



SEPTEMBER 6, 2020

GRACE  
FELLOWSHIP

## Discussion Starter #1: Why do you think the gospel is called “good news”?

**Key Passage:** “Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, <sup>2</sup> which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, <sup>3</sup> concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh <sup>4</sup> and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, <sup>5</sup> through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, <sup>6</sup> including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.” (Romans 1:1-6)

The word “gospel” occurs 93 times exclusively in the New Testament, and means “good news.” Broadly speaking, the gospel refers to the whole of the Bible; more specifically, the gospel refers to the good news concerning Jesus Christ and salvation. Of course, to appreciate the good news we must start with the bad news.

### What’s the Bad News?

#### 1. We are all sinners by nature and by choice.

The sin nature is that aspect in humans that makes us rebellious against God. We each have a natural inclination to sin. When given the choice to do God’s will or our own will, we will naturally choose to do our own will. Romans 3:23 says, “*All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*”

#### 2. Our sin keeps us from holy God’s presence today and will ultimately result in physical death and eternal separation from Him in Hell.

Isaiah 59:2 says, “*Your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.*” Romans 6:23 says, “*The wages of sin is death...*” Matthew 25:46 says, “*These [the unrighteous] will go away into eternal punishment [Hell].*”

#### 3. Because we are sinners, we cannot do anything to earn our way into the favor or presence of holy God.

Romans 3:10 says, “*There is no one righteous.*” Our best human efforts to please God are “*as filthy rags*” (Isaiah 64:6).

**Discuss:** Why do you think many people are hesitant to admit that they are sinners?

**Discuss:** Why do you think many people are reluctant to believe that Hell is real?

**Discuss:** Why is it necessary to understand bad news in order to appreciate good news?

## What's the Good News?

The key to understanding the gospel is to know why it's good news. There are many reasons why the gospel is good news! Here are four of those reasons:

- The gospel is the good news that even though we cannot earn our salvation, the work of redemption and justification is complete, having been finished on the cross by Jesus (John 19:30).
- The gospel is the good news that we, who were once enemies of God, have been reconciled by the blood of Christ and adopted into the family of God (Romans 5:10).
- The gospel is the good news that *"there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus"* (Romans 8:1).
- The gospel is good news because our salvation and eternal life in heaven are guaranteed through Christ (John 14:1-4).

**Discuss:** Which of the four reasons listed above of why the gospel is good news is most meaningful to you today?

## What is the Gospel?

The essentials of the gospel are stated in 1 Corinthians 15:3-6: *"For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup> that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, <sup>5</sup> and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. <sup>6</sup> Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep."* Notice four important truths about the gospel according to 1 Corinthians 15:3-6:

- The gospel is from God; it is not man-made. Paul *"received"* (v.3) the gospel from God and then *"delivered it"* (v.3). God is the Source and Force behind the gospel.
- The gospel is *"of first importance"* (v.3). Everywhere the apostles went, they preached the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ.
- The gospel is evidenced by proofs: *"Christ died for our sins"* (proven by His burial), and *"was raised on the third day"* (proven by the eyewitnesses) (v.4).
- The gospel was completed *"in accordance with the Scriptures"* (v.3-4). The theme of the entire Bible is the salvation of humanity through Christ.

**Discuss:** Which of the four truths about the gospel according to 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 (above) is most meaningful to you today?

**Discuss:** Briefly tell about your personal experience with the gospel and how you came to know Christ.