

What is the Gospel?

I. What is the Gospel?

A. Often seen as the rules we must live by and the doctrines we must believe to be a Christian

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. (Ro 1:16 NIV)

¹ 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. ² By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. ³ For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵ and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. (1 Co 15:1–5 NIV)

II. The Gospel before the cross?

¹⁶ John answered them all, “I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” ¹⁸ And with many other words John exhorted the people and proclaimed the good news (Gk. ‘euangelion’) to them. (Lk 3:16–18 NIV)

¹⁴ After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. ¹⁵ “The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!” (Mk 1:14–15 NIV)

⁸ Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you.” (Ga 3:8 NIV)

III. What would a first century Jew have thought of when they heard ‘the Gospel’?

A. The Good News of Israel’s redemption

⁹ You who bring good news (LXX ‘euangelizomai’) to Zion, go up on a high mountain. You who bring good news to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with a shout, lift it up, do not be afraid; say to the towns of Judah, “Here is your God!” ¹⁰ See, the Sovereign LORD comes with power, and he rules with a mighty arm. See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him. ¹¹ He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young. (Is 40:9–11 NIV)

¹ The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, ² to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, (Is 61:1–2 NIV)

B. The trajectory of the Gospel is global peace and everlasting joy on the earth

² *In the last days the mountain of the LORD's temple will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and all nations will stream to it.* ³ *Many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.* ⁴ *He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.* (Is 2:2–4 NIV)

IV. The Storyline of the Bible

A. The story of the Bible is a story of restoration, not annihilation

³ *And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God."* ⁴ *'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.'* ⁵ *He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!"* Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." (Re 21:3–5 NIV)

¹ *Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb* ² *down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.* ³ *No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him.* ⁴ *They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.* (Re 22:1–4 NIV)

B. The Bible often uses the language of 'this age' and 'the age to come' to describe this

³² *Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.* (Mt 12:32 NIV)

²⁰ *he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms,* ²¹ *far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.* (Eph 1:20–21 NIV)

C. The coming of the Messiah will put an end to this age, and begin the age to come

⁶ *Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"* ⁷ *He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority."* ⁸ *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."* ⁹ *After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.* ¹⁰ *They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when*

