wrong-doer. He who voluntarily opposes God's will is blameworthy in the sight of God and is liable to punishment." [5] Sin is not merely being human, but is an avoidable thing in which we are held accountable for. Everywhere in Scripture we are exhorted to "sin not." But so many define sin in a way that makes these commands to be utter nonsense! Sin is sin, and reaps the same result. If the standard of what is sin is "anything that deviates from the actual perfection of God," then all we can do **is to sin!** But God is clear, we are **not to** sin; we do not **have to** sin! (Ezek. 3:21; 1 John 2:1). So many in their definition of sin unwittingly create an attitude that murder is as bad as forgetting a promise! To this strange idea of sin, Dr. Phineas F. Bresee remarked that **"A failure to distinguish between sin and infirmity, puts an undue emphasis upon sin, and has a tendency to discourage earnest seekers from pressing on to full deliverance from the carnal mind. Calling that sin which is not sin, opens the door to actual sinning"**. [6] This took a while for it to sink in when I first read it, but I soon realized that it was quite true. If sin is deadly, as we know it is, and **everything** that falls short of God's perfection is a sin, it is ridiculous to even attempt to try avoid sin, for the very imperfection of your next heartbeat, or your next breath, is not as perfect as what God's would be, and is therefore "sinning." "But to make everything sin is, in effect, to make **nothing** sin". [7] To make that which is amoral, i.e., forgetfulness, mistakes, unintentional offenses resulting from ignorance, to be "sin," is truly to make **"nothing"** sin. If we make no differentiation whatsoever, we leave door wide open for allowing all sorts of sin.

Richard S. Taylor states, "Choice of evil, or sin in act, always produces the combination of the three facts, and such a combination always brings forth death." [8] The "three facts" that Taylor refers to are: "the result of sin? It involves (1) separation from God, (2) depravity of the moral and spiritual nature, and (3) just punishment." [9] Sin is a choice; an avoidable choice. "Sin is a clenched fist and a blow in the face of God," [10] Otherwise, sin would be merely a misfortune, something in which we are held accountable for when we had no power to choose otherwise. It is clearly an injustice to damn someone for something that they cannot avoid doing. No ability; no responsibility. "If we view the problem scripturally, sin is inexcusable. If it is unavoidable, however, it is excusable. Therefore to say sin is inexcusable is to declare sin to be avoidable." [11] An erroneous doctrine of sin that makes "nothing" to be sin fails miserably, especially in light of the terrible consequences of sin. A wrong idea of what sin really is could easily sink the most devout Christian into despair. The only options left for those that desire to be consistent is to

either defy Scripture and allow for sin altogether, or to believe the Scriptures and ensure that their doctrinal understanding of sin is in alignment with the Scriptural possibility of not sinning.

Many are not satisfied with the definition of sin as I have presented. For fear that I may be claiming that "sins of ignorance are not really sins," they will not find that assertion here. Those who do not differentiate between an "act" of sin, and a "mistake" will argue that even **sins of ignorance** are stated to be in need of atonement in the Scriptures. They will find no disagreement with me that sins of ignorance are truly sins and are in need of atonement! But I will assert that the Scriptures clearly treat "sins of ignorance" differently than "willful **acts**" of sin. "Certain New Testament passages have a bearing on this matter. One of them is Heb.10:26. "For if we sin deliberately" (RSV); "For if we go on sinning willfully" (NASB); "For if we sin willfully" (KJV); and "If we deliberately keep on sinning" (NIV). This passage implies that we can sin without it being willful and deliberate." [12] But also note that in this passage "unwillful" and "sins of ignorance" are treated completely different from **willful** and **deliberate** sinning, especially in its end result! "[E]ven unintentional sins need to be atoned for--or cleansed moment by moment--by Christ. Leviticus 4-5 teaches that such sins need to be atoned for. When a person "sins unintentionally...he is guilty" (4:27), and "When he is made aware of the sin...he must bring...his offering for the sin he committed" (v.28). Likewise in the New Testament, such sins need to be cleansed away. In 1 John 1:7 we read, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin." Here, as the believer is "walk[ing] in the light," some things are called "sin." They are so serious that the blood of Jesus Christ needs to cleanse them away. It is to be noted, though, that the word for "purifies" in in the present tense in the Greek. This means that such a believer is cleansed right as the sin occurs..." [13] Note the contrast between 1 John 1:7 and Hebrews 10:26. Deliberate and willful sin is treated with the utmost severity. Sins of ignorance, while still sins that need cleansing, are immediately met with grace. Also note that one can be pure in motive, thereby "walking in the light" yet commit a multitude of unknown and unwillful sins without violating his or her conscience. A "deliberate" sin however, involves rebellion against a known law of God, and is incompatible with "walking in the light." There is no automatic cleansing for those who sin with a "high hand."

Conclusion

We started the examination of sin by attempting to emphasize the importance of finding a Biblical definition. Sin touches nearly every critical facet of theology and must be carefully examined to avoid tainting our theological doctrines. If we assume that it is something that it is not, then we build a tower of theological presumption upon it. Sin is central to the doctrine of salvation and the atonement. This is certainly an area where we cannot afford to be in error; the fate of our eternal souls could hang in the balance!

We have also observed that the most popular concept of sin today is the legal model. It paints the brush broadly, yet leads us to inevitable failure. The nature of sin is not that we fail to succeed in being equal to God, it is the failure to ascend to the capacity that we are **able** as human beings. Our limited knowledge can lead us to failures, but these failures are not **rebellion** if they are done so in ignorance. God knows the heart and intent of every person. No one is punished with eternal damnation the sin of Adam, but we all suffer the misfortune of an inherited depravity. This nature we are born with is met with grace to respond, which makes each individual personally accountable.

We also tested the popular idea of sin, and the Wesleyan definition of sin within the context of different passages. The Wesleyan model fits every single passage that uses sin as a verb. Only a small percentage of passages worked with the legal model.

Sin is a choice; an avoidable choice through the grace of God. If it is avoidable, then we are accountable. Sin as an act of the will is to be separated from *sins of ignorance*, or *mistakes*. With the exception of including "ignorance" as a sin that always carries the same damaging effect as willful sin, the following definition seems to follow along with the points of this article, and those that have preceded it in this series.

"Sin is to be defined primarily in relation to God. It is disobedience, unbelief, ignorance, [the idea that "ignorance" is the same as "disobedience or unbelief" I strenuously deny!] and the passive

assertion of usurped autonomy, and the wicked deviation from, or violation of, God's righteousness will and law. The breach of a right relationship with God carries with it the disruption of a right relationship with others and the disintegration of the self. But this is a derivative, for it is because of sin against God that there is sin against others and oneself (Ps.51:4)."[14] I can accept many of the finer points of this definition as it relates to the practical aspect of what sin is and does. While it is important to understand what sin *is*, we must keep in focus that sinning always has some bearing upon our relationship with God and others. Hopefully by realizing this, we will be motivated by love to avoid the damaging effects of sin; but if we cannot be motivated by love, this knowledge should give us a healthy fear of the reality of what our sin does, not only to us, but God and others!

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3. *Lange's Commentary on the Holy Scriptures*, John Peter Lange, D.D., Volume 12, James, pages 121-122, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI. New Edition 1960.
4. *Conflicting Concepts of Holiness*, W.T. Purkiser, pages 40-48, Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, Kansas City, MO. Revised edition 1972.
5. *Systematic Theology*, S. J. Gamertsfelder, D.D., Ph. D., page 413, Evangelical Publishing House, Harrisburg, PA. 1938.
6. *Christian Theology*, H. Orton Wiley, footnote 2:508, from Bresee's *Sermon: Death and Life*, Beacon Hill Press, Kansas City, MO, 1952.
7. *Exploring Our Christian Faith*, W.T. Purkiser editor, page 293, Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, Kansas City, MO. 1978.
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12. *A Wesleyan-Holiness Theology*, J. Kenneth Grider, page 292, Beacon Hill Press, Kansas City, MO. 1994.
13. *A Wesleyan-Holiness Theology*, J. Kenneth Grider, page 293, Beacon Hill Press, Kansas City, MO. 1994.
14. *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia revised*, Geoffrey W. Bromiley editor, 4:518, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, MI. 1988

Main Menu: [A Theology Of Sin](#)

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[What is Sin?](#)

[The Wages of Sin](#)

[The Depravity of Man](#)

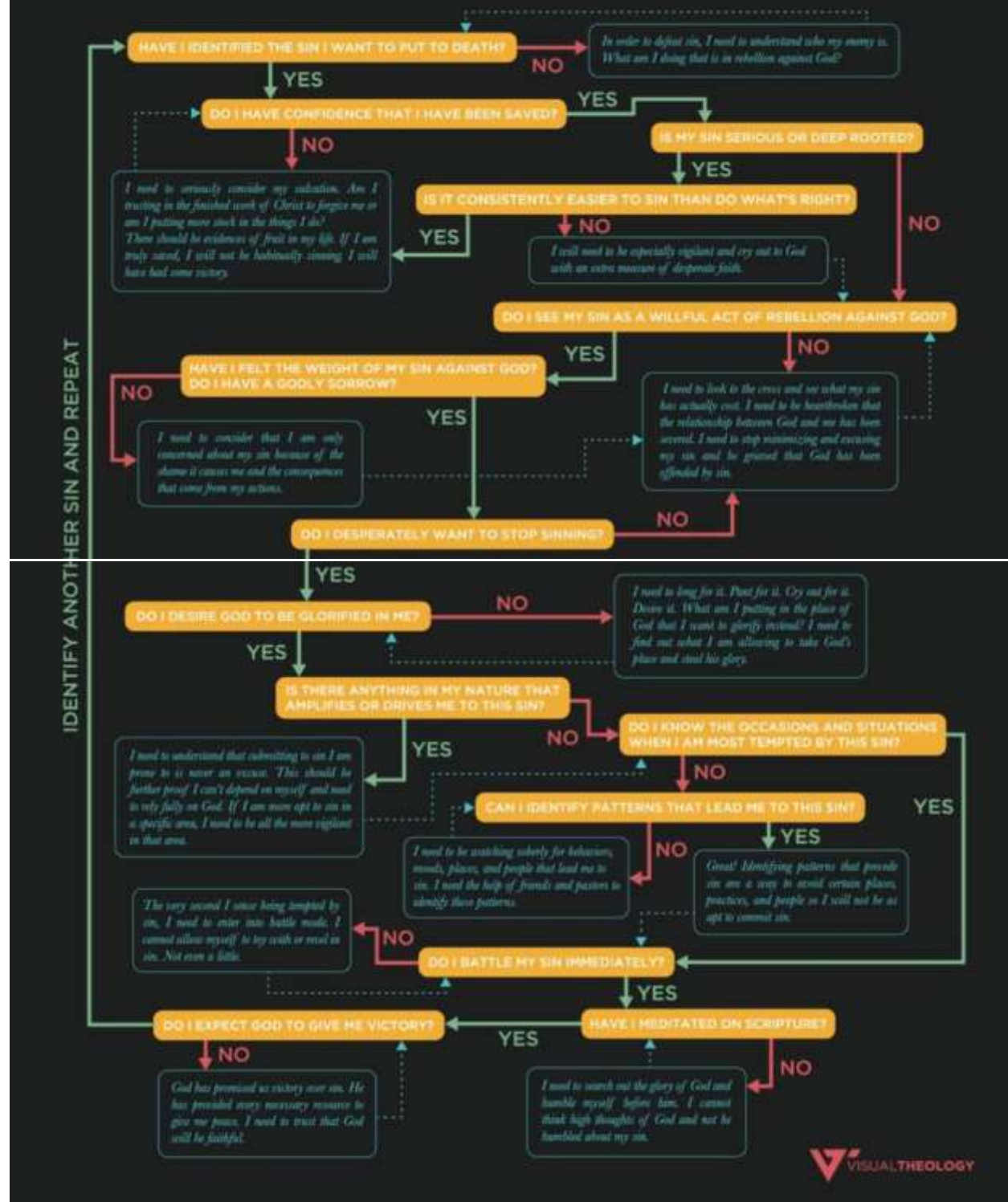
[The Grace of God](#)

[Sin and the Atonement](#)

[Must we Sin?](#)

[Chastisement and the Christian](#)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)



The Cross Chart – The Paradox of Christian Growth

<https://www.scribd.com/document/242088904/The-Cross-Chart>

The Cross Chart

The Paradox of Christian Growth

People tell me I'm growing in grace, but I don't feel I'm any better—especially when I consider my thought life (envy, lust, jealousy, greed, a critical spirit, the lot). The truth is I need the Holy Spirit's power now more than ever. That's the paradox. I know I'm stronger than when I was a new Christian, but I feel weaker. Perhaps that's the point. Could it be that weaker is stronger? (1Cor. 15:9)

The chart explained: Before I knew Christ, I was in the dark concerning God's holiness and the magnitude of my sin. (the solid gray area on the left) The new birth changed all that. As a babe in Christ, two things began to dawn on me—the absolute holiness of God, and the ugliness of my sin—especially in light of the new life of love to which God was calling me. But, when I made a mess of it, I would repent, look in faith to Jesus, and trust in his righteousness to "bridge the gap" between what I should be and what I was. (the small cross)

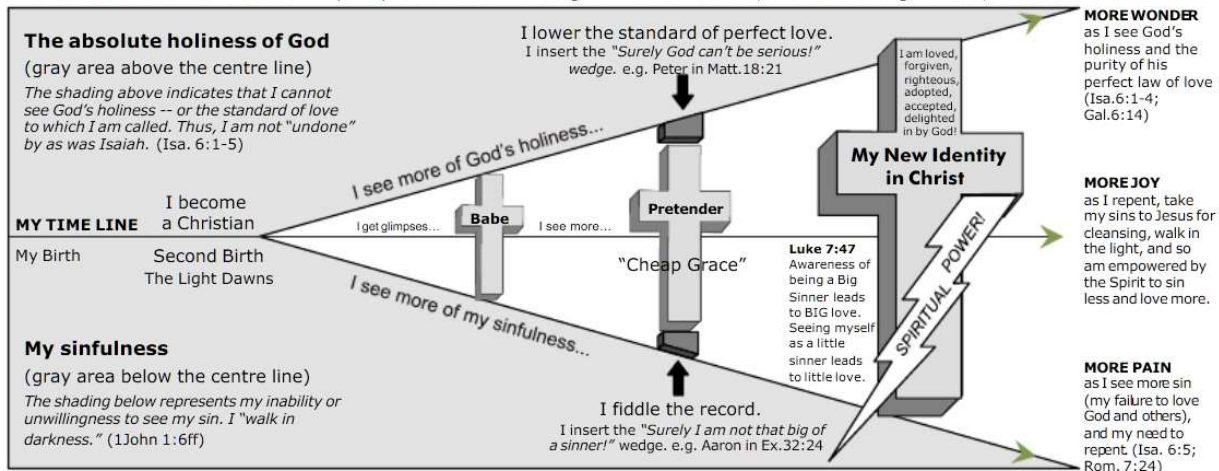
Still today, the battle is in the choosing. Every time I'm exposed as a sinner, I'm faced with a choice.

1. I can try to save face by lowering the standard, rationalising, fiddling the record, shifting the blame, or otherwise making excuses for my shortcomings ("inserting wedges"). At this point, my growth will "flat-line".

2. Or, in repentant faith, I can bridge the gap by "letting the Cross grow bigger" as I run to Jesus with my sin. (the big cross) There is no power in the discovery of sin. New life comes as I "work the Gospel"—i.e. take my sin to Jesus, rest in my new identity in him, and rely on the Holy Spirit to produce his fruit in me. (Gal. 5:22)

READ & DISCUSS Luke 7:36-47 (see reverse side) With which character do you identify in this story?

The Cross Chart illustrates the Luke 7:47 principle - that "He who is forgiven much loves much, but he who is forgiven little, loves little."



THE POINT? Spiritual growth comes as I see my sin, admit it, and "let the Cross grow" in my life. The power to change flows from this faith-action.

Concept by Richard Lovelace (Renewal as a Way of Life, IVP, page 162). Adapted by Paul Miller for Sonship ©1988. Adapted by John W. Long, Jr. for SONSHIP for Africa ©2002, and Grace4Life ©2006 London UK.

See larger view on next page...

The Cross Chart

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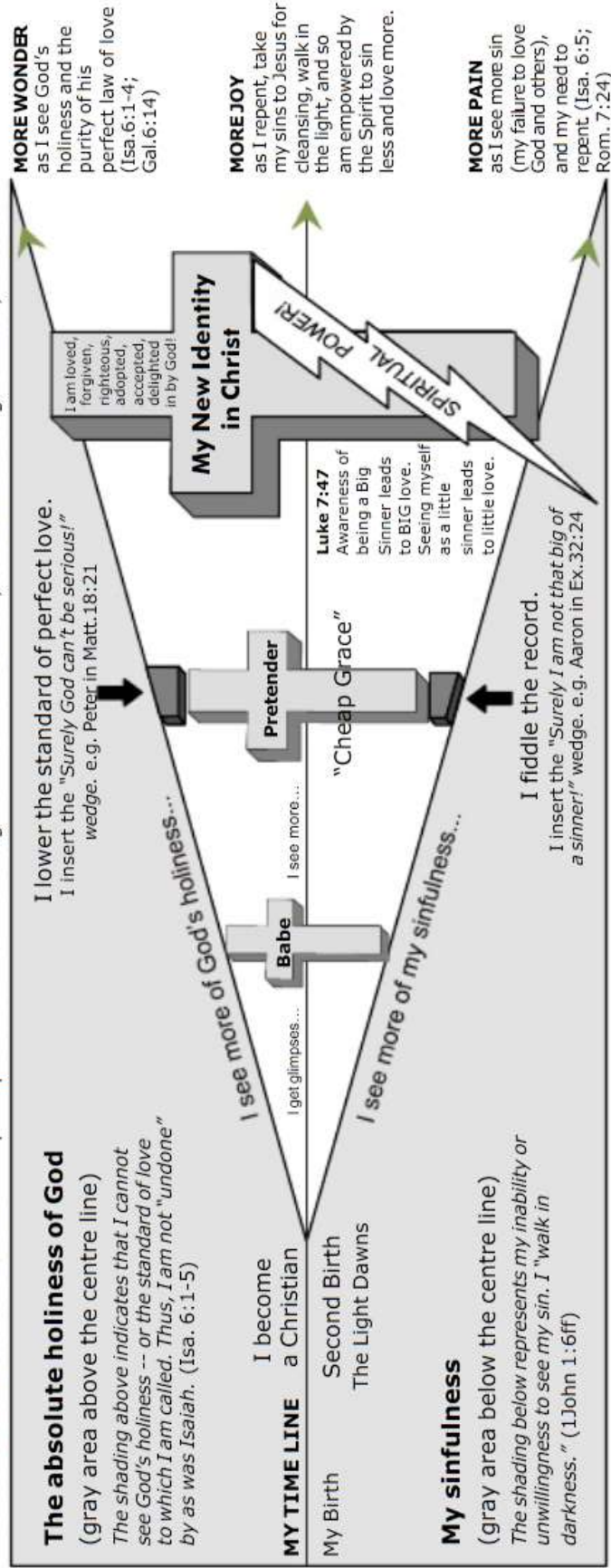
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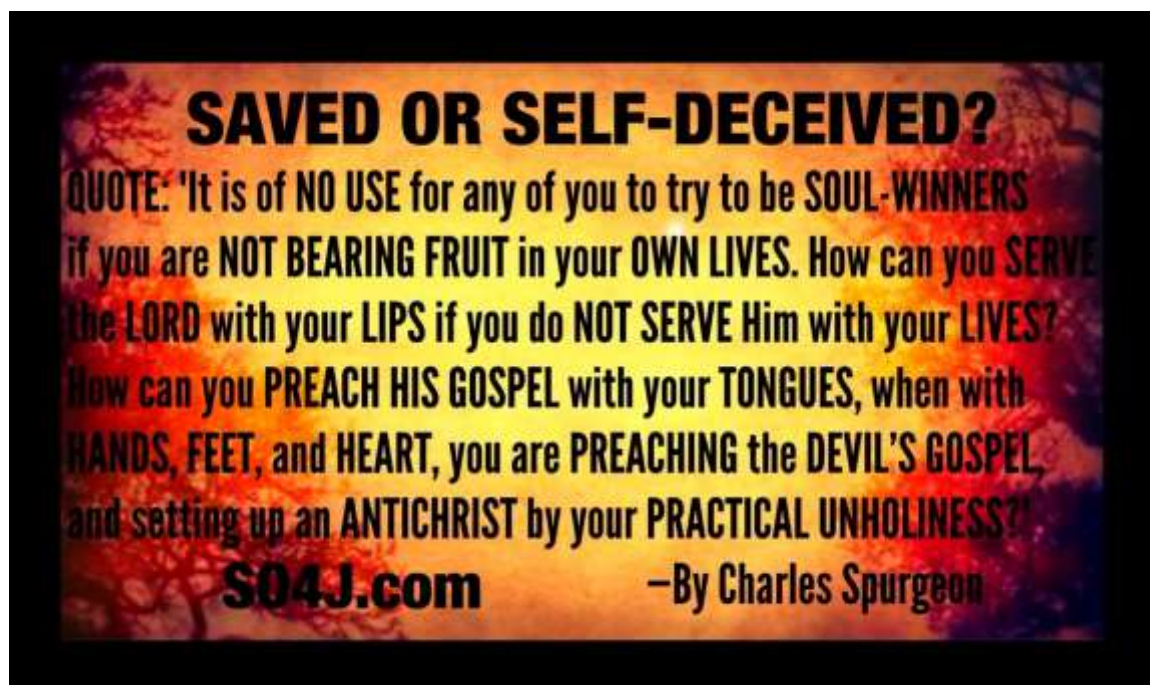
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See also: [Faith](#)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Top 10 Reasons Unsaved People Think They Are Saved

<http://so4j.com/top-10-ways-unsaved-people-think-theyre-saved>



The Gospel
The Good News
Becoming Born Again

The Plan of Salvation

(Survey of Various Presentations)

Basic Gospel Message of Salvation:

Everyone is saved who believes in Jesus Christ: that He...

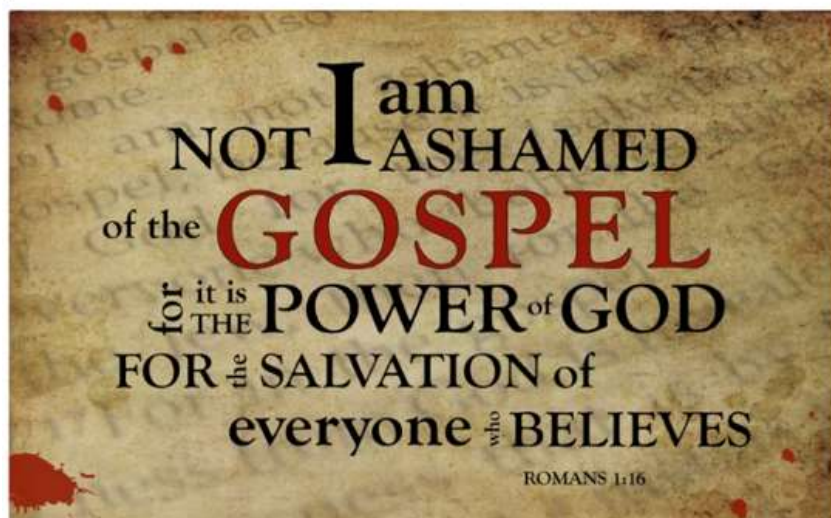
	Died on a cross / for the Forgiveness of our Sins [as foretold by OT Prophets in Scripture],
	He was Buried / then was Raised up on the 3 rd day (<u>Resurrection</u>) [as per OT Prophets].
	Witnesses after Jesus arose: Apostles ate and drank with Him; over 500 men/women saw.
	Why Preach? – commanded by Jesus; of first/highest importance; and to warn you that
	Jesus was appointed by God to reign over everything and to judge the living and the dead.

NOTE: The order of this information does NOT matter. NO gospel presentation is complete without emphasizing Jesus' resurrection and that Jesus was appointed ruler (Lord) and judge over all.

Exact wording is not required as long as the essence of the Gospel is clear and complete.

The above summary of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is based on Paul's and Peter's (via Luke's Book of Acts) explicit statements of the Gospel (see: 1 Cor. 15:1-11, 20-28; Acts 10:34-38, 39-45 re: Peter's presentation of the Gospel to the Gentile Roman Centurion Cornelius). Other similar statements of the Gospel are found in Rom. 1:1-5; Acts 17:16-34 (Paul's speech at Mars Hill, Athens) and to a lesser extent, 2 Tim. 2:8-10.

["Christ" = from *Christos*, the Greek word for the Hebrew "Messiah" = "Anointed One of God"; i.e., Jesus the Messiah]



Legend:

	Saved / Believes in Jesus:
	Died/ ~~Sins~~ /Scriptures
	Buried/Resurrection
	Witnesses
	Why Preach
	Appointed by God

Notes:

Order does not matter.

No gospel presentation is complete without emphasizing the resurrection of Jesus and that Jesus was appointed ruler (Lord) and judge over all.

Exact wording is not required as long as the essence of the gospel is clear and complete.

Submit your comments, suggestions, questions to:
gospel@timoninc.com

For more details see: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

The ABC's of Salvation

TODAY IS THE DAY OF SALVATION

IF I DIE TODAY WILL I GO TO HEAVEN? WHY WOULD ANYONE PUT OFF THE MOST IMPORTANT DECISION THEY COULD EVER MAKE IN THEIR LIVES, CONCERNING ETERNAL LIFE? / FOR IT IS BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED, THROUGH FAITH — AND THIS NOT FROM YOURSELVES, IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD — NOT BY WORKS, SO THAT NO ONE CAN BOAST. - EPHESIANS 2:8-9

THE APOSTLE PAUL TELLS US WHAT THE GOSPEL IS

"MOREOVER, BRETHREN, I DECLARE TO YOU THE GOSPEL WHICH I PREACHED TO YOU, WHICH ALSO YOU RECEIVED AND IN WHICH YOU STAND, BY WHICH ALSO YOU ARE SAVED, IF YOU HOLD FAST THAT WORD WHICH I PREACHED TO YOU—UNLESS YOU BELIEVED IN VAIN. FOR I DELIVERED TO YOU FIRST OF ALL THAT WHICH I ALSO RECEIVED: THAT CHRIST DIED FOR OUR SINS ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES, AND THAT HE WAS BURIED, AND THAT HE ROSE AGAIN THE THIRD DAY ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES - 1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-4

f SHARE

tw SHARE

in SHARE

en SHARE



ADMIT THAT YOU'RE A SINNER

THIS IS WHERE THAT GODLY SORROW LEADS TO GENUINE REPENTANCE FOR SINNING AGAINST A RIGHTEOUS GOD AND THERE IS A CHANGE OF HEART, WE CHANGE OUR MIND AND GOD CHANGES OUR HEARTS AND REGENERATES US FROM THE INSIDE OUT.



BELIEVE IN YOUR HEART THAT JESUS CHRIST DIED FOR YOUR SINS, WAS BURIED, AND THAT GOD RAISED JESUS FROM THE DEAD

BELIEVE IN YOUR HEART THAT JESUS CHRIST DIED FOR YOUR SINS, WAS BURIED, AND THAT GOD RAISED JESUS FROM THE DEAD. THIS IS TRUSTING WITH ALL OF YOUR HEART THAT JESUS CHRIST IS WHO HE SAID HE WAS.



CALL UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD.

THIS IS TRUSTING WITH ALL OF YOUR HEART THAT JESUS CHRIST IS WHO HE SAID HE WAS. EVERY SINGLE PERSON WHO EVER LIVED SINCE ADAM WILL BEND THEIR KNEE AND CONFESS WITH THEIR MOUTH THAT JESUS CHRIST IS LORD, THE LORD OF LORDS AND THE KING OF KINGS.

Salvation



It is as simple as ABC

Source: <https://calvarychapelkaneohe.com/abc-of-salvation/>

The Plan of Salvation Seen in the Bible

The chiastic literary structure is seen in many Bible books and passages.
Below is a pattern representing the whole Bible.
The Bible is God's invitation through Christ to accept His plan for our redemption.

- Earth without form - the abyss (Gen. 1:1) *Notice that the first pair items matches the last pair.*
- Creation (Gen. 1, 2)
- The fall from God's image (Gen. 3)
- Death begins, a Redeemer is promised (Gen. 3:15)
- Call to Abraham - a people chosen (Gen. 12)
- God's people in slavery; escape to the wilderness (Ex.)
- Restoration of knowledge about God's plan — His law (Ex.)
- Christ introduced in the sanctuary system (Lev.)
- God's people in captivity for unfaithfulness (Ezek., Dan. and others)
- Christ revealed in human flesh (Gospels)
- Heaven's greatest gift — redemption through the cross!
- Christ revealed through the Holy Spirit (Acts)
- Medieval persecution; church in the wilderness (Rev. 12, 13)
- Restoration of lost truth — the Reformation (Rev. 12)
- Christ seen in the heavenly sanctuary — Judgment message (Rev. 14)
- God's people threatened; forbidden to buy or sell; endurance (Rev. 13; 14:12)
- Call of the mighty angel; Elijah, Appeal to God's people to come out (Rev. 18)
- Resurrection of the righteous to immortal life (1 Thess. 4)
- Restoration; incorruptible bodies; like Christ's glorious body (1 Cor. 15)
- Earth desolate for 1000 years; Satan in the abyss (Rev. 20)
- Creation of new heavens and new earth (Rev. 21)

[Source: <http://www.bibleexplained.com/bible-chi.html>]

The Bridge Illustration – Simple to Do On A Napkin

<http://www.extendgrace.org/PDF/spiritual%20conversation%20tools.pdf>

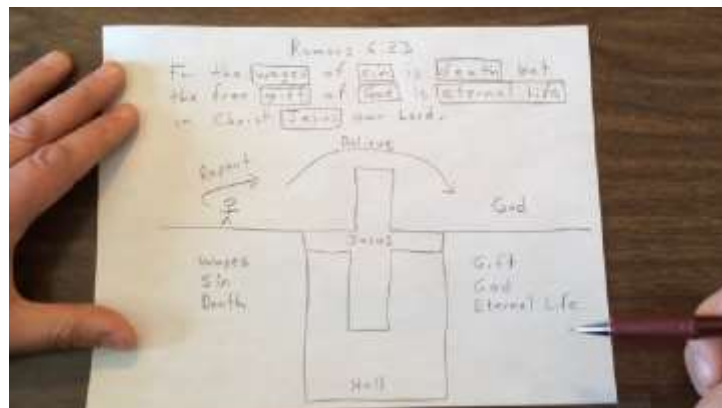
The Bridge to Life – Navigators

<https://www.navigators.org/Tools/Evangelism%20Resources/Tools/The%20Bridge%20to%20Life>

<http://www.ibcberlin.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/bridge.pdf> [PDF]

One Verse Gospel Presentation With Bridge Diagram Based On Romans 6:23

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LZjWByhBdQ> [Video]



How to Know God Personally

What does it take to begin a relationship with God? Devote yourself to unselfish religious deeds? Become a better person so that God will accept you?

You may be surprised that none of those things will work. But God has made it very clear in the Bible how we can know Him.

The following principles will explain how you can personally begin a relationship with God, right now, through Jesus Christ...

Principle 1:

God loves you and offers a wonderful plan for your life.

God's Love

"God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." ¹

God's Plan

[Christ speaking] "I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly" [that it might be full and meaningful]. ²

Why is it that most people are not experiencing the abundant life? Because...

Principle 2:

All of us sin and our sin has separated us from God.

We Are Sinful

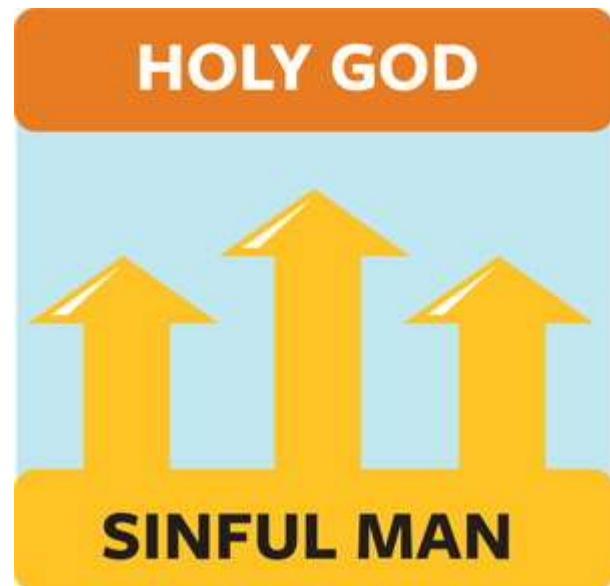
"All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." ³

We were created to have fellowship with God; but, because of our stubborn self-will, we chose to go our own independent way, and fellowship with God was broken. This self-will, characterized by an attitude of active rebellion or passive indifference, is evidence of what the Bible calls sin.

We Are Separated

"The wages of sin is death" [spiritual separation from God]. ⁴

This diagram illustrates that God is holy and people are sinful. A great gulf separates us. The arrows illustrate that we are continually trying to reach God and the abundant life through our own efforts, such as a good life, philosophy, or religion -- but we inevitably fail.



The third law explains the only way to bridge this gulf...

Principle 3:

Jesus Christ is God's only provision for our sin. Through Him we can know and experience God's love and plan for our life.

He Died in Our Place

"God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." ⁵

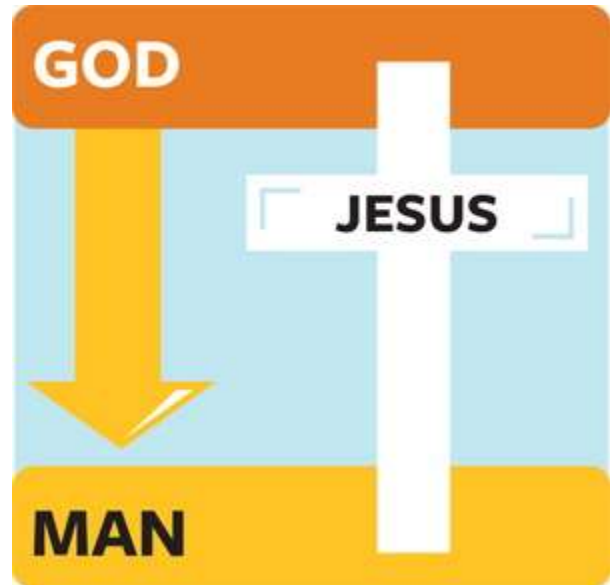
He Rose From the Dead

"Christ died for our sins...He was buried...He was raised on the third day, according to the Scriptures...He appeared to Peter, then to the twelve. After that He appeared to more than five hundred..." ⁶

He Is the Only Way to God

"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.'" ⁷

This diagram illustrates that God has bridged the gulf which separates us from Him by sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross in our place to pay the penalty for our sins.



It is not enough just to know these three principles...

Principle 4:

We must individually receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; then we can know and experience God's love and plan for our lives.

We Must Receive Christ

"As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name." ⁸

We Receive Christ Through Faith

"By grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast." ⁹

When We Receive Christ, We Experience a New Birth

We Receive Christ by Personal Invitation

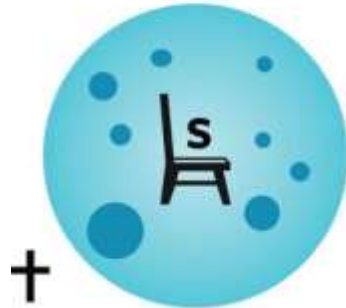
[Christ speaking] "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him." ¹⁰

Receiving Christ involves turning to God from self (repentance) and trusting Christ to come into our lives to forgive our sins and to make us what He wants us to be. Just to agree intellectually that Jesus Christ is

the Son of God and that He died on the cross for your sins is not enough. Nor is it enough to have an emotional experience. You receive Jesus Christ by faith, as an act of the will.

These two circles represent two kinds of lives:

Self-Directed Life



- S** Self is on the throne
- † Christ is outside the life
- Interests are directed by self, often resulting in discord and frustration

Christ-Directed Life

- Love
- Joy
- Peace
- Patience
- Kindness
- Goodness
- Faithfulness



- Life is Christ-centered
- Empowered by Holy Spirit
- Introduces others to Christ
- Has effective prayer life
- Understands God's Word
- Trusts God
- Obeys God

Which circle best describes your life?

Which circle would you like to have represent your life?

The following explains how you can receive Christ:

You can receive Christ right now by faith through prayer

Prayer is talking to God. God knows your heart and is not so concerned with your words as He is with the attitude of your heart. The following is a suggested prayer:

"Lord Jesus, I need You. Thank You for dying on the cross for my sins. I open the door of my life and receive You as my Savior and Lord. Thank You for forgiving my sins and giving me eternal life. Take control of the throne of my life. Make me the kind of person You want me to be."

If this prayer expresses the desire of your heart, then you can pray this prayer right now and Christ will come into your life, as He promised.

Does this prayer express the desire of your heart?

Yes, I just asked Jesus into my life

**I may want to ask Jesus into my life,
but I have a question I would like answered first**

(1) John 3:16 (NIV); (2) John 10:10; (3) Romans 3:23; (4) Romans 6:23; (5) Romans 5:8; (6) 1 Corinthians 15:3-6; (7) John 14:6; (8) John 1:12; (9) Ephesians 2:8,9; (10) Revelation 3:20

Adapted from *Have You Heard of the Four Spiritual Laws* and *Would You Like to Know God Personally*, by Dr. Bill Bright, co-founder of Campus Crusade for Christ. © Campus Crusade for Christ. All rights reserved.

The Four Spiritual Laws (Original Version)

1

God loves you and created you to know Him personally. He has a wonderful plan for your life.

God's Love

"For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16)

God's Plan

"Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the one true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent." (John 17:3)



What prevents us from knowing God personally?

2

People are sinful and separated from God, so we cannot know Him personally or experience His love.

People Are Sinful

*“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”
(Romans 3:23)*

People were created to have fellowship with God; but, because of our stubborn self-will, we chose to go our own independent way and fellowship with God was broken. This self-will, characterized by an attitude of active rebellion or passive indifference, is an evidence of what the Bible calls sin.

