

Starting Point

Detailed Outline

The Gospel: What is the Gospel?

1. The word “gospel” simply means “good news.” In order for there to be good news, there first has to be some bad news. The bad news is the devastating reality of sin.

2. The Bad News

2.1. Sin separates us from God.

- “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.” Isaiah 59:2 (ESV)
- ”For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Romans 3:23 (ESV)

2.2. We are spiritually dead.

- “And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.” Ephesians 2:1-3 (ESV)

2.3. We are slaves to a nature opposed to God and His will and way for our life.

- “Jesus replied, ‘Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin.’” John 8:34

2.4. Because of sin, physical death and its effects entered into the World.

- “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” John 10:10

3. The Good News

3.1. Even while we were in sin God loved us!

- “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:8

3.2. Because of His love for us, God designed a plan to rescue and redeem us.

- “Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.” Ephesians 1:4-5 (NLT)

3.3. *When Jesus died on the cross, He took our sin upon himself. This is called “Substitutionary Atonement.” Basically, it means that Jesus died in our place, paying the penalty for our sin.*

- “He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; ‘by his wounds you have been healed.’” 1 Peter 2:24
- “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” 2 Corinthians 5:21

3.4. *In Jesus, God’s gift to us is not only life with Him in eternity, but a life in this present world that experiences forgiveness, purpose, and fullness.*

- “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 6:23 (ESV)
- “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” John 10:10

4. How do we respond?

4.1. *What’s a Christian?* The term “Christian” simply means “Christ’s one” or “of Christ.” The question then becomes, “How do I come to belong to Christ?” In the Bible, Jesus Himself and the earliest Christian leaders (called the Apostles) taught people to do these basic things in order to be considered “of Christ.”

4.2. *Believe:* Believe that Jesus is God’s Son who died to pay for your sins, that He rose from the dead, and is alive today. The biblical term for this is “faith.”(John 3:16; 2 Corinthians 15:2-4; Ephesians 2:8-9)

- It is important to note that “faith” is not merely intellectual agreement with facts. Instead it is an understanding that leads to action. What are the initial actions of “enacting” or “living out” this belief?
- “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16 (ESV)

4.3. *Confess:* Confess that Jesus is your Savior and Lord (Master/Leader). The Bible calls this “confession.”

- “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

4.4. *Repent:* Re-direct your life, all parts of your life, to the Lordship of Jesus. (Romans 10:9; Matthew 10:32-33).

- What does it mean to repent? Repentance simply means to “change your mind and turn around.” After coming to belief in Jesus, you need to change your mind about who is in control of your life. You must give control of your life to God.
- “Change your hearts and lives and be baptized, each one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.” Acts 2:38 (NCV)

4.5. *Be Baptized*: Unite with Jesus Christ by being baptized.

4.5.1. *FAQ’s on Baptism*

- Do we teach salvation by works? We do not teach salvation is a good work that earns our salvation (works righteousness), but that baptism is how God has chosen for us to express our faith in Jesus.
- Who should get baptized? Those who are old enough to believe the gospel message.
- What if I was baptized as an Infant? Baptism is our personal pledge of faith to God, and not a decision that can be made for us. You can honor your past, without disregarding making your own pledge of faith in baptism.

4.5.2. *Why should I get baptized?*

- To follow the example of Jesus (Mark 1:9).
- To demonstrate your faith in Jesus (Acts 2:41).
- To follow the command of Jesus (Matt 28:19-20).

The Church: What is the Church?

1. The word “Church” in Greek is *ekklesia*, which means “assembly” or “the called out ones.” The idea behind this is that the church is the people who have been called out from the world to belong to God and follow Jesus. The church then, is primarily an identity of the followers of Jesus, and not a function people perform or building they gather inside of.

2. What’s the Mission

2.1. Love God and love others (The Great Commandment).

- “Jesus replied, ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself.’” Matthew 22:37-38

2.2. Make Disciples (The Great Commission)

- “Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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.” Matthew 28:18-20

2.3. What’s the purpose of the church?

2.4. *Evangelism*: Sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with others.

2.5. *Discipleship*: Helping others grow in their faith and love through the teaching of Jesus.

2.6. Stages of Discipleship:

2.6.1. Lost (you don’t know Jesus)

2.6.2. Believer (you trust and follow Jesus)

2.6.3. Worker (you are sharing Jesus with others)

2.6.4. Disciple-Maker (you are helping those you led to faith lead others to faith)

2.7. *Worship*: Praising God together in communion, prayer, singing, and preaching.

2.8. *Ministry*: Serving to meet the needs of others inside and outside the church.

2.9. *Fellowship*: Regularly sharing life with other Christians.

