

Good News

Framing The Good News

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Leader Notes

OVERVIEW: Welcome to our series, “The Good News!” In this 4-week series we will explore the Good News of Jesus and how it radically changes us when we embrace it. For part one we’ll dive into framing the Good News as the Bible’s core message about Jesus becoming king. We’ll ask questions like: What exactly is the Gospel? How do you define it? Who is it about?

ICEBREAKER: That Was Great News!

I remember well that moment when my wife, Merlene, said “yes” to my marriage proposal. Several years later I remember receiving the results that we were expecting baby #1 and then baby #2. These were times of great news! What memories do you have of receiving great news? Share your story with the group!

STUDY:

What is the gospel? Why do we call it Good News? How do I tell others about it? The goal of the first week of our series is that you would grow your understanding of and be able to articulate the crucial truths of the Gospel Message. Today’s study will help set us up for success in the rest of this series.

Note: Throughout this study we will reference Matthew W. Bates' book, *The Gospel Precisely*. It's a short, readable book that gives many insights into the topics we're looking at in this series. You can order a copy of it here. [Amazon Link](#)

WHAT IS THE GOOD NEWS?

1. The Bible, and Christians, often use the term "gospel" or "good news". How would you define what this term refers to or means?

LEADER NOTE: The gospel refers not to just a concept or ideology, but to a person, Jesus Christ. Here's a summary of the gospel message: "Jesus is the saving king. He pre-existed with God the Father. In accordance with God's promises, Jesus became human in the line of David, died for our sins, was buried, was resurrected on the third day, was seen, was installed as King at God's right hand, sent the Spirit, and will one day return to rule." *The Gospel Precisely* p. 21

2. What is an example of a false gospel we hear in culture or even in some churches?

LEADER NOTE: A false gospel is a message that promises human flourishing outside of allegiance to Jesus our King. Although we don't call them "gospels", our culture is full of messages about how the best way to be fulfilled in life is to go on a journey of self-discovery, to live for whatever your heart most desires. Even some churches preach a false gospel message centred around how God wants you to be rich, healthy and attractive. A false gospel message downplays Jesus' call say "no" to a self-centred life and "yes" to following Him.

CONNECTING GOSPEL TO CHRIST IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

In the bible, the gospel is a multi-faceted term that is meant to invoke the story of Jesus becoming the victorious, saving king. The Old Testament had a word for this. We often translate it as Messiah or Christ. Notice in the examples below how the proclamation of the gospel is tied to the idea that Jesus is the Messiah or Christ.

Our English language doesn't have a verb for gospel activity, but the original Greek of the New Testament used the verb evangelion (to gospel). When someone is sharing the good news about Jesus, we might say they are "gospeling". **NOTE:** The word "gospeling" in some of the following scriptures is Matthew Bates' adaptation of the NIV text.

Acts 5:42 - "Every day in the temple and from house to house they did not cease teaching and gospeling that the Christ is Jesus."

Acts 8:4-5 - "Now those who were scattered went about gospeling the word. Phillip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed to them the Christ."

Acts 9:22 - "Yet Saul baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Messiah."

Acts 17:2-3, "Paul reasoned with them from the scriptures explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead and saying this is the Christ this Jesus who I am proclaiming to you."

Acts 18:5 - "Paul was occupied by preaching testifying to the Jews that Jesus is the Messiah."

Acts 18:28 - "By the scriptures Apollos showed the Christ to be Jesus."

Mark 1:1 - "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus the Christ the son of God."

3. Have you ever noticed before how the good news of the early church in Acts centered on announcing and convincing people that Jesus was the Christ?

4. How have you understood the term "Christ" in the past? How do you think most people think about it?

CHRIST/MESSIAH IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

What does it mean to say that Jesus is the Christ? Let's explore that question.