People Are Separated

*“For the wages of sin is death”.
[spiritual separation from God] (Romans 6:23)*

GOD



This diagram illustrates that God is holy and people are sinful. A great chasm separates the two. The arrows illustrate that we are continually trying to reach God and establish a personal relationship with Him through our own efforts, such as a good life, philosophy, or religion, but we inevitably fail.



The third principle explains the only way to bridge this gulf...

3

Jesus Christ is God's only provision for man's sin. Through Him alone we can know God personally and experience His love and plan.

He Died In Our Place

"But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)

He Rose From The Dead

"Christ died for our sins... He was buried... He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures... He appeared to Peter, then to the twelve. After that He appeared to more than five hundred..." (1 Corinthians 15:3-6)

He Is the Only Way to God

"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through me'." (John 14:6)



This diagram illustrates that God has bridged the chasm that separates us from Him by sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross in our place to pay the penalty for our sins.



The fourth principle explains it's not enough to just know these truths...

4

We must individually receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; then we can know God personally and experience His love and plan.

We Must Receive Christ

“Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God.” (John 1:12)

We Receive Christ Through Faith

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.” (Ephesians 2:8-9)

When We Receive Christ, We Experience a New Birth

(Read John 3:1-8)

We Receive Christ by Personal Invitation

[Christ speaking] *“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 him, and he with Me.” (Revelation 3:20)*

Receiving Christ involves turning to God from self (repentance) and trusting Christ to come into our lives to forgive us of our sins and to make us what He wants us to be. Just to agree intellectually that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that He died on the cross for our sins is not enough. Nor is it enough to have an emotional experience. We receive Jesus Christ by faith, as an act of the will.

These two circles represent two kinds of lives.

A life entrusted to Christ. Christ is central and on the throne, and self yields to Christ.



A life without Jesus Christ. Self is central and on the throne and Jesus Christ (+) is on the outside.

You Can Receive Christ Right Now by Faith Through Prayer

God knows your heart and is not as concerned with your words as He is with the attitude of your heart. The following is a suggested prayer:

*Lord Jesus, I want to know You personally.
Thank You for dying on the cross for my sins.
I open the door of my life and receive You as
my Savior and Lord. Thank You for forgiving
me of my sins and giving me eternal life. Make
me the kind of person You want me to be.*

Does This Prayer Express the Desire of Your Heart?

If it does, pray this prayer right now, and Christ will come into your life, as He promised.

Did You Receive Christ Into Your Life?

According to His promise as recorded in Revelation 3:20, where is Christ right now in relation to you? Christ said that He would come into your life and be your Savior and friend so you can know Him personally. Would He mislead you? On what authority do you know that God has answered your prayer? (The trustworthiness of God Himself and His Word.)

The Bible Promises Eternal Life to All Who Receive Christ

“And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.” (1 John 5:11-13)

Thank God often that Christ is in your life and that He will never leave you (Hebrews 13:5). You can know on the basis of His promise that Christ lives in you and that you have eternal life from the very moment you invite Him in.

Do Not Depend on Feelings

The promise of God's Word, the Bible—not our feelings—is our authority. The Christian lives by faith (trust) in the character of God Himself and His Word. This train diagram illustrates the relationship among fact (God and His Word), faith (our trust in God and His Word), and feeling (the result of our faith and obedience) (John 14:21).

The train will run with or without the caboose. However, it would be useless to attempt to pull the train by the caboose. In the same way, we as Christians do not depend on feelings or emotions, but we place our faith (trust) in the character of God and the promises of His Word.



Now That You Have Entered Into a Personal Relationship With Christ

The moment you received Christ by faith, as an act of your will, many things happened, including the following:

- Christ came into your life (*Revelation 3:20 and Colossians 1:27*)
- Your sins were forgiven (*Colossians 1:14*)
- You became a child of God (*John 1:12*)
- You received eternal life (*John 5:24*)
- You began the great adventure for which God created you (*John 10:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17 and 1 Thessalonians 5:18*)

Can you think of anything more wonderful that could happen to you than entering into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ? Would you like to thank God in prayer right now for what He has done for you? By thanking God, you demonstrate your faith.



To enjoy your new relationship with God...

Suggestions For Christian Growth

Spiritual growth results from trusting Jesus Christ. “...The righteous will live by faith” (Galatians 3:11). A life of faith will enable you to trust God increasingly with every detail of your life, and to practice the following:

- G** — Go to God in prayer daily.
(John 15:7)
- R** — Read God's Word daily. Start with the Gospel of John.
(Acts 17:11)
- O** — Obey God moment by moment.
(John 14:21)
- W** — Witness for Christ by your life and words.
(Matthew 4:19; John 15:8)
- T** — Trust God for every detail of your life.
(1 Peter 5:7)
- H** — Holy Spirit—Allow Him to control and empower your daily life and witness.
(Galatians 5:16,17; Acts 1:8)

Remember...

Your walk with Christ depends on what you allow Him to do in and through you empowered by the Holy Spirit, not what you do for Him through self effort.

For more information about a relationship with God and growing in your spiritual life, consider visiting:

www.Cru.org

www.EveryPerson.com

www.EveryStudent.com

www.StartingWithGod.com

If you found the message in this booklet helpful, please let us know! We'd love to hear your story!

Please email us at Cru@Cru.org

THE ROMANS ROAD

TO SALVATION

We are all sinners by nature and by choice.

Romans 3:23
For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

We receive eternal life as a free gift!

Romans 6:23
For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

God demonstrated His love for us, His enemies.

Romans 5:8
But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

We must trust and surrender to Jesus as Lord.

Romans 10:9-10
That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

A sinner's prayer for forgiveness
"Dear God, I know I'm a sinner. I know my sin deserves to be punished. I believe Christ is the Son of God, who died for me and rose from the grave. I want to turn from my sin and trust Jesus Christ alone as my Savior. Thank You for the forgiveness and everlasting life I can now have through faith in Jesus. In Jesus' name, Amen."

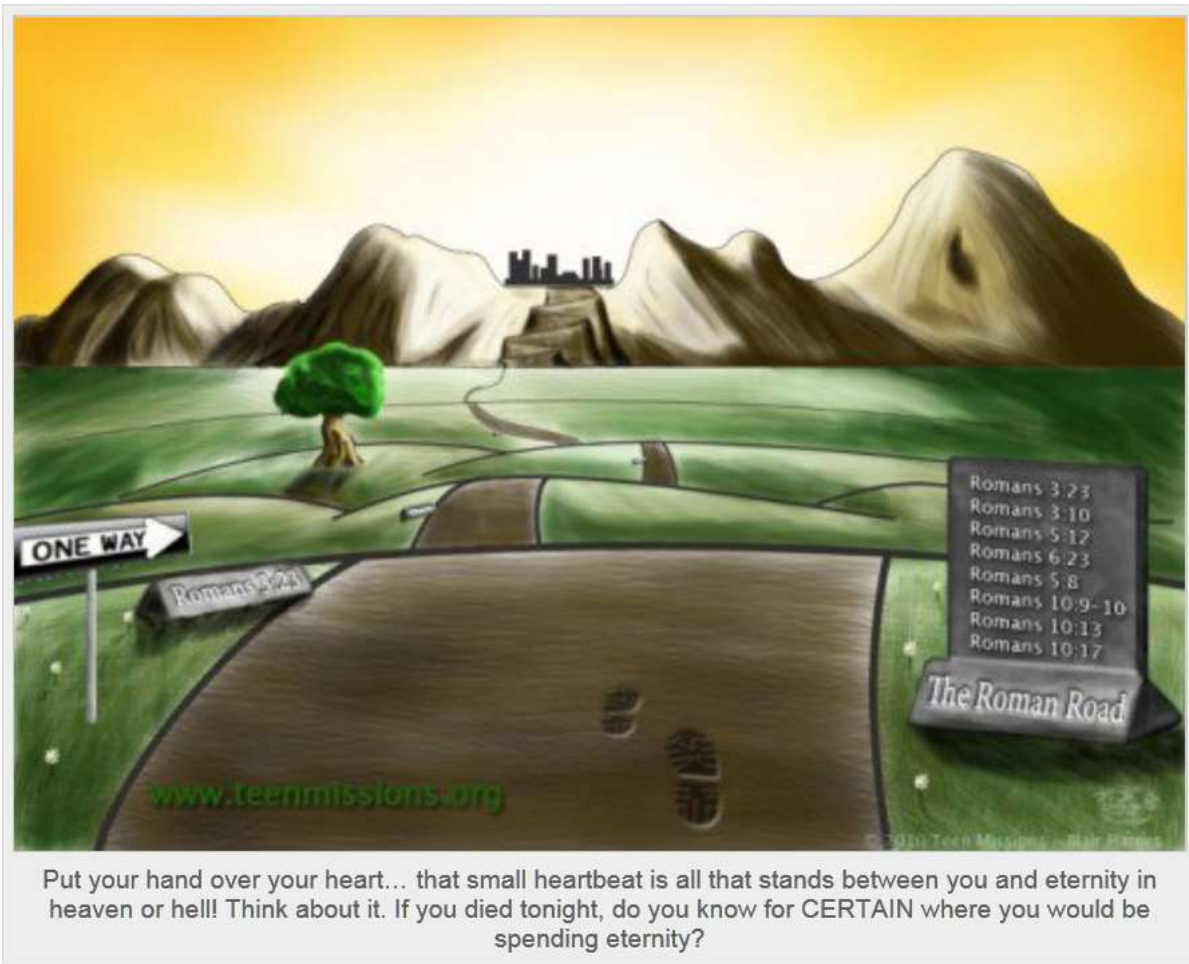
Our assurance of salvation through Jesus

Romans 10:13
For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.



trinitymissions.org

The Romans Road



Steps down the Roman Road to Salvation... Read on!

I consider myself a 'good person'... won't that be enough?

Romans 3:23 NKJV – for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Romans 3:10 NKJV – As it is written: “There is none righteous, no, not one;

Romans 5:12 NKJV – Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned–

The creator of the universe is HOLY. God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. 1Jn 1:5 (KJV) He has set laws in place for his creation to obey. What are these laws? They begin with the [10 Commandments](#). While you might consider yourself 'good' compared to most people, how do you measure up against God's law? Have you ever told the smallest lie? Then you are a liar. “For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.” James 2:10 (NIV) Disobedience to God is sin.

Is sin really THAT big of a deal? If it is... what HOPE is there?

Romans 6:23 NKJV – For the wages of sin [is] death, but the gift of God [is] eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Disobedience to an infinite eternal God deserves an infinite eternal consequence. God shows us His character and his laws in his creation, the world around us. He has also written his laws in our hearts... on our conscience. He has also given us his WORD the Bible. No good judge would let the guilty go free, the criminal go unpunished. Neither can a holy righteous God allow sinful man to go unpunished... but God LOVES man whom he has made in his image and He has provided a way of escape by sending his only son to die in our place.

After what I've done to grieve God... HOW could He willingly die in my place?

Romans 5:8 NKJV – But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. Jn 3:16-NKJV While he died on the cross, he was mocked, spit upon, and cursed. Yet Jesus cried out, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do..." (Lk 23:34-KJV) With such love, Jesus died in your place... knowing every evil act, word, and thought you would commit. What powerful love! He loves you unconditionally even to the point of death when you are at your worst!

HOW can I be saved?

Romans 10:9-10 NKJV – that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation

You can never be saved by trying to be a good person, nor can you be saved through any amount of 'good works'. Ephesians 2:8,9 says "For by grace have you been saved by faith. And that, not of yourselves. It is the gift of God, not of works. Lest any man should boast. (KJV) You and I can be saved only by confessing our sins and placing our faith in God's son, Jesus Christ who died and paid for our sins on the cross. We must also surrender our life to His lordship... placing him in charge of every area of our life because we now belong to him.

Did God HEAR me? Did He accept me?

Romans 10:13 NKJV – For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."

God promises that "to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" (Jn 1:12 NIV) Yes, God does hear and accept ALL who come to put their faith in Him. There is no need to fear death any longer because Jesus BROKE the power of death on the cross with his own blood. The price has been paid in full and it is God's promise to receive all who come to him by placing their faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

What do I do now?

Romans 10:17 NKJV – So then faith [comes] by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Your journey as a child of the King of Kings has just begun! You must begin by spending time daily in prayer and in God's Word, the Bible. You must also find fellowship with other believers in a Church that teaches and preaches the Bible. You should also now confess Jesus, your savior before men. Share about your new faith in Christ with your family, coworkers and others whom God has placed on your daily path.

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"The Roman's Road" is a popular method of presenting the Gospel using only Scriptures from the Biblical Book of Romans. It is certainly an effective soulwinning tool which every believer should be well familiarized with.

Before I say another word let me WARN YOU that the Roman's Road is a false plan of salvation if you leave out the Gospel, which according to 1st Corinthians 15:1-4 is the DEATH, BURIAL and RESURRECTION of Jesus Christ. I realized recently that many versions of the Roman's Road tract does not even mention the resurrection of Jesus Christ.



The Romans Road should include **Romans 10:9-10**, **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."**

Certainly, a lost sinner can be led to the Lord through many other Books of the Bible, but the Book of Romans is rich in doctrine and a masterpiece of divine literature. Thank God for the wonderful Book of Romans!

I was saved at the age of 13 in Chicago. I remember my first soulwinning experience while going door-to-door soulwinning with other members of our church youth group. An adult woman answered the door and after a brief introduction, I asked her, "Do you know for sure if you died this moment that you would go to Heaven?" She replied, "No." I asked her if I could share the Gospel with her and she agreed. I was stumped and didn't know what to say. I froze. So I read to her the Gospel tract in my hand, which was called "The Roman's Road." I couldn't explain anything more to her other than what I was reading.

I remember feeling frustrated and ill-prepared. I recall telling her that she could call my pastor if she had further questions and I pointed out the church's phone number on back of the Gospel tract. I went away sad because I had the opportunity to win someone to Christ but didn't understand it enough myself to explain it. I went home that afternoon and memorized *The Roman's Road* and was determined to be prepared the next time I went out soulwinning.

Although I was saved at the early age of 13, I didn't receive the blessed assurance of my salvation until I was 20-years old. I lived in constant fear, and cried myself to sleep many nights, wondering if perhaps I didn't have enough faith or maybe I had missed something. I was so afraid of going to Hellfire. Looking back, I now realize that it was my woeful ignorance of the Scriptures and God's plan of salvation that caused me so much emotional fear, worrying and doubt. I was saved, but didn't understand it, and so my mind was filled with many doubts and fears.

As a result of my painful ordeal, I wrote a book called, [SALVATION](#), so I could share with others the wonderful truths which God gave to me to settle the assurance of my salvation. I have never doubted my salvation since. I now fully realize that I am saved, not by my own self-righteousness; but by **HIS**

RIGHTEOUSNESS. It's not a prayer that saves us, but our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Salvation is of the Lord. I was focusing on an experience, the words I spoke when I prayed, the degree of my faith, et cetera. I was really worried. Thankfully, those days are forever gone and I know beyond any shadow of a doubt that my name is written in Heaven in the Lamb's Book of Life.

Here is ***The Romans' Road*** . . .

1. **All Have Sinned.** Romans 3:10 states, "*As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one.*" And again in Romans 3:23 we are told, "*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*" Romans 5:12 tells us, "*Wherefore, as by one man [Adam] sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.*" When Adam sinned, he brought the curse of sin upon all mankind. This is why everyone is born with a nature to sin, it has been passed down since Adam.
2. **There is a Penalty for Sin.** Romans 6:23 says, "*For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*" Death is the penalty for sin, Physical Death and a *Second Death*. Most people confuse spiritual death with the *Second Death*. We are born spiritually-dead. Adam and Eve died spiritually the moment they sinned, and all of their descendants since have been born spiritually-dead. This is why a person must be born-again spiritually. God's Holy Spirit is that spiritual life. The Bible also speaks of a *Second Death*, which means being cast into the Lake of Fire forever as punishment for our sins. Just as a person is paid wages for work performed on the job, so does God payback sinners in the Lake of Fire.
3. **Jesus Died, Was Buried, And Rose Three Days Later.** Christ died for our sins! Romans 5:8, "*But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*" What a precious Scripture! God in His love decided to give mankind a chance to escape the wrath of God's judgment. Jesus came and laid down His life for us, knowing just how sinful the human race is. God expressed His love for humanity, paying men's sin debt, knowing that we are so undeserving.
4. **Call Upon the Lord Jesus to Be Saved.** Romans 10:13 promises, "*For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*" The word "call" means "to appeal unto." Lost sinners who come to Jesus for forgiveness of sins, believing that He is the Christ, the Son of God, will be saved. How much faith do you need to be saved? Just enough faith to obey Romans 10:13 and trust upon the Lord Jesus for salvation. Romans 10:9-10, "*That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*"

Jesus DIED, was BURIED and RESURRECTED. This is the Gospel according to 1st Corinthians 15:1-4. If you receive the Gospel as payment for your sins, then you are saved immediately, irrevocably and eternally.

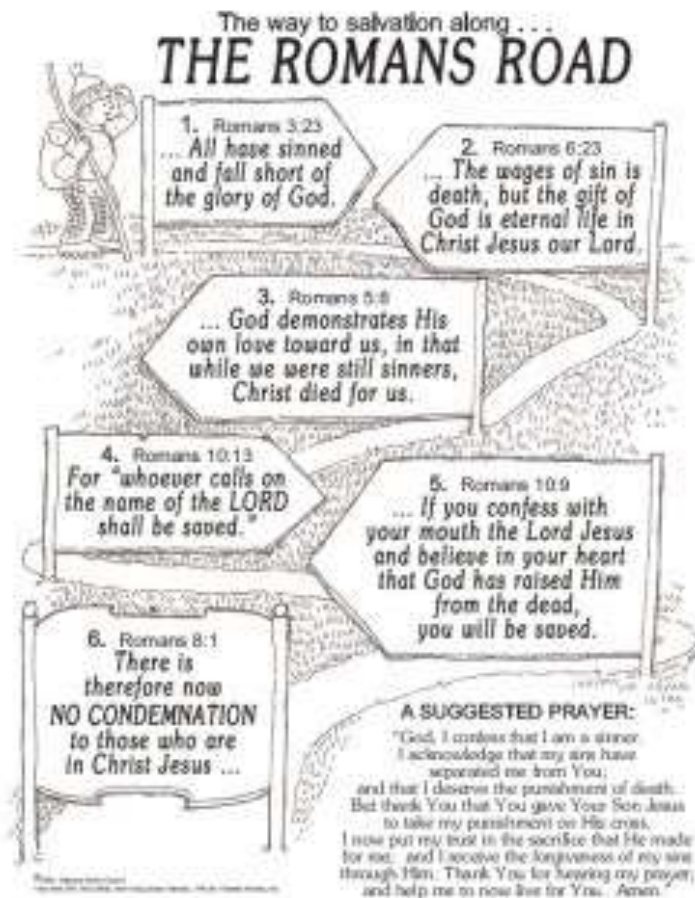
Salvation is the simplest thing in the world, but men can make it so complicated. Some people say that faith in Christ is insufficient to save a lost sinner. They claim that a person must depart from their sinful lifestyle and commit their life to live for God. That is a very complicated requirement for a person who's been living in sin their entire life. Old habits are not easily broken.

The truth is that salvation is a free gift that God offers to humanity. Salvation is receiving; not giving. Notice once again the words of Romans 6:23, "*For the wages of sin is death; but **the gift of God** is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*" All God requires of us to receive the free gift of eternal life is that we come by way of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Amen!

The Romans Road is a simple presentation of the Scriptures, which soulwinners can use to lead lost sinners to the redeeming Savior. I encourage every believer reading this article to become a soulwinner. If you're already a

soulwinner, please keep up the good work! If you've never been saved, then now is the time to believe upon the name of Jesus, the Christ, that your sins will be blotted out forever and you can know that your name is written in Heaven.

[Source: http://www.jesus-is-savior.com/Basics/romans_road.htm]



ROMAN'S ROAD

Take the Roman's Road!

Romans 3:10 - *As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:*

Romans 3:23 - *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*

Romans 5:8 - *...God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

Romans 6:23 - *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Romans 10:9-10 - *... If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

Romans 10:13 - *For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*

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How to Know Jesus

In four brief steps, you can come to an understanding of how to find eternal life.



During Billy Graham's landmark 1954 London Crusade, his team developed a simple system to bring people to faith known as "Steps to Peace with God." Since that time, and in various printed and electronic forms, this succinct and clear presentation of how to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and experience peace with God has been translated into dozens of languages and shared with millions of people.

"Steps to Peace with God" is natural overflow of the Gospel message Billy Graham has given around the world. It clearly conveys God's love, forgiveness, and plan for each person's life.

STEP 1: GOD'S PURPOSE: PEACE AND LIFE

God loves you and wants you to experience peace and life—abundant and eternal.
The Bible says ...

"We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."
—Romans 5:1

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."
—John 3:16

"I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."
—John 10:10

Why don't most people have this peace and abundant life that God planned for us to have?

STEP 2: THE PROBLEM: OUR SEPARATION

God created us in His own image to have an abundant life. He did not make us as robots to automatically love and obey Him. God gave us a will and a freedom of choice. We chose to disobey God and go our own willful way. We still make this choice today. This results in separation from God.

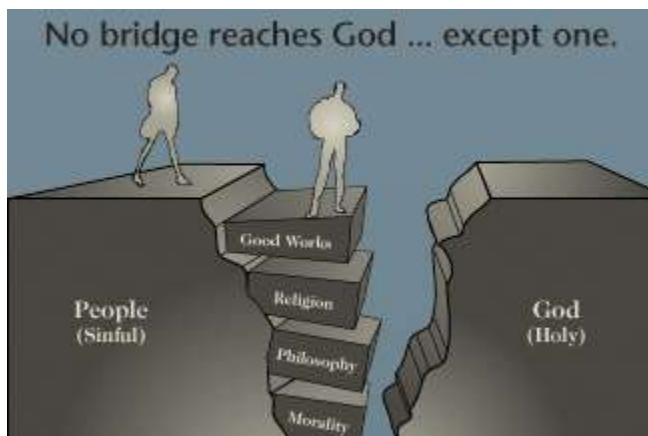


The Bible says ...

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

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."
—Romans 6:23

People have tried in many ways to bridge this gap between themselves and God ...



The Bible says ...

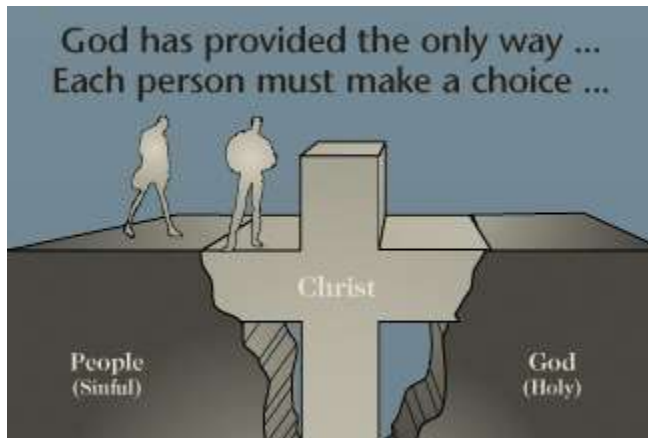
"There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death."
—Proverbs 14:12

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

No bridge reaches God ... except one.

STEP 3: GOD'S BRIDGE: THE CROSS

Jesus Christ died on the cross and rose from the grave. He paid the penalty for our sin and bridged the gap between God and people. [continued next page]



The Bible says ...

"For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ."
—1 Timothy 2:5

"For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God."
—1 Peter 3:18

"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."
—Romans 5:8

God has provided the only way. Each person must make a choice.

STEP 4: OUR RESPONSE: RECEIVE CHRIST

We must trust Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and receive Him by personal invitation.



The Bible says ...

"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 him, and he with me."
—Revelation 3:20

"Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."
—John 1:12

"That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."
—Romans 10:9

Where are you? Will you receive Jesus Christ right now?

Here is how you can receive Christ:

- **Admit your need (I am a sinner).**
- **Be willing to turn from your sins (repent).**
- **Believe that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross and rose from the grave.**
- **Through prayer, invite Jesus Christ to come in and control your life through the Holy Spirit. (Receive Him as Lord and Savior.)**

PRAYER

How to Pray:

Dear Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner, and I ask for Your forgiveness. I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead. I turn from my sins and invite You to come into my heart and life. I want to trust and follow You as my Lord and Savior. In Your Name.
Amen.

God's Assurance: His Word

If you prayed this prayer, the Bible says ...

"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. "
—Romans 10:13

Did you sincerely ask Jesus Christ to come into your life? Where is He right now? What has He given you?

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."
—Ephesians 2:8–9

Receiving Christ, we are born into God's family through the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit who indwells every believer. This is called regeneration, or the "new birth."

This is just the beginning of a wonderful new life in Christ. To deepen this relationship you should:

- Read your Bible everyday to know Christ better.
- Talk to God in prayer every day.
- Tell others about Christ.
- Worship, fellowship, and serve with other Christians in a church where Christ is preached.
- As Christ's representative in a needy world, demonstrate your new life by your love and concern for others.

[If you are making this commitment to Christ today, please let us know.](#)

We would like to send you Bible study materials to help you grow in your faith.

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God's Plan of Salvation

1 John 5:11-12 And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. The one who has the Son has this eternal life; the one who does not have the Son of God does not have this eternal life.

This passage tells us that God has given us eternal life and this life is in His Son, Jesus Christ. In other words, the way to possess eternal life is to possess God's Son. The question is, how can a person have the Son of God?

Man's Problem

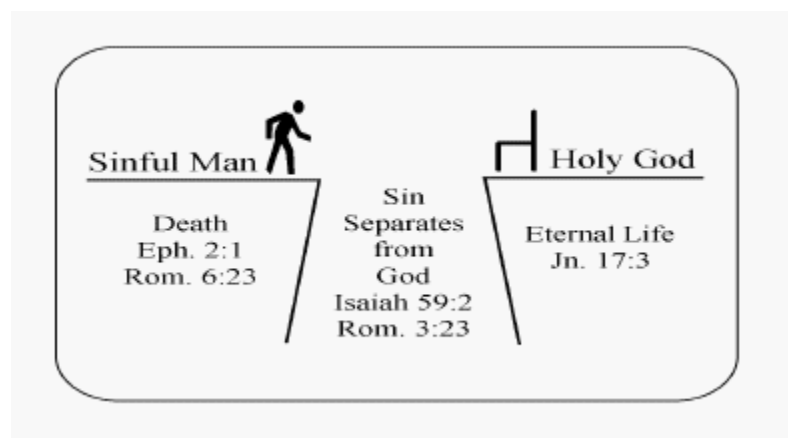
Separation From God

Isaiah 59:2 But your sinful acts have alienated you from your God; your sins have caused him to reject you and not listen to your prayers.

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

According to Romans 5:8, God demonstrated His love for us through the death of His Son. Why did Christ have to die for us? Because Scripture declares all men to be sinful. To "sin" means to miss the mark. The Bible declares "all have sinned and fall short of the glory (the perfect holiness) of God" (Rom. 3:23). In other words, our sin separates us from God who is perfect holiness (righteousness and justice) and God must therefore judge sinful man.

Habakkuk 1:13a You are too just to tolerate evil; you are unable to condone wrongdoing.



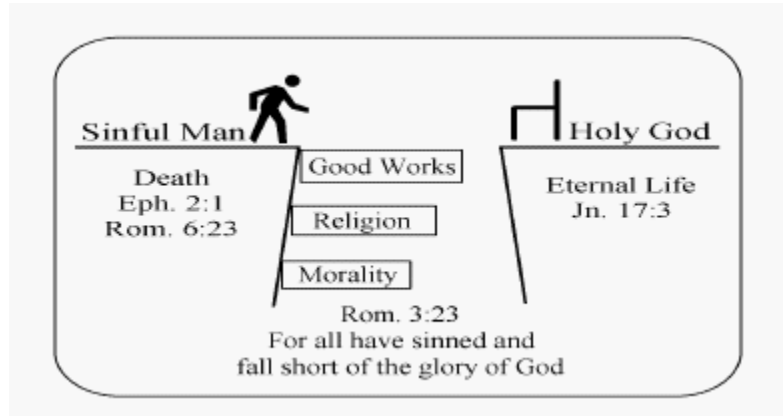
The Futility of Our Works

Scripture also teaches that no amount of human goodness, human works, human morality, or religious activity can gain acceptance with God or get anyone into heaven. The moral man, the religious man, and the immoral and non-religious are all in the same boat. They all fall short of God's perfect righteousness. After discussing the immoral man, the moral man, and the religious man in Romans 1:18-3:8, the Apostle Paul declares that both Jews and Greeks are under sin, that "there is no one righteous, not even one" (Rom. 3:9-10). Added to this are the declarations of the following verses of Scripture:

Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace you are saved through faith, and this is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 it is not of works, so that no one can boast.

Titus 3:5-7 he saved us, not by works of righteousness that we have done but on the basis of his mercy, through the washing of the new birth and the renewing of the Holy Spirit, 6 whom he poured out on us in full measure through Jesus Christ our Savior. 7 And so, since we have been justified by his grace, we become heirs with the confident expectation of eternal life.

Romans 4:1-5 What then shall we say that Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh, has discovered regarding this matter? 2 For if Abraham was declared righteous by the works of the law, he has something to boast about (but not before God). 3 For what does the scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.” 4 Now to the one who works, his pay is not credited due to grace but due to obligation. 5 But to the one who does not work, but believes in the one who declares the ungodly righteous, his faith is credited as righteousness.



No amount of human goodness is as good as God. God is perfect righteousness. Because of this, Habakkuk 1:13 tells us God cannot have fellowship with anyone who does not have perfect righteousness. In order to be accepted by God, we must be as good as God is. Before God, we all stand naked, helpless, and hopeless in ourselves. No amount of good living will get us to heaven or give us eternal life. What then is the solution?

God's Solution

God is not only perfect holiness (whose holy character we can never attain to on our own or by our works of righteousness) but He is also perfect love and full of grace and mercy. Because of His love and grace, He has not left us without hope and a solution.

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

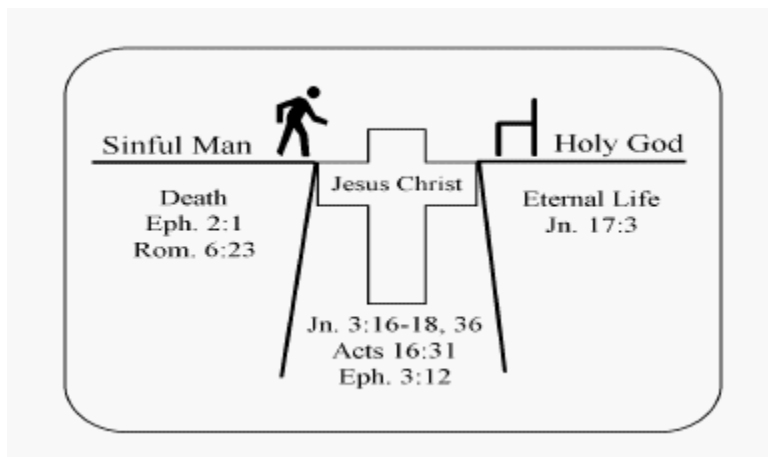
This is the good news of the Bible, the message of the gospel. It's the message of the gift of God's own Son who became man (the God-man), lived a sinless life, died on the cross for our sin, and was raised from the grave proving both the fact He is God's Son and the value of His death for us as our substitute.

Romans 1:4 who was appointed the Son-of-God-in-power according to the Holy Spirit by the resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 4:25 He was given over because of our transgressions and was raised for the sake of our justification.

2 Corinthians 5:21 God made the one who knew no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we would become the right-eousness of God.

1 Peter 3:18 Because Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring you to God, by being put to death in the flesh but by being made alive in the spirit.



How Do We Receive God's Son?

Because of what Jesus Christ accomplished for us on the cross, the Bible states "He that has the Son has life." We can receive the Son, Jesus Christ, as our Savior by personal faith, by trusting in the person of Christ and His death for our sins.

John 1:12 But to all who have received him--those who believe in his name--he has given the right to become God's children

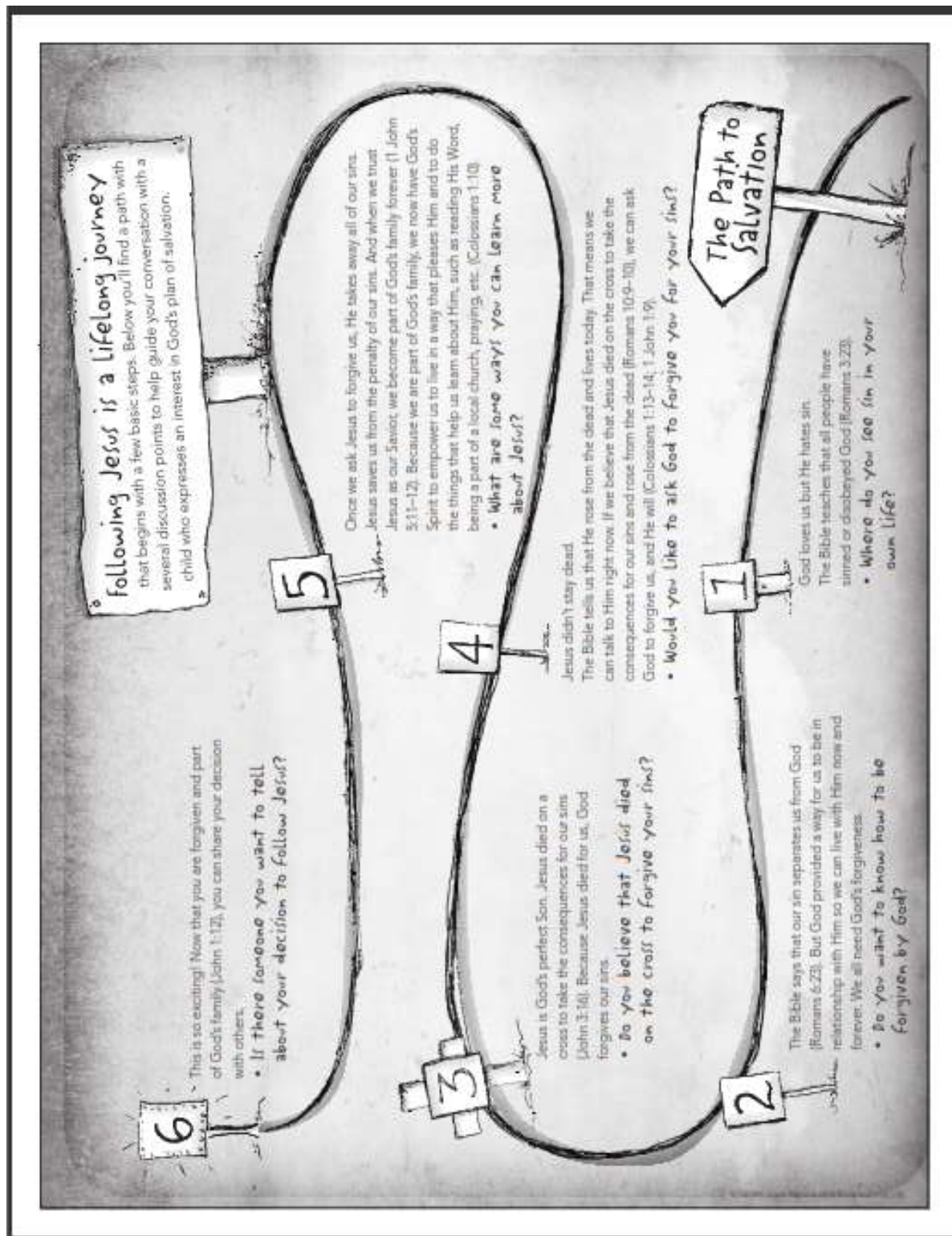
John 3:16-18 For this is the way God loved the world: he gave his one and only Son that everyone who believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world should be saved through him. 18 The one who believes in Him is not condemned. The one who does not believe has been condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the one and only Son of God.

This means we must each come to God the same way: (1) as a sinner who recognizes his sinfulness, (2) realizes no human works can result in salvation, and (3) relies totally on Christ alone by faith alone for our salvation.

If you would like to receive and trust Christ as your personal Savior, you may want to express your faith in Christ by a simple prayer acknowledging your sinfulness, accepting His forgiveness and putting your faith in Christ for your salvation.

If you have just trusted in Christ, you need to learn about your new life and how to walk with the Lord. May we suggest you start by studying through the [ABCs for Christian Growth](#) available online at www.bible.org. This series will take you step-by-step through some basic truths of God's Word and will help you build a solid foundation for your faith in Christ.

