

Why We Believe

Week 4: The Gospel

I. What is the Gospel?

A. Gospel means good news.

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

II. The Fall of Man

A. Man was initially created sinless and lived in harmony with God in the Garden of Eden.

B. We were given only one rule (do not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil).

C. If they did they were told that they would die.

D. Adam and Eve chose to disobey and became separated from God. Genesis 3

III. The Consequences of the Fall

A. When Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit they died.

B. The Bible defines life as knowing God.

1. Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. John 17:3

C. With Adam and Eve all of mankind fell.

1. Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned. Romans 5:12

D. The Magnitude of the Problem

1. The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. Galatians 5:19-21

2. Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called “uncircumcised” by those who call themselves “the circumcision” (that done in the body by the hands of men)—remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. Ephesians 2:11-12

E. There is no Human Solution

1. In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. Hebrews 9:20

2. because it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. Hebrews 10:4

3. But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. Hebrews 9:26b

IV. There is Only One Way

A. Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. John 14:6

1. Jesus proclaims to be not only the only solution for the problem of sin, but the only path to God.

V. It is Not Dependent on Our Works

A. 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. For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Ephesians 2:8-10

VI. Salvation is Permanent

A. And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory.
Ephesians 1:13-14

B. being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. Philippians 1:6

C. They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us. 1 John 2:19

VII. Objections

I don’t like it.

It is not fair.

What about people who have not heard?

What about “good” people who reject God?

How can there be only one way?

VIII. Intellectual Problems and Deep Seated Desires

A. Intellectual Problems are when a claim or tenant of a philosophic system appears to be in conflict with other known or accepted philosophy.

B. A desire to have things be different is not an intellectual problem, but is often offered as such.

IX. It is Not Fair

A. You’re right.

B. Fair might not be what you want.

1. The parable of the workers Matthew 20.

X. What About People who Haven’t Heard?

A. Where the Bible is silent it is silent.

B. We can speculate from examples like Abraham, Job, Balaam, examples from missionaries, and testimonies.

XI. What about “good” People who do not Believe?

A. Who gets to define good?

1. for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God Romans 3:23

2. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:23

B. Behavior must be evaluated in context.

1. How did General Rommel’s allegiance affect our view of him in WWII?

C. Do we measure behavior in society based on the balance of behavior or on the violation of rules?

XII. One Way

Who says there is only one way?

Why should there be more than one way?

Who has the authority to determine the available paths.