The words "Messiah" (from Hebrew) and "Christ" (from Greek) pertain to oil. Prophets, priests and kings were anointed with holy fluid - oil - in order to be devoted for special purposes in the Old Testament

READ - Exodus 40: 15, 1 Kings 19:16, Psalm 89:20

God sent prophets to declare that a king would come in the future to restore his people.

READ - Isaiah 9: 1-7; 16: 5; Jeremiah 33: 14-16; Ezekiel 37; Hosea 3: 5

The hope for this Messiah king crystallized around God's promises to David regarding an eternal throne for one of his offspring.

READ - 2 Samuel 7: 12-16; Psalm 89: 3-4, 20-49; 132: 10, 17).

"Christ" is the New Testament word for this long-awaited anointed king.

5. Now that you have a sense of the Old Testament expectation of the Messiah/Christ, how might this change how you understand the New Testament verses from earlier in the study?

LEADER NOTE: For the first century Jews, sharing the good news about Jesus was directly linked to their understanding of the prophecies in the Old Testament about the Messiah. Their gospeling was about proving that Jesus was the Christ the Old Testament scriptures pointed to. There is also a dynamic here that may surprise you - the gospel political. "This future Christ-king would not only lead over spiritual affairs but also exercise real-world political power to restore the fortunes of his downtrodden people."

The Gospel Precisely pg. 25

MORE CONNECTIONS OF GOSPEL TO CHRIST

READ - Romans 1: 2-4, 2 Timothy 2: 8

Notice how these gospel summaries focus on Jesus as the Royal Christ, his Davidic lineage, and his resurrection.

6. How does this help to shape your understanding of where the gospel announcement begins?

PENTECOST SERMON CONCLUSION WAS GOSPEL THAT JESUS IS LORD AND MESSIAH/CHRIST

Notice how Peters' gospel proclamation at Pentecost doubles down on Jesus' attainment of kingship. After his entire speech he sums it all up with this "Therefore".

"Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah" (Acts 2:36).

Just as elsewhere in the New Testament the cross is essential, but the gospel reaches its climactic energy with Jesus' rule as the Christ.

WHAT ABOUT FORGIVENESS?

You may be thinking, what about forgiveness? Don't worry, it's there and we'll talk about it more later in the series. But the point we want to make in this study is that we don't want to end up with a Christianity that has forgiveness without kingship.

Matthew Bates says it this way:

Forgiveness without kingship? Our haste to get to what we so badly need causes us to misunderstand how forgiveness is available. What is foremost in our minds when we consider the gospel is a transaction at the cross: Jesus is savior redeemer atoning sacrifice and lamb of God. Perhaps he has some vague authority too as Lord. We fail to see that forgiveness flows not just through a person but through a person in his official capacity as king - crucified raised and reigning. While serving as king at God's right hand, he is also the high priest in the sacrificial offering that covers our sins. As will become clear, Jesus' forgiving power cannot be separated from his royal authority as head of a new creation. pg. 29-30

READ: 1 Corinthians 15: 3-5

3 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance[a]: 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,[b] and then to the Twelve. NIV

Notice that forgiveness flows through kingship. Paul says nothing here about Jesus. Instead, he speaks about the Christ's death for our sins. By mentioning the Christ rather than Jesus, Paul stresses that kingship is the vessel through which forgiveness flows.

7. As we've seen in today's study, the gospel is more than Jesus' work on the cross. How does this change your prior view of the gospel?

8. What does it mean to you to accept the gospel that Jesus is king? How does/might that change your life?

PRAY:

Father, thank you for the gospel. Thank you that Jesus came to be my victorious, reigning king. As we go through these study weeks about the Good News, please fan a flame in my heart to live for king Jesus, to proclaim him as my king and to serve him with my whole heart. Today, I commit (recommit) my life to live for him, worship him and share him with others. Thank you for teaching me about your son. Thank you for filling me with your power to worship him and live for him. Help me to be faithful to you, to love you and follow you well today. I ask these things in the name of your son, my king, Jesus, AMEN.