[Source: <https://bible.org/article/gods-plan-salvation>]



[Source: http://www.the-harvest.org/media/71932/TS_2-10_Gods_Salvation_Plan.pdf] [PDF]

God's Plan of Salvation – Berean Baptist Church

<http://www.bbcfnc.org/goodnews.php>

God of the Bible	Man the Sinner (Bad News)	Christ the Savior (Good News)	Man's Response (& Results)
• Triune God¹ (Mt 3:16-17) ◦ God the Father ◦ The Son of God ◦ God the Holy Spirit • Creator God (Gen 1:1; Rom 1:25) ◦ "Uncaused Cause"² (Rom 4:17b) ◦ God made mankind "in our image" (Gen 1:1, 26-27) • The Sovereign (1 Tim 6:15) ◦ Law-Giver³ (Gen 2:16-17) ◦ Omnipotent (Rev 19:6) ◦ Omniscient (Is 46:10) • God is Holy (Is 6:3) ◦ Just (De 32:4) ◦ Judge (Gen 18:25) ◦ Righteous (Psalm 11:7) ◦ Merciful (Ex 34:6-7; Eph 2:4) ◦ Love (1 Jn 3:16; Ro 5:8; 1 Jn 4:8) ◦ Angry (Ps 7:11)	• Fall of Man ◦ Adam and Eve ◦ 1st human sin (rebellion) ▪ Gen 3:1-7; 15⁴ ◦ Death (Gen 2:17) ▪ Physical and Spiritual • God's Commandments (Beatitudes) ◦ Ex 20:1-10; Mt 5 & 6; Mk 12:29-31 • You are a sinner⁵ (guilty before God) ◦ Rom 3:10, 19, 23; 5:8, 12, 18 • The wages of sin is death ◦ Rom 5:12, 6:23a; Eph 2:1 • God's wrath abides on you ◦ 1 Jn 3:36; Rom 1:18; Eph 2:3 • Unbelievers go to hell ◦ Mt 10:28, 25:41; Rom 2:8-9; 1 Cor 6:9-11; Rev 21:8 • You must be born-again ◦ 1 Jn 3:3, 5; 1 Peter 1:23	• Jesus Christ, the Son of God (Mt 16:16) ◦ Sent from the Father as the only way to God (Mt 3:17; 1 Jn 3:16, 8:16, 14:6; Acts 4:12) ◦ Born of a virgin (Mt 1:23) ◦ God Incarnate (1 Jn 4:2-3) ▪ All God & Man (1 Jn 1:1, 14) • The Gospel (Christ died for you⁶) ◦ Christ knew no sin⁷ (2 Cor 5:21) ◦ Christ died for our sins⁸ ▪ 1 Jn 19:23; Rom 5:8; 1 Cor 15:3; ▪ 2 Cor 5:21; 1 Jn 2:2 ◦ Christ was buried (Mt 27:60) ◦ Christ rose again (1 Cor 15:4) • More Good News ◦ The Gospel is a promise⁹ of salvation from God (Rom 1:2; Tit 1:2; 1 Jn 2:25) ◦ Christ is presently interceding for you (Advocate) (1 Jn 2:1) ◦ Christ is coming again (Acts 1:11)	• Repentance¹⁰ (turn) toward God and Faith¹¹ (trust or belief) alone in the gospel are inseparable experiences of grace (gifts) and are what one must do to be saved.¹² ◦ Mark 1:15 & Luke 13:3, 5 ◦ 1 Jn 1:12; 3:16, 36; 20:31 ◦ Acts 3:19; 8:37; 11:18; 15:11, 19; 16:31; 17:30; 20:21 ◦ Rom 1:1-2, 16; 6:23b; 10:9-10 ◦ Eph 2:8-9 & 1 Jn 5:1 • By God's grace salvation¹³ results in: ◦ Eternal Life (1 Jn 3:16) ◦ Conversion (Acts 3:19) ◦ Justification (Rom 1:17, 5:1, 8:1) ◦ Adoption (Rom 8:15) ◦ Being sealed with the Spirit (Eph 1:13) ◦ Being given spiritual gifts (Rom 12:4-6) ◦ Discipleship; Sanctification¹⁴ ◦ Preservation (Jude 1:1, 24-25) ◦ Glorification (Rom 8:30)

Notes:

1. GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION BEGAN IN ETERNITY PAST (EPH 1:4; REV 13:8) AND ULTIMATELY WILL END WITH THE CREATION OF A NEW HEAVEN/ NEW EARTH (2 PET 3:7-13; REV 21:1-4).
2. THE TRIUNE GOD OF THE BIBLE IS THE SELF-EXISTENT, "I AM THAT I AM" ETERNAL GOD WHO IS THE ULTIMATE CAUSE BEHIND ALL THAT EXISTS (EX 3:14; 1 JN 1:3; ROM 4:17b; COL 1:16-17).
3. AS THE SOVEREIGN OF THE UNIVERSE, GOD HAS THE RIGHT TO GIVE HIS CREATURES ANY COMMANDMENT OR LAW HE SEES FIT; THE FIRST WAS GIVEN TO ADAM AND EVE.
4. GIVEN TO EVE, THIS IS THE EARLIEST RECORD OF GOD PROMISING A COMING SAVIOR; THE SEED OF A WOMAN WOULD ULTIMATELY BE JESUS BORN OF A VIRGIN, IN BETHLEHEM (IS 7:14; MIC 5:2; MT 2:1).
5. A FAILURE TO ACKNOWLEDGE ONE'S GUILT BEFORE GOD DURING A GOSPEL PRESENTATION MAY BE AN INDICATION THAT THE SPIRIT OF GOD IS NOT WORKING IN THE HEART OF A POTENTIAL CONVERT (1 JN 16:8).
6. AS OUR (ALL BELIEVERS) REPRESENTATIVE, JESUS—THE LAMB OF GOD—PAID OUR PENALTY AND SUFFERED DEATH IN OUR PLACE TO REMOVE THE WRATH OF GOD, THEREBY RANSOMING, REDEEMING, AND RECONCILING HUMANITY TO GOD; THIS IS THE DOCTRINE OF PENAL (VICARIOUS) SUBSTITUTIONARY ATONEMENT (MK 10:45; 1 JN 1:29; ROM 4:25, 5:19; 2 COR 5:18-19; TIT 2:14; HEB 9:26; 1 JN 4:10).
7. CHRIST DIED FOR "OUR" SINS NOT HIS OWN SINS; CHRIST'S LIFE WAS PERFECT; HE KEPT THE LAW PERFECTLY BECAUSE NO MAN OR WOMAN COULD KEEP THE LAW. (2 COR 5:21; HEB 4:15)
8. ON THE CROSS, CHRIST SHED HIS PRECIOUS BLOOD AND GAVE HIS LIFE TO SATISFY THE WRATH OF GOD, REMIT SINS, AND PURCHASE THE CHURCH (ACTS 20:28; HEB 9:22; 1 PET 1:19; 1 JN 2:2).
9. THE GOSPEL IS A PROMISE FROM GOD OF FORGIVENESS OF SINS AND ETERNAL LIFE TO ANYONE WHO REPENTS AND BELIEVES THE GOSPEL; ONE DOES NOT HAVE TO ASK FOR THIS GIFT (EPH 2:8-9); IT HAS ALREADY BEEN PROMISED TO ALL WHO WILL BELIEVE ON HIS NAME (1 JN 1:12, 3:16; ROM 10:9; EPH 1:7, 2:8; TIT 1:2).
10. ALL SINNERS ARE RESPONSIBLE TO REPENT OF ANY AND ALL SIN THAT IS KEEPING THEM FROM TURNING TO GOD (REPENTANCE) AND PLACING AUTHENTIC FAITH IN THE PERSON AND WORK OF JESUS CHRIST (THE GOSPEL); IN THESSALONICA, THE BELIEVERS TURNED FROM IDOLS TO SERVE THE ONE TRUE AND LIVING GOD (1 THESS 1:9). IN JERUSALEM, THE JEWS NEEDED TO REPENT OF THEIR FAILURE TO RECOGNIZE JESUS AS THE MESSIAH (ACTS 2:38). SUBSEQUENTLY THE CHRISTIAN LIFE WILL BE CHARACTERIZED BY REPENTANCE FROM SIN (ACTS 3:9, ROM 2:4, 1 JN 3:19; REV 3:19).
11. FAITH IN CHRIST IS SYNONYMOUS WITH AUTHENTIC BELIEF, DEPENDENCE, TRUST IN, AND RELIANCE UPON HIM. IT IS MUCH MORE THAN INTELLECTUAL ASSENT; IT INCLUDES FOLLOWERSHIP (1 JN 2:23-24; 1 JN 2:19).
12. THIS IS THE ANSWER TO THE "WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?" QUESTION, AND IT CAN NEVER BE UNDERSTOOD TO BE MORE THAN ONE EXPECTATION OR STEP (ACTS 16:30-31).
13. SALVATION IS PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE IN ITS TENSES; BELIEVERS HAVE BEEN SAVED FROM THE PENALTY OF SIN, ARE BEING SAVED FROM THE POWER OF SIN, AND WILL BE SAVED FROM THE PRESENCE OF SIN IN THE NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH. AFTER ONE IS SAVED, WATER BAPTISM IS OFTEN THE FIRST PUBLIC PROFESSION OF FAITH IN CHRIST (MT 28:20; ACTS 2:38-41, 8:12, 36-38, 16:31-33).
14. THE CONCEPT OF BEING SAVED WITHOUT BEING A FOLLOWER OF THE LORD JESUS IS FOREIGN TO THE NT (MT 16:24, 28:19-20; LK 14:27; 1 JN 10:27; 2 COR 5:17). SANCTIFICATION IS BOTH INSTANTANEOUS (1 COR 6:11) AND PROGRESSIVE RESULTING IN BEING CONFORMED TO THE IMAGE OF CHRIST (RO 8:29) BY GOD'S GRACE AND IN THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (1 JN 17:19, 1 THESS 4:3; TIT 2:11-12; 1 PET 1:15; 1 JN 2:3).

By: SEAN HARRIS 5/21/12

www.bereanbaptistchurch.org

Link to PDF of above Chart and Notes: <http://www.bbcfnc.org/goodnews.php> [PDF]

Web page has downloadable PDFs for what it means to be born-again and about baptism.

Links also has videos discussing What is the Gospel, the Plan of Salvation, How to Present/Share

Prayer of Salvation (Example prayer to God):

"Father,

I know that I have broken your laws and my sins have separated me from you. I am truly sorry, and now I want to turn away from my past sinful life toward you. Please forgive me, and help me avoid sinning again. I believe that your son, Jesus Christ died for my sins, was resurrected from the dead, is alive, and hears my prayer. I invite Jesus to become the Lord of my life, to rule and reign in my heart from this day forward. Please send your Holy Spirit to help me obey You, and to do Your will for the rest of my life.

In Jesus' name I pray, Amen."

Prayer of Salvation - I've Prayed It; Now What?

If you've prayed this prayer of salvation with true conviction and heart, you are now a follower of Jesus. This is a fact, whether or not you feel any different. Religious systems may have led you to believe that you should feel something - a warm glow, a tingle, or some other mystical experience. The fact is, you may, or you may not. If you have prayed the prayer of salvation and meant it, you are now a follower of Jesus. The Bible tells us that your eternal salvation is secure! *"that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved"* (Romans 10:9).

[Source: <http://www.allaboutgod.com/prayer-of-salvation.htm>]

You Are Complete in Jesus Christ? (Christian Biblical Church of God)

[Advocates OT observances, including keeping the Sabbath (Saturday) and Festivals]

From *Evidence that Demands a Verdict* (2017 revision)

You can laugh at Christianity. You can mock and ridicule it. But it works. If you trust Christ, start watching your attitudes and actions—Jesus Christ is in the business of changing lives.

Christianity is not something to be shoved down your throat or forced on you. You have your life to live and I have mine. All I can do is tell you what I have learned and experienced. After that, what you do with Christ is your decision.

Perhaps the prayer I prayed will help you: **"Lord Jesus, I need you. Thank you for dying on the cross for me. Forgive me and cleanse me. Right this moment I trust you as my Savior and Lord. Make me the type of person you created me to be. In Christ's name, Amen."**

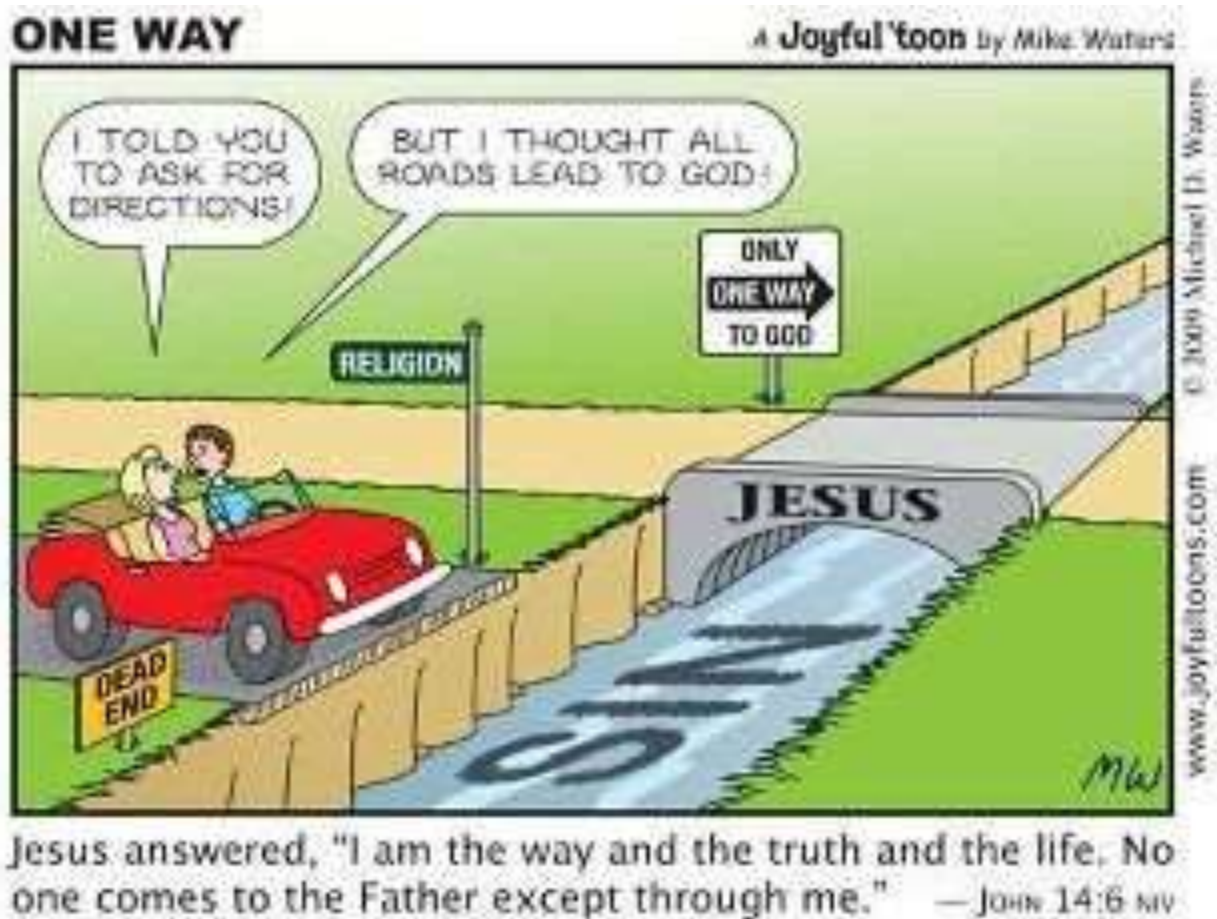
[Josh McDowell](#)

CGSJ (Come Get Some Jesus)

<http://inchristwetrust-george.blogspot.com/2013/04/here-is-great-cartoon-that-represents.html>

Here is a cartoon that represents that Jesus is the only way to the Father. No religion or good works can get you to Heaven except by faith alone in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Repent of your sin ask the Lord Jesus to come into your life. Surrender your life to Him because He is the truth! John 14:6



Plan of Salvation – Church of Christ

<http://www.vparkcoc.org/new-post/>

NOTE: This is an example of the Church of Christ (Campbell) Plan of Salvation. They believe that Baptism is a requirement for salvation.

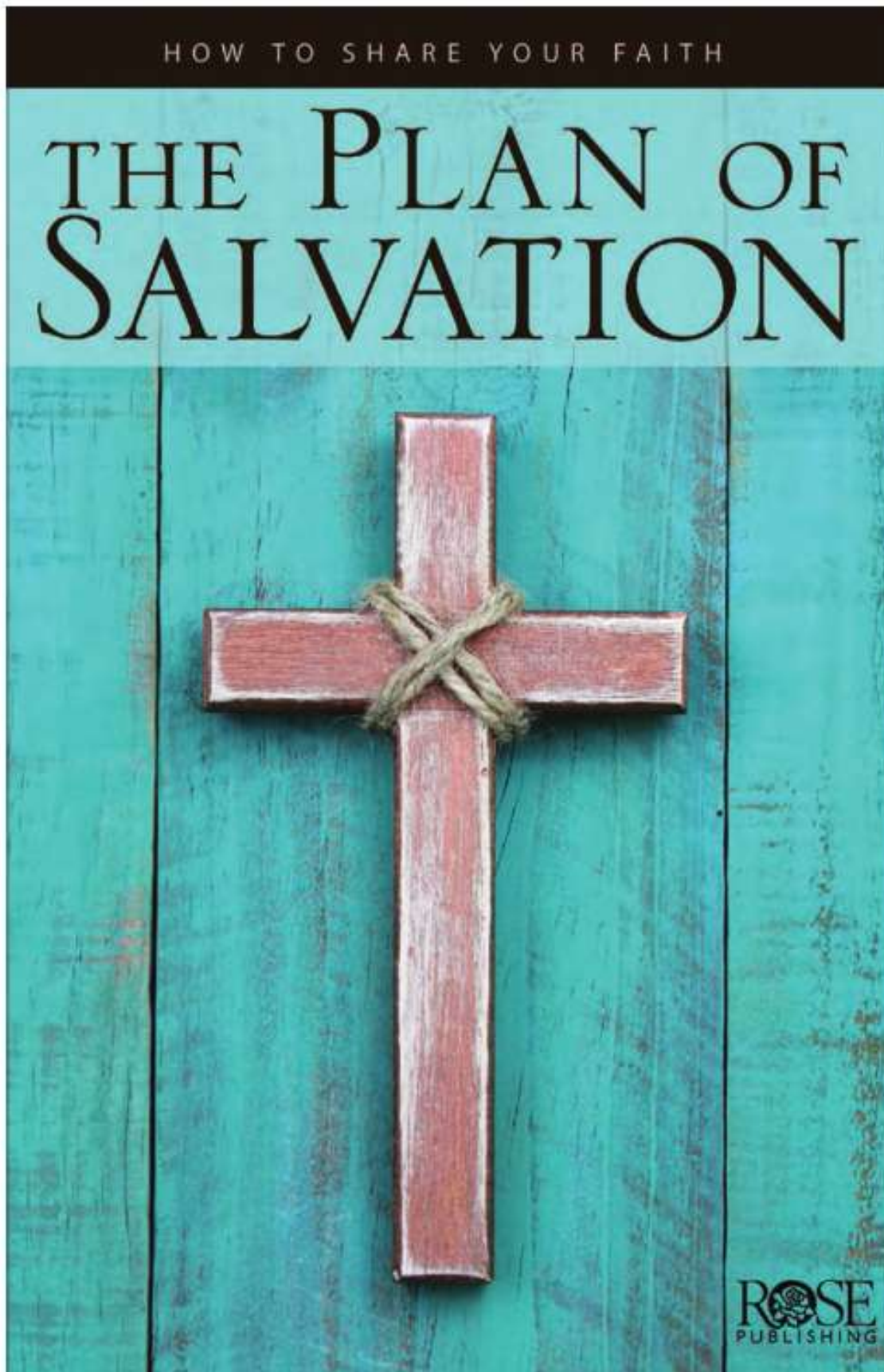


We believe there are 5 steps in the Plan of Salvation based on the scriptures. They are to hear the Gospel, believe in Christ, repent of your sins, confess faith in Christ and to be Baptized. Below are scriptures which support each step.

Biblical Repentance & Biblical Salvation

If you are willing to turn away from your sins (repent) and to ask Jesus into your heart both as Lord (the one who you obey) and Savior (the one who paid the price for your sin), then pray the sample prayer below. Jesus is not just fire insurance so you don't go to hell, nor is he way to a happy life. But he is the way into heaven and the only way to God the Father and the only way to have the life you were meant to have. He wants to be Lord of your life today, tomorrow, and for Eternity.

<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>GOD</th> <th>MAN</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1) Do not worship any other gods</td> <td>5) Honor your father & mother</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2) Do not make any idols</td> <td>6) Do not murder</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3) Do not misuse the name of God</td> <td>7) Do not commit adultery</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4) Keep the Sabbath holy</td> <td>8) Do not steal</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>9) Do not lie</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>10) Do not covet</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	GOD	MAN	1) Do not worship any other gods	5) Honor your father & mother	2) Do not make any idols	6) Do not murder	3) Do not misuse the name of God	7) Do not commit adultery	4) Keep the Sabbath holy	8) Do not steal		9) Do not lie		10) Do not covet	The Bible says we have a problem: SIN! (breaking any of the 10 commandments) <i>All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Romans 3:23</i> <i>Not a single person on earth is always good and never sins. Ecclesiastes 7:20</i>
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	All of us have broken 10 commandments but God has a solution: JESUS!! <i>God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him (Jesus) shall not perish, but have eternal life. John 3:16</i>														
	Jesus' invitation to you. <i>Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Matthew 11:28</i>														
	You've been invited, but you must receive Jesus into your heart. <i>As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name John 1:12</i>														
	And you must receive Jesus into your heart by faith. <i>By grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God... Ephesians 2:8-9</i>														
	Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are God's only son, and that you died on the cross for my sins. I admit I am a sinner and I repent of my sins. With your help I will live my life for you. I open the door of my life, and receive You into my heart as my Savior and Lord. Thank You for forgiving my sins, dying on the cross for me, and giving me a new life now and for Eternity. Amen <i>Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. 2 Corinthians 5:17</i>														



THE PLAN OF SALVATION

Jesus called his disciples to spread the good news throughout the world. Ever since then, Christ's followers have lived the good news and spoken and written about it. Today, the need and responsibility to share the good news is not any less serious, urgent, and present. Every Christian should know:

1. Why we should share the good news
2. What the good news is
3. How we should go about sharing the good news

Knocking on a stranger's door to share the gospel is not for everyone. Some people are simply too terrified with that idea, others do not feel that their lives are worthy of being Christ's ambassadors, and others cannot deal with the

anxiety this would cause. Sharing the good news does not have to be either awkward or cause a high level of anxiety. To give believers confidence as they share the good news, it's helpful for all believers to know a few things:

1. Remember that the Holy Spirit is in charge. Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to all believers so that we may be his witnesses in the world (Acts 1:7-8).
2. The Holy Spirit will give you the right words (Luke 12:11-12).
3. The real work belongs to the Holy Spirit, who convicts the world of the need of a savior (John 16:8), changes people's hearts (Ezek. 36:27), and transforms people (John 3:5-6).

So, as you think about the call to share the good news, remember that you never do it alone and the timing is not yours, but God's. The Holy Spirit is with you to remind you, empower you, and guide you. Being prepared with the content of what we should say and how best we can say it is, however, always a good idea.

Many believers feel that they cannot share the gospel effectively unless their own lives are perfect. How would you reply to this issue? Do we have to wait until our lives are perfect to represent Christ?

WHY WE SHARE THE GOOD NEWS: CALLED TO MAKE DISCIPLES

We share the gospel because we are moved by the conviction that God called us to do just that: make disciples.

1. Sharing the good news is an intimate part of what being followers of Christ means (Matt. 28:19–20).
2. Despite any nervousness or anxiety we might feel, the evangelistic experience is full of blessings.
3. The world is in need of the good news we have available.

Jesus has called us to become lifelong learners. Think about a child. When a child is born, she doesn't know how to speak, feed herself, get dressed—nothing. All she knows is that she feels hungry, cold, and tired and wants to have her basic needs met. She begins to learn by observing and copying. This begins lifelong learning by imitation. That's a disciple! See? We already know how to be a disciple: We all are disciples: we started out by being followers, copiers of the behaviors we saw growing up. But in terms of sharing the good news, we need to learn to be a more specific kind of disciple: a disciple of Jesus.

BEING DISCIPLES OF JESUS

Being disciples of Jesus means:

1. We are imitators of Jesus (Eph. 5:1; 1 Thess. 1:6).
2. We learn to see people and the world as Jesus would—with love and compassion (2 Cor. 5:16).
3. We recognize that Jesus is King of our lives and the world (Phil. 2:9–11) and belong to him alone (1 Cor. 6:19–20; Rom. 14:8).
4. We seek to live out the fruit of the Spirit in our lives: "love, joy, peace, forbearance [patience], kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal. 5:22–23).
5. We become God's instruments, spokespeople, and envoys to:
 - Testify of his goodness and love;
 - To warn of the dangers of a life away from God and of impending judgment;
 - And to do justice, act with love, and show mercy in a world that is desperate for justice, love, and mercy.

How are you being a disciple of Jesus in your life?

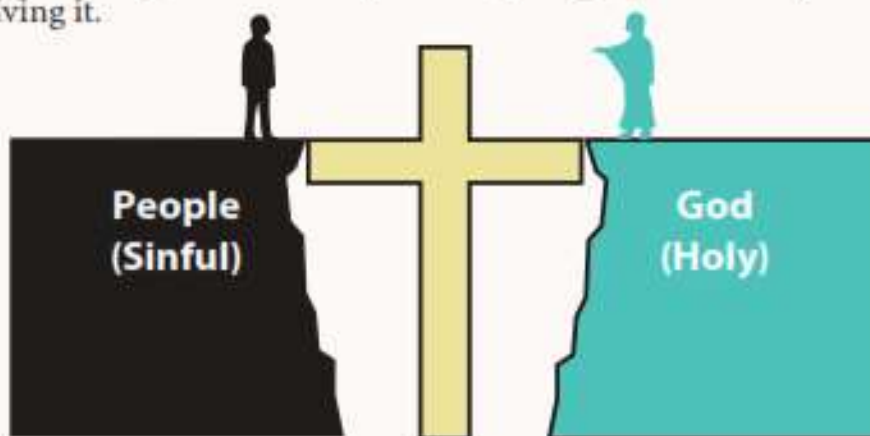
WHAT'S THE GOOD NEWS? THE BASICS OF EVANGELISM

Some people accept the good news after hearing the stories of the conversion experiences of believers. Others find God's transforming love through friendships or by listening to or reading about other people's lives. Others discover it alone while reading Scripture or after going through an unexpected experience. Although the Holy Spirit draws people and opens their eyes in many different ways, the basics of the message are the same:

1. God loves people.
2. People are bound to sin and cannot get free on their own.
3. God sent Jesus to free us from sin and death.
4. Because of God's grace—not our works—we can be assured of our salvation.
5. Becoming disciples of Jesus begins with repentance of sin and a request for forgiveness.
6. As disciples of Jesus, we grow and mature in a deeper relationship with God throughout our lives.

John 15:8: "This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."

These are some helpful tools that organize the basic message and are intended to help both the one presenting the gospel and the person receiving it.



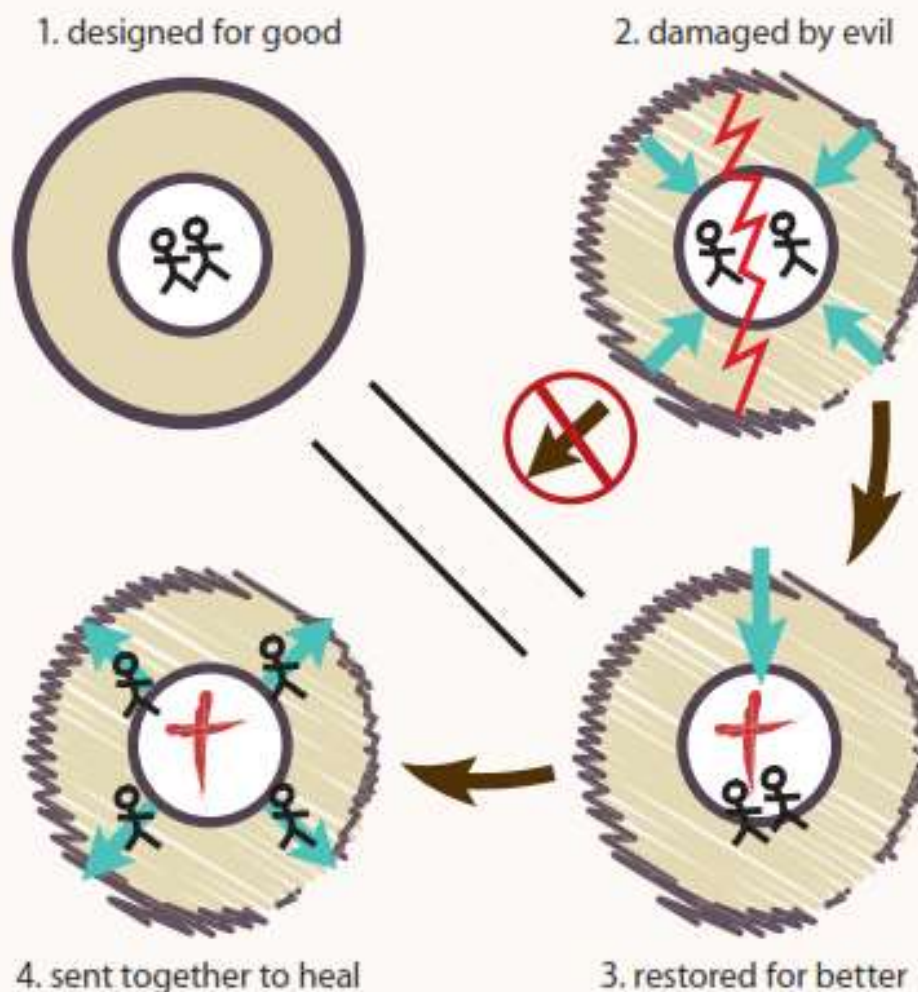
This drawing illustrates how Jesus' work on the cross allows sinful people to begin a relationship with God and be rescued from eternal death.

THE FOUR CIRCLES illustration, by James Choung, shows God's original intention for his creation. (1) God made humans to be and do good. However, (2) sin affected our ability to do good. We became self-centered and enslaved to sin. Our sin breaks our relationship with God, nature, and one another.

(3) Thankfully, Jesus came to restore humanity. His death on the cross liberated us from the slavery of sin and death.

(4) Being free from sin, believers can become ambassadors of God. God is sending believers to heal relationships by preaching the good news of Jesus to a lost humanity.

Humans cannot move from circle 2 to 4 because sin has opened a gap that separates God from humans. Only through Christ is it possible to reach God.



THE GOOD NEWS: A LOVING GOD

If we want to share our faith with others, we are best served if we know the details of what we want to share.

GOD LOVES US

Our story began with love and the Garden of Eden. God created all things out of love. The Garden of Eden was a place filled with goodness. Humanity was meant to enjoy God's company in this wonderful place!

OUR REBELLION

But things went wrong. Instead of enjoying and being satisfied with being made in God's image, we wanted to be like God. Rather than enjoying the freedom of love in relationship with God and each other, we became enslaved to evil, sin, rebellion, and death. We turned our backs to God and became enemies of God (Rom. 5:10). In short, the problem was and is rebellion—or sin. We became slaves to sin, evil, and death.

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

LOVE VS. REBELLION

God's Love	Human Rebellion
• God is love (1 John 4:8). • God's love endures forever (Ps. 100:5). • God cares for his creation (Ps. 145:9, 15–16). • God loves the world (John 3:16–18). • God loved humanity and sent Jesus to bring salvation (Rom. 3:22–24; 5:5–8; Eph. 2:1–10; 1 John 4:9–10). • God loves the church (Eph. 5:25). • God's love allows humans to love (1 John 4:7–12). • God's love is so great that he is ready to forgive the rebellious (Jer. 33:8).	• People do evil (Judg. 2:11). • People are disobedient (Rom. 5:19). • People transgress (Eph. 2:1). • People sin (Lev. 26:40). • People are lawless (Titus 2:14; 1 John 3:4). • People trespass (Rom. 5:15–17). • People are ungodly (2 Tim. 2:18). • People suffer death (Rom. 6:23).

Can you write about a time when you experienced God's love?

DIVINE HELP

We all sense that something has gone wrong with the world. This is not the way it was supposed to be! So we look for solutions, and we attempt to solve our basic problem: we try good behavior, social and personal reforms and changes, the guidance of gurus or wise people. But we are unable to find a permanent solution of our own. God has solved our problem. **Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."**

And we realize that to be freed from the bondage that enslaves us, we need help from someone greater than us. We must come to realize that our efforts are futile. Only God can make us free and give us life. **Titus 3:5: "He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy."**

GOD'S SURPRISING SOLUTION

God's solution begins with Jesus becoming human. We can be sure that Jesus experienced the whole range of human life: he suffered, he cried, he rejoiced, he laughed, he was tempted, he became angry, he was disappointed. **Hebrews 2:14–18: "Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity. . . . Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted."**

A common reason for not accepting God—or his existence—is the mistaken belief that God remains indifferent to human suffering. However, when we consider that God became fully human, then this reason is no longer valid. God cares. In fact, God cares so much that "he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

The way Jesus solved humanity's main issue can be seen in at least three different but complementary ways:

1. He lived a life worthy of imitation: he taught us what being a human means, and how to live in the way God wants us to live.
2. He defeated the powers of evil and death: he made us free to serve and love!
3. He substituted himself for us: he died and rose again, and through his death and resurrection, God forgave us completely.

THE GOOD NEWS: WHAT JESUS DID, IS DOING, AND WILL DO

The good news that Jesus and the apostles proclaimed is that in and through Christ, God has:

1. Established his kingship,
2. Defeated the powers of evil,
3. Forgiven and justified people from their sins, and
4. Begun the ultimate goal of restoring the entire creation.

THE KING HAS ARRIVED!

God is the righteous King. In the human experience, kingship, the right to rule, is a forceful imposition: the strongest rule. Many Jews at the time of Jesus seemed to have expected the Messiah to be the sort of king who would use force and violence to get rid of the Romans and all the other enemies of the Jews. But the kingdom of God is unlike any kingdom on earth. In and through Jesus' life and death, God showed that the kingdom of God was not gained through the use of the sword or any other type of violence. It came through the humble obedience and loving sacrifice of his Son, Jesus.

Jesus showed that the kingdom of God is the manifestation of God's power to free his people from sin and death and to defeat the forces of evil.

In short—and this is part of the good news we should proclaim—the Lord reigns! The kingdom of God is near, and God is the righteous and loving King. Also part of the good news, there is nothing we have to do to deserve this gift. It is God's amazing grace that saves us. We are saved by grace alone. And that is wonderful news!

As you look at your own life, where do you see evidence of God starting his restoration work in your heart and mind?



VICTORIOUS OVER EVIL

The Gospels describe the beginning of Jesus' public ministry with his time in the wilderness. There, Satan tempted him, but Jesus came out victorious over Satan and evil. Then, Jesus proclaimed, "The time has come.... The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!" (Mark 1:15).

Jesus' victory in the wilderness was the first glimpse of what was to come. On the cross, Jesus obtained a decisive victory over evil. Did you hear that? Evil has been defeated! The resurrection confirmed Jesus' triumph over the powers of evil and death. The resurrection also restated the fact that God's kingdom has arrived. And, finally, the resurrection confirmed the beginning of a new reality, new possibilities: a new birth for people and for the entire creation and reconciliation with God.

Evil is thrashing, kicking in complete rage, knowing that its final days are coming, trying to destroy and ruin all it can before its final day arrives.

In short—and this too is part of the good news we should proclaim—evil and death are defeated.

Sometimes, when watching the news, for example, it is easy to believe that evil is winning. But as mere humans, we cannot see the future. How should we pray for people and situations that seem to be mired in evil? What person or situation can you bring to God in prayer today?

EVIL

Let's make something clear, evil is a parasite: it doesn't have life on its own; it draws its life and strength from goodness. But, like all parasites, once it gets in and attaches to its host, it can deplete all vitality from it. Evil effectively "rules" over its host. When humanity rebelled against God in the Garden of Eden, they opened the door to evil, to the parasite Evil, and it attached itself firmly to the goodness of creation. It has grown strong and arrogant by sucking out the life of all that is good and desirable in God's good creation. And it goes so far as to claim to be the true owner and ruler of the world! However, God is the true King of all. God is the only one worthy of ruling. Evil is an impostor whose temporary insane rule is waning.

NEW POSSIBILITIES: FORGIVENESS AND RECONCILIATION

Evil, the parasite, corrupts and distorts: that which was meant to be good becomes distorted or corrupted and used for ill. And evil affected humanity, starting in the Garden. Sin corrupted and distorted the creation that God declared good.

God created us to relate to him, to each other, and to the rest of the good creation he made. Sin, however, spoiled those relationships. Instead of loving and worshiping God, we became God's enemies, and we love to create our own idols to worship. Instead of relating to each other in love and understanding, we would rather dominate and subjugate others, becoming enemies of each other.



Instead of loving God's good creation, we abuse it and destroy it.

Sin distorts and corrupts humanity's efforts to be good or do God's will. Sin enslaves humans, making them think, feel, act, and speak in distorted ways. What seems good to us is, in fact, a distortion of what real good is. God grieves that what he intended for good, we turn into evil; what he intended for beauty and pleasure, we turn into ugliness and suffering. And God, as the rightful King of creation, will judge evil and evildoers.

Fortunately, Jesus' death on the cross—his defeat of the power of sin—accomplished several important things:

1. Freed people from the slavery of sin.
2. Removed the weight of sin by satisfying God's requirements of the law.
3. Reconciled people with God.
4. Saved people from condemnation in the final judgment when Jesus returns.

Tell your story of becoming a follower of Jesus, why you felt it was important, what it means to you today. Do it verbally, in writing, or as an art project. Share it with at least one person.

MAKING ALL THINGS NEW

One of the things that makes the good news so very good is the knowledge that God is committed to make all things new: "Then I saw 'a new heaven and a new earth'" (Rev. 21:1).

When we think about the good news, if we arrive at the cross and stop there, the good news is incomplete. Jesus rose from the dead. That's a huge part of the good news! And what's so good about that is that he is just the beginning of what God wants to do.

Jesus' resurrection began a new era, an era of transformation. God is transforming and renewing people and, through them, his creation. Although his new creation will not be fully realized until Jesus returns at the end of times, the work of Jesus' followers offers powerful glimpses of what that future, glorious, transformed new creation will be like.

And this transformation begins with people. Those who hear the good news and accept and confess Jesus as Lord and Savior experience a transformation, a new birth. This new birth is an anticipation of the final resurrection, a taste of the renewal to come for all of creation. Believers are born again (John 3:5–8).

Is just accepting Jesus really all that is needed? Well, yes and no. Yes, we must accept God's free offer of salvation and restoration. But no, it is not that simple. While accepting Jesus' invitation to be reborn, to be renewed, is a major step, it is only the first step—it is just the beginning. Jesus also invites us into a new relationship: a renewed friendship with God, with those around us—our neighbors. It is here that we become disciples of Jesus. And being a disciple of Jesus is a lifelong project!