3. What does it mean to be the church?

3.1. The church is a body, not a business; an organism, not an organization.

- “And He is the head of the body, the church...” - Colossians 1:18 (NIV)

3.2. The church is a family, meaning we stress relationships rather than rules.

- “Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.” - Galatians 6:10 (NIV)

3.3. The church is a fellowship, therefore, unity and harmony are top priorities.

- “Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.” - Ephesians 4:3 (NIV)

3.4. The church is a flock, therefore it is cared for and led by shepherds.

- “Again Jesus said, ‘Simon son of John do you love me?’ He answered, ‘Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.’ Jesus said, ‘Take care of my sheep.’” - John 21:16 (NCV)

4. How is the church organized?

4.1. Jesus is the Chief Shepherd of the Church

4.2. Elders are the under-shepherds of the churches.

Core Beliefs: What do we believe?

1. The Restoration Movement's key ideas (begun early 1800s)
 - 1.1. Restore the Church. "We are not the only Christians, but we are Christians only."
 - 1.2. The Bible is our only authority. "No creed but Christ, no book but the Bible."
 - 1.3. Strive for unity! "In essential unity, In non-essentials, liberty, in all things, love."
 - 1.4. Reach the Lost. "We want to be one, that the world may be Won."
2. **Church Beliefs** (see website for extended description)
 - 2.1. **GOD:** We believe in One eternal God —Father, Son, Holy Spirit — Creator of all things visible and invisible (Gen 1:1-2, Dt. 6:4, Heb 11:3, Eph 1:9-10; Rev 13:8).
 - 2.2. **JESUS:** We believe Jesus is God's One and only Son who came to earth to die an atoning death for sin on the cross, rose from the dead, ascended to the Father, and will return again (John 3:16, Col 1:15; 2:9-15; 1 Cor 15:3-8, 20-28; 2 Cor 5:18-21; Heb 4:14-15).
 - 2.3. **HOLY SPIRIT:** We believe the Holy Spirit was sent to convict the world, empower the Church, and indwell believers (John 16:8-11; Acts 2:38; 2 Cor 3:17-18; Gal 3:2)
 - 2.4. **BIBLE:** We believe that the Bible is the infallible Word of God and the final authority for the church (Mark 12:36; John 14:26; 16:12-15; Acts 1:16; 1 Corinthians 2:12-13; 2 Timothy 3:14-16; 2 Peter 1:20-21).
 - 2.5. **MARRIAGE:** We believe that God established marriage to be a lifelong relationship between one man and one woman (Genesis 2:23-25; Exodus 20:14, 17, 22:19; Leviticus 18:1-20, 22-23; 20:11-21; Matthew 19:4-6, 9; Romans 1:18-31; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, 15-20; Hebrews 13:4, 1 Timothy 1:8-11; Jude 7).
 - 2.6. **HUMANITY:** We believe that all humans are created in the image of God, who willfully sinned and as a result are eternally lost apart from Jesus Christ (Gen 1:26-27; Gen 3; Rom 3:23; Eph 2:1-3).
 - 2.7. **SALVATION:** We believe that Salvation is only by God's grace through Christ death on the cross and resurrection from the dead (Rom 3:23; 5:1-2; 10:9, Acts 2:38, Gal 3:26-29; Eph 2:4-10, Col 2:11-13, 1 Peter 3:21)
 - 2.8. **CHURCH:** We believe the Church was founded by Jesus Christ with Him as the head, and consists of all believers who have surrendered their life to Jesus (Matt 16:13-20, 28:18-20; Acts 2:14-47; Eph 3:10; 4:11-13; Col 1:18; 1 Pet 2:9-10).

2.9. RETURN OF CHRIST: We believe in the second coming of Jesus and the bodily resurrection from the dead (Acts 1:11; 2 Thess 1:5-12; 1 Thess 4:13-18; Rev 20:11-15, 21:1-8).

Next Steps: What's my next step?

1. Come

1.1. Come to Church

1.2. Come to Christ

2. Connect

2.1. Connect through Small Groups, Bible Studies, and Sunday School class.

2.2. Connect by becoming a member of the church.

- You are ready to become a member when: 1) You are a baptized believer, 2) you agree with the beliefs of the church, 3) you agree with the Community Covenant.
- Community Covenant (what is expected of church members):
 - 1. I will protect the unity of my church.
 - I will share the responsibility of my church.
 - I will be involved in the life of my church.
 - I will support the testimony of my church.
 - I will commit to growing spiritually with my church.
- If you are ready to become a member contact the church office for further details.

3. Grow

3.1. Grow by serving the needs of those around you.

3.2. Grow by serving on a ministry team at the church.

4. Go

4.1. Share Christ with those you know and love.