What's good to know is that we don't have to work on our project on our own:

"His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness" (2 Pet. 1:3).

"He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 1:6).



PRESENTING THE GOOD NEWS

Presenting the good news is a calling, and every Christian is called to do it. It is also a spiritual discipline. That means it is not something we just know how to do. We must learn how to do it. It might not be easy. It might be intimidating. For some, it might even be terrifying. And for everyone, it is demanding.

However, sharing the good news essentially is a simple thing. And it begins not at a stranger's door or on a bus or out in a park. It begins in your room at home, in your Sunday school classroom, in your small group. It begins with silence before God, not with words to people. Yes, it's true! It begins with:

1. Bible study—The more we know God, about God, and God's plans for humanity, the better we can share what God has done for us.
2. Prayer—The closer we are to God, the more of life we can share with others. An abundant prayer life will overflow our hearts and minds.

Although evangelism can be practiced anywhere and at any time, here we'll focus on personal evangelism, or personal witnessing. In personal witnessing, we must remember that we are just the messengers. It is the most important message anyone could ever encounter, but we need to remember to let the message be and stay at the center of our words and actions. And let the God who created the universe be the one in charge of transforming and recreating people. In presenting the gospel, we assume some responsibilities and God takes the others. It is a partnership that God invites us to be a part of.



APPLICATION

Make a list of people to keep in prayer. Ask the Lord to open their eyes at the right time.

ROMANS ROAD TO SALVATION

As you prepare to be a witness, there are several things you should keep in mind:

1. Remember that you are bringing good news!
2. Love people and accept them where they are. If your words don't arise from love, then the good news will get muddled with controversies and arguments. God's love heals and transforms.
3. Be mindful of the movement of the Holy Spirit. God is active in and engaged with the world. Be sensitive to the Spirit's promptings and opening of doors to demonstrate God's love to the world.
4. Remember the good news:

We need help!

■ *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).*

■ *"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6:23).*

God provided a solution. And he did it out of love:

■ *"God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8).*

God extends an invitation to accept his solution for our problem. It is an invitation to allow ourselves to be transformed and be part of a new life, a life in the kingdom of God. And it all begins with a confession:

■ *"If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (Rom. 10:9).*

BECOMING INSTRUMENTS OF GOD AND GOD'S PROMISES

Areas to Grow as Instruments of God	Promises of the Holy Spirit
Living and speaking in a way that shows God's power and goodness in our own lives when we have been in need.	Will empower us to be effective witnesses of the good news in word and action (Luke 12:11-12; Acts 1:7-8)
Praying	Will bring our prayers before God (Rom. 8:26-27)
Studying the Bible	Will reveal God to us and remind us of Jesus' teachings (1 Cor. 2:10-12; Eph. 3:3-5; John 16:12-13)
Living a life of obedience	Will empower us for a faithful life (Rom. 8:3-6; 15:13)
Being witnesses of God's love and grace	Will enable us to confess in our hearts that Jesus is Lord (1 Cor. 12:3) and enable us to keep God's laws (Ezek. 36:27)
Living in a way that reflects God's love, mercy, holiness, and power	Will make us free, leading us to salvation (2 Cor. 3:17), will transform us into the image of Christ (2 Cor. 3:18), and will mark us as God's children (2 Cor. 1:21-22)

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There's a New Day Dawning

<https://faithalone.org/tracts/theres-a-new-day-dawning/>



Children and young adults rarely think about tomorrow. The vigor of youth deludes us into thinking we are invincible. But as we grow older we begin to realize how vulnerable we really are—to disease, to accidents, to violent crime. One day the thought strikes home quite suddenly: “Someday I will die.”

It may be then that we take a long look at our short life. The New Testament writer James took that look and asked: “What is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away” (James 4:14). Like a jet’s white vapor trail across a blue sky, our lives appear on the scene and—in terms of history or eternity—quickly fade away.

When this life is over, then what?

God says...

It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment. (Hebrews 9:27)

“And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night.” (Revelation 14:11)

And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:15)

“He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” (John 3:18)

That means...

There is no escaping the fact that all of us will be judged someday and that many will end up spending eternity in hell. A common misconception is that since God is loving, He wouldn’t send anyone to hell. Therefore, people speculate that those who are unprepared for judgment day will either be allowed into heaven after a time of suffering

for their sins, or else they will be annihilated. However, God's Word says that "the smoke of their torment ascends *forever and ever*." People assigned to hell will *never* be allowed into heaven, and they will never be annihilated.

Only those whose names are written in the Book of Life will escape hell and will spend eternity in God's kingdom. And whose names are written in that Book? Those who believe in Jesus Christ. They are the only ones who "[are] not condemned." Those who don't believe in Christ "[are] condemned already."

If you aren't ready for judgment day now, you should be doing everything in your power to get ready. There will be no opportunity to prepare after you're dead.

But if I'm living a good moral life, I have nothing to worry about, right?

God says...

"There is none righteous, no, not one;
There is none who understands;
There is none who seeks after God.
They have all turned aside;
They have together become unprofitable;
There is none who does good, no, not one."
(Romans 3:10-12)

Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. (Romans 3:20)

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

That means...

Contrary to popular opinion, even if you are living a moral life, you do have something to worry about. No matter how moral you are, you can't measure up to God's standard. God doesn't grade on the curve! You can't get into heaven by being better than average. Not a single person—other than Jesus Christ—has ever lived a sinless life: "There is none righteous, no, not one." That is an indictment against everyone. Even if you were the most loving person on earth, you wouldn't be good enough to get into heaven.

In school your grades were based on what you learned compared to what others learned. Too often we carry that school mentality over into our beliefs about eternal life. In terms of getting into heaven, it doesn't matter whether we are morally in the top or the bottom of our human class: "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

But surely good works help, don't they?

God says...

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit. (Titus 3:4-5)

For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all. (James 2:10)

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

That means...

No, good works can't help you get into heaven. In fact, if you think they can, then you aren't ready for judgment day. As we saw previously, "There is none who does good, no, not one." The verses at left clearly state that salvation is "not of works, lest anyone should boast" and that it is "not by works of righteousness which we have done." In spite of this, many people have trouble letting go of the idea that they need to do good to get into heaven. They imagine that God weighs their heavenly aptitude on a huge scale much like the one the Statue of Justice holds in her hand. They hope their good deeds outweigh their bad deeds, and that this will help them get into heaven.

For this to be true, God would have to be blindfolded like the Statue of Justice. But He *can* see! The very presence of our bad deeds proves that we aren't good enough to earn eternal life. God's standard is perfection: "Whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all." Of course, we all fall hopelessly short of such a standard.

If I can't tip God's scale in my favor with my good works, how can I gain eternal life?

God says...

Then he [the jailer] called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. And he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved..." (Acts 16:29-31)

But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness. (Romans 4:5)

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)

For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

That means...

There is only one way to have eternal life: “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved.” Jesus is God in the flesh. He became a man, lived a sinless life, and then paid the full and complete payment for our sins by dying on the cross in our place. In other words, He bought the right to give us eternal life. He bought this right with His own blood.

Do you ever think you’ve been too bad for God to care about you? Did you notice in the verses at left the type of people God justifies, that is, the type of people He declares righteous? He “justifies the *ungodly*.” He died for *sinners* like you and me! He doesn’t give salvation to the godly, because, as we’ve already seen, no human being is truly godly except the Lord Jesus Himself.

Therefore, the only way to avoid eternal condemnation is to “believe on Him who justifies the ungodly.” You can trust Him to do as He has promised. He proved He could and would keep His promises when He rose bodily from the dead as He had said. He has promised to give eternal life freely to all who believe in Him. You can count on that.

You mean it’s as simple as just believing in Christ?

God says...

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life...He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” (John 3:16, 18)

“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life.” (John 6:47)

But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness. (Romans 4:5)

“Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.” (Galatians 2:16)

That means...

Yes, it's that simple. The only condition of eternal life is to believe in Jesus Christ.

A young man struggled for years trying to work his way to God. Finally a friend asked him whether his view of the Gospel might be wrong. That really hit him hard. Through his friend, he learned that what he believed was wrong. He learned that the Bible teaches that only faith in Christ can open heaven's gates. He gave up trying to be good enough to be saved. He trusted in Christ alone.

I am that young man. I would like to return the favor. May I ask you to reconsider your view of the Gospel? Are you trusting in church attendance, good deeds, charitable gifts, or praying? These are all good things. But they're not good enough, because "by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified." It is vital that you know that "a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ."

The only effective option, therefore, is to believe in Christ and be saved from eternal condemnation. Jesus guarantees eternal life to all who trust in Him for it: "He who believes in Me has everlasting life." You can take His word for it.

But doesn't the Bible also say that God will judge everyone according to their works?

God says...

Will He not render to each man according to his deeds? (Proverbs 24:12)

Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it...And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books...And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:11-12, 15)

Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. (2 Corinthians 5:9-10)

That means...

Yes, God will judge everyone according to their works, both those who have believed in Christ and those who haven't. However, according to the Bible there will be two separate judgments: one at the "great white throne" and another at "the judgment seat of Christ." Neither of these judgments has as its purpose the evaluation of deeds to determine who gets into heaven. That determination is based solely on who believed in Christ for eternal life and who didn't.

The Great White Throne Judgment will be for those whose names are “not found written in the Book of Life.” That Book contains the names of everyone who has life—eternal life. At the moment a person believes in Jesus for eternal life he has it and his name appears in the Book of Life. That is the most important registry of all time and you certainly want your name recorded there.

The Judgment Seat of Christ will be for those whose names are written in the Book of Life. There Jesus will judge the works of all the people who have ever believed in Him for eternal life.

Therefore, while it is true that God will judge everyone’s works, that doesn’t change the fact that the only way to have eternal life is by believing in Jesus Christ.

Why, then, would God judge the works of someone who is unsaved if his works weren’t necessary for his salvation anyway?

God says...

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. (Galatians 6:7)

Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it...And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books...And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:11-12, 15)

“And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you.” (Matthew 11:23-24)

That means...

There are two reasons why God will judge the works of those who are unsaved. First, God has decided to give every unbeliever an opportunity to see his guilt. Countless people go to the grave wrongly thinking that they are good enough to merit heaven. At the Great White Throne Judgment all such claims will be thoroughly examined and refuted as “the books” of works are opened.

Second, God has determined that the amount of punishment unbelievers will receive will be related to their works. And, since God will take people’s backgrounds into account, there will be some surprises. Jesus told the people of Capernaum who had rejected Him that “*it shall be more tolerable* for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you.” The land of Sodom was renowned for its wickedness (see

Genesis 19). The people of Capernaum were surely more outwardly moral. However, God will punish them more because they didn't believe in Jesus in spite of "the mighty works which were done" in their city. In determining punishment, God will take into account how much opportunity each person has had. With churches on every corner, Bibles in every household, Christian radio and TV, and plenty of Christian literature, people in Christian lands today have received much light and will be held accountable for that.

O.K. But why would God judge the works of someone who is saved?

God says...

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. (Galatians 6:7)

For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ...So then each of us shall give account of himself to God. (Romans 14:10 & 12)

Each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. (1 Corinthians 3:13-15)

That means...

The reason God will judge the works of the saved is because He has determined that "whatever a man sows, that he will also reap." This is true of all people, the saved and the unsaved. Believers are indeed accountable. "Each of us shall give account of himself to God." The reception of eternal life is not a license to sin. God expects believers to glorify Him with their lives and He has promised to reward them if they do.

Therefore, if a Christian wastes the time, talent, and treasure that God has given him, "he will suffer loss." What will he lose? He won't lose his salvation, for that is impossible. Notice that Paul says, "he will suffer loss, [but] he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire." What he will lose are those rewards which God would have given him if he had done works that had enduring quality. It is beyond the scope of this booklet to detail and explain the various rewards God will give (e.g., treasure, ruling with Christ, hidden manna, special white garments, special abundance of life). The point is that the good works which believers do now will be recompensed by God in tangible ways at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Will there be rewards for each and every good work Christians do during their Christian lives, or does God only look at the entirety of their lives?

God says...

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Matthew 6:19-21)

“And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward.” (Matthew 10:42)

That means...

Each and every good work which a believer does will be rewarded. Even the giving of “a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple” will result in reward which “by no means” shall be lost. Of course, if lesser works will surely be rewarded, so will greater ones.

These are like the “instant winner” prizes you can receive in many promotions today. For example, when you go to a fast food restaurant and peel off a game sticker that says you’ve won a free order of French fries, you are an “instant winner.” To be a winner at a fast food restaurant is a matter of chance, but to be a “winner” of heavenly rewards is a matter of choice. Whenever a believer chooses to obey God in the power of the Holy Spirit, he lays up treasure in heaven. While it’s true that “we can’t take it with us,” we *can* send it on ahead! By using our time, talent, and treasure to serve God and our fellow men, we build up a stockpile of rewards.

Will there be any special reward for those Christians who persevere in doing good works until the end of their lives?

God says...

“Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods.” (Matthew 24:45-47)

If we endure, we shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us. If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself. (2 Timothy 2:12-13)

And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. (Galatians 6:9)

That means...

Yes, there will be a special reward for those Christians who persevere in doing good works: “If we endure, we shall also reign with Him.” Ruling with Christ is a privilege reserved solely for those believers who “[do] not grow weary while doing good.” All believers will be in the kingdom; yet not all will reign with Christ. If it’s a privilege to serve in the administration of a president or monarch today, imagine how much more of a privilege it will be to serve in the administration of the King of kings and Lord of lords!

Think of this as a “perseverance prize.” In a marathon, a runner has to “hang in there” for the entire 26 miles of the race in order to receive the medal. No medal is given for finishing part of the course—even 25 miles. Only by enduring to the end can a person win this prize.

The Lord Jesus promised a special reward for those who are faithfully serving Him when they go to be with Him. He places special importance on finishing the Christian race well.

But doesn’t salvation *apart from works* eliminate the possibility of rewards *for works*?

God says...

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:8-10)

Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. (1 Corinthians 9:24-25)

That means...

No, there’s no contradiction between salvation freely given apart from works and rewards that are given for works. Eternal life is one thing and eternal rewards are quite another. The first Scripture cited on the facing page deals with eternal salvation. The second deals with eternal rewards. Salvation “is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.” The only way to be saved is “by grace...through faith.” However, once we’re saved, God expects us to please Him by doing good works: “For we are His

workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” If we do, He has chosen to reward us.

This is true of public education. Children don’t have to do any work or pay any price to get into school. It’s free. However, they do have to work—and work hard—if they hope to make the honor roll or to earn a scholarship.

Rewards are an important part of our Christian education as well. Day by day we are tested; however the results won’t be fully disclosed until the Judgment Seat of Christ. There won’t be any time for last minute “cramming.” And there won’t be any “make-up exam.” We’d better prepare now, or we’ll fail to obtain the imperishable crown of ruling with Christ.

Isn’t it selfish to strive for rewards?

God says...

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Matthew 6:19-21)

Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. (1 Corinthians 9:24)

And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. (1 John 2:28)

That means...

No, it isn’t selfish to strive for rewards. How could it be if we are commanded in Scripture to do so? The Lord Jesus commands us to “lay up treasures in heaven.” The apostle Paul tells us to “run in such a way that you may obtain it.” The apostle John exhorts us to abide in Christ so that when He comes we might “have confidence and not be ashamed before Him.”

The word *selfish* means “greedy at the expense of others.” It isn’t selfish to strive for eternal rewards, since greed is the very opposite of what it takes to obtain rewards. We must be generous and loving toward others to lay up rewards. Besides, we aren’t competing with other Christians for rewards. God, who is infinite, will never exhaust His ability to reward His people. No one will ever be rewarded “at the expense of others.”

It is important to realize that there is a difference between legitimate self interest and selfishness. God has created us with a natural desire for fulfillment and joy in life. This is not selfish, since the true path to fulfillment and joy is in loving and helping others.

So, how do I prepare for the Judgment Seat of Christ?

God says...

And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. (Galatians 6:9)

If we endure, we shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us. If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself. (2 Timothy 2:12-13)

And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. (1 John 2:28)

“God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. (1 Peter 5:5-7)

That means...

Believe in Christ for eternal life. The people addressed on the facing page are believers. Only believers will be at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Endure. God treasures endurance: “If we endure, we shall also reign with Him.” Only those believers who are confessing Christ in word and deed when this life is over will rule with Him.

Abide in Him. The believer who abides in Christ is one who openly and honestly seeks to follow Him in all that he says, does, and thinks. The desire of the abiding believer is to please the Lord Jesus. Thus when the Lord reveals sin in his life, he confesses and forsakes it.

Do good. Of course, doing good is a requirement of eternal rewards. Couch potatoes won't be rewarded. You must get off the couch and do good in order to please God. Prayer, giving, visiting, witnessing, exhorting, teaching, and the like are all works that please God if done with the right motives.

Humble yourself. Humility is the key to right motives. Those whose aim is self-exaltation won't be highly rewarded at the Judgment Seat of Christ. The ones whom God will exalt are those who humble themselves before Him. We are *servants* of Christ. If we lose sight of that, we are in danger of seeking glory for us instead of for Him.

Are you ready?

Death and judgment lie in the future for all of us. Just as death is inescapable, so is judgment. Everyone, lost and saved, will be judged.

The lost will be judged at the Great White Throne Judgment. At that judgment God will show unbelievers from their own works that they deserve eternal condemnation. Since they didn't receive the free gift of eternal life, their names will not be found in the Book of Life. Remember: The Bible has no Christ-*plus* formula for salvation. The only biblical formula for salvation is trusting Christ alone for eternal life.

The saved will be judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ. The Lord Jesus will evaluate the works of believers and will show what rewards each one has or hasn't laid up. How Christians live now will have direct impact on their eternal experience. While all Christians will forever enjoy the kingdom of God, some will have a richer experience than others. To be ready for the Judgment Seat of Christ believers must abide in Christ moment by moment, knowing that at any time He may return for us.

You *can* be ready for judgment day. The question is: Are you?

Saving Faith in Focus

<https://faithalone.org/tracts/saving-faith-in-focus/>



Is Believing the Gospel Enough?

Confusion over the gospel abounds. I hear it from people all over the country and around the world. They don't know what to believe. They aren't sure what God requires. Is it turning from sins or commitment of life? Inviting Jesus into their hearts? Obeying the Golden Rule? Confessing their sins? Being baptized?

There is only one true gospel. The key is to discover and believe it. However, that isn't necessarily easy to do, because many different gospels are being preached and it is hard to determine which one is correct.

Most forms of the gospel being preached today are what I call faith-plus gospels. These say that faith in Christ for eternal life is necessary, but that it is not enough. Works must accompany faith, according to faith-plus gospels, in order for a person to make it to heaven. There are two versions of the faith-plus gospel.

- Salvation by faith plus works. Some say that one must have faith plus works in order to obtain salvation. A person lacking sufficient good works, or guilty of major sins, will not make it to heaven, even if he believes in Christ.¹
- Salvation by faith that works. Others say that one must have faith that works. They claim that one is saved by faith in Christ plus nothing, but that true faith in Christ results in commitment, obedience, turning from sins, etc.² There is no real difference between saying that to be saved you must turn from sins, commit your life to Christ, and believe in Him, and saying that believing in Christ necessarily results in turning from your sins and committing your life to Him. Both insist that turning from sins and commitment of life is necessary to obtain final salvation. This may sound significantly different than salvation by faith plus works. However, it is actually another way of saying the same thing.
- Salvation apart from faith or works. In addition to faith-plus gospels, there is one gospel requiring no faith at all! That is the gospel of universalism, which teaches that all are already saved, or will ultimately be saved. According to this view no one will spend eternity apart from God, even those who never believed in Christ. This view can surface anywhere, even in very conservative, evangelical churches. The motive may seem to be good—an abhorrence of people going to

hell—but it is a direct contradiction of God's Word. The way to keep people from hell is by proclaiming the true gospel that they might believe it and be saved, not by distorting the gospel.

The Bible Is the Only Reliable Guide to the Gospel

Understanding the gospel is not a matter of taking a poll. The majority is rarely right and that is especially true in terms of the gospel. Jesus said, “Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it” (Matthew 7:13 -14). Jesus unequivocally said that the majority of people are on the wrong road. Many are on the broad way. Few are on the narrow way. The gospel is contrary to our expectations. Very few things in life are received simply by believing. (Actually, I can't think of anything, other than eternal life, which is received by faith alone.) Thus, the gospel seems to be “foolishness to those who are perishing” (1 Corinthians 1:18).

To be saved you must resist the impulse to follow the crowd. There is only one reliable guide to spiritual truth and that is the Bible.

When the apostle Paul went to the city of Berea , he began teaching in the Jewish synagogue. Paul's traveling companion, Luke, reports that the Bereans “were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so” (Acts 17:11).

Every person should study the Scripture to see whether the gospel they are hearing is correct. We should all be like the Bereans, searching the Scriptures, so that we will know what to believe.

The only condition of eternal salvation is faith in Christ. Even a casual reading of the Gospel of John, the only book in Scripture whose purpose is evangelistic (John 20:31), 5 makes this clear. “He who believes in Me has everlasting life” (John 6:47). “He who believes in Him is not condemned” (John 3:18). “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life” (John 5:24). “Whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die [spiritually]” (John 11:26).

The Bible is God's Word. As such, it is without contradiction. We can be sure that if these and many other passages list faith in Christ as the sole condition of eternal life and freedom from condemnation, this is indeed true. There are no other conditions.

What Is Faith in Christ?

Let's begin by considering what faith is. Once we determine that, we will consider what faith in Christ is.

Faith is the conviction that something is true.

We all exercise faith every day. For example, most of us believe that George Washington was the first President of the United States because we have recognized that the evidence is convincing.

Do you believe that you exist? That is, are you convinced that you are alive? I once met a college student who doubted his existence and that of everything in the universe. I was tempted to pinch him to give him some tangible evidence! Most rational people are certain they exist, no doubt about it. The evidence is overwhelming.

Though long past her childbearing years, Abraham's wife Sarah believed that she was going to have a son. God had said she would: "By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised" (Hebrews 11:11, italics added). Ninety-year-old Sarah was positive that God would keep His promise, and would do what He said. Abraham too was "fully convinced that what [God] had promised He was also able to perform" (Romans 4:21, italics added). Faith is being convinced or persuaded (the KJV has "fully persuaded" here) of the truth of something—in this case, the promise that a son would be born to an elderly couple.

The key to believing something is the proof in favor of it. Thus, despite popular opinion, faith is not really a choice. You don't "choose" to believe that George Washington was the first President, that you exist, that two plus two equals four, etc. Similarly, Sarah and Abraham didn't "choose" to believe that God would keep His promise to them regarding a son. When the evidence that something is true persuades people, they believe it. When they aren't persuaded, they don't believe it.

Let's say you were on a jury. After listening to all of the evidence, you concluded that the defendant was guilty. Could you choose to believe that he was innocent? Of course not. You could vote not to convict, but that would be acting dishonestly, contrary to what you believed. The only way you could move from belief to unbelief or the other way around is if you came to perceive the testimony differently.

Doesn't this mean, then, that the evidence traps us? In a sense, yes. However, two people can look at the same evidence and draw different conclusions because they have different opinions on whether the evidence is trustworthy. We are guided by our perception of the evidence. We believe evidence that we perceive as true. We don't believe evidence that we perceive as false.

Therefore, faith is not a decision. It is the conviction that something is true. It is especially important that we understand this, for much confusion about the gospel has resulted from the mistaken idea that we can be convinced that the gospel is true and yet not be saved until we decide to believe it.

Faith in Christ is the conviction that He is the Guarantor of eternal life for every believer.

Faith in Christ is sometimes called saving faith, since the Bible teaches that all who believe in Him have eternal salvation. There are many things that Jesus promised. When the Bible speaks of “faith in Christ,” it is talking about believing a specific promise that He made. Jesus explained that saving promise to His friend, Martha:

Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?” She said to Him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.” —John 11:25-27

“Do you believe this?” Jesus’ question to Martha cuts to the heart of the gospel. While Jesus promised many things in the course of His ministry, this one promise is the key to gaining eternal salvation. Jesus is claiming to be “the resurrection and the life.” Anyone who believes that has eternal life and will never die.

First, as “the resurrection,” He guarantees, “He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.” That is, He insures bodily resurrection from the dead to all who believe in Him. Since we know from other Scriptures that both believers and unbelievers will be resurrected (Daniel 12:2; John 5:29 ; Acts 24:15), this must refer to the resurrection of the righteous, also called the first resurrection (Revelation 20:5-6). Jesus is promising that death will not keep a believer from bodily participation in His eternal kingdom. All believers will live eternally in glorified bodies in Jesus’ kingdom.

Notice that this promise has no other conditions. Many add to what Jesus said and end up with this distorted gospel: “He who believes in Me and turns from His sins and perseveres in good works, though he may die, he shall live.” That is not what Jesus promised. A person who believes this altered message does not believe what Jesus said.

Second, as “the life,” He certifies, “Whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.” This is another way of reinforcing what He has just said. In verse 25 He confirms that physical death cannot keep the believer from bodily participation in the eternal kingdom. In verse 26 Jesus affirms that no believer will ever experience spiritual death. As “the life,” Jesus is the Guarantor of eternal life: “Whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.” He guarantees the believer will never lose eternal life. All who believe in Him are secure forever.

Some say, “Yes, He is the Giver of eternal life; however, to be saved takes more than just believing. You must also commit your life to Him, turn from your sins, confess Him, obey Him, be baptized, etc., etc., etc.” Once again, if a person is convinced that this distorted message is true, then he doesn’t believe what Jesus is saying. Jesus made it clear that the only condition is being convinced that He guarantees eternal life to all who believe in Him. Add anything to that and you have a different gospel.

Martha believed Jesus’ promise. In answer to the question, “Do you believe this?” she said, “Yes, Lord, I believe.” She then went on to acknowledge Him as “the Christ, the

Son of God, who is come into the world.” She knew that Jesus was the Messiah and as such, He certainly fulfills His promise to give eternal life, life that is forever secure, to every believer (compare John 20:31). Martha understood that there were no strings attached. She knew that she had eternal life and that she would never lose it because Jesus, as the Son of God, was trustworthy.

The apostle Paul sums up what Martha, and every Christian, believes when they come to faith in Christ: “However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life” (1 Timothy 1:16). In order to be saved, we must believe on Jesus for everlasting life. On the basis of His death and resurrection, He always fulfills His guarantee to give everlasting life to all who believe in Him for it.

Martha did not decide to believe in Jesus for eternal life. She was convinced of the truth of what Jesus said and hence she believed in Him in the biblical sense.

Faith in Christ does not erase every problem.

It greatly saddens me when I hear some evangelists tell the unsaved to believe in Jesus for benefits other than eternal life. “Believe in Jesus and He will heal your broken marriage.” “Believe in Him and He will turn your finances around.” “Become a Christian and all your depression will vanish.” People who believe in Jesus for a better marriage, for financial prosperity, or for emotional well being, are not guaranteed eternal salvation.

Many today think they are saved because they went forward at some meeting and gave Jesus their life, believing in Him for something other than eternal life. While it is true that He can help us with all issues in life, that is not the promise of the gospel, and the help He gives is not necessarily the deliverance we want. He doesn’t guarantee a happy marriage, good finances, or freedom from depression to every believer. There are many factors other than faith in Christ, which influence these things. However, the only condition of eternal life is faith in Christ!

What Saving Faith Is Not

It is sometimes helpful to consider what something is not. This is particularly true of saving faith. Contrary to popular understanding, none of the following are a part of or a synonym for saving faith: believing general Bible truth, promising to serve God, praying, walking an aisle, being sorry for your sins, turning from your sins, inviting Jesus into your heart, believing with a special kind of faith, doing good works, or having heart faith.

Believing general Bible truth.

You can believe many biblical concepts and still miss the one truth that is saving—the truth of the gospel. For example, you can attest to Jesus’ deity, His virgin birth, and His bodily resurrection, and yet not believe Jesus’ promise to give you eternal life freely if you just believe in Him for it. There is only one truth that will save: Jesus’ guarantee that anyone who believes in Him for eternal life has it.

Promising to serve God.

Promises, promises! Almost every child who goes to a Christian camp makes some sort of commitment in front of a campfire. If all the young people who promised to become missionaries had done so, there would never be a lack of workers on any mission field in the world. Many have vowed to serve God in the hope that their commitment would cause God to save them. Because it is possible to promise sincerely to serve God, and yet not be convinced that Jesus freely gives eternal life to all who just believe in Him, commitment isn't an absolute indicator of saving faith. (Many cult members are radically committed.) Pledges to serve God in hopes of gaining salvation actually become a stumbling block, for to be saved one must believe in Christ alone for eternal life, not Christ plus commitment.

Praying.

A very popular evangelistic technique today is to ask unbelievers to pray to become Christians. However, there is not one biblical example of anyone ever praying to be saved. Jesus never led anyone in a prayer of salvation, nor did any of the apostles or evangelists mentioned in the Bible. A person is saved by believing in Christ for eternal life, not by praying.³

Walking an aisle.

Asking unbelievers to come forward—to walk the aisle or come to the front of the auditorium—in order to be saved is another popular evangelistic practice without biblical precedent. A person may stand before others with complete sincerity and with a strong desire to be saved and yet return to his seat not having believed in Christ for eternal life. Coming forward will not save. Only believing in Christ will save.⁴

Being sorry for your sins.

A popular song of years past contained the phrase, “Cry me a river.” You may indeed shed many tears, be extremely sorry for your sins, and yet not believe in Christ for eternal life. No amount of anguish over sin can open the way to heaven. Only believing in Christ alone can.

Recognition of one's sinfulness shows a person that he needs a Savior, and this acknowledgment may result in tears. But the presence or absence of tears is not the point. Nowhere does the Bible say that being sorry for your sins is a condition of eternal life. There is but one requirement: believing that Jesus is the Guarantor of eternal life to all who just believe in Him.

Turning from your sins.

Can someone undergo radical changes in his or her life without believing the gospel? Of course. Often, for example, unbelieving alcoholics give up drinking. Moral reform is certainly possible. And it is a good thing to do in the sense that it is always best to follow

God's blueprint for living, whether or not you are a Christian. Yet, moral reform will not save.

In fact, if people think that turning from sins is a condition of salvation, their faith in moral reform can actually prohibit them from being saved. To be saved, a person must believe that Jesus guarantees eternal life to all who believe in Him.

Inviting Jesus into your heart.

Another very common and unfortunate evangelistic appeal is telling people to invite Jesus into their hearts in order to be saved. The problem here is that they can invite Jesus into their hearts and yet not believe in Him for eternal life.⁵

Some individuals have invited Jesus into their hearts hundreds of times. Whenever they doubt the efficacy of what they did (with good reason), they just repeat the invitation, thinking: Maybe I didn't invite Him in sincerely enough the last time.⁶ Jesus enters the lives of people the moment they believe in Him for eternal life.

Believing with a special kind of faith.

Some pastors today teach that saving faith is different than everyday faith.¹⁵ This, however, is just not true. All faith is the conviction of the truth of some proposition. What makes saving faith saving is not the uniqueness of the faith, but its object. Saving faith results instantly in eternal salvation because it believes in the right object: the guarantee of life made by Jesus Christ to every believer.

Doing good works.

Saving faith should not be confused with doing good works. In their zeal to call people to godliness, some pastors and theologians today mingle the two.

A desire for godliness is admirable. However, it is simply not true that in order to believe in Christ for eternal life you must also do good works and forsake bad works. Works have no place in saving faith. Saving faith is based solely on what the Lord Jesus has already done and promises to do for us. It is not based even in part on what we might do for Him.

The thief on the cross was a terrible sinner who was at death's door. He had only hours left to live. He couldn't offer Jesus any good works, any service, any moral reform. He could only believe in Him, and that he did. Even though Jesus' own disciples were disheartened and had lost faith in His return to set up the kingdom, the thief boldly said, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom" (Luke 23:42). Jesus' response shows the freeness of the gospel for all who believe in Him: "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43).

Head Faith, Heart Faith, and Mind Games

How do you convince someone that saving faith is not just faith in the gospel, that it includes commitment, turning from sins, perseverance in obedience, and the like? Since there is no verse in Scripture that identifies saving faith as anything other than believing the gospel, you'd have a hard time proving your view from the Bible. However, there is an easier way.

The best way to sell the idea that saving faith includes the kitchen sink is through the use of pejorative terms like intellectual faith or head faith. Some preachers and teachers tell people that just believing the facts of the gospel is intellectual faith or head faith. Then they espouse the idea that the Bible teaches that the faith that truly saves is heart faith.

Heart faith can include almost anything. However, heart faith raises potential problems. How much commitment, turning from sins, obedience, and the like is enough? The biblical evidence demonstrates that this supposed distinction between head faith and heart faith is really a mind game.

First, the Scriptures never refer to the head as the source of thinking and feeling. In addition, the word *head* is never associated with faith in the Bible.

Second, of the two remaining words, *heart* and *mind*, the Scriptures often use them interchangeably. Both refer to the inner self where one thinks and believes and feels.

Third, the mind is not viewed as being inferior to the heart in Scripture. In one of the most famous verses on sanctification in the Bible, Paul exhorted the believers in Rome, "Be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Romans 12:2). Similarly, he exhorted the Ephesian believers, "Be renewed in the spirit of your mind" (Ephesians 4:23). Paul spoke to the Corinthian believers of having "the mind of Christ" (1 Corinthians 2:16). Luke said that the Lord "opened [the disciples'] understanding [literally mind in Greek], that they might comprehend the Scriptures," that is, the Old Testament Scriptures, concerning His resurrection (Luke 24:45).

Fourth, while the words *believe* and *faith* occur approximately 450 times in the Bible, only a few passages specify where belief takes place.⁷ They speak of believing as though the reader of Scripture knows what that means and where it occurs.

Believing in Christ is the sole condition of eternal life. There is no such thing as special types of faith called heart faith and head faith. Saving faith doesn't include commitment, obedience, or turning from sins. It is merely the conviction that Jesus is speaking the truth when He says, "He who believes in Me has everlasting life" (John 6:47).

There Is No Additional Step

Many well-meaning people unintentionally introduce a lot of confusion when they say something like this, "Do you believe that Jesus, by His death and resurrection, freely gives eternal life to all who believe in Him? Great! Now would you like to trust Him?"

This two-step approach to saving faith is confusing. How does a person who already believes something choose to trust it? Say, for example, that you believe that Jesus is God. Do you also need to choose to trust His deity in order to really believe it? Of course not. You believe in Jesus' deity if the evidence convinces you that He is indeed the Second Person of the Trinity. What you believe, you trust to be true.

The same is true with the gospel. If you believe it, you are saved. Jesus guarantees it.

Sometimes this supposed distinction is illustrated by means of a chair and belief in its ability to hold one up. The illustration goes as follows.

"Do you believe that this chair will hold you up if you sit in it?"

"Yes, I believe it will."

"Okay, then have a seat."

"No, I won't do that."

"Then you don't really believe the chair will hold you up, for to truly believe it, you must trust that it will hold you up. And you only trust it when you take a seat."

The illustration is patently false. Only a masochist would sit in a chair he didn't "really believe" would hold him up. You sit in a chair because you already believe it is dependable, not in order to believe it is.

The only condition of eternal life is belief in Him for it. Once you do that, you have eternal life. There is no additional step involved.

Yes, Believing the Gospel Is Enough!

Saving faith means believing the gospel, believing in Christ alone for eternal life. Nothing else is saving faith. Not only is believing the gospel enough, but it is the only way to salvation. Jesus guarantees eternal life to all who believe in Him for it. Do you believe this?

¹One evangelist who has been in the ministry for 51 years recounted his testimony by quoting from a letter he wrote shortly after his conversion: "It has been over nine days since I smoked a cigarette...I am now taking part in all the church work I can...I have been born again. You may think I will get over this in a few days and be back to normal but I will never be the same again. I had not been born again before now. *I did believe but I did not have the love of God* (emphasis added). Clearly for this evangelist, believing, while necessary, is not enough. One must also love God by living an obedient life.

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²This is sometimes called Lordship Salvation. It is the view that to be saved you must not only believe in Christ for eternal life, but you must also yeild to His Lordship over your life. While Lordship Salvation typically refers to Calvinists who believe in salvation by faith that works, it applies equally well to Arminians who believe in salvation by faith plus works.

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³If a person came to believe the gospel while he was praying a prayer, he would be saved. However, it is not a good idea to ask a person to pray something he doesn't already believe. And, if he already believes it, then he is already saved, without the prayer.

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⁴Of course, if a person comes forward and a counselor is used of God to convince him that Jesus guarantees eternal life to all who believe in Him, then he would end up being saved. However, coming forward is not a condition, any more than coming to church in the first place is a condition. A person can be saved at school, at work, in her car, in a foxhole, on a basketball court, or anywhere, with or without an aisle or a preacher!

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⁵In my early days in evangelism I used this appeal. I remember one student at my college who invited Christ into his life. I gave him some material to read and scheduled an appointment for the next week. When we met for follow-up, e told me that the material I had given him said that Jesus was the only way to God, but that he didn't believe that. "Really," I said. "Then why did you invite Jesus into your heart?" He told me that he was a Bahai and that he had invited Jesus into his heart because he wanted all of the prophets in his heart.

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⁶Of course, this approach is futile. Each time the person doubts, and invites Jesus in “one last time,” it becomes more difficult to do this sincerely because it seems so hypocritical. The only way to be sure that Christ is in your life and that you are eternally secure is to believe Jesus’ promise that all who simply believe in Him have eternal life.

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⁷One passage, Romans 10:9-10, directly speaks of “believ[ing] in your heart.” That is set in contrast with “confess[ing] with your mouth.” The former is internal; the latter external. The former is by faith alone. The latter includes works.

“Confessing with your mouth the Lord Jesus” is the action that involves commitment, obedience, and turning from your sins, not “believing in your head that God raised Him from the dead.” Nor is believing with your heart defined as some special kind of faith that might rightly be called heart faith. Paul is merely indicating that saving faith takes place internally, as opposed to confessing Christ in word and deed, which takes place externally. Romans 10:9-10 is dealing with salvation from the wrath of God, both eternally and temporally. Believing the gospel is the condition of escaping the wrath of God eternally (“with the heart one believes unto righteousness”—all righteous people go to heaven; hence, the only way to escape the eternal wrath of God is faith in Christ). Confessing Christ is the condition of escaping the wrath of God here and now (“with the mouth confession is made unto salvation [from God’s temporal wrath]”).

Four other passages, none of which is dealing with saving faith, indicate indirectly that belief takes place in the heart (Mark 11:23; 16:14; Luke 8:12; 24:25). However in each of those verses the point is just that belief takes place internally. And, as we have already seen, in the last of those passages believing in the heart is equated with believing with the mind.

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Evangelism Explosion

Website: <http://evangelismexplosion.org>

Steps to Life: <http://evangelismexplosion.org/resources/steps-to-life/>

Answers to Tough Questions:

How do you respond when someone asks about your faith in God, in Christ, your belief in Heaven and Hell, in the Bible? Do you become defensive, do you fight, go into combat mode, become intimidated? None of these extremes are necessary nor are they appropriate.

When presented with an opportunity to witness to the truth you can provide a reasonable answer for what you believe. “And do not fear their intimidation, and do not be troubled, but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence (1 Peter 3:14-15). Also Paul says to Timothy: “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15).

Here is a list of the questions with access to a few sample answers.

<http://evangelismexplosion.org/resources/answers-to-tough-questions/>

Online (and Downloadable) Tracts

Our Gospel tracts are offered here for your convenience. Feel free to print them out and use them as you share the Gospel with family, friends, and other acquaintances. The information in our foreign Gospel tracts is exactly the same, page-by-page, as our English tract. By simply using your English tract, you guide them as they use their foreign tract. You can also take a look at our web presentation of the Gospel called [Steps to Life](#).

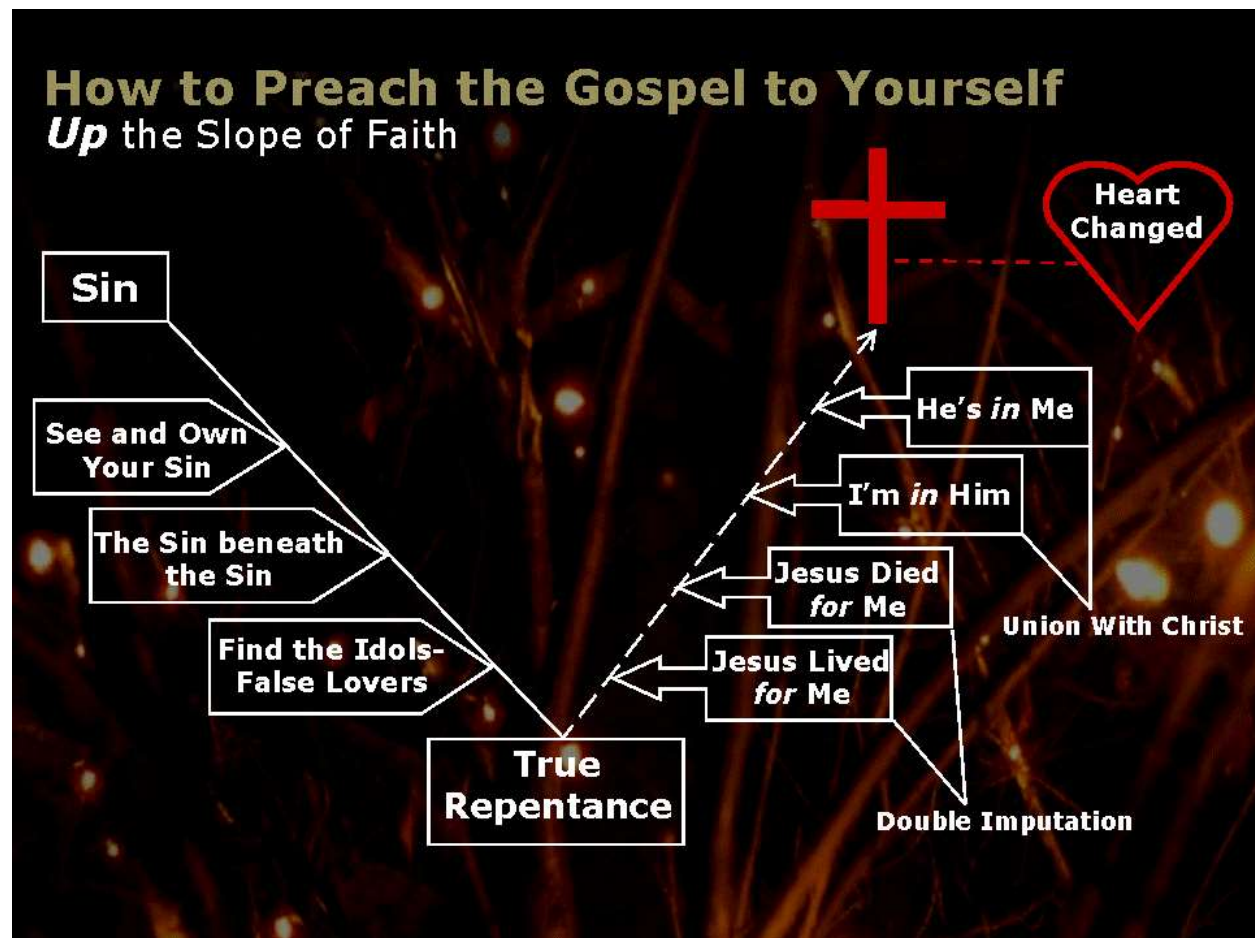
We encourage you to share these tracts with others. (Each tract page has a “Share” link. You may also want to link to one or more of our Gospel tracts from your website.)

<http://evangelismexplosion.org/resources/online-tracts/>

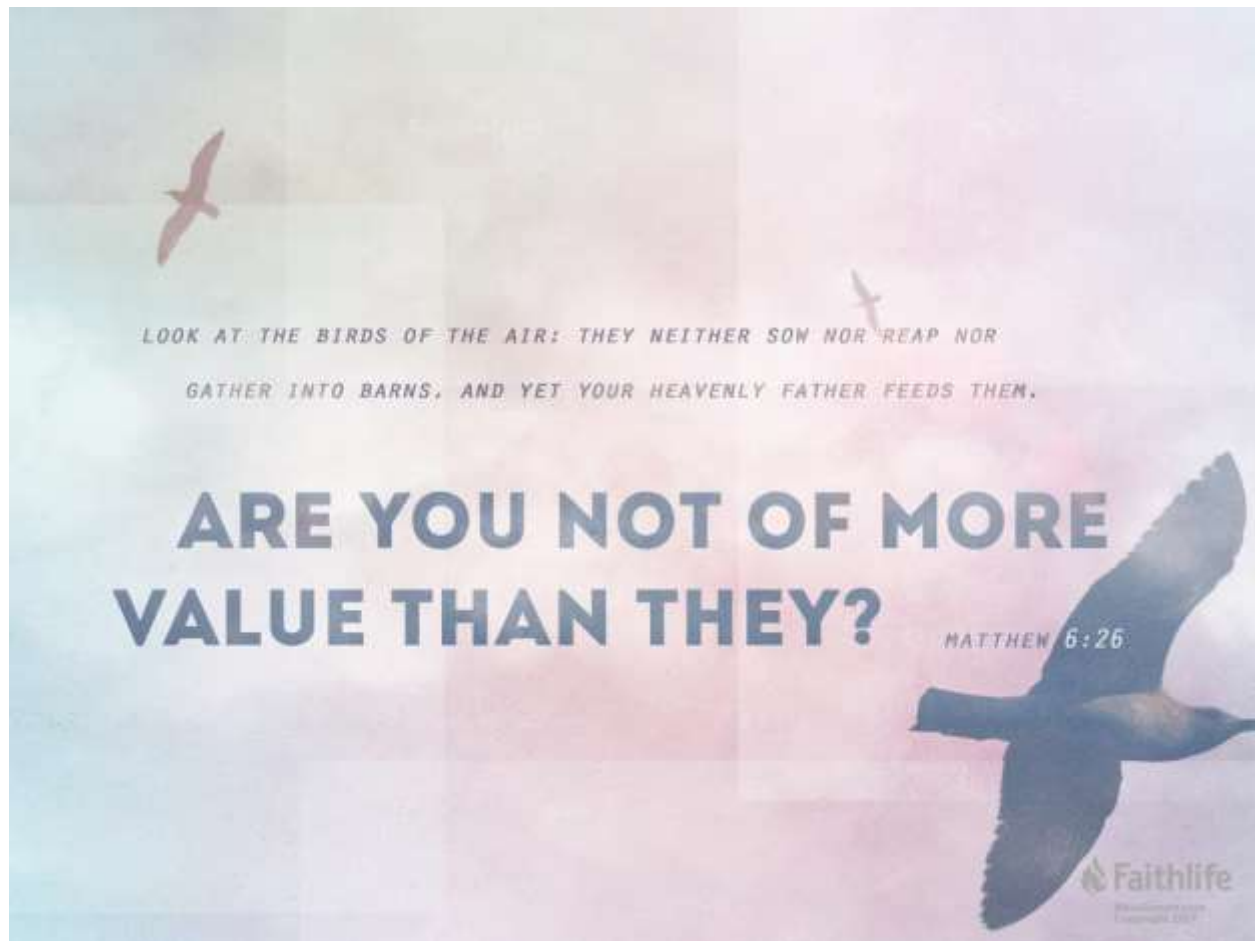
See also the various Plan of Salvation presentations (previous pages) for links of encouragement regarding how to share the God’s Good News with others.

How to Preach the Gospel to Yourself

<https://wdennisgriffith.wordpress.com/2015/02/17/how-to-preach-the-gospel-to-yourself/>



Note: The above diagram is provided as an FYI. Have not had time to vet the concept depicted here nor the supporting article.



Regarding Salvation...

THE CONDITION FOR SALVATION

- A. **The Condition.** Salvation is conditioned solely on faith * in Jesus Christ. Nearly 200 times faith, or belief, is stated as the single condition in the NT (Jn 1:12; Ac 16:31). That faith must be placed in Christ as one's substitute for and Savior from sin. It is not easy to believe someone whom you have never seen about the most important matter of eternal destiny, but this and only this is the way to be saved.
- B. **The False Additions to Faith.** Through the ages other requirements in addition to faith have been wrongly added. Some of these are:
 - 1. **Surrender** to the lordship of Christ. Christ must be Lord in the sense of Jehovah in order to be a qualified Savior (Ro 10:9), but Christ's personal lordship over the individual's life is not a condition for salvation. It should be a consequence of salvation and is a condition for dedication in full discipleship.
 - 2. **Baptism.** Baptism is the visible testimony to one's salvation, but not a condition for it. Ac 2:38 is best translated, "Repent and be baptized on the basis of the remission of sins." Ac 22:16 teaches that baptism followed the arising, just as forgiveness followed the calling on the name of the Lord. The two parts of the verse should be kept distinct. Mk 16:16 is probably not a genuine part of Mark's gospel.
 - 3. **Repentance.** This is a valid condition for salvation when understood as a synonym for faith. It is a false addition to faith when understood as a prerequisite, requiring the cleansing of the life in order to be saved.
 - 4. **Confession.** Confession is a normal result of being saved, though it may also accompany the initial act of believing. Nowhere is public confession required. In this connection, prayer may be helpful in clinching a decision, but it is not in itself a requirement for salvation.

Source: Ryrie Study Bible Notes

The Theology Notebook – Soteriology

https://bible.org/assets/http/soteriology_notebook_1.18.pdf [PDF]

See also: [Faith](#)

[Repentance](#)

[Baptism](#)

The Difference between Religion and Christianity

<http://www.middletownbiblechurch.org/helpseek/religion.htm>

The Relationship between Good Works and Salvation

<http://www.middletownbiblechurch.org/salvatio/workssal.htm>

Two Aspects of Forgiveness (that is needed for Salvation vs Fellowship)

<http://www.middletownbiblechurch.org/christia/twoaspet.htm>

Salvation vs Discipleship

<http://www.middletownbiblechurch.org/doctrine/sal-dis.htm>

Salvation vs Rewards

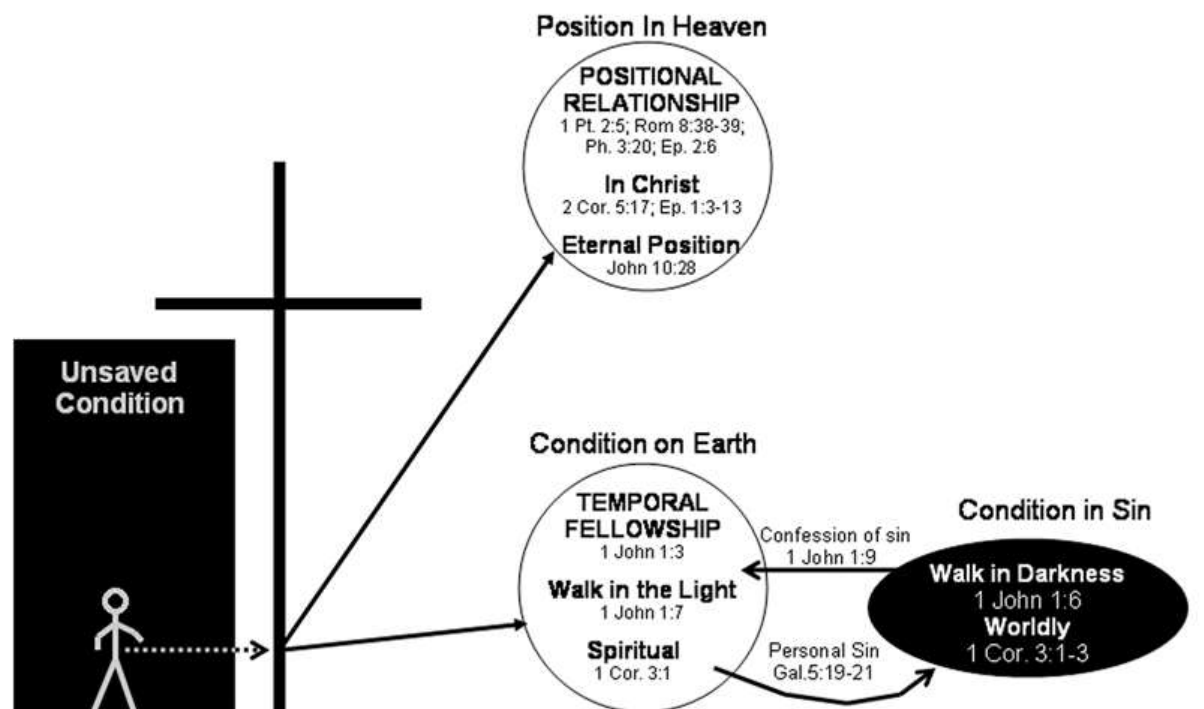
<http://www.middletownbiblechurch.org/salvatio/rewards.htm>

Living by Faith -- Are You Claiming These Facts by Faith?

<http://www.middletownbiblechurch.org/christia/livfaith.htm>

God's Sovereignty and Man's Responsibility

<http://www.middletownbiblechurch.org/reformed/sovereig.htm>



[Source: http://www.generationword.com/audio_series/basic_doctrine.html]

Salvation in the Old Testament vs New Testament

What was the Old Testament way of salvation?

<http://www.gotquestions.org/Old-Testament-salvation.html>

Excerpt:

Many Christians are a little confused about how Old Testament believers were saved. The first problem we have is that in Old Testament times they didn't know about Jesus' death on the cross. Yet Acts 4:12, says of Jesus, *"Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."* How could people living in Old Testament times be saved if they didn't know the name of Jesus? The second problem is the place of animal sacrifices. Did those sacrifices take away sin? Were people saved by sacrificing sheep, bulls, and goats? ...

Old Testament Salvation

<https://bible.org/article/old-testament-salvation>

How Were People Saved Before Jesus Came in the Flesh?

<https://answersingenesis.org/gospel/salvation/how-were-people-saved-before-jesus-came-in-the-flesh/>

How Were People Saved Before Christ?

<http://coldcasechristianity.com/2013/how-were-old-testament-saints-saved/>

Salvation in OT Times

<http://chosenpeople.com/main/jewish-roots/252-salvation-in-old-testament-times>

How Were Jews Saved in the Old Testament?

<https://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/onsite/otsaints.html>

Excerpt:

Between the fall of Adam and the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, how were people's sins atoned for? Was there true salvation as we know it in NT times? Also, if the Law doesn't save, how did it 'work' for OT believers? Were they trusting in Messiah and didn't know it? I'm confused by all this. Any clarification you might have would be great...

The Old Testament Doctrine of Salvation

<https://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/onsite/OldTestSal.html>

Are there Old Testament Scriptures that mention salvation for the Gentiles?

<http://christianity.stackexchange.com/questions/11288/are-there-old-testament-scriptures-that-mention-salvation-for-the-gentiles> [Discussion Forum]

"Salvation in the Old Testament" (in Tradition and Testament)

<http://www.ntslibrary.com/Salvation%20in%20the%20Old%20Testament.pdf> [PDF]

How Old Testament Saints Were Saved

<http://loveintruth.com/amf-docs/otsaints.htm>

Salvation in the OT

<http://storage.cloversites.com/gracefellowship3/documents/Salvation%20in%20the%20OT.pdf> [PDF]

Salvation

<http://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionary/salvation/>

The Experience of Salvation in the OT and NT

http://biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/vox/vol05/salvation_grogan.pdf [PDF]

What Does the Bible Say about Salvation?

http://www.christianbiblereference.org/faq_salvation.htm

Old Testament Salvation - Could Old Testament Saints Keep the Law?

<http://preservedwords.com/ot-salvation-pv.htm>

[NOTE: Extreme dispensationalist view, included FYI]

Does Dispensationalism Teach Two Ways of Salvation?

<http://www.spiritandtruth.org/teaching/documents/articles/4/4.htm?x=x>

61 Bible Verses About Salvation

<http://dailyverses.net/salvation>

Answers from the Bible: On the Way to Salvation

http://www.justforcatholics.org/answers_bible.htm

Excerpt:

Do you hunger for a personal relationship with God? Do you long for spiritual cleansing, liberty and peace? The following short articles explore the teaching of the Bible on the way of salvation. Please read them. Earnestly seek God in prayer to open your heart to the message of the gospel. He promises to reveal himself to honest seekers. 'You will find him if you seek him with all your heart and with all your soul' (Deuteronomy 4:29).

[Note: Answers questions addressed to Catholics]

The Way to Salvation in the Christian Gospel [This is an FYI – NOT a “How-to”]

[Warning: Heavy Reformed perspective; overcomplicates the Gospel to protect “imputation”]

<http://www.askelm.com/doctrine/d890101.htm>

*“The major teaching of the Bible which is a key in understanding the way by which a person obtains salvation is that of **Imputation**.”*

Is There a Different Way of Salvation for Jews? (re: Dual-Covenant Theology)

<http://www.teachingtheword.org/apps/articles/?articleid=59466&view=post&blogid=5435>

Excerpt:

Although this view has recently been touted by leading figures who are popular among conservative Evangelicals, it is completely contrary to Scripture.

Two Wrong Kinds of Covenant Theology

Today, two false brands of covenant theology are leading some conservative Evangelicals to teach false ways of salvation that the Holy Spirit condemns in Galatians chapter one. The false doctrine of dual-covenant theology teaches that Jews are saved by their observance of the Old Testament law, while Gentiles are saved by faith in Jesus Christ. Another aberrant teaching called One Law Theology, embraced by Messianic Jews and tolerated by growing numbers of Evangelicals, teaches that Gentiles in effect must become Jews in order to be saved...

How We're Saved by Faith in Jesus Christ

<http://www.biblesprout.com/articles/salvation/>

Is Jesus the Only Way of Salvation?

<https://www.gci.org/disc/18-onlyway>

Excerpt:

People sometimes object to the Christian belief that salvation is given only through Jesus Christ. In our pluralistic society, tolerance is expected, even demanded, and the concept of freedom of religion (which permits all religions) is sometimes misinterpreted to mean that all religions are somehow equally true.

All paths lead to the same God, some say, as if they have traveled all of them and have returned from the destination. They are not tolerant of the "narrow-minded" people who believe in only one way, and they object to evangelism, for example, as an insulting attempt to change the beliefs of other people. Yet they themselves want to change the beliefs of those who believe in only one way...

How Were People Saved Before Jesus Came?

<https://faithalone.org/journal/2003i/bryant.pdf> [PDF]

Salvation According to the Old Testament: By Faith in Christ or by Faith and Works Apart from Christ? (Responding to One Muslim's Claims)

http://www.answering-islam.org/Responses/Men/salvation_bible.htm

Can You Lose Your Salvation?

<http://www.discoverrevelation.com/Salvation.htm>

NOTE: Also contains definitions for many theological words/concepts.

How did people get saved in the Old Testament?

People in the Old Testament were saved by faith just like people today. Three passages to examine in the Old Testament regarding justification by faith are Ezekiel 18:26-28; Isaiah 1:18; and Isaiah 55:7.

The Old Testament system of sacrifices was never intended to be salvific (cf. Hebrews 10:4 and context). What was intended to show was the seriousness of sin.

An important point that Paul makes regarding Abraham is in Romans 4:10:

"How then was it credited? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised."

Paul is showing that Abraham was justified by his faith after which God sealed it with a covenant sign (circumcision) which is equivalent to a Christian's baptism (cf. Col. 2:12-13). Therefore, people in the Old Testament were saved by faith just like people today.

[Source: <https://carm.org/how-did-people-get-saved-old-testamentsalvation-old-testament>]

How Were Gentiles Saved in the Old Testament?

Ephesians 3:12,13 states... *"That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were **far off** are made nigh by the blood of Christ."* No matter how alienated or "far off" a person (or nation) may be, *"the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men"* (Titus 2:11).

Gentiles in the Old Testament were saved by placing their faith in Jesus Christ, i.e., the coming Messiah. Anybody who sought the Lord sincerely, following what light he or she had, God was obligated to get the truth of the Gospel to them. Man's duty is to obey the Truth of God's Word; God's duty is to get His Truth to those who desire it. No one ever went to Hell who didn't choose to go there. If a person chooses to reject Jesus Christ as their sin offering, i.e., their Savior, then they will die in their sins and go to Hellfire.

Although the death of Christ did break down the wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles (as far as ceremonial law is concerned), Acts 10:43 plainly teaches that people in the Old Testament were all saved the same way... *"To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."*

In the Old Testament book of Ruth, we learn that Ruth the Moabitess, and a Gentile, became a Christian. Rahab, Nebuchadnezzar, and Naaman (all Gentiles) also appear to have been saved in the Old Testament.

[See [more Ruth references/resources](#) in this Appendix]

There has always been just ONE plan of salvation... *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."* Salvation has always been, and will always be, by grace through faith in the blood sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ (1st Peter 1:18,19). Romans 4:5 proclaims... *"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."* We read that Abraham was saved just this way in Genesis 15:6... **"And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness."** The only way to be saved is to come to Jesus Christ as a guilty sinner, and to depend on Him to forgive one's sins. Again, Acts 10:43 plainly teaches that people in the Old Testament were all saved the same way...

"To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."

[Source: http://www.jesus-is-savior.com/Believer%27s%20Corner/Doctrines/ot_salvation.htm]

How Were People Saved Before Christ? (2013)

[Recommended]

<http://coldcasechristianity.com/2013/how-were-old-testament-saints-saved/>

The “exclusivity” of Christianity is a stumbling block for many skeptics. How can Jesus be the only way to heaven? A claim such as this seems arrogant and intolerant in the pluralistic world in which we live. How can Christians believe millions of devout people from other religious traditions will be condemned just because they don’t know Jesus? Several years ago I received an email from a podcast listener who told me he believed all “good” people would eventually be “saved” just like the Old Testament saints. After all, the Bible acknowledges the salvation of devout Old Testament believers even though they lived and died long before Jesus walked on earth. If Old Testament saints can go to heaven without knowing or trusting Jesus, why can’t people today get to heaven by simply obeying the Ten Commandments?



If only that were the case. Unfortunately, the Old Testament saints were just as incapable of following the Ten Commandments as we are today. God provided them with the Law and recognized they would constantly break it. For this reason, He also provided them with an elaborate sacrificial system (to remind them of their shortcomings and the penalty for their continuing sin) and the promise of a Savior. Like us, the Old Testament saints were not saved by their adherence to the Law. They were saved by the grace of God through their faith in the Savior, even though this Savior was only a promise at the time.

They Knew About Grace

These early believers listened closely to the words of God as they were revealed by the prophets and the Scripture. As a result, they understood the nature of grace. David, for example, wrote about God’s forgiveness and grace (Psalm 32:1-5) and Paul later told us that David understood that “God reckons righteousness apart from works” (Romans 4:6-8). All the Old Testament heroes of faith recognized their good works could not save them (read Hebrews 11:13). Even Isaiah knew his “goodness” wasn’t “good enough” (Isaiah 64:6) and that animal sacrifices weren’t going to ultimately please a Holy and perfect God (Psalm 40:6).

They Knew a Messiah was Coming

With the limited knowledge of God given to them at the time, the Old Testament saints understood God would have to do something dramatic to save them. They placed their faith in the coming Savior who was described from the earliest of times. God told Adam and Eve one of their descendants would eventually defeat Satan (Genesis 3:15), and Abraham understood God would provide a sacrifice for sin, just as God provided the substitutionary sacrifice to replace Isaac (Genesis 22:8, Romans 4:3 John 8:56). Job had a similar expectation and hope for a Redeemer (Job 19:25-26), and Moses also expected and believed in the coming Messiah and the reward of Salvation (Hebrews 11:26, John 5:46). Many other Old Testament prophets and wise men spoke about the coming Savior. Enoch, for example, even talked about the second coming of the Messiah (Jude 14)! Old Testament prophets clearly described where the Messiah would be born (Micah 5:2), how He would be betrayed (Zechariah 11:12), how He would die (Isaiah 53:5), and how He would be resurrected (Psalm 16:10, Isaiah 26:19).

Old Testament saints understood their *imperfect works* would not unite them to a *perfect God*. They looked forward to the work of a flawless Messiah who would be “pierced through for our transgressions”, “crushed for our iniquities” and chastened “for our well-being” so that “by His scourging we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5). Those who understood and accepted the truth about grace and the coming Messiah were saved on the basis of their faith. The Savior has now appeared and His name is Jesus. We have today what the Old Testament saints only anticipated. Jesus is, as He always was, the Messiah and the only way to the Father.

J. Warner Wallace is a [Cold-Case Detective](#), a [Christian Case Maker](#), and the author of [Cold-Case Christianity](#)

Lordship Salvation

What is Lordship Salvation?

<https://www.gotquestions.org/lordship-salvation.html>

The Foolish Doctrine of Lordship Salvation

<http://jesus-is-savior.com/False%20Doctrines/Lordship%20Salvation/foolish.htm>

Excerpt:

REASONS WHY LORDSHIP SALVATION IS FOOLISH:

1. **Because the Word of God clearly teaches that a person is saved by FAITH ALONE in Christ.** This is evidenced by Romans 4:5; Ephesians 2:8,9; Titus 3:5 and hundreds of other Scriptures. Romans 4:5 states... *"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, **his faith is counted for righteousness**."* The Bible couldn't possibly be any clearer on this matter. Salvation is through faith in Christ's righteousness alone (Romans 4:5-6). This has nothing to do with Christian living. James 2:18 speaks of the FRUIT of a man's faith, which should be evident in every believer's life; BUT, that is completely separate from the ROOT of a man's faith, which is by faith alone in Christ. Lordship Salvationists confuse the two, tragically to their own damnation.
2. **Because Lordship Salvation doesn't allow for backsliding.** Lordship Salvationists DON'T allow for a Christian to backslide. As far as they're concerning, a backslidden believer is no believer at all. This is adamantly refuted in the Word of God by numerous references, to heroes of the faith who backslide into horrible sin (such as king David who committed adultery and murder). The foolish doctrine of *Lordship Salvation* leaves absolutely no allowance for a believer to backslide. Like it or not, there is an ongoing raging battle in EVERY believer between the sinful flesh and the Spirit of God (Romans 7:22,23; James 4:1). Even the Apostle Paul said in Romans 7:19, *"For the good that I would I do not: **but the evil which I would not, that I do.**"* Now why would the Apostle Paul DO EVIL if Jesus were his Lord and Master? Hmmm? This Scripture alone proves the willing ignorance and hypocrisy of the proponents of the *Lordship Salvation* heresy. Even the best of Christians, such as the Apostle Paul, commit sin.
3. **Because Jesus Christ is already the Lord and Master of every saved person.** When you place your faith in Jesus Christ as your Savior, He immediately becomes your Lord and Master. Now whether you acknowledge Him as such in your daily life is up to you. But you don't make Jesus Lord; He is Lord! Proponents of *Lordship Salvation* pervert the meaning of "Lord" in the New Testament to mean "surrender in obedience." However, the Greek word for "Lord" when referring to Christ is always *KURIOS*, meaning, "Supreme in Authority." We read in John 13:14, *"If I then, your **Lord and Master**, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet."* The word "Master" here is the Greek *didaskalos* and simply means, "Teacher." Jesus never asked us to recognize Him as our teacher to be saved. The heresy of *Lordship Salvation* is rooted in a corrupted understanding of Biblical terms, specifically the meaning of the Words: *repent, Lord, and Master*. Look up the Biblical Greek meaning of these words and the foolishness of *Lordship Salvation* crumbles away. Every believer recognizes Jesus Christ as the One who is Supreme in Authority, i.e., God Almighty. This is a quite different meaning than the nonsense which Lordship Salvationists teach.

Just because a believer backslides doesn't mean that they've not acknowledged Christ as their Lord and Master, i.e., God and Teacher. What it DOES mean is that they don't love Jesus like they should (John 14:15). We read in Revelation 2:1-4 the message concerning the church of Ephesus. We read in Verse 4, *"Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love."* The believers at Ephesus had backslid, and wandered away from the Lord; but they were still saved. This is why every church needs to have revivals from time to time. Whether a believer lives for Christ in obedience, or backslides into sin, is irrelevant to the FACT the Christ

is still the Lord and Master of every saved person. Christians who choose to live in unrepentant sin will be judged by God (Romans 12:19). 1st Thessalonians 4:6 is also clear evidence of this...

"That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified." Lordship Salvationists need to let God do His job.

4. **Because Lordship Salvation eliminates growth in grace.** 1st Peter 2:2 states, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." A new convert is a babe in Christ. They need the MILK of God's Word if they are to grow strong in the Lord. The Apostle Paul states in 1st Corinthians 3:1, "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ." Carefully read through 1st Corinthians and you'll be surprised just HOW BAD these believers were. They were suing each other (6:6). They were coming to the Lord's Supper drunk (11:21). They were divided amongst each other in quarrels (1:12). Fornication was openly allowed in the church (5:1). They even ate meats offered to idols (8:4). According to the *Lordship Salvation* crowd, there's no way these rascals could be saved; but the Apostle Paul called them *BABES IN CHRIST*.

"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." —Romans 4:5

What is Lordship salvation and is it biblical?

<https://carm.org/what-is-lordship-salvation-and-is-it-biblical>

Bottom-line answer according to this article: NO.

Excerpt:

The position of CARM is that regeneration precedes faith the way electricity precedes light in a light bulb. The order is logical--not temporal. Electricity must be present for light to occur in a lightbulb, but it's not true that light must be present in order for electricity to occur. We would say that whenever electricity is present in a lightbulb, the automatic and natural result is light. The electricity is "logically" prior to the light--not temporally prior. In other words, it is logically necessary that electricity precedes the light; and when electricity is present, light is also present.

With this analogy, I think it is easier to understand that it is God who regenerates us ([2 Corinthians 5:17](#); [1 Peter 1:3](#); [John 1:13](#)), and that the necessary result of his regenerative work in us is our faith and repentance. God grants that we believe ([Philippians 1:29](#)) and grants that we repent ([2 Timothy 2:25](#)). Therefore, our position is that repentance is a necessary result of God's work in us (yet it's also something that we do). The issue of Lordship salvation incorrectly addresses the order of salvation by implying that faith leads to regeneration, which leads to repentance. I believe this mistakenly puts the focus on man's ability instead of God's work, and this is where the error of Lordship salvation arises. The truth is that we are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. Repentance from sin is the result of salvation--not a contributing factor to it.

If it is God who grants us repentance ([2 Timothy 2:25](#)) and faith ([Philippians 1:29](#)), then there is no room for the Lordship salvation controversy. Instead, we understand that the Lordship of Christ and our repentance are both the natural result of the work of God--not the work of our faith and repentance.

Wikipedia: Lordship Salvation Controversy

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lordship_salvation_controversy

Understanding the Lordship Salvation Controversy

<http://www.equip.org/article/understanding-the-lordship-salvation-controversy/>

Lordship Salvation: Is it Biblical?

<http://www.dtl.org/salvation/article/guest/lordship-1.htm>

Bottom-line answer according to this article: NO.

Letter to a Friend Concerning the So-Called "Lordship Salvation" (John Piper)

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/letter-to-a-friend-concerning-the-so-called-lordship-salvation>

Lordship Salvation

<https://www.christiantruth.com/articles/lordshipsalvation.html>

An Introduction to Lordship Salvation (John MacArthur)

<https://www.gty.org/library/Articles/A114/An-Introduction-to-Lordship-Salvation>

A 15-Year Retrospective on the Lordship Controversy (John MacArthur)

<https://www.gty.org/library/articles/A100/a-15year-retrospective-on-the-lordship-controversy>

A Gospel of Doubt – Promotion Video for Book by Dr. Bob Wilkin (2016)

<https://www.facebook.com/GraceEvangelical/videos/10154955788814474/>

In, "A Gospel of Doubt," Dr. Bob Wilkin gives a chapter by chapter response to Dr. John MacArthur's "The Gospel According to Jesus". In this video, Dr. Wilkin summarizes the second chapter.

Lordship Salvation for Dummies (Bob Wilkin)

<https://faithalone.org/magazine/y2006/06so1.html>

Excerpt:

...

Two Types of Lordship Salvation: RA

You can remember the two types with the letters RA, which stands for the element Radium, or for the disease many have, Rheumatoid Arthritis. But in this case it stands for **Reformed and Arminian**. The type of Lordship Salvation most people are most familiar with is found in the writings of men like John MacArthur, John Piper, and R. C. Sproul. I call this **Reformed** Lordship Salvation. It is *Reformed* because these men believe the five points of Calvinism which grew out of the Reformation. COP for the Reformed person means this: No one is absolutely sure that he has been chosen by God or that Christ died for him. The only way to be sure you are born again is to persevere until death. Therefore, according to Reformed Lordship Salvation, if at the moment of death you are not persevering, you haven't *lost* everlasting life, for that is impossible. Rather, you have simply *proved* what you thought was the new birth was actually a Satanic deception.

The second type of Lordship Salvation is **Arminian**. Arminius was a follower of Calvin who thought the system needed to be modified to include free will. So for him, if a person failed to persevere in faith and good works, then he would *lose* eternal life. Since it was a choice of the free will to receive eternal life from God, it could also be a choice of the free will (through rebellion or sin) to give it back. COP for the Arminian Lordship Salvation person says that if at the moment of death you are not persevering in faith and good works, then you will go to hell because you lost everlasting life at some point along the way. While that may sound like a big difference from Reformed Lordship Salvation, it really isn't. Whether you *lose* everlasting life or *prove* you never had it by failing to persevere, you end up in the lake of fire. The end result of both forms is the same. Commitment, obedience, and perseverance (COP) are required in both systems for a person to ultimately receive everlasting life.

...

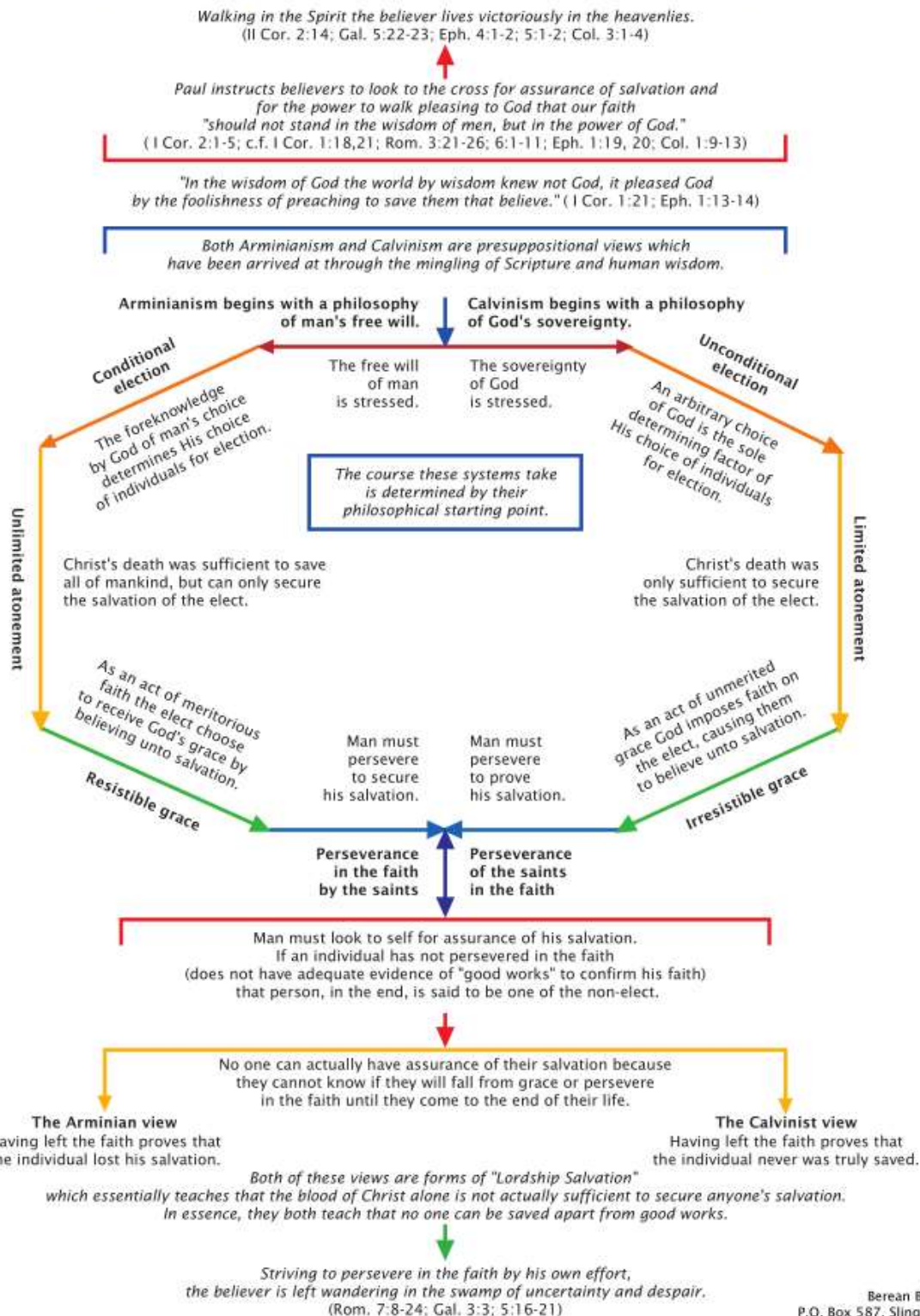
Lordship Salvation is very popular today. I would estimate that 95% of all churches, denominations, seminary and Bible college professors believe in either Reformed or Arminian Lordship Salvation. But popularity must not be confused with correctness. The Lord Himself made it clear that the way is narrow that leads to life. While many assume He was speaking of non-Christian religions, there is no reason to conclude that. Careful examination shows that most "Christians" do not believe that the one who simply believes in Jesus has irrevocable everlasting life. The next time you see a law enforcement officer, think COP: Commitment, Obedience, Perseverance. That is what Lordship Salvation is all about. Lordship Salvation is about eternal salvation by law keeping. When you hear a leading Reformed theologian speak of our "Arminian brethren," don't be surprised. Armenians and Calvinists are united in their belief in COP. Only committed and obedient believers who persevere to the end will make it into the kingdom. But that message is not good news. Here's good news: "He who believes in Me has everlasting life" (John 6:47).

LORDSHIP SALVATION	SCRIPTURAL SALVATION	verse references (KJB)
Make Jesus YOUR Lord	Believe Jesus is THE Lord	Acts 16:31, Romans 10:9
Ask Jesus into your LIFE	Ask Jesus into your HEART	John 14:20, Acts 15:9, Romans 8:9-10, 1 Corinthians 14:25, Ephesians 3:17, Colossians 1:27
Surrender your LIFE to Christ	Surrender your SOUL to Christ	John 10:28, Ephesians 1:12-13, 1 Peter 1:5
Forsake your sins	Seek forgiveness for sins	Ephesians 1:7 with 2:8 with Romans 10:8-13
"Clean up my LIFE"	"Clean my SOUL"	Revelation 1:5
Promise to change	Believe <i>Jesus'</i> promises	John 5:24, 10:28
Submit	Believe	John 3:16
Reform	Receive	John 1:12

Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4biJSZj_RNw

Lordship Salvation: A Comparison of Calvinist and Arminian Views of Election

A Comparison of Calvinist and Arminian Views of Election



Source: <https://kettlemorainebiblechurch.weebly.com/charts.html>

The Psychological Effects of Lordship Salvation (Frank B. Minirth)

<https://faithalone.org/journal/1993ii/J11-93c.htm>

Excerpt:

The theme of the whole Bible is grace, and I urge all believers to “stand in grace” for their mental and spiritual health. Knowing that we are unconditionally loved and assured in our salvation, we can be delivered from the rat-race so many Christians are running today (Eccl 1:14; 4:4; Ps 39:4-5).

The Lord Jesus said: “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32). It is wise men and women, indeed, who seek the truth about grace. And it is these believers who can *live* by grace (Rom 6:14) so that all the glory will go to God. God has done so much *for* us and desires to do much more *through* us!

“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen” (Rom 16:24).

Lordship Salvation for Dummies

<https://faithalone.org/magazine/y2006/06so1.html>

Excerpt:

There are lots of books *for Dummies* today. I've chosen to call this article *Lordship Salvation for Dummies* not because I question your intelligence, but because I want to lighten up the discussion of what could otherwise become a very heavy subject. While Lordship Salvation is complicated, its basic tenets are quite simple. Often when I speak on this I give loads of quotes from Lordship authors to show I'm not making this stuff up. In this article I don't do that because I can't keep it simple if I give you 20 or 30 quotes. However, there are plenty of quotes on our website backing up what I write here.

The Basic Definition: COP

There are three key words that define Lordship Salvation. They are captured in the word **COP**.

1. C = Commitment

All who believe in Lordship Salvation agree that mere belief of certain facts or propositions about Jesus is not enough to save anyone. Lordship Salvation says that one must not only believe in Jesus as the Savior, but one must yield one's life to Him as Lord of your life. According to Lordship Salvation, a person can believe in Jesus for everlasting life and not be saved because that faith must be joined by a commitment to serve Him one's entire life. *The first word to remember is commitment.*

2. O = Obedience

Lordship Salvation is not only concerned with a person's commitment to Christ at the start of the Christian life. Initial commitment to Christ must be followed by ongoing obedience. According to Lordship Salvation, one's initial commitment to serve Christ must be followed by a life of obedience. There is no salvation apart from obedience according to Lordship Salvation, because obedience proves that one is truly saved. Often it is said this way, “We are saved by faith alone, but the faith that saves is never alone.” Commitment is always wedded to obedience. *The second word to remember is obedience.*

3. P = Perseverance

Lordship Salvation believes that commitment must result in obedience that in turn perseveres to the end of life. A person who commits (C) his life to Christ, and obeys (O) Him for decades, yet who stops serving and obeying Him at the end of life and who dies as an immoral person or an alcoholic or a drug addict or

any other type of sinner will not make it into the kingdom. According to Lordship Salvation, no matter how long you have been committed to and have obeyed Christ, you can never assume you are secure, for that is when you are most likely to let down your guard, fall away, and end up in hell. *The third word to remember is perseverance.* So, putting it all together, you can remember the three key elements of Lordship Salvation with the word COP: Commitment + Obedience + Perseverance = Everlasting Life.

Two Types of Lordship Salvation: RA

You can remember the two types with the letters RA, which stands for the element Radium, or for the disease many have, Rheumatoid Arthritis. But in this case it stands for **Reformed and Arminian**. The type of Lordship Salvation most people are most familiar with is found in the writings of men like John MacArthur, John Piper, and R. C. Sproul. I call this **Reformed** Lordship Salvation. It is *Reformed* because these men believe the five points of Calvinism which grew out of the Reformation. COP for the Reformed person means this: No one is absolutely sure that he has been chosen by God or that Christ died for him. The only way to be sure you are born again is to persevere until death. Therefore, according to Reformed Lordship Salvation, if at the moment of death you are not persevering, you haven't *lost* everlasting life, for that is impossible. Rather, you have simply *proved* what you thought was the new birth was actually a Satanic deception.

The second type of Lordship Salvation is **Arminian**. Arminius was a follower of Calvin who thought the system needed to be modified to include free will. So for him, if a person failed to persevere in faith and good works, then he would *lose* eternal life. Since it was a choice of the free will to receive eternal life from God, it could also be a choice of the free will (through rebellion or sin) to give it back. COP for the Arminian Lordship Salvation person says that if at the moment of death you are not persevering in faith and good works, then you will go to hell because you lost everlasting life at some point along the way. While that may sound like a big difference from Reformed Lordship Salvation, it really isn't. Whether you *lose* everlasting life or *prove* you never had it by failing to persevere, you end up in the lake of fire. The end result of both forms is the same. Commitment, obedience, and perseverance (COP) are required in both systems for a person to ultimately receive everlasting life.

"Assurance" According to Lordship Salvation

According to Lordship Salvation "assurance" is a degree of confidence that I am likely to persevere. For both Reformed and Arminian brands of Lordship Salvation, perseverance is the key. Thus the question is, how confident am I that I will hang in there? And since nobody can know for sure what will happen to them in the future, assurance of salvation is never certainty. Several years ago, I had a conversation in Miami with a Reformed Lordship Salvation pastor and seminary professor who admitted he wasn't sure if he would persevere and that therefore he wasn't sure he was born again or that he would escape hell. He said, "I might fail to persevere, and if so, I'd end up in hell."

For one believing in Lordship Salvation "assurance" may fluctuate from 1% to 99%, but it can only be 100% after you have died. Surely when Lordship Salvation people have arguments with their spouse, when they lose their temper, when they find themselves gossiping, or when they find themselves doing something else they shouldn't do, their assurance goes way down, maybe to 10% or less. For a person who is obsessive-compulsive and perfectionistic, you'd never have over 50% confidence. You'd be mired in despair over the hopelessness of your situation. If anyone reading this holds to Lordship Salvation, I do not wish to offend you. However, I liken this view of assurance, common to both Reformed and Arminian Lordship Salvation, as leading to this type of evangelism: "I don't know where I'm going when I die and if you have ten minutes I can help you not know where you are going when you die." My heart breaks for people caught in this sort of thinking.

Does Lordship Salvation Proclaim the True Gospel?

I've had conversations and debates with many Lordship Salvation people. In all of these we agree on one thing: One of us is proclaiming the true gospel and the other is not. Therefore, Lordship Salvation people will admit that if the Free Grace view of the gospel is correct, then they are not proclaiming the true gospel. Similarly, if the Lordship gospel is correct, then Free Grace theology is not. According to Galatians 1:6-9, we must be very careful to believe and proclaim the correct gospel, for those who do not

are under a curse. This is why gospel-related issues are the most important doctrinal issues in the church today. Every Christian, every pastor, every church must make sure that the gospel they proclaim is the biblical gospel.

As we have seen, both brands of Lordship Salvation teach that works are necessary for a person to escape hell and enter into eternity with God. This is the false gospel that Paul condemns in Galatians. Therefore, the Lordship Salvation gospel is not the true gospel because it doesn't teach that all who simply believe in Jesus have everlasting life that can never be lost. Their gospel is at odds with the message Jesus proclaimed. No person who holds to Lordship Salvation can say that John 3:16, 5:24, or 6:47 contains enough information for a person to be saved, because these verses do not mention commitment, obedience, or perseverance. The insistence on commitment, obedience, and perseverance as conditions for kingdom entrance makes the Lordship Salvation gospel a works salvation gospel.

Let me clarify by making it clear what I'm not saying. First, I am not saying that Lordship Salvation people are necessarily unsaved. What I'm saying is that they don't believe the gospel now. If in the past they believed in Jesus Christ alone for everlasting life, apart from works of any kind, they are born again but confused. For example, by his own testimony, leading Lordship Salvation theologian and preacher, Dr. J. I. Packer said in a *TableTalk* article that he once believed the gospel that Zane Hodges preaches, but he doesn't anymore. Thus he is born again, although he indicates that he no longer believes the Free Grace gospel. Many in Lordship Salvation, however, have never believed that simply by faith in Jesus they themselves are eternally secure. Second, I'm not saying that someone cannot be saved by hearing a Lordship Salvation gospel. What I am saying is that if a person is saved under Lordship Salvation teaching, it is because they reject most of what the Lordship Salvation person told them. Lordship Salvation garbles the gospel and the more it is garbled, the less likely it is that a person can grasp and believe the true gospel.

Lordship Salvation Is Popular But Wrong

Lordship Salvation is very popular today. I would estimate that 95% of all churches, denominations, seminary and Bible college professors believe in either Reformed or Arminian Lordship Salvation. But popularity must not be confused with correctness. The Lord Himself made it clear that the way is narrow that leads to life. While many assume He was speaking of non-Christian religions, there is no reason to conclude that. Careful examination shows that most "Christians" do not believe that the one who simply believes in Jesus has irrevocable everlasting life. The next time you see a law enforcement officer, think COP: Commitment, Obedience, Perseverance. That is what Lordship Salvation is all about. Lordship Salvation is about eternal salvation by law keeping. When you hear a leading Reformed theologian speak of our "Arminian brethren," don't be surprised. Arminians and Calvinists are united in their belief in COP. Only committed and obedient believers who persevere to the end will make it into the kingdom. But that message is not good news. Here's good news: "He who believes in Me has everlasting life" (John 6:47).

Lordship Salvation – What's the Discussion About?

<https://www.allaboutjesuschrist.org/lordship-salvation-faq.htm>

Excerpt:

he theology of Lordship Salvation stresses that submitting to Jesus as "Lord of your life" goes hand-in-hand with trusting in Christ at salvation. A changed life should result. Those who profess to Lordship Salvation would doubt an individual who claims to be saved, but his or her life has not changed.

The Bible teaches that faith in Jesus Christ will result in a person's life being changed (see [2 Corinthians 5:17](#); [Galatians 5:22-23](#); [James 2:14-26](#)). However, it is also important to consider the person's circumstances, because sometimes spiritual growth takes place fairly quickly, while other times, the growth takes longer to develop. The Bible is clear that a person is saved by faith alone, apart from works ([John 3:16](#); [Ephesians 2:8-9](#)). However, the Bible also speaks of a changed life ([Ephesians 2:10](#)).

So, how can we reconcile these concepts? Consider these points:

- Faith in Jesus Christ produces change in one's life ([2 Corinthians 5:17](#)).
- A child of God does not want to continue in a life of sin ([Romans 6:2](#)).
- Submission to the Lordship of Jesus Christ is an issue of spiritual growth and maturity, not salvation ([2 Peter 1:5-8](#)).
- In order to have salvation, one does not have to submit to God in every area of life. Salvation consists of recognizing that he or she is a sinner, in need salvation, and trusting in Jesus for salvation ([John 3:16](#); [Ephesians 2:8-9](#)).
- Christians are called to submit to Him ([James 4:7](#)).

So, what is the conclusion? Changing one's life and submitting to Christ's lordship come as the result of salvation, but are not a requirement for salvation.

WHAT DO YOU THINK? - We have all [sinned](#) and deserve God's judgment. [God](#), the Father, sent His only Son to satisfy that judgment for those who believe in Him. [Jesus](#), the creator and eternal Son of God, who lived a sinless life, loves us so much that He [died](#) for our sins, taking the punishment that we deserve, was [buried](#), and [rose from the dead](#) according to the [Bible](#). If you truly believe and trust this in your heart, receiving Jesus alone as your [Savior](#), declaring, "[Jesus is Lord](#)," you will be saved from [judgment](#) and spend eternity with God in heaven.

What is Lordship Salvation? [Recommended]

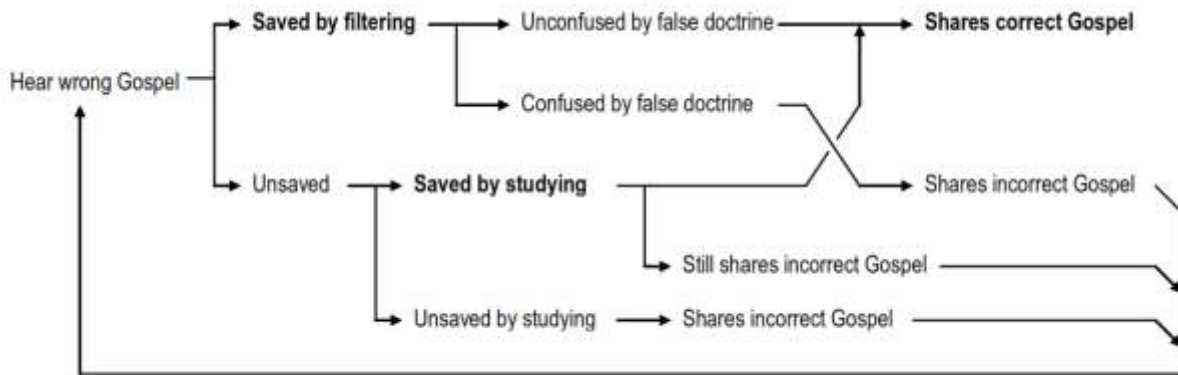
<http://once-lost.com/what-is-lordship-salvation/>

Lordship Salvation

<http://www.workmanmin.com/Studies/LordshipSalvation.pdf> [PDF]

Excerpt:

You may ask why, then, do these otherwise fine organizations promote a false Gospel? They do it because it seems to work. God doesn't require you to be an expert at the Gospel message to lead a person to Christ. Each of these organizations presents a Gospel that includes all of the essential elements (even if they then add a little of their own). The Holy Spirit that is working in the person's life to bring them to grips with the Gospel *is* then capable of filtering out the added error we, as imperfect creatures, may add. Even so, that is a poor justification for tempting God.



It is the well-defined infrastructure that many of these organizations share in common that allow them to enjoy such great success. Whether the person believes the real Gospel and filters out the Lordship error, or, believes the error too, they are quickly introduced to a discipleship program to acquaint them with God's Word. Those that were truly saved begin to grow immediately and simply fail to recognize the subtle distinction between salvation and discipleship. They share the Gospel as they heard it and sometimes see the same results. For those that also believed the error the introduction to discipleship is the same. These people are sometimes (but not always) saved through the study of scriptures about salvation during discipleship training. Rather than fault the message, they humbly fault their earlier understanding and continue to share the same errors that indirectly lead to their own salvation.

A Return to Rome: Lordship Salvation's Doctrine of Faith

<https://faithalone.org/journal/1991b/Hollo.html>

What is Lordship Salvation? (Bob Wilkin) (2012) (Links to Video)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=msWsC0srUas> [Video]

Paul Washer Discusses Lordship Salvation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sX5LlBIWz3U> [Video]

Three Tenses of Salvation

Phase	Justification	Sanctification	Glorification
Tense	Past	Present	Future
Saved from sin's:	Penalty	Power	Presence
Scripture	Eph 2:8-9; Titus 3:5	Philip 2:12	Rom 5:10

Lordship Salvation:

- Changes the gospel
- Places an impossible burden upon the unsaved
- Ignores the reality of a carnal Christian
- Confuses justification with sanctification
- Destroys the assurance of salvation



Temporal Consequences For the Believer Yielding to the Old Nature

Conviction (2 Pet 2:7-8; Ps 32:1-5)

Divine discipline (Heb 12:5-11)

Premature death (Acts 5:1-11; 1 Cor 11:30; 1 John 5:16; Rev 2:23)

Loss of reward (1 Cor 3:15; 9:27; 2 John 8; Rev 3:11)

Loss of fellowship (1 John 1:9)

Excommunication (1 Cor 5:4-5; Matt 18:15-17)

Temporal consequences (Gal 6:7-8)

Unanswered prayer (Ps 66:18; 1 Pet 3:7)

Loss of testimony (Gen 19:14)

Loss of leadership role (1 Tim 3:1-13; 2 Sam 13-20)

Lordship Salvation vs Free Grace

Lordship salvation or free grace, which is right?

<http://www.bible-teaching-about.com/lordship.html>

The So-Called Free Grace vs. Lordship Salvation Debate

<https://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/onsite/lordship.html>

Lordship Salvation vs Free Grace? (Reddit Discussion Forum)

https://www.reddit.com/r/TrueChristian/comments/72mzib/lordship_salvation_vs_free_grace/

What is lordship salvation vs free grace?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ypr3lQv51z0> [Video]

Lordship vs Free Grace Animated Comparison

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1uAdl4EIDAo> [Video]

Calvinism Teaches Works-Salvation – Piper, MacArthur, Sproul, Carson, Grudem

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dDMD5FecWr4> [Video]

Lordship Salvation Errors - Best Looking Heresy Ever! By [Marc Monte](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FkKeUflWrol>

“Lord ship salvation is like telling a drowning man to dry off first before you throw him a life raft.”

Lordship Salvation: A Horse With Wheels

<https://faithalone.org/magazine/y1992/92may2.html>

Excerpt:

In a discussion I had with a seminary professor, the Lordship Salvation debate was characterized as follows: "Lordship Salvation puts the cart [works] before the horse [salvation through faith], but you in the Free Grace movement detach the cart from the horse."

Does Free Grace detach works from salvation and faith as Lordship Salvation accuses? Another way of stating this charge is that Free Grace detaches sanctification (in its progressive aspect) from justification by faith. The question is, is this a legitimate charge, or a floppy straw man?

I think this professor's metaphor is misguided and reflects a misunderstanding of *both* positions...

Putting the Gospel (Lordship Salvation vs Free Grace) Debate in Sharper Focus

<https://faithalone.org/magazine/y1991/91may2.html>

Excerpt:

I have found that many on both sides of the Free Grace/Lordship Salvation debate are unable to delineate clearly the major differences *between* the views. In addition, I have discovered that most are unable to clearly articulate differences *within* each view.

DIFFERENCES *BETWEEN* THE VIEWS

The Free Grace View.

All holding the Free Grace view have four beliefs in common.

First, the sole condition of eternal life is trusting in Christ as one's Savior. None of the following are conditions of eternal life: turning from sins, being willing to turn from sins, committing one's life to Christ, baptism, doing good works, or persevering in the faith.

Second, the promises of God's Word are sufficient for assurance. While one's works can have a confirmatory value, they are not essential for assurance. Any believer can have 100% certainty of his salvation if he but looks to the promises in God's Word to the believer.

One can have firm assurance of salvation and yet walk in sin. Sin, while a grievous thing, does not necessarily weaken assurance. Only if sin results in a person taking his eyes off of God's promises can sin weaken assurance.

Third, the Gospel of John is given great weight in formulating one's view of the Gospel.

Fourth, eternal salvation once gained can never be lost.

The Lordship Salvation View.

All those who believe in Lordship Salvation disagree with the first three Free Grace positions stated above. The following three points are held by all in the Lordship Salvation camp.

First, the condition of eternal life is more than trusting in Christ as one's Savior. One or more of the following are also conditions of eternal life: turning from sins, being willing to turn from sins, committing one's life to Christ, baptism, obedience, and persevering in the faith.

Second, the promises of God's Word, while necessary for assurance, are not sufficient. One must also look to his works. No believer can have 100% assurance of salvation merely by looking to the promises in God's Word to the believer. (Indeed, most, but not all, in the Lordship Salvation camp say that 100% assurance is impossible since no one's works are perfect.)

It is impossible to have firm assurance of salvation and yet walk in sin. Sin necessarily weakens assurance.

Third, care is taken not to give undue weight to the Gospel of John when formulating one's view of the Gospel. The Synoptic Gospels and the NT Epistles are felt to be at least equally as important as the Gospel of John in gaining a proper perspective on the Gospel.

Lordship Salvation advocates are divided on the eternal security issue. Reformed Lordship Salvationists, in agreement, with Free Grace Salvationists, believe in eternal security. However, Arminian Lordship Salvationists do not.

DIFFERENCES *WITHIN* THE VIEWS

Three Free Grace Views

Free Grace #1: Antinomianism

Holds to the four essential Free Grace views. Believes that perseverance is not guaranteed; apostasy is possible for the true believer; and that the believer is not under any set of rules or laws today.

Free Grace #2: Basic Free Grace

Holds to the four essential Free Grace views. Believes that perseverance is not guaranteed (however, many if not most in this view hold that all believers will produce at least some good works sometime somewhere, even though those works may not be evident to others or even themselves); and that apostasy is possible for the true believer. Unlike the above group, the basic Free Grace position holds that believers are under rules and laws today. This group tends to have a strong view of accountability and the believer's future judgment.

Free Grace #3: More Reformed Free Grace

Holds to the four essential Free Grace views. Believes that perseverance is guaranteed (with a strong view of perseverance which excludes the possibility of carnality lasting for a very long time and which asserts that all believers will produce good works which are clearly observable to themselves and others), and that apostasy is not possible for the true believer.

Three Lordship Salvation Views

Lordship Salvation #1: Mild Lordship Salvation, Reformed

Holds to the three essential Lordship Salvation views. Says that only a willingness to turn from sins and a willingness to commit all to the Lord is needed for eternal salvation. Has the same view of perseverance and apostasy as the previous group. Holds to eternal security.

Lordship Salvation #2: Strong Lordship Salvation, Reformed

Holds to the three essential Lordship Salvation views. Says that more than a willingness to turn from sins and a willingness to commit all to the Lord is needed. Major sins must be forsaken and all must be committed to the Lord before salvation can occur. Has the same view of perseverance and apostasy as the previous two groups, with the exception that this group sees failure on the part of the true believer as very rare and very short lived. Holds to eternal security. Does not emphasize the doctrine of rewards and the believer's future judgment.

Lordship Salvation #3: Strong Lordship Salvation, Arminian

Holds to the three essential Lordship Salvation views. Says that more than a willingness to turn from sins and a willingness to commit all to Lord is needed. Major sins must be forsaken and all must be committed to the Lord before salvation can occur. In addition, other conditions of salvation like baptism, confession of sins, and good works are added by various representatives of this group. Those holding this view believe that perseverance is not guaranteed and that salvation is lost if and when one fails to persevere. Apostasy is also viewed as possible for the true believer and again loss of salvation is considered to be the result.

CONCLUSION

While there is a spectrum of beliefs within each camp, the lines between Lordship Salvation and Free Grace Salvation are clearly drawn. I am grieved by the efforts of some today to blur the distinctions. Unity

is a fine thing; but not at the expense of our lifeblood, the Gospel!

Lordship Salvation's Good Intentions Are Not Enough

<https://faithalone.org/magazine/y1991/91oct2.html>

Excerpt:

I came close to calling this article, "Why I Could *Almost* Believe in Lordship Salvation."

What appeals to me about the Lordship Salvation position is that it may often be motivated by good intentions to solve a very real problem in the church.

Lordship Salvation is concerned with the serious problem of too many worldly Christians. Who can argue with Lordship teachers who claim that many who call themselves Christians are weak and worldly? We all agree that many Christians do not live up to what they profess to believe. We all want to see more consistency between lip service and life service.

Behind Lordship Salvation is the stated intention of trying to produce committed Christians. Again, who could argue against that? Like most pastors, I long for deeper commitment for my people. What a luxury it would be to see the people of my flock always living obediently, hungering for the Word, actively witnessing, and sacrificing all for the cause of Christ.

However, in spite of these good intentions, I am not swayed by the Lordship message. I recently completed several years of intense study on the subject which resulted in my writing a doctoral dissertation that evaluates and responds to the Lordship arguments. **I am convinced that we should not question their intentions, only the solution they offer.**

The solution they prescribe for the problem is to present a gospel that gets a commitment to serve Christ "up front" before salvation. But preaching commitment of all of one's life creates more problems than it attempts to solve.

One problem with this approach is that it asks of an unregenerate sinner a very "Christian" decision. Not having experienced God's grace, how can we expect an unsaved person to respond in gratitude, submission, surrender, and commitment? We must preach commitment, but only on the basis of the grace that brings salvation. In Rom 12:1 Paul appeals to *Christians* to surrender their lives on the basis of God's merciful dealings with them in salvation.

Another problem with the commitment gospel is that it detracts from the only proper object of faith, the Lord Jesus Christ and His work on the Cross. Instead of looking to Him to fulfill His promises, those who are taught that commitment is needed will likely look to the amount of their commitment for assurance of salvation. They will live in doubt about whether they have committed themselves enough.

Though they have good intentions, Lordship Salvation teachers have oversimplified the problem of worldly Christians. Some who profess to be Christians have never been saved because the true Gospel was never made clear to them and thus they have never believed it. Others who truly are believers nonetheless struggle with tenacious sins and powerful worldly temptations. Still others while truly saved have yet "to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Pet 3:18) through their study of the Scriptures...

The Free Grace Gospel – Clarifying the Issues

http://4himnet.com/bnyberg/The_Free_Grace_Gospel-Clarifying_the_Issues-Nyberg.pdf [PDF]

Excerpt:

A ... distraction has occurred between those who advocate “lordship salvation” and those who advocate a “free grace gospel.” Those advocating “lordship salvation” often refer to the other side as “the no lordship” proponents. They prefer to characterize the “free grace” position as those who deny the Lordship of Christ. Unfortunately, this terminology only muddies the waters, rather than clarifying the real issues in the debate. Years ago, Lance Latham clearly defined the “free grace” position when he stated:

Surely, we must recognize WHO HE IS, or we will die in our sins (John 8:24). But this is vastly different from making Him your Lord in your life, in other words, promising to obey the rest of your life. This latter is preaching “works.” His mercies, with all His graciousness to us, WILL LEAD us to making Him Lord, and that out of a heart of love and appreciation of Him.

We feel that those who propose this way of salvation change the obvious meaning of Romans 10:9 to justify this:

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

This CANNOT be made to say, “make Him Lord of your life.”

Lance continues:

Believing on Christ is distinctly not “turning the direction of your life over to Him.” *It is looking in faith to our Saviour crucified for our sins on Calvary!* It is not of works, devotion or full surrender. It is His work and His death that avails.”

GES’ Bob Wilkin: A Heretic’s Vagaries and Intrigue [Needs more vetting]

<http://www.biblestudy.net/2007/08/02/ges-bob-wilkin-a-heretics-vagueries-and-intrigue/>

NOTE: Not sure about the validity of above article, but liked the summary of the Gospel:

But the first, and most well-known and understood meaning of “gospel” is the good news concerning Jesus Christ is that God became a man, died on the cross as our Substitute, and was later declared to be the Son of God with power by His resurrection out from the dead.

A Critique of *The Gospel According to Jesus* (J. Kevin Butcher)

<http://faithalone.org/journal/1989i/Butcher.html>

The 'Cross-less' Gospel By Dr. Max D. Younce

http://soulwinning.info/fd/crossless_gospel.htm

Beware of the “Crossless” Gospel

<https://standforthefait.com/2015/12/06/beware-of-the-crossless-gospel/>

<https://indefenseofthegospel.blogspot.com/2007/09/bob-wilkin-alleged-response-to.html>

A Gospel of Doubt Chapter Summaries

<https://faithalone.org/video/a-gospel-of-doubt/>

Dr. Bob Wilkin gives a chapter by chapter response to Dr. John MacArthur's "*The Gospel According to Jesus*".

Grace Evangelical Society (GES) Controversy (1990 thru 2009)

<http://www.gbsonlinelibrary.com/ges-gospel-controversy/>



The GES Gospel: (a/k/a) Crossless Gospel, Promise-only Gospel [Note: Many missing links]

The Gospel of the Christ by Thomas L. Stegall

<http://tottministries.org/the-gospel-of-the-christ-by-thomas-l-stegall/>

Bob Wilkin on Repentance (A Critique)

<http://www.bereaninternetministry.org/Papers/Bob%20Wilkin%20and%20Repentance.docx>

The Resurrection and The Gospel in John

<https://cmmorrison.files.wordpress.com/2011/12/resurrection-in-john-reformatted.pdf>

Wayne Grudem's "Free Grace" Theology: 5 Ways It Diminishes the Gospel [Review]

<http://www.gracelife.org/resources/bookreviews/?id=1>

Zane Hodges and Theological Legalism by [Bob Nyberg](#)

http://www.4himnet.com/bnyberg/Zane_Hodges_and_Theological_Legalism.pdf [PDF]

Repentance vs Faith by [Bob Nyberg](#)

http://www.4himnet.com/bnyberg/Zane_Hodges_and_Theological_Legalism.pdf [PDF]

The Free Grace Gospel – Clarifying the Issues by [Bob Nyberg](#)

http://www.4himnet.com/bnyberg/The_Free_Grace_Gospel-Clarifying_the_Issues-Nyberg.pdf [PDF]

Excerpt:

Sally and Jane are on opposite sides of the abortion debate. Sally is “pro-choice,” whereas Jane is “pro-life.” As they discuss their views, Jane says that the term “pro-choice” is really misleading and should rightfully be called “pro-abortion.” Sally protests that the term “pro-abortion” mischaracterizes her position. The term “pro-abortion” implies that she advocates all pregnant women should have an abortion. Sally insists that the term “pro-abortion” misrepresents her true belief, which is that women should have a choice regarding their own bodies. Sally and Jane continue to argue about terminology, when the real issue is the fact that millions of babies die in the womb each year. Whether to use the terms “pro-choice” or “pro-abortion” is really secondary and distracts from the real issue.

A similar distraction has occurred between those who advocate “lordship salvation” and those who advocate a “free grace gospel.” Those advocating “lordship salvation” often refer to the other side as “the no lordship” proponents. They prefer to characterize the “free grace” position as those who deny the Lordship of Christ. Unfortunately, this terminology only muddies the waters, rather than clarifying the real issues in the debate. Years ago, Lance Latham clearly defined the “free grace” position when he stated:

Surely we must recognize WHO HE IS, or we will die in our sins (John 8:24). But this is vastly different from making Him your Lord in your life, in other words, promising to obey the rest of your life. This latter is preaching “works.” His mercies, with all His graciousness to us, WILL LEAD us to making Him Lord, and that out of a heart of love and appreciation of Him.

We feel that those who propose this way of salvation change the obvious meaning of Romans 10:9 to justify this:.

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

This CANNOT be made to say, “make Him Lord of your life.” 1

Lance continues:

Believing on Christ is distinctly not “turning the direction of your life over to Him.” It is looking in faith to our Saviour crucified for our sins on Calvary! It is not of works, devotion or full surrender. It is His work and His death that avails.” 2

As Lance explains, the real issue has nothing to do with the Deity or Lordship of Christ. To characterize the “free grace” position as “no lordship” is simply a diversion from the real issues.

In recent years, an “in house” debate has developed among those advocating the “free grace” position. But lately, the real issues have been clouded because of terminology.

The Free Grace Fracture by [Bob Nyberg](#)

http://www.4himnet.com/bnyberg/The_Free_Grace_Fracture-Nyberg.pdf [PDF]

"Easy Believism" - A Misnomer

<https://faithalone.org/magazine/y2006/06so2.html>

Excerpt:

Misnomer: 1. Unsuitable name—a wrong or unsuitable name or term for something or somebody. 2. Calling something by a wrong name—a use of a wrong or unsuitable name or term to describe something or somebody.

Generally when the suffix *-ism* is placed behind a word, it describes a movement, doctrine, or system of belief. Sometimes it is meant to allude to cult beliefs (i.e., Mormonism, etc.). Obviously, the usual reason for calling the pure gospel of grace (faith alone in Christ alone for eternal life) *easy believism* is to insinuate that those who adhere to it are cultlike, and have come up with a new, aberrant gospel. So is what some consider *easy believism* a new view of the gospel? Is it a deviation from the real gospel? Or is it indeed the good news that sinners may have - and thus be guaranteed - eternal life by simple (simple, not easy) faith in Jesus Christ? ...

If It's Free, Why Would Anyone Need to Strive to Enter?

<https://faithalone.org/magazine/y1991/91nov3.html>

Hard Believism?

<https://faithalone.org/blog/hard-believism/>

Excerpt:

I was recently sent this article, "[Easy Like Friday Afternoon: A Manifesto on Hard-Believism](#)" by Jared C. Wilson. He rejects "easy believism" for "hard believism."

What self-professing "easy-believers" think is that they are upholding the free gift of grace by insisting one can believe without actually changing, that one can have the benefits of Christ's salvation without actually worshiping him as Lord, and some will charge the "hard-believers" with being scandalized by grace.

I am a self-professed easy-believer (although I prefer the term Free Grace), so let me offer some responses to the claims he makes in the article.

JGES: The New Puritanism – Zane C. Hodges

Part 1: D.A. Carson on Christian Assurance

<https://faithalone.org/journal/1993i/Hodges.htm>

Part2: Michael S. Horton: Holy War with Unholy Weapons

<https://faithalone.org/journal/1993ii/J11-93b.htm>

Part3: Michael S. Horton: Holy War with Unholy Weapons (continued)

<https://faithalone.org/journal/1994i/Hodges.html>

Cheap Grace or Cheap Law?

<https://faithalone.org/magazine/y2013/sep-oct/Cheap%20Grace%20or%20Cheap%20Law.pdf> [PDF]

Repentance is for All Men

<https://faithalone.org/journal/1998i/Anderson.html>

Excerpt:

In his book *I Call It Heresy!* A. W. Tozer makes his position of [Lordship salvation](#) clear when he says, "...true obedience is one of the toughest requirements of the Christian life. Apart from obedience, there can be no salvation, for salvation without obedience is a self-contradictory impossibility...we need to preach again...a Christ who will either be Lord of all or he will not be Lord at all!"¹ In the same chapter he reveals his understanding of the [repentance](#) in the Luke 15 parable of the "Prodigal Son" when he writes:

...the first thing the returning sinner does is to confess: "Father, I have sinned against heaven and in Thy sight, and I am no more worthy to be called Thy son. Make me as one of Thy hired servants."

Thus, in repentance, "we...fully submit to the Word of God and the will of God, as obedient children...and if we do not give Him that obedience, I have reason to wonder if we are really converted!"²

Tozer is not alone in his convictions concerning repentance and its role in salvation.³ In John MacArthur's classic "line in the sand" development of the salvation message in *The Gospel According to Jesus*, he states in no uncertain terms:

"From His first message to His last, the Savior's theme was calling sinners to repentance-and this meant not only that they gained a new perspective on who He was, but also that they turned from sin and self to follow Him."⁴

Another who sees repentance as an essential part of the salvation process is D. L. Bock, who says that "repentance...is an appropriate summary for the offer of the gospel today."⁵ He comes to this conclusion largely from Jesus' use of the term in Luke 24:47, which is Luke's version of the Great Commission.

Clearly these men understand repentance to be a requirement for justification. In other words, in their discussions, repentance is for unbelievers. But others think repentance is for believers. John Calvin wrote: "Now it ought to be a fact beyond controversy that repentance not only constantly follows faith but is also born of faith."⁶ And C. H. Spurgeon said, "All the fruits meet for repentance are contained in faith itself. You shall never find that a man who trusts Christ remains an enemy to God, or a lover of sin."⁷

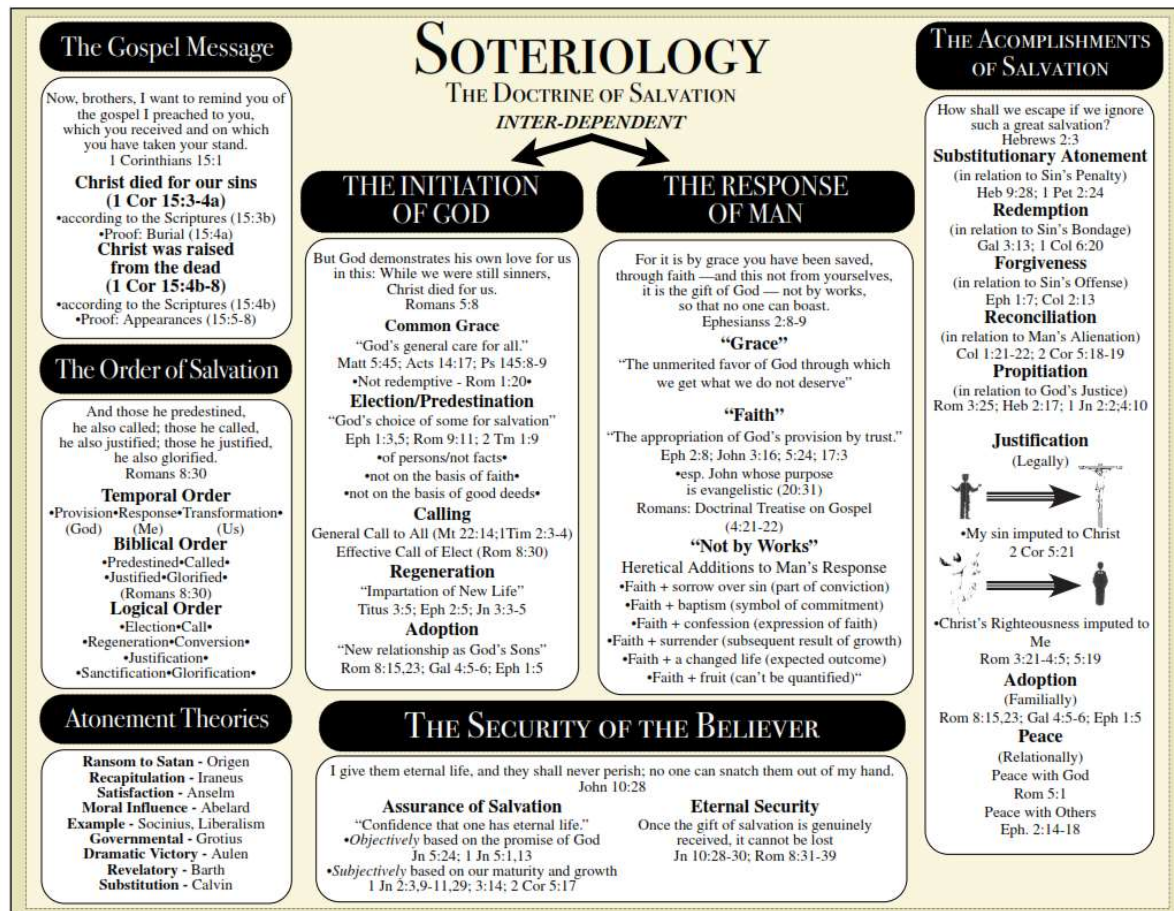
And so it is fair to say that some Christian teachers believe that repentance is for unbelievers, while others think repentance is for believers. Which view is correct?⁸ Both are right. In other words, repentance is for all men, unbelievers and believers alike. However, we will try to demonstrate that repentance is not a prior condition for unbelievers to come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. The procedure for this study will be to review in more detail the positions taken on repentance throughout church history while categorizing those who thought repentance was for unbelievers and those who thought it was for believers. Then from scriptural examples we will try to show that repentance is for all men...

See also: [Faith](#)

[Repentance](#)

[Baptism](#)

Some perspectives on the Doctrine of Salvation (Soteriology)



<http://www.fellowshipconway.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Soteriology-Chart.pdf>

(<http://www.fellowshipconway.org/category/charts/>)

See following page for expanded view....

The Gospel Message

Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand.
1 Corinthians 15:1

Christ died for our sins (1 Cor 15:3-4a)

•according to the Scriptures (15:3b)

•Proof: Burial (15:4a)

Christ was raised

from the dead

(1 Cor 15:4b-8)

•according to the Scriptures (15:4b)

•Proof: Appearances (15:5-8)

The Order of Salvation

And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.
Romans 8:30

Temporal Order

•Provision•Response•Transformation•
(God) (Me) (Us)

Biblical Order

•Predestined•Called•

Justified•Glorified•
(Romans 8:30)

Logical Order

•Election•Call•

Regeneration•Conversion•

Justification•

Sanctification•Glorification•

Atonement Theories

Ransom to Satan - Origen

Recapitulation - Irenaeus

Satisfaction - Anselm

Moral Influence - Abelard

Example - Socinus, Liberalism

Governmental - Grotius

Dramatic Victory - Aulen

Revelatory - Barth

Substitution - Calvin

SOTERIOLOGY

THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION
INTER-DEPENDENT

THE INITIATION OF GOD

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
Romans 5:8

Common Grace

•"God's general care for all,"

Matt 5:45; Acts 14:17; Ps 145:8-9

•Not redemptive - Rom 1:20•

Election/Predetermination

•God's choice of some for salvation"

Eph 1:3,5; Rom 9:11; 2 Tm 1:9

•of persons/not facts•

•not on the basis of faith•

•not on the basis of good deeds•

Calling

General Call to All (Mt 22:14; 1 Tm 2:3-4)

Effective Call of Elect (Rom 8:30)

Regeneration

•"Impartation of New Life"

Titus 3:5; Eph 2:5; Jn 3:3-5

Adoption

•"New relationship as God's Sons"

Rom 8:15,23; Gal 4:5-6; Eph 1:5

THE RESPONSE OF MAN

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.
Ephesians 2:8-9

"Grace"

•"The unmerited favor of God through which we get what we do not deserve"

"Faith"

•"The appropriation of God's provision by trust."

Eph 2:8; John 3:16; 5:24; 17:3

•esp. John whose purpose

is evangelistic (20:31)

Romans: Doctrinal Treatise on Gospel

(4:21-22)

"Not by Works"

Heretical Additions to Man's Response

•Faith + sorrow over sin (part of conviction)

•Faith + baptism (symbol of commitment)

•Faith + confession (expression of faith)

•Faith + surrender (subsequent result of growth)

•Faith + a changed life (expected outcome)

•Faith + fruit (can't be quantified)"

THE SECURITY OF THE BELIEVER

I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.
John 10:28

Assurance of Salvation

•"Confidence that one has eternal life,"

•Objectively based on the promise of God

Jn 5:24; 1 Jn 5:1,13

•Subjectively based on our maturity and growth

1 Jn 2:3,9-11,29; 3:14; 2 Cor 5:17

Eternal Security

Once the gift of salvation is genuinely received, it cannot be lost

Jn 10:28-30; Rom 8:31-39

THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF SALVATION

How shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation?
Hebrews 2:3

Substitutionary Atonement

(in relation to Sin's Penalty)

Heb 9:28; 1 Pet 2:24

Redemption

(in relation to Sin's Bondage)

Gal 3:13; 1 Col 6:20

Forgiveness

(in relation to Sin's Offense)

Eph 1:7; Col 2:13

Reconciliation

(in relation to Man's Alienation)

Col 1:21-22; 2 Cor 5:18-19

Propitiation

(in relation to God's Justice)

Rom 3:25; Heb 2:17; 1 Jn 2:2,4; 10

Justification

(Legally)

•My sin imputed to Christ

2 Cor 5:21

•Christ's Righteousness imputed to Me

Rom 3:21-4:5; 5:19

Adoption

(Familially)

Rom 8:15,23; Gal 4:5-6; Eph 1:5

Peace

(Relationally)

Peace with God

Rom 5:1

Peace with Others

Eph. 2:14-18

Security of the Believer – Eternal Security

Does Anyone Really Know If They are Saved? -- A Survey of the Current Views on Assurance with a Modest Proposal by Ken Keathley (2002)

<https://faithalone.org/journal/2002i/keathley.pdf> [PDF]

Excerpt:

At a symposium honoring Dale Moody, I. Howard Marshall recited the old saw that Arminians know they are saved but are afraid they cannot keep it, while Calvinists know they cannot lose their salvation but are afraid they do not have it. Aside from being witty, this highlights the two components of the question about assurance. First, is it possible to know absolutely or even confidently that one is saved, and second, is it possible for those who currently believe they are saved to have assurance that they will remain in a state of grace until the day of redemption? It is more than just a little ironic that though they travel different routes, many Arminians and Calvinists arrive basically at the same answer—assurance is based on the evidence of sanctification.

Michael Eaton points to the 19th century preacher, Asahel Nettleton, as a good example of this odd state of affairs when he quotes Nettleton who stated, “The most that I have ventured to say respecting myself is, that I think it possible I may get to heaven.” Words perhaps expected from an Arminian, but Nettleton was a Calvinist.

Recently, Thomas Schreiner and Ardel Caneday presented an updated version of the provocative position set forth earlier by Louis Berkhof and G. C. Berkouwer. They attempt to reconcile the biblical passages that promise unconditional assurance with passages that warn of divine judgment (particularly the five warning passages in the Book of Hebrews) by positing “that adhering to the warnings is the means by which salvation is obtained on the final day.” The believer’s salvation is not merely anifested by perseverance, but rather, eschatologically speaking, a believer actually is saved by perseverance. However, Schreiner and Caneday deny that the elect will apostatize, claiming that the warning passages are the means by which God has chosen to preserve the elect. The means-of-salvation position, as they call it, seems to be, as a practical matter, a melding of Arminian and Calvinist soteriology. Critics respond that if they are correct then perhaps we should be honest enough to admit to our Roman Catholic counterparts that the Council of Trent was right after all.

This paper will first address the two main questions about assurance with a brief survey of the proposed answers. Second, additional attention will be given to the means-of-salvation position of Schreiner and Caneday, which is sure to be the topic of much discussion in evangelical circles. Third, it will be contended that, though Schreiner and Caneday have made a positive contribution to the discussion about assurance, a variation of the tests-of-genuineness position best explains the tension between the biblical texts that assure and those that admonish.

...

Even if a believer knows he is saved, the question of perseverance is still unanswered. This brings us to the second aspect of assurance—how secure is one’s salvation? Arminians have traditionally answered that apostasy is possible for the believer while Calvinists have affirmed the perseverance of the saints. Some scholars have offered mediating positions that argue that while the Scriptures warn against the danger of apostasy, the possibility of apostasy does not exist. Thomas Schreiner and Ardel Caneday’s means-of-salvation position is one such midway proposal, and this paper will give additional attention to it.

Apostasy Is Possible	Apostasy Is Not Possible	Apostasy Is Threatened, But Not Possible
Non-elect believers fall (Luther) Non-persevering believers fall (Moody)	Implicit Universalism (Barth) Once-Saved-Always-Saved (GES)	Tests-of-Genuineness (Demarest) Irreconcilable Tension (Carson) Means-of-Salvation (Schreiner and Caneday) Middle Knowledge (Craig)

...

The position offered over the next few pages is very close to the oncesaved-always-saved view. However, it differs in that it simultaneously affirms both God's preservation of the redeemed and their persistent, persevering faith, so it is more accurately described as a variant of the tests-of-genuineness view. This position has four points. First, the only basis for assurance is the objective work of Christ. Second, assurance is of the essence of saving faith. Saving faith perseveres is the third point, and the fourth point is that there are rewards offered by God to the believer subsequent to salvation.

First, the only basis for assurance is the objective work of Christ. Any doctrine of assurance that includes introspection as a component will produce anxiety in the hearts of the very people it is intended to encourage. Barth is right when he points out that no system that has a Christological beginning and an anthropological ending can provide genuine and sustained assurance.

Second, assurance is of the essence of saving faith. The very nature of conversion and regeneration guarantees that certain knowledge of salvation is simultaneous with being saved. Subsequent doubts and fears may come, but a core conviction about one's relationship with God will remain.

Third, saving faith perseveres or remains until the day when it gives way to sight. Perseverance should be understood as a faith that cannot be annihilated and therefore persists. This persistent faith inevitably and eventually exhibits itself in the believer's life in such a way as to bring glory to God. The point of Hebrews 11 is that saving faith manifests itself by the journey of discipleship. One may stumble and falter but never leave the trail. Perseverance should be viewed more as a promise than a requirement.

Fourth, there are rewards that are subsequent to salvation for the believer to win or lose. One of the great weaknesses of the Schreiner and Caneday proposal is the necessity to deny that there are any subsequent rewards available for the believer and that all promises of reward must be references to salvation itself. Their position is difficult to reconcile with many biblical passages. For example, 1 Cor 3:12-15 speaks of one Christian's work remaining while another Christian's work burns. The believer whose work remains receives a reward while the other believer suffers loss. Schreiner and Caneday admit the passage teaches "some will be saved that have done shoddy work." This admission undermines the major plank of their position—that persevering in good works is the necessary means by which our salvation is completed. A better understanding of the role of works in believers' lives is to hold that we will be judged and rewarded according to our service.

In the end, assurance comes from depending on Christ alone. This writer agrees with Calvin's retort to the Roman Catholic controversialist Albert Pighius, "If Pighius asks how I know I am elect, I answer that Christ is more than a thousand testimonies to me."

Calvinism, Predestination, and Assurance (Bob Wilkin) (2012)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZKD4E9cJvVk> [Video]

Calvinism in Three Minutes (George C. Scott)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YHS591VUfN0> [Video]

This clip is from the 1979 film *Hardcore*, directed by Paul Schrader, an ex-Calvinist. In this film, Schrader presents Jake Van Dorn, a pious Calvinist played by George C. Scott. In one scene, Jake sits in an airport in Las Vegas while trying to track down his daughter, who has gotten involved in the pornography business and is reported to be in Vegas. He has enlisted the help of Niki, a young woman who knows his daughter. As they sit, Niki challenges Jake on what she feels is an exceedingly negative outlook on life. He responds with a dry, irrelevant explanation of TULIP, the five points of Calvinism. Schrader takes this opportunity to poke fun at the tradition he grew up in and to poke fun at his memories of Calvinists.

(Language Warning: F-word employed at the end)

Contains link to video: Hardcore Reformed theology from Jake VanDorn

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/slacktivist/2012/06/10/hardcore-reformed-theology-from-jake-vandorn/>

You Can Be Sure!

<https://faithalone.org/tracts/you-can-be-sure-2/>



Do you know for *sure* that you are going to heaven? If you're like most people, you're a little afraid to say "Yes." You think it sounds a little presumptuous. I mean, can anyone really be *sure*?

Well, the Bible has good news for you. You *can* be sure. In fact, God *wants* you to be sure. And it's not as complicated as you might think.

Let's look at what God says in His Word.

Jesus Gives Eternal Life to Those Who Believe in Him

God says...

There is none righteous, no, not one. (Romans 3:10)

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

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

You were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold...but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. (1 Peter 1:18-19)

That means...

God clearly explains in His Word that we are all sinners. "All have sinned." None of us is good enough to get into heaven on his or her own merits to spend eternity with God. "There is none righteous, no, not one."

But God loves us so much that He provided a way. That way is through His Son, the Lord Jesus. By dying on the Cross, Jesus paid the full and complete price for our sins so that we don't have to.

Because He shed His blood and died for us, Jesus Christ is able to fulfill His promise to freely give believers eternal life.

But what is eternal life?

God says...

“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” (John 14:6)

“He who believes in Me has everlasting life.” (John 6:47)

The life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us. (1 John 1:2)

That means...

In one sense, eternal life is what its name suggests: unending life. After all, if *eternal* life could be lost, then it is misnamed, because it wouldn't really be eternal. All who have eternal life will live forever in God's kingdom. No one who has come to faith in Christ will ever go to hell. Once you believe in Christ, your eternal destiny in God's kingdom is guaranteed.

In another sense, eternal life is not merely unending life. It is the life of God. Indeed, John refers to Jesus Christ Himself as eternal life. Eternal life is God's kind of life. It is life that comes from God. Thus a person who has eternal life has God's life within him.

It is obvious from what we have just said that eternal life doesn't begin when we die. Jesus said, “He who believes in Me *has* [present tense] everlasting life.” He didn't say that the one who believes in Him *will* have (future tense) everlasting life. He said that he *has* eternal life—from that very first moment of faith. Thus a brand-new believer has God's life, which is unending and full of potential.

But I already believe that Jesus is God, that He lived a sinless life, and that He died and rose again.

God says...

Jesus said to her [Martha], “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?” She said to Him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.” (John 11:25-27)

That means...

Just believing in Jesus' deity, sinlessness, death, and resurrection won't give you assurance that you have eternal life. Millions of people believe those things and yet lack assurance. The reason is because it is sadly possible to believe that Jesus died and rose again, and yet not believe His promise to give eternal life freely to all who believe in Him. Multitudes of people believe that Jesus' death and resurrection was necessary

for their salvation, but that it wasn't enough. They believe that their commitment, obedience, and good works are also necessary for them to go to heaven.

To be sure you are saved, you must believe that Jesus Christ has given you eternal life as He said He would if you believed in Him. It's simply a matter of taking God at His word. Martha did, and she knew she had eternal life. So can you.

Is it really that simple?

God says...

Jesus said to her [Martha], "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" She said to Him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world." (John 11:25-27)

That means...

Yes, it really is that simple. Take a second look at how Martha responded to the Lord's question, "Do you believe this?"

She was definite and assured. Martha didn't hesitate to say, "Yes, Lord I believe." She believed that Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God, the One whom the Old Testament prophets had foretold." She knew that the Messiah gives eternal life to all who believe in Him. There was no doubt in her mind.

Like Martha, you too can be sure you have eternal life. The Bible says that you must believe in Christ for eternal life. Have you done that? If you have, then you are saved! It really is that simple!

But... aren't good works necessary for assurance?

God says...

By grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

That means...

Knowing you have eternal life is dependent on believing Christ's promise, not on the works you do. Since the possession of eternal life is based on believing God's promise and on nothing else, how could works ever be necessary for assurance?

As we've already noted, many people think they gain eternal life by believing in Christ and by doing good works. Yet the Bible says that salvation is "the gift of God" and that it is "not of works, lest anyone should boast." Only by believing in Christ can you be sure you have eternal life.

Until you come to the place where you stop depending on your own good works, you won't have eternal life. To be saved you must believe in Christ, not in your works. And, once you believe in Christ, you will be sure you are saved because your salvation is dependent on your belief in God's promise, not on your works.

But... I thought I could lose my salvation.

God says...

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life." (John 5:24)

And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst...All that the Father has given Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up on the last day." (John 6:35, 37-39)

That means...

There is no way salvation can be lost. Jesus said that the person who believes in Him shall not come into judgment. That's a promise. If a person who had everlasting life ever "came into judgment," then Jesus would not be true to His word. Yet it is impossible for God to lie.

Many people think that staying saved is a matter of *their* doing God's will. However, Jesus Christ said that it is really a matter of *His* doing God's will! Jesus promised that whoever believes in Him will *never* hunger or thirst. Never. He promised that He will by no means cast out anyone who comes to Him and that He won't lose even one person who has believed in Him.

If anyone who came to faith in Christ ever lost his or her salvation, then Jesus would have failed to fulfill His promise and to do the will of the Father. Christ's eternal gift can never fail for any reason. He guarantees it.

Can Assurance Be Lost?

God says...

I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. (Galatians 1:6-7)

Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with the yoke of bondage. (Galatians 5:1)

That means...

Yes, assurance can be lost. While eternal life can't be lost, assurance can. Whenever a believer stops looking to Christ for assurance, he will lose assurance of his salvation. The believers in Galatia were confronted by false teachers. The false teachers told them that they had to keep the Law of Moses in order to be saved. The result was that some of the believers in Galatia lost the assurance that they were saved.

A person is saved the very moment he believes in Christ for eternal life. At that moment, he knows for sure that he has eternal life and that he can never lose it. However, that does not mean that all Christians always have assurance of salvation. If a Christian takes his eyes off Christ, then he will lose his assurance. Each day you must believe Christ's promise to you in order to stay sure that you have eternal life.

If you lose your faith, you will also lose your assurance. Therefore you need to cultivate your faith in order to keep your assurance. "Avoid truth decay: Read your Bible every day" is a slogan that is true of all aspects of the Christian life, including assurance of salvation.

Shouldn't I feel happy all the time if I'm really saved?

God says...

Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all. (1 Thessalonians 5:14)

Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. And He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see." Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, "See how He loved him!" (John 11:33-36)

"In the world you have tribulation..." (John 16:33)

"And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." (Revelation 21:4)

That means...

No. You won't experience unbroken happiness until you go to be with the Lord. Only then will He wipe away all your tears. Only then will all your sorrows and pains cease.

Many people mistakenly think that once they receive eternal life all of their problems are behind them. Yet that just isn't true. Even the Lord Jesus Himself groaned and wept over the death of his friend Lazarus. Christians experience tribulation in this life. Grief, depression, family problems, illnesses, injuries, financial problems, and chronic pain are just some of the things Christians have to deal with in their lives.

Feelings are like thermometers. They fluctuate. Sometimes you feel great. Sometimes you feel “lousy.” Christians can be bold and strong or fainthearted and weak. Feelings come and go. Just as your knowledge of your earthly citizenship is not based on how you feel (“I’m really discouraged today; I wonder if I’m *really* an American”), so neither is your knowledge of your *heavenly* citizenship.

God promised you eternal life if you believed in Christ for it. God doesn’t lie. The Gospel is true. If you have believed in Christ for eternal life, then you have it, even if you’re in great physical or emotional pain. You can depend on His promise regardless of how you feel.

But... if I were really saved, wouldn't my circumstances be better?

God says...

From the Jews five times I [Paul] received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils of the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness—beside the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches. (2 Corinthians 11:24-28)

That means...

It’s easy to think that if I’m truly a child of God, then nothing bad could ever happen to me. Yet bad things *do* happen to God’s children. As the quotation above shows, the apostle Paul experienced several lifetimes’ worth of trouble in his service for Christ.

Circumstances are fickle. Sometimes you’re on top of the world. Sometimes the world is on top of you! Until you are in heaven, you can’t look to your circumstances to see whether or not you’re saved.

But... I already made the decision to follow Jesus and to serve Him.

God says...

Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit. (Titus 3:5)

For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again. (2 Corinthians 5:14-15)

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. (Romans 12:1-2)

That means...

You've made a wonderful decision. That's a noble goal. However, it has nothing to do with obtaining eternal life or assurance. Following and serving the Lord are not the issue in salvation. The only issue in salvation is faith.

Of course, serving Christ is something that you as a growing Christian should do. The love of Christ should move you to serve Him. Serving Him *is* reasonable. However, you should serve Him because you know you have eternal life, not in order to try to gain it. If you think you need to serve Christ in order to have eternal life, then you don't believe His promise.

Believing in Christ assures you that you are saved. Then, by all means, *do* follow Him!

You mean I really can be sure?

God says...

If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which He has testified of His Son. He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son. And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son does not have life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God. (1 John 5:9-13)

That means...

Yes, you can *really know* that you have eternal life. God didn't say that you could *guess* or *hope* or *think* that you have eternal life. He said you could *know*.

In fact, if you don't know that you're saved, then you aren't focusing on the truth of God's testimony. All you need to do to be sure you have eternal life is to believe God's promise. Don't look within yourself. Introspection is a bottomless pit. Look instead to God's promise. He guarantees eternal life to all who believe on Him for it. How simple!

Let's review: Neither your good works, nor your circumstances, nor your feelings will give you assurance. Those things are all changeable and undependable. Only one thing

will give you assurance: believing God's testimony concerning His Son. God guarantees that all who believe on His Son for eternal life have it and will never perish. If you believe in Christ for eternal life, then you are sure that you're saved. It's that simple.

Now What?

God says...

"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." (John 15:5)

"As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full." (John 15:9-11)

That means...

Knowing you have eternal life is just the beginning. You have before you a door of opportunity which is wide open to something magnificent and wonderful: fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ. He not only wants you to live with Him forever in His kingdom, He also wants you to enjoy fellowship with Him here and now.

A life of meaning and purpose is to be found in fellowship with Christ. If you walk in fellowship with Him, your life will have *eternal* value and significance. Also, you will experience God's love and joy.

Growth in Christ, like the physical growth of children, takes time. Spend time daily in prayer and in God's Word, the Bible. The Gospel of John is a good place to start. Find and regularly attend a church where Christ is honored and where the Bible and the Gospel are clearly taught. Seek out an older, mature Christian who is willing to mentor you in the faith.

Remember one thing: Jesus Christ guarantees eternal life to all who believe in Him for it. Assurance of salvation is something which is and always will be vital to your walk with Christ. Keep looking up! As long as you look to Him and His promise to you, you will know you have eternal life.

Evangelism

<http://www.godsbreathpublications.com/evangelism/>

Outreach vs. Evangelism: How to Tell the Difference

<http://www.outreachmagazine.com/features/4923-outreach-vs-evangelism-how-to-tell-the-difference.html>

Excerpt:

evangel (-v n j l) n.

1. The Christian gospel.
2. An evangelist.

[Middle English evaungel, from Late Latin vangeliū, from Greek euangelion, good news, from euangelos, bringing good news : eu-, eu- + angelos, messenger.]

The root of the word evangelism, evangel, is derived from the Greek word *euangelion* which is translated good news. From that same word, we derive the word gospel. We find also that many words we use in English are in reality synonymous evangel(ism), gospel and good news all speak of the same thing and find their root in the same word. They speak of the act of spreading the gospel and to the content of the message that is given. This is an important point to note they refer both to the method and the message.

The word *euangelion* is found in many places throughout the New Testament. The term is often used to express collectively the gospel doctrines; and “preaching the gospel” is often used to include not only the proclaiming of the good tidings, but the teaching men how to avail themselves of the offer of salvation, the declaring of all the truths, precepts, promises, and threatenings of Christianity. It is termed “the gospel of the grace of God” (Acts 20:24), “the gospel of the kingdom” (Matt. 4:23), “the gospel of Christ” (Rom. 1:16), “the gospel of peace (Eph. 6:15), “the glorious gospel,” “the everlasting gospel,” “the gospel of salvation” (Eph. 1:13). (*Easton Illustrated Dictionary*)

In the *Elwell Evangelical Dictionary* we read specifically about Pauls application of the term which he used over 60 times and is found in every one of his letters except for Titus. Paul’s ministry was distinctively that of the propagation of the gospel. Unto this gospel he was set apart (Rom. 1:1) and made a minister according to the grace of God (Eph. 3:7). His special sphere of action was the Gentile world (Rom. 16:16; Gal. 2:7).

Since Paul accepted the gospel as a sacred trust (Gal. 2:7), it was necessary that in the discharge of this obligation he speak so as to please God rather than man (I Tim. 2:4). The divine commission had created a sense of urgency that made him cry out, “Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel” (I Cor. 9:16). For the sake of the gospel Paul was willing to become all things to all men (I Cor. 9:22-23). No sacrifice was too great. Eternal issues were at stake. Those whose minds were blinded and did not obey the gospel were perishing and would ultimately reap the vengeance of divine wrath (II Cor. 4:3; II Thess. 1:9). On the other hand, to those who believed, the gospel had effectively become the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16).

Outreach

Unlike *evangel*, the term outreach is not found in the Bible, though the idea certainly is. Outreach implies action more than message. Perhaps it is best defined as a business term: an act of reaching out, bringing an organization’s services or products out into the community. When a church engages in outreach, it is reaching out to the community in order to meet needs or to let people know of its existence. The Salvation Army is an excellent example. When tragedy strikes, especially in the case of natural disasters, the Salvation Army is often on the scene, providing food, clothing and other necessities. My local church has some excellent and exciting outreach programs.

Unintended Consequences of the Jesus Movement: The Big Decision

http://www.patheos.com/blogs/pilgrimsroadtrip/2016/07/unintended-consequences-of-the-jesus-movement-the-big-decision/?ref_widget=related&ref_blog=pilgrimsroadtrip&ref_post=5-yiddish-words-for-christians-video&repeat=w3tc

What is Salvation (In 2 Minutes)

<https://www.streetgraceministries.com/2012/09/06/what-is-salvation-in-2-minutes-paul-washer/>

Canon [J. John](#)

Evangelist Canon J. John Shares the Gospel (2016)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fABMxA5Kg-k> [Video]

What is an Evangelist? (Canon J. John) (2015)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WibKBDJsMBE> [Video]

What Happened at God's Funeral (Canon J. John) (2015)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8cETa0HpK_Q [Video]

A Man with A Dog (Canon J. John) (2011)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TNYGww5MJPo> [Video]

C3 Presence 2014 – Bible, Breath, Blood and Bride (Canon J. John)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BBHdLdHEB0M> [Video]

FYI: To see J. John interact with other Christian notables on his interview program...

[Facing the Canon](#) with Tom Wright (2014)

[Recommended]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8sCoF4uNLWQ> [Video]

Wright answers difficult questions submitted to him by [John Canon](#), including women leadership in the church, resurrection, Israel today and returning to the land and the centrality of Jesus for gentiles and Jews, Isaiah 53, prayer, why do bad things happen to good people?, sacraments, why does not Bible address more everyday issues, marriage, sharing the Gospel.

ALSO: check out his interview of [Nick Gumble](#) founder of [Alpha International](#) [Recommended]

For reference resources regarding N.T. Wright (and other scholars and theologians) related to Paul and Romans, see "[Reference Notes on Paul and Romans \(and Galatians plus Ephesians\)](#)".

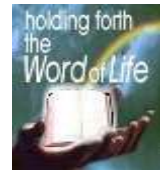
Christian Evangelism (Note: This is an Extreme Free-Will Site)

<https://www.evangelicaloutreach.org/christian-evangelism.htm>



Christian Evangelism is the heart of the New Testament.

Especially in the book of Acts is this apparent. ALL Christians evangelized, not just the apostles (Acts 8:1 cf. 8:4)! **Without Christian evangelism, how will people hear about what the Lord Jesus did on the cross to call upon him to be saved**



(Rom. 10:13,14). Repentance and faith in JESUS are vital for personal salvation, but even many church people don't know that! People need to hear the gospel and Christians need sound teachings on the importance of personal *evangelism* and how to do it.

Paul's Evangelism (At Mars Hill Athens)

<https://www.evangelicaloutreach.org/aloneinathens.htm>

GES Grace in Focus: The Broken Record Approach to Evangelism (p. 4-7) (2008)

https://faithalone.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/GIF_JanFeb2018_forweb.pdf [PDF]

See also: [What is the Gospel \(Gospel Presentations\)](#)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)



Pastor Mohammed, Arab Ex Muslim...Best life story & Testimony

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5zJ872BPZzw>

(@about 37:00 min.)

Stop being complacent, rise up to the challenge. Today is open doors. It takes love to take advantage of open doors. Challenge the church in America to love the Muslims: do not argue with them, do [apologetics](#) or go into Islamics... there is nothing common between us and them, except we are human. We do not have the same faith – we do not lead to the same god. Our god is a living, holy and righteous god who loves all people. That is the message that we can get across. Christianity is the religion that has a message that no other religion has: our message is love. Love unfolding from Genesis to Revelation. It's the story of love. How god loves man and worked throughout history to redeem man. And how he is going to glorify man in eternity. It's the story of love. No other religion in the world has that message. What we find in other religions is do's and don'ts. We do not find love. People cannot understand and comprehend love. How god come to earth in human design came to earth to love us. They cannot that. I can understand why. But this is why we are here...

<https://www.facebook.com/Tyre-Church-541702972547112/>

Ex Muslim "Nina" : Lie that block Muslims to the Truth

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fWaumUSHwnA>

Ten Reasons We Fail to Share Our Faith



Ten Reasons We Fail to Share Our Faith

www.ColdCaseChristianity.com

We mistakenly think our beliefs about Christianity are entirely subjective

Some of us hesitate to share the Gospel because (whether we care to admit it or not) we've come to see religious truth as a matter of subjective opinion rather than objective truth. We treat the Gospel more as a cookie than a cure.

We think we have to be a theologian or apologist to share effectively

As Christian Case Makers, we don't have to become experts. We simply need to know how to resource the experts when someone on our jury asks a question.

We aren't sure who we should share with

The best jurors are simply smart and interested citizens who are humble enough not to presume they know the answer before they hear the question, and it's important to understand these characteristics of good jurors if we hope to have an impact as Christian Case Makers.

We are simply afraid to take the first step

The fear most of us have with evangelism is simply taking the first step of starting a conversation. Our fear typically turns to joy (and even courage) once we get the conversation started.

We think we have to know someone well before we can share the truth

The reason "friendship evangelism" is statistically dominant is simply because we, as Christians, are so uncomfortable sharing our faith with strangers. We have created this statistical reality.

We're not sure how to engage people (especially people we don't know well)

Walk up to the person you want to engage and ask the question: "What do you think happens when you die?" It invariably leads to deeper conversations about the meaning of life, the existence of God and plight of humans.

We're afraid of feeling uncomfortable at any point in the process

What's keeping you from sharing the Gospel with the people in your life, even the strangers who you meet every day? It might just be that (like me) you're often more concerned with your own comfort than you are with the cause of Christ.

We hold pessimistically low expectations of being successful

As I examined my own low expectations, my true nature was exposed. Why wasn't I sharing what I believed? Because I was lazy and tired of rejection. Why wasn't I reflecting the nature of Christ? Because I'd come to see my behavior as a way to reach the lost rather than as a reflection of a truly changed life. Why didn't I trust God for my expectations in the first place? Because I was slipping back into my old self-reliant denial of God's power.

We are conditioned to speak a Christian language foreign to the secular culture

When I'm talking with unbelievers, I try to think about how I used to hear and interpret these words before I became a Christian. I take the time to translate important Christian concepts for those who might be willing to entertain the ideas if only I was willing to speak their language.

We think our success as evangelists is dependent on our individual effort

Evangelism and Christian Case Making is often just like baseball. Remember your place in the line-up. Drive in a run if you can, or just get on base for the next player at bat. Remember you're not alone. If each of us can get a single, we'll eventually succeed as a team.



COLD-CASE CHRISTIANITY:

A Homicide Detective Investigates the Claims of the Gospels

Apologetics

The word apologetics does not mean to say you're sorry. Instead, it refers to the defense of what you believe to be true. Theologian and apologist Clark Pinnock explains the nature of apologetics in this way:

The term apologetics derives from a Greek term, apologia, and was used for a defense that a person like Socrates might make of his views and actions. The apostle Peter tells every Christian to be ready to give a reason (apologia) for the hope that is in him (1 Pet. 3:15). Apologetics, then, is an activity of the Christian mind which attempts to show that the gospel message is true in what it affirms. An apologist is one who is prepared to defend the message against criticism and distortion, and to give evidences of its credibility. (Pinnock, A, 36)

Source: *Evidence that Demands a Verdict* (Revised, 2017 by Josh McDowell and his son, Sean, PhD)

Paul's Sermon on Mars Hill: A Biblical Model for Practical Apologetics

[Recommended]

<http://jmsmith.org/downloads/Paul-at-Mars-Hill.pdf> [PDF]

Excerpts:

1. **Paul didn't travel to Athens with the intention of preaching there...** Paul was embodying the principal set forth by his fellow apostle Peter which states that a believer should "Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you and accounting for the hope that is in you..." (1 Peter 3:15)
2. **Paul argued;** and not only that, but he argued with the Jews in the synagogue as well as the people in the market place. Many within the Church's ranks today feel that arguing is not Christ-like and has no place in sharing the Gospel. This is unfortunately due to the fact that at times Christians have replaced the conviction of the Holy Spirit in regards to a person's conversion experience with argument and reasoning. As a result, many Christians have taken the opposite path and abandoned the use of argumentation and reason altogether as unbiblical, or useful only when discoursing in the halls of academia. This is in clear contrast with Scripture for here we see the apostle arguing not just with the "intellectual folk" (the Stoics and Epicureans) or the "religious folk" (in the synagogue), but also with the "everyday folk" (in the market place). For Paul, despite the fact that the Gospel did not rest solely on "wise and persuasive words," it could certainly be, and often was, proclaimed using reason and argumentation.
3. Moving on in the text, we find another curious phenomenon. Though the Athenian philosophers considered Paul's talk of Jesus and the resurrection "Idle babbling" about "strange deities" they nevertheless took him to Mars Hill (the Areopagus) and asked if he would explain his "new teaching." Luke parenthetically tells us that the Athenians were always looking for opportunities to say something different or hear something new. This is interesting because Athens was considered the center of knowledge in the ancient world. And yet, despite being immersed in the various religions and philosophies of the day, the Athenian philosophers still **had a craving for some kind of new truth**. Amidst an extremely pluralistic society there was still something about the message of the Gospel that intrigued them. This is very much the case within modern academia.
4. Later in his sermon, Paul goes on to tell us that people everywhere are searching and even groping for God. In his mind, the Athenians' temple to the unknown god no doubt provides an example of such searching. According to his letter to the church in Rome, God's presence is a reality that even the most callous skeptic is aware of. All of this should serve as a constant reminder to the Christian that no matter how much people ridicule or revile the message of the cross, there is still a yearning for truth in our culture that only the Gospel can fulfill.

It is also worth noting the beliefs of Paul's listeners and their similarity to the ideals prevalent in our society. The Epicureans adhered to a naturalistic philosophy that deemed pleasure the ultimate goal. The Stoics, though also naturalistic, saw virtue as the highest good. The current philosophies of hedonism and humanism...have much in common with these philosophies of old.

5. Right from the start, one cannot help **but notice the politeness with which Paul addresses his listeners**. Though his spirit was deeply distressed by their idolatry, he still addresses them with respect. It is a common temptation, especially in an argumentative atmosphere, to see nonbelievers as "the enemy" and to speak to them as such. This is not Paul's tactic in this passage or in any of his epistles for that matter. In fact, throughout his writings it can be argued that his harshest words are directed at those who claim to be believers. We, as Christians, must remember this as we engage the nonbeliever. It should be the Gospel that offends rather than the one who proclaims the Gospel.

However, lest we think that the Christian should sacrifice truth on the altar of politeness, **we now turn to an equally visible aspect of Paul's message: his incredible boldness**. Paul doesn't beat around the bush, so to speak, in dealing with the religion of the Athenians. He tells them in no uncertain terms that the faith they possess in their idols is not only misplaced, but also foolish seeing as that the idols they worship as gods were fashioned by their very own hands. Though undoubtedly offensive to his audience, this was truth that they needed to hear. At the opposite end of the spectrum from those seeking to offend are those Christians who feel that an unbeliever should never be told anything they might object to. This extreme form of seeker-sensitive apologetics is foreign not only to Paul, but to the entire witness of scripture. Many may be offended, but the Christian's responsibility is to proclaim this message lovingly and faithfully, seeking neither to offend nor to appease those listening.

See also: [Greek Philosophy](#) and [The Use of Greek Philosophy by Paul in the Bible](#)

Both are in my other separate reference resources:

Reference Notes on Paul and Romans

Christian Scholarship: Biblical – Theological – Philosophical

(Also see my above reference resources for more about apologetics)

For an excellent intro. and in-depth resource on apologetics: [Recommended]
Evidence that Demands a Verdict (Revised, 2017 by [Josh McDowell](#) and his son, Sean, PhD)

See also: [Gospel of Paul vs Peter](#)

[Gospel of Jesus vs Paul](#)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Biblical Passages with the Word Apologia

from *Evidence that Demands a Verdict* (2017 Revision)

The New Testament uses the Greek word *apologia*, often translated in English as “defense,” eight times in the New Testament. (All passages in this list are quoted from the ESV with italics added):

1. Acts 22:1: “Brothers and fathers, hear the defense that I now make before you.”
2. Acts 25:16: “I answered them that it was not the custom of the Romans to give up anyone before the accused met the accusers face to face and had opportunity to make his defense concerning the charge laid against him.”
3. 1 Corinthians 9:3: “This is my defense to those who would examine me.”
4. 2 Corinthians 7:11: “For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, but also what eagerness to clear yourselves [*apologia*], what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what punishment! At every point you have proved yourselves innocent in the matter.”
5. Philippians 1:7: “It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel.”
6. Philippians 1:16: “The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel.”
7. 1 Peter 3:15: “But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect.”
8. 2 Timothy 4:16: “At my first defense no one came to stand by me, but all deserted me. May it not be charged against them!”

First Peter 3:15 uses the word defense in a way that denotes the kind of defense one would make to a legal inquiry, asking, “Why are you a Christian?” A believer ought to give an adequate answer to this question. The command to be ready with an answer is directed toward every follower of Jesus—not just pastors, teachers, and leaders.

There are instances in many other passages when, even though the word *apologia* may not appear, the Bible either models or explicitly emphasizes the importance of apologetics. Consider a few: 2 Corinthians 10:5; Jude 3; Acts 2:22–24; 18:4; Titus 1:9; Job 38:1–41; Luke 24:44.

Jesus the Apologist

Except for 1 Peter 3:15, the New Testament appearances of *apologia* all come from the writing or ministry of Paul. But was Jesus an apologist? Though the New Testament does not mention Jesus using the word *apologia*, we nevertheless hold that he was, indeed, an apologist. Philosopher Douglas Groothuis has carefully studied the question of whether Jesus was a philosopher or an apologist. After giving many examples of how Jesus rationally defended the crucial claims of Christianity, Groothuis concludes:

Contrary to the views of critics, Jesus Christ was a brilliant thinker, who used logical arguments to refute His critics and establish the truth of His views. When Jesus praised the faith of children, He was encouraging humility as a virtue, not irrational religious trust or a blind leap of faith in the dark. Jesus deftly employed a variety of reasoning strategies in His debates on various topics. These include escaping the horns of a dilemma, a fortiori arguments, appeals to evidence, and *reductio ad absurdum* arguments. Jesus’ use of persuasive arguments demonstrates that He was both a philosopher and an apologist who rationally defended His worldview in discussions with

some of the best thinkers of His day. This intellectual approach does not detract from His divine authority but enhances it. Jesus' high estimation of rationality and His own application of arguments indicates [sic] that Christianity is not an anti-intellectual faith. Followers of Jesus today, therefore, should emulate His intellectual zeal, using the same kinds or arguments He Himself used. Jesus' argumentative strategies have applications to four contemporary debates: the relationship between God and morality, the reliability of the New Testament, the resurrection of Jesus, and ethical relativism. (Groothuis, JPA)

Apologetics in the Old Testament

Some falsely assume that apologetics began in the New Testament era. After explaining how Jesus and Paul engaged in logical debate both to destroy faulty beliefs and to propagate the Christian faith, philosopher J. P. Moreland observes:

Jesus and Paul were continuing a style of persuasion peppered throughout the Old Testament prophets. Regularly, the prophets appealed to evidence to justify belief in the biblical God or in the divine authority of their inspired message: fulfilled prophecy, the historical fact of miracles, the inadequacy of finite pagan deities to be a cause of such a large, well-ordered universe compared to the God of the Bible, and so forth. They did not say, "God said it, that settles it, you should believe it!" They provided a rational defense for their claims. (Moreland, LYG, 132)

Five Reasons Apologetics Is Important Today

Reason #1: We Are All Apologists Anyway

Apologetics is not listed as a spiritual gift for teachers, preachers, or evangelists, as though only some ought to become apologists. Rather, all Christians are called to be ready with an answer (1 Peter 3:15; Jude 3). We all make a case for Christianity in some fashion or another—but are we doing it well? Beyond the specific Christian calling to have a ready defense for the faith, there is a sense in which everyone is already an apologist for something. The question is not whether we are apologists, but what kind of apologists we are. Christian author and social critic Os Guinness addresses this idea:

From the shortest texts and tweets to the humblest website, to the angriest blog, to the most visited social networks, the daily communications of the wired world attest that everyone is now in the business of relentless self-promotion—presenting themselves, explaining themselves, defending themselves, selling themselves or sharing their inner thoughts and emotions as never before in human history. That is why it can be said that we are in the grand secular age of apologetics. The whole world has taken up apologetics without ever knowing the idea as Christians understand it. We are all apologists now, if only on behalf of "the Daily Me" or "the Tweeted Update" that we post for our virtual friends and our cyber community. The great goals of life, we are told, are to gain the widest possible public attention and to reach as many people in the world with our products—and always, our leading product is Us. (Guinness, FT, 15–16)

Reason #2: Apologetics Strengthens Believers

Reason #3: Apologetics Helps Students Hang On to Their Faith

Reason #4: Apologetics Helps with Evangelism

Reason #5: Apologetics Helps Shape Culture

Doing Philosophy as a Christian: The Example of Justin Martyr (2016)

<https://credohouse.org/blog/doing-philosophy-as-a-christian>

“... I elaborate on the example of Justin Martyr, whose life points the way for those wishing to engage in philosophy as Christians. Due to space limitations, I wasn’t able to include this portion in my forthcoming book; so I post it here...” [select link to see full article]

See also: [Evangelism](#)

[There’s a New Day Dawning](#)

For information related to apologetics see my separate reference resources:

Notes on Paul and Romans (and Galatians plus Ephesians).

Christian Scholarship: Biblical – Theological – Philosophical

above also discuss Paul’s Use of Greek Philosophy as an apologetic tool, etc.

Prayer

Since prayer is an integral part of the praxis of The Gospel and evangelism, it was decided to add at least a short section on the topic.

How to Pray

<http://christianity.stackexchange.com/questions/2157/to-whom-should-we-pray-to-the-father-or-the-son-jesus-or-the-holy-spirit>

<http://www.bible.ca/ntx-praying-to-jesus.htm>

<http://www.biblefood.com/prayer.html>

Prayer of Salvation (Example prayer to God):

*"Father,
I know that I have broken your laws and my sins have separated me from you. I am truly sorry, and now I want to turn away from my past sinful life toward you. Please forgive me, and help me avoid sinning again. I believe that your son, Jesus Christ died for my sins, was resurrected from the dead, is alive, and hears my prayer. I invite Jesus to become the Lord of my life, to rule and reign in my heart from this day forward. Please send your Holy Spirit to help me obey You, and to do Your will for the rest of my life.
In Jesus' name I pray, Amen."*

Prayer of Salvation - I've Prayed It; Now What?

If you've prayed this prayer of salvation with true conviction and heart, you are now a follower of Jesus. This is a fact, whether or not you feel any different. Religious systems may have led you to believe that you should feel something - a warm glow, a tingle, or some other mystical experience. The fact is, you may, or you may not. If you have prayed the prayer of salvation and meant it, you are now a follower of Jesus. The Bible tells us that your eternal salvation is secure! *"that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved"* (Romans 10:9).

[Source: <http://www.allaboutgod.com/prayer-of-salvation.htm>]

<http://www.salvationprayer.info/prayer.html>

The Jesus Prayer (a Prayer of the Heart)

The Jesus Prayer is very simple:

"Lord Jesus Christ Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner,"

<http://www.orthodoxprayer.org/Jesus%20Prayer.html>

<http://www.goarch.org/ourfaith/ourfaith7104>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus_Prayer

http://www.copticheritage.org/orthodoxy/tradition_of_the_jesus_prayer

<http://gravitycenter.com/practice/breath-prayer/>

<http://www.peterkreeft.com/topics-more/jesus-prayer.htm>

A.C.T.S.

Consider this acronym for prayer "**A.C.T.S.**": **A**doration, **C**onfession, **T**hanksgiving and **S**upplication.

So, ACTS means: Talk to him, telling him how much you love him; confess your sins; thank him for what he has done for you that you could never repay, and pray for supplying the needs of others.

The Lord's Prayer

<http://www.jesuschristsavior.net/Prayer.html>

Examples of Prayer by Jesus – Learning from the Prayer Life of Jesus

Why did Jesus pray?

One way we can learn to pray is by looking at the prayer life of Jesus. Although the Gospels don't provide a detailed biography of Christ, they do offer captivating glimpses into His prayer life. First, however, it will be helpful to answer the question, "Why did Jesus pray?" This is sometimes puzzling for Christians. After all, if Jesus is God, why did Christ need to pray?

Theologically speaking, there are at least three reasons that Jesus prayed. First, Jesus prayed as an example to his followers. This is an example we continue to learn from, as this article demonstrates. Second, the Incarnation consists of both divine and human natures. From His human nature, it was perfectly natural for a Jewish believer such as Christ to pray. Third, the nature of the Trinity allows for communication between its members. As God the Son, Jesus could pray to God the Father.

Jesus and Prayer

Jesus prayed for others. In Matthew 19:13, we read, "Then little children were brought to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them." Despite the fact that "the disciples rebuked those who brought them," Jesus said the children should not be hindered "for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these" (v. 14). In John 17:9 we read, "I [Jesus] pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given Me, for they are Yours." This underscores the need for intercessory prayer.

Jesus prayed with others. Luke 9:28 reads, "[Jesus] took Peter, John and James with Him and went up onto a mountain to pray." Jesus prayed alone, as we'll read below, but He also knew the value of praying with others. Acts 1:14 underscores the importance of Christians praying with one another: "They all joined together constantly in prayer ..."

Jesus prayed alone. Luke 5:16 reads, "But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed." As much as Jesus understood the value of praying with and for others, He also understood the need to pray alone. Psalm 46:10 reads, "Be still, and know that I am God." Sometimes it's important for us to "be still" before God, but the only way to do this, especially in our hectic culture, is to do so alone with God.

Jesus prayed in nature. Psalm 19:1 reads, "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands." What better place to commune with our Creator than among the wonders of nature? Luke 6:12 says, "One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray ..." He could have gone to a home, a synagogue or if He were near Jerusalem he could have gone to the temple to pray. But there were times when Jesus made the decision to pray where He was, which often happened to be in nature. We are surrounded by so much that is "man made" that sometimes it's difficult for us to remember that this is not our world, but God's world (Genesis 1:1, Psalm 24:1) full of wonders for us to enjoy.

Jesus could pray as a sprinter or a marathon runner. The Lord's Prayer is full of wisdom, but it is short enough to be easily memorized and serve as an example of a sprint rather than a marathon prayer. But Jesus also knew how to dedicate long periods of time to prayer. As we read in Luke 6:12, Jesus "spent

the night praying to God." We, too, need to be able to offer short prayers, as well dedicate long periods of our lives to prayer.

Jesus prayed regularly. This insight is gleaned from a passage cited earlier, Luke 5:16: "Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed." The word "often" is not hidden, but makes it obvious that Jesus prayed regularly. Throughout the Gospels whenever we read of Jesus and prayer, it comes up regularly and naturally. It was simply a part of His worldview, integrated into every aspect of Christ's life. Can we say the same about prayer in our life?

The prayers of Jesus were heartfelt. Jesus did not pray in a cold, distant manner, but in heartfelt supplication, demonstrating empathy and a genuine love for God. This is demonstrated clearly in John 17, where Jesus prays for Himself, His immediate disciples, as well as for all believers.

Jesus prayed based on His knowledge of God and His truths. The prayers of Jesus were based on God's revealed truths and, as such, were in line with a solid biblical worldview. In John 4:24 Jesus said, "God is spirit, and His worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth." He also said, "the truth will set you free" (John 8:32), underscoring the importance of truth in the life of Jesus and, in turn, our lives. Proper prayer requires us to have a truthful understanding of God and what He has revealed to us through His Word.

Jesus taught persistence in prayer. "Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up" (Luke 18:1). The parable Jesus shared is not meant to depict a pestering disciple who finally bugs God enough that He chooses to respond, but about persistence in prayer and waiting on God and His timing.

Jesus knew that not all his prayers would be answered as expected. This is a difficult prayer lesson to learn, but the fact of the matter is that not all our prayers are answered in ways we expect. Even Jesus knew this hard lesson as he cried out to God the Father from Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36-44). Three times Jesus prayed for God to allow an easier path, but Jesus knew, "Yet not as I will, but as You will" (26:39). Unanswered prayer is such a challenge to the Christian life that we'll address the matter in more detail in another article in this series.

As You Will

When Jesus prayed in Gethsemane, "Yet not as I will, but as You will," He offered a tremendous but seemingly simple insight into prayer: God is in charge. As we learn from the prayer life of Jesus – and there is much to learn – we need to keep this overarching principle in mind. A disciple asked Jesus, "Lord, teach us to pray," (Luke 11:1) and in response was taught the Lord's Prayer. But by studying the prayer life of Jesus, we can learn not only the important truths of the Lord's Prayer, but so much more.

Robert Velarde is author of Conversations with C.S. Lewis (InterVarsity Press), The Heart of Narnia (NavPress), and primary author of The Power of Family Prayer (National Day of Prayer Task Force). He studied philosophy of religion and [apologetics](#) at Denver Seminary and is pursuing graduate studies in philosophy at Southern Evangelical Seminary.

[1] Unless otherwise noted all Scripture quotations are from the New International Version of the Bible.

[Source: <http://www.focusonthefamily.com/faith/faith-in-life/prayer/learning-from-the-prayer-life-of-jesus/>]

<http://www.prayers-of-jesus.info/>

<http://www.religioustolerance.org/prayer.htm>

10 Verses about the Power of Prayer:

<http://www.whatchristianswanttoknow.com/10-awesome-bible-verses-about-the-power-of-prayer/>

The Proactive Structure of the Lord's Prayer (John Rankin)

<https://revjohnrankin.blogspot.com/2018/01/the-proactive-structure-of-lords-prayer.html>

Excerpt:

There are four all-defining subjects within the prayer. Here they are, followed by each of the four lines of the prayer from the original Greek:

1. Family – Our Father in the heavens, holy is your Name.
2. Politics – Your kingdom come, your will be done, in heaven and on earth.
3. Economics – Give us today our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.
4. Spiritual Warfare – And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

I teach a whole 2-3 hour seminar unpacking this prayer, and go into the reasons why I believe such a translation is accurate. For here, focusing on the clause in question, let me make these observations.

1. The prayer involves a) complete dependency on the goodness of God's kingship, b) calling for his kingdom to come, and thus c) acting in life accordingly.
2. If we do not know how this is the foundation for an overcoming proactive faith (e.g., the letters to the seven churches in Revelation, v. 2:7 and its repetitions), we can easily slip into a passive, defensive mode.
3. So whereas it is folly to seek to oppose the evil one on our own initiatives, it is folly not to take the authority, led by the Spirit, to drive out demons in personal and political contexts, as Jesus commissioned his disciples.
4. When Jesus is led by the Spirit into the testings/temptations of the devil, he is the One with the proactive power to defeat the evil one. We pray that God will not lead us into the same testing, but based on what Jesus has done, to take his victory his employ it actively in his Name.

The Prayer that Turned the World Upside Down (Albert Mohler)

<https://albertmohler.com/2018/01/23/prayer-turns-world-upside/>

Except:

*This article is an excerpt from my new book, **The Prayer that Turns the World Upside Down: The Lord's Prayer as a Manifesto for Revolution**....*

We long for revolution. Something within us cries out that the world is horribly broken and must be fixed. For centuries, the word *revolution* was scarcely heard, buried under ages of oppression. The word itself was feared and speaking it was treason. And then, revolutions seemed to appear almost everywhere.

Some historians have gone so far as to identify our modern epoch as "The Age of Revolution." Is it? Perhaps it is more accurate to refer to our times as "The Age of Failed Revolution." Looking across the landscape it becomes clear that very few revolutions produce what they promise. Arguably, most revolutions lead to a worse set of conditions than they replaced.

And yet, we still yearn for radical change, for things to be made right. We rightly long to see righteousness and truth and justice prevail. We are actually desperate for what no earthly revolution can produce. We long for the Kingdom of God, and for Jesus as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. We are looking for a kingdom that will never end and a King whose rule is perfect.

This is why Christians pray the Lord's Prayer. This is the very prayer that Jesus taught his own disciples to pray. So Christians pray this prayer as a way of learning *how* to pray and *what* to pray – as Jesus teaches us to pray.

The Lord's Prayer is the prayer that turns the world upside down. Are you looking for revolution? There is no clearer call to revolution than when we pray "*Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*" But this is a revolution only God can bring ... and He will.

This short prayer turns the world upside down. Principalities and powers hear their fall. Dictators are told their time is up. Might will indeed be made right and truth and justice will prevail. The kingdoms of this world will all pass, giving way to the Kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ.

It all comes down to one of the shortest prayers found in the Bible. The Lord's Prayer takes less than 20 seconds to read aloud, but it takes a lifetime to learn. Sadly, most Christians rush through the prayer without learning it – but that is to miss the point completely.

Perhaps this is part of a larger problem. Gary Millar, who has written some enormously helpful resources on prayer, goes so far as to argue that "the evangelical church is slowly but surely giving up on prayer." The statement is shocking, but the truth of his assessment is even more shocking. Why are evangelicals giving up on prayer?

Millar suggests that life is easy for most evangelicals – perhaps too easy. Some of us lack the desperation that most Christians have experienced throughout church history. Desperation leads to prayer. We are also incredibly distracted and busy. Both are enemies of prayer. But giving up on prayer is not only a sign of evangelical weakness. It is disobedience.

Jesus did not only teach his disciples to pray – he commanded us to pray.

I think there is another big reason behind the fact that so many Christians do not pray. Many Christians simply do not know how to pray.

In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus teaches us how to pray.

We remember Martin Luther as the great Reformer, nailing his famous 95 theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany in 1517 and leading the Reformation of the church. What we do not so often remember is that Martin Luther was also a man who regularly needed a haircut. We should be very glad that he did.

Luther's barber, Peter Beskendorf once asked Luther for advice on how to pray. Luther responded by writing instructions on prayer he called "A Simple Way to Pray, for Master Peter the Barber."

Luther pointed his barber to the Lord's Prayer, and he offered this incredibly helpful advice:

"So, as a diligent and good barber, you must keep your thoughts, senses, and eyes precisely on the hair and scissors or razor and not forget where you trimmed or shaved, for, if you want to talk a lot or become distracted thinking about something else, you might well cut someone's nose or mouth or even his throat."

We get Luther's point immediately. We must learn to pray, and to resist distractions in prayer. Advice about cutting hair or shaving is easy to understand. A distracted barber is a dangerous barber. Luther applied the lesson well: "How much more does a prayer need to have the undivided attention of the whole heart alone, if it is to be a good prayer!"

We have much to learn about prayer, and the Lord's Prayer is the right place to start. This is no tame prayer for safe times. This is the prayer that turns the world upside down.

Praying in Public, Especially at Civic Events (must we end with the words, "In Jesus Name"?)

Point of View: <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/markdroberts/series/praying-in-the-name-of-jesus/>

Most conservative Christians tend to downplay Jesus' instruction (Matthew 6:5-6) about the importance of going off by oneself and pray alone and in secret. After all, if public prayer is not permitted, then just about every Christian service is seriously in error, with the possible exception of some by the Society of Friends (Quakers). Conservatives interpret Matthew 6:5 as not condemning public prayer. Rather, it criticizes only that prayer in public that is motivated by a desire to show off. Prayer "*may be offered in any circumstances, however open, if not promoted by the spirit of ostentation...*" ¹

[Source: <http://www.religioustolerance.org/prayer.htm>]

High Priestly Prayer

The high priestly prayer is a prayer spoken by Jesus Christ about himself, his disciples, and his later followers, as recorded in John 17. This prayer is the special prayer of the Lord, and may be regarded as the sole example furnished by the evangelists of our Lord's method of prayer. The thanksgiving in Matthew 11:25 is the only other instance of any extent in the report of the prayers of Jesus, but even that is brief compared to what is here furnished. The fullness of this prayer clearly shows that it was uttered in the hearing of the disciples.

Their relation to it is remarkable. Auditors, they yet could not share in it. At the same time, it was a profound revelation to them both of the relation of the Master to God, and the character of the work which He had come to perform, and the part which they were to take in it. John gives us no hint as to the place in which it was spoken; John 14:31 indicates a departure from the upper room. But apparently the prayer was offered where the discourses of John 15 and 16 were delivered.

[Source: <http://www.religionfacts.com/library/isbe/high-priestly-prayer>]

Q: #204. How many times did Jesus pray in the Bible?

A: The Bible tells us in (1 Th 5:17) to "pray without ceasing."

While I don't believe this literally means to *never* stop praying, I would say that Jesus probably came closer to never stopping than any person who has ever lived on this planet. He was continually in a prayer mode.

He is shown to pray:

alone (Mt 14:23)(Mk 1:35)(Lk 9:18)(Lk 22:39-41),
in public (Jn 11:41-42)(Jn 12:27-30),
before meals (Mt 26:26)(Mk 8:6)(Lk 24:30)(Jn 6:11),
before important decisions (Lk 6:12-13),
before healing (Mk 7:34-35),
after healing (Lk 5:16),
to do the Father's will (Mt 26:36-44), among other things.

He also taught on the importance of prayer (Mt 21:22)(Mk 11:24-26)(Mt 7:7-11)(Lk 11:9-13)(Jn 14:13-14)(Jn 15:7,16)(Jn 16:23-24)(Mt 5:44)(Lk 6:27-28)(Mt 6:5-15: including the Lord's Prayer)(Lk 11:2-4)(Mt 18:19-20).

If you take all of the places (in the Bible) that show Jesus praying, you will have a PERFECT outline of how to pray (check out Jn 17).

Below are all of the verses I could find in the Gospels that show Jesus praying.

(Lk 3:21-22) At His Baptism.

(Mk 1:35-36) In the morning before heading to Galilee.

(Lk 5:15) After healing people.

(Lk 6:12-13) Praying all night before choosing His 12 disciples.

(Mt 11:25-26) While speaking to the Jewish leaders.

(Jn 6:11) Giving thanks to the Father before feeding 5000.

(Also see: Mt 14:19, Mk 6:41, Lk 9:16)

(Mt 14:22) Before walking on water.

(Also see: Mk 6:46, Jn 6:15)

(Mk 7:31-37) While healing a deaf and mute man.

(Mt 15:36) Giving thanks to the Father before feeding 4000.

(Also see: Mk 8:6-7)

(Lk 9:18) Before Peter called Jesus "the Christ."

(Lk 9:28-29) At the Transfiguration.

(Lk 10:21) At the return of the seventy.

(Lk 11:1) Before teaching His disciples the Lord's Prayer.

(Jn 11:41-42) Before raising Lazarus from the dead.

(Mt 19:13-15) Laying hands on and praying for little children.

(Also see: Mk 10:13-16, Lk 18:15-17)

(Jn 12:27-28) Asking the Father to glorify His name.

(Mt 26:26) At the Lord's Supper.

(Also see: Mk 14:22-23, Lk 22:19)

(Lk 22:31-32) Prayed for Peter's faith when Satan asked to "sift" him.

(Jn 17:1-26) Prayed for Himself, His disciples, and all believers just before heading to Gethsemane.

(Mt 26:36-46) In Gethsemane before His betrayal. (He prayed 3 separate prayers.)

(Also see: Lk 22:39-46, Mk 14:32-42)

(Lk 23:34) Right after being nailed to the cross, Jesus prayed, "Father forgive them; for they know not what they do."

(Mt 27:46) While dying on the cross, Jesus cried out, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

(Also see: Mk 15:34)

(Lk 23:46) In His dying breath, Jesus prayed, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.

(Lk 24:30) Prayed a blessing on the bread before He ate with others after His resurrection.

(Lk 24:50-53) He blessed the disciples before His Ascension.

There are also verses outside of the Gospels that show us that even though Jesus is now in Heaven, He is still making intercession on our behalf (Rom 8:34)(Heb 7:25)(Heb 9:24)(1 Jn 2:1).

[Source: <http://jesusalive.cc/ques204.htm>]

Prayer

Human Influence & Responsibility

- "You do not have, because you do not ask God." -James 4:2
 - "For no matter how many promises God has made, they are 'Yes' in Christ. And so through him the 'Amen' is spoken by us to the glory of God." - 2 Corinthians 1:20
 - "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened." Matthew 7:7-8

Believer/Priest in Christ before God

- "I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it." John 14:13-14
 - "Since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, . . . let us draw near to God." Heb. 9:19 (also 1 Pt.2:5, 9; Rev. 1:6)

Types of Prayer (Ep.6:18)

1. Confession-1 Jn.1:9; Daniel 9:5
2. Adoration/Praise-Ps.34:11; 103:1
3. Thanksgiving-Col.4:2; Phil.4:6
4. Petitions/Supplications/Requests- James 1:5-8; Ps.142:1; Heb.5:7
5. Intercession for Others- James 5:16; Acts 8:24; 2 Timothy 2:1

How To Pray

1. Persistence-Luke 11:5-9; 18:1; Ephesians 6:18
2. Boldness/Confidence - Heb. 4:16
3. Reverence-Is. 66:2; Ps.111:9; 89:7
4. Alert - Col.4:2; Luke 21:26
5. Forgiving - Mt.6:12-15; 18:21-35; Ephesians 4:32.

Steps to Prayer

1. Confession - Psalm 66:18
2. Thanksgiving - Ephesians 5:20
3. Intercession - Ephesians 6:18
4. Petition for Needs - Eph. 6:18

Hindrances to Prayer

1. Lack of Faith - Matt. 21:22; Mark 11:24; Phil.4:6 (anxious)
2. Wrong Motive - James 4:2-3
3. Sin - Psalm 66:18
4. Hard Heart to others - Prov. 21:13
5. Strife in home - 1 Peter 3:7
6. Pride - Job 35:12-13
7. Carnal/No Spirit - Eph. 6:18
8. Disobedience/Rebellion- Eph.6:18
9. Against God's General Will - 1 Jn. 5:14-15 (Must know God's Word)
10. Against God's Specific Will - 2 Cor.12:8-9 (Trust Unknown Plan)

Breakdown of the Lord's Prayer

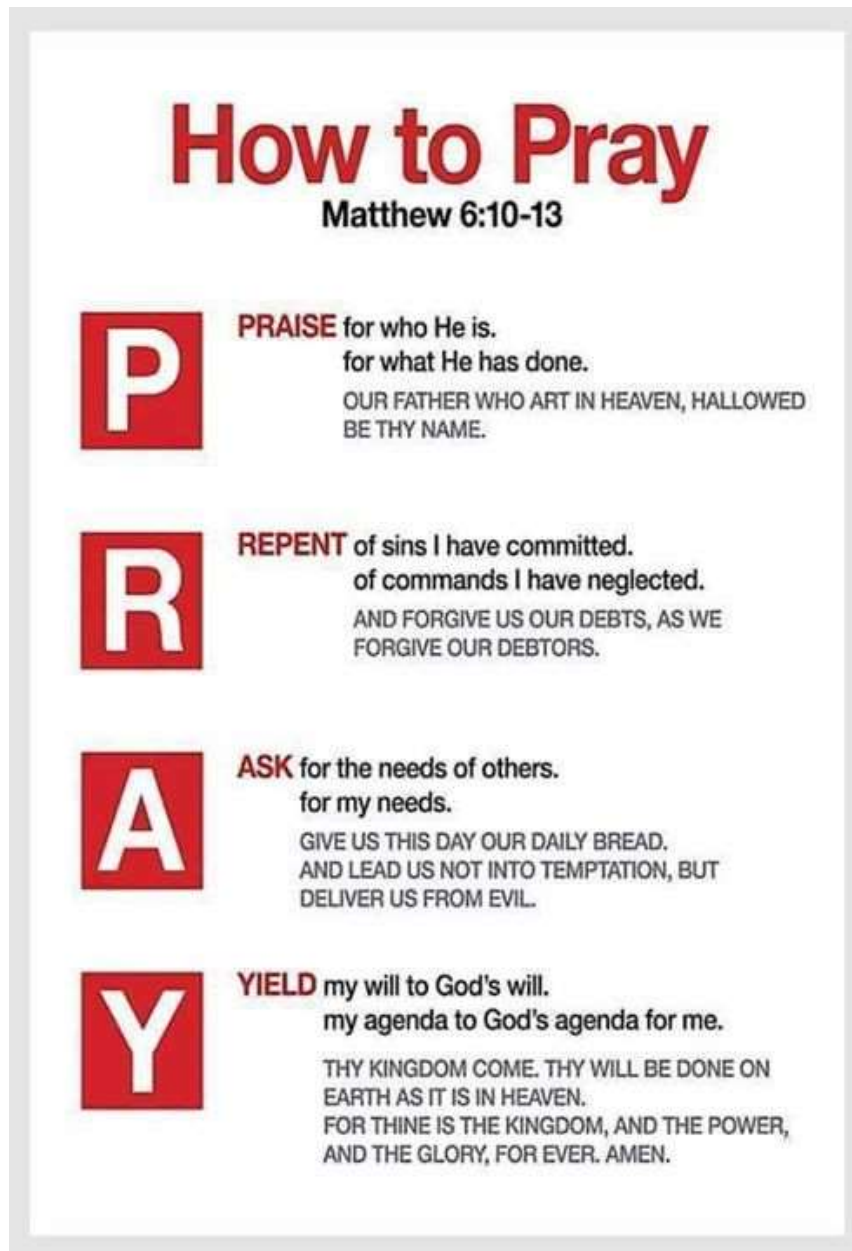
Our Father - close, personal , familiar relationship with God
in heaven - his abode and seat of sovereign rule is highest possible
hallowed be your name - familiarity and sonship does not diminish our awe, fear and respect of our God
your kingdom come - God's ultimate will is the coming of his Son's rulership and kingdom. You desire the fulfillment of this.
your will be done - You desire, first, that God's will be done
on earth as it is in heaven - You desire God's will, not the will of man, nor your will, be done on earth in fullness and completion.
Give us today our daily bread - you also have your own will and desires that agree with God's but go beyond his general plan and will
Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.-Forgive
Lead us not into temptation - Pray for your battle with sin & temptation
deliver us from the evil one - reject the counter kingdom of darkness; ask for deliverance from situations



www.generationword.com

A Warning Against Lazy Praying - Tim Conway

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2To_M6z3Itk [Video]



See also: [Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Return to the beginning: [Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Who I am in Christ

My Identity

I am Accepted...

Jn. 1:12	I am God's child.
Jn. 15:15	I am Christ's friend.
Rom. 5:1	I have been justified.
1 Cor. 6:17	I am united with the Lord (one spirit).
1 Cor. 6:19-20	I am bought with a price; I belong to God.
1 Cor. 12:27	I am a member of Christ's Body.
Eph. 1:1	I am a saint.
Eph. 1:5	I have been adopted as God's child.
Eph. 2:18	I have access to God thru the Holy Spirit.
Col. 1:14	I have been redeemed and forgiven.
Col. 2:10	I am complete in Christ.

I am Secure...

Rom. 8:1-2	I am free forever from condemnation.
Rom. 8:28	I am assured all works together for good.
Rom. 8:31-34	I am free from any charge against me.
Rom. 8:35-39	I cannot be separated from the love of God.
2 Cor. 1:21-22	I am established, anointed, sealed by God.
Col. 3:3	I am hidden with Christ in God.
Phil. 1:6	I am confident that the good work God has begun in me will be perfected.
Phil. 3:20	I am a citizen of heaven.
2 Tim. 1:7	I have not been given a spirit of fear, but of power, love and a sound mind.
Heb. 4:16	I can find grace and mercy in time of need.
1 Jn. 5:18	I am born of God; the evil one cannot touch me.

I am Significant...

Matt. 5:13-14	I am the salt and light of the earth.
Jn. 15:1,5	I am a branch of the true vine, a channel of His life.
Jn. 15:16	I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit.
Acts 1:8	I am a personal witness of Christ's.
1 Cor. 3:16	I am God's temple.
2 Cor. 5:17-21	I am a minister of reconciliation for God.
2 Cor. 6:1	I am God's co-worker (1 Cor. 3:9).
Eph. 2:6	I am seated with Christ in the heavenly realm.
Eph. 2:10	I am God's workmanship.
Eph. 3:12	I may approach God with freedom and confidence.
Phil. 4:13	I can do all things thru Christ who strengthens me.

"Understanding your identity in Christ is absolutely essential for your success at living a victorious Christian life!"

Dr. Neil T. Anderson, *Who I Am in Christ*
(Gospel Light, 1993)



Satan's Lie

You are a sinner because you sin.

Your identity comes from what you have done.

Your identity comes from what people say about you.

Your behavior tells you what to believe about yourself.

God's Truth

You are a saint (one declared righteous by God) who sins.

Your identity comes from what God has done for you.

Your identity comes from what God says about you.

Your belief about yourself determines your behavior.

Dr. Timothy Warner, *Resolving Spiritual Conflicts and Cross-Cultural Ministry*
(Freedom in Christ Ministries, 1993)

Bookmark Front:
Dr. Neil T. Anderson, *Victory Over the Darkness*
(Gospel Light, 1990)

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What is the Gospel?...

The “Gospel” is the “Good News” that...

Everyone is saved who believes in Jesus Christ: that He...

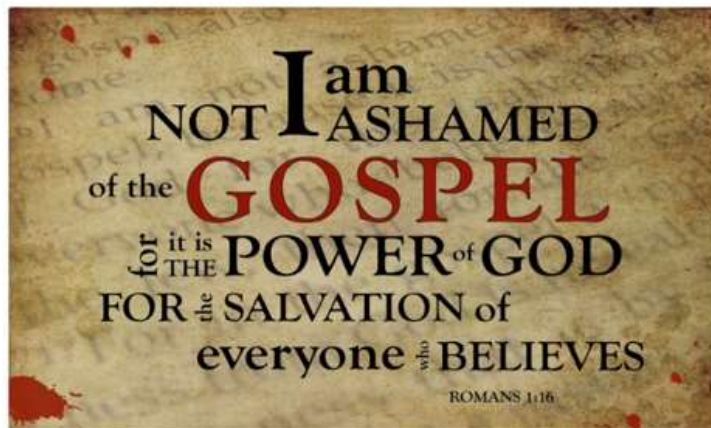
	Died on a cross / for the Forgiveness of our Sins	[as foretold by OT Prophets in Scripture],
	He was Buried / then was Raised up on the 3 rd day (Resurrection)	[as per OT Prophets].
	Witnesses after Jesus arose: Apostles ate and drank with Him; over 500 men/women saw.	
	Why Preach? – commanded by Jesus; of first/highest importance; and to warn you that	
	Jesus was appointed [Lord] by God to reign over everything and to judge the living and the dead	

NOTE: The order of this information does NOT matter. NO gospel presentation is complete without emphasizing Jesus' resurrection and that Jesus was appointed ruler (Lord) and judge over all.

Exact wording is not required as long as the essence of the Gospel is clear and complete.

The above summary of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is based on Paul's and Peter's (via Luke's Book of Acts) explicit statements of the Gospel (see: 1 Cor. 15:1-11, 20-28; Acts 10:34-38, 39-45 re: Peter's presentation of the Gospel to the Gentile Roman Centurion Cornelius). Other similar statements of the Gospel are found in Rom. 1:1-5; Acts 17:16-34 (Paul's speech at Mars Hill, Athens) and to a lesser extent, 2 Tim. 2:8-10.

[“Christ” = from *Christos*, the Greek word for the Hebrew “Messiah” = “Anointed One of God”; i.e., Jesus the Messiah]



Legend:

	Saved / Believes in Jesus:
	Died/Sins/Scriptures
	Buried/Resurrection
	Witnesses
	Why Preach
	Appointed by God / Lord

Submit your comments, suggestions, questions to: gospel@timoninc.com

Note: The “Gospels” are books (by four writers) in the Bible that are accounts (reportings) of Jesus’ life, messages/teachings (including his “Gospel” or “Good News” of salvation), his death and resurrection. There are four of them in the beginning of the New Testament.

For Details see: [The Gospel of Jesus the Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

See also my other separate reference resources:

Christian Scholarship: Biblical – Theological – Philosophical

The Complete Sayings of Jesus – NKJV with Appendix

(Note: NKJV is primary text to make reading easier, except when it varies significantly from the original KJV or a different translation text is clearer and/or more accurate.)

Mere Christianity – C.S. Lewis

For information on the writings of Paul and the New Perspectives on Paul, including Romans and related topics, plus various N.T. Wright (and other scholars) related resources, see “[Reference Notes on Paul and Romans](#)” (and Galatians plus Ephesians).

NOTE: For issues and details related to Heaven and life after death, as well as covering related topics and including different perspectives (including N.T. Wright) - see “[Reference Notes on Heaven](#)” (based in part on the book, *Heaven*, by Randy Alcorn).