

The GOSPEL In eight minutes



So many people are seeking for something.

We intuitively feel

that **something is wrong** with our lives
or that there must be a better way to live or to be.

Others feel somehow **incomplete**
and that **something is missing** from our lives
– like purpose, direction, love,
peace or connectedness.

Our instincts, which seek the best for us,
are correct. **Something is missing** –
it is our connection to creation
and our relationship with the creator God.

This is the good news that you can read in the Bible.

The Bible describes the creation of man as an act of love by the creator God.

It tells us that God had a purpose when He created mankind - that we should have eternal life with Him, after the death of our physical bodies.

The Bible tells us the history of mankind's relationship with God, of mankind's repeated descent into sin which separates us from Him and of God's constant offer of reconnection and the restoration our relationship with Him.

This culminates in Christ's sacrifice on the cross which wipes all sin away for all those who turn to God. It is turning to God and the sacrifice of Christ that makes us complete and gives us eternal life.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16;

This is one of the most famous verses in the Bible as it announces God's love for us who are perishing because of sin.

"For all have sinned; all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet now God in His gracious kindness declares us not guilty. He has done this through Christ Jesus, who has freed us by taking away our sins." Romans 3:23-24;

If we recognize that our sin separates us from God, following Jesus as our teacher can bring us back into completeness and into relationship with God.

The apostle Paul says “I want to make quite clear to you, brothers, **what the message of the gospel that I preached to you is**; you accepted it and took your stand on it”

“I passed on to you what was **most important** and what had also been passed on to me - that **Christ died for our sins, just as the scriptures said. He was buried, and He was raised from the dead on the third day, as the Scriptures said.**” You can read this for yourself in the Bible: 1 Corinthians chapter 15, verses 1-4

The good news is that despite our sin and rejection of Him, God sent Jesus to die to pay the price of sin on our behalf. By Christ rising from the dead on the third day, Jesus enables us also to wipe away our sins and to rise from our state of spiritual death - to live again with God for ever.

After Jesus' death burial and resurrection He gave the gospel (the good news) to the apostles that He wanted proclaimed to the whole world.

Jesus said "I have been given complete authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit."

Matthew 28:19-20;

“Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

We see the **apostle Peter** proclaiming this **new message of good news** for the first time.

The apostle Peter shows that an ancient prophecy has been fulfilled, that **Christ has risen and is reigning now at Gods right hand.**

“This prophecy was speaking of Jesus, whom God raised from the dead, and we all are witnesses of this. Now He [Jesus] sits on the throne of highest honour in heaven, at God's right hand. And the Father [God], as He had promised, gave Him [Jesus] the Holy Spirit to pour out upon us, just as you see and hear today.”

Peter helps people to realise they have crucified the Messiah they have been waiting for by saying “...let it be clearly known by everyone in Israel that God has made this Jesus whom you crucified to be both Lord and Messiah!”

You can read this in the book of Acts chapter 2.

The people were shocked at what they had done and asked **"Brothers, what should we do?"**

Peter said **"Just have faith, pray the sinner's prayer and join the church of your choice."**

(no, he didn't really – but that's what people are being taught today)

Peter actually replied, "Each of you must (repent) turn from your sins and be baptized (in water) into the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift (indwelling) of the Holy Spirit."

When Peter proclaimed the gospel (the good news) which Jesus told him to proclaim, 3000 people heard, believed, repented, were baptized and saved then received the gift of the Holy Spirit. They were added (by God) to the congregation (body) of Christ.

In the account of a follower of Jesus named Philip who is talking to an Ethiopian eunuch (who is reading scripture), Philip shares the same gospel

“So Philip began with this same scripture and then used many others to tell him the Good News about Jesus. As they rode along, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “Look! There's some water! Why can't I be baptized?”

Philip said “You don't need to! Just have faith,
pray the sinner's prayer
and join the church of your choice”

(no, he didn't really – but that's what people are being taught today)

Philip actually replied “You can be baptised, if you believe with all your heart.” And the eunuch replied, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.”

You can read this yourself in Acts chapter 8

Saul [the apostle Paul] heard the same gospel and was saved in the same way.

“As he [Saul] was nearing Damascus on this mission [to persecute followers of Christ], a brilliant light from heaven suddenly beamed down upon him.

He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, “Saul! Saul! Why are you persecuting me?”

“Who are you, sir?” Saul asked. And the voice replied, “I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting!

Jesus said “Just have faith, pray the sinner’s prayer and join the church of your choice”

(no, he didn’t really – but that’s what people are being taught today)

Jesus actually said “Now get up and go into the city, and you will be TOLD what you are TO DO.”

‘So his companions led him by the hand to Damascus. He remained there blind for three days. And all that time he went without food and water.’

God tells Ananias [a follower of Christ] to go to Saul:

“Rise and go to Straight Street, and inquire at the house of Judas for a man called Saul, from Tarsus...”

“Then Ananias went. He entered the house, and laid his hands on Saul and said, "Brother Saul, I have been sent by the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on your way here, so that you may recover your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.”

“Instantly something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he got up and was baptized.”

(You can about read this in Acts chapter 9)

Paul then retells **the story of his conversion**

(You can read this in Acts chapter 22:1-16;)

“I said, **'What shall I do, Lord?'** And the Lord told me, 'Get up and go into Damascus, and there **you will be told all that you are to do.**'”

“Then he [Ananias] told me, 'The God of our ancestors has chosen you to **know His will** and to **see the Righteous One [Christ]** and **hear Him speak.** You are to take His message everywhere, telling the whole world what you have seen and heard.’”

“Ananias then said to me ‘You do not need to do anything, just have faith, pray the sinner’s prayer and join the church of your choice’
(no, he didn’t really – but that’s what people are being taught today.)”

Ananias actually said: “Now, don't wait any longer.
Rise up, **get yourself immersed [baptised]**
and get your sins washed away,
trusting in His [Jesus'] name.”

Some believe and teach
Saul [who is now called Paul]
was saved on the Damascus road
and **at that point his sins were forgiven**
and **he received the Holy Spirit.**

But if the account says **Paul** was **blind** and **fasting**
and **praying** for **three days** after the Damascus road
experience, **what sins** had **Paul** committed
within those three days that **needed forgiveness**
when Ananias told Paul
to **be baptized** wash away his sins?

And why had **Saul not received the Spirit** on the Damascus road if **three days later** Ananias tells him he will be recovered and that **he will receive the Holy Spirit?**

It was **IN HIS BAPTISM** that Paul **was saved by the BLOOD of CHRIST** which washed his sins away and enabled him, now having been saved to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Ananias told **Paul** to do the same thing as **Peter** had **told the crowd** on Pentecost who asked him **what they must do**, after they had caused Jesus to be killed.

Peter had told them that **baptism** was for the forgiveness of sins - their sins were washed away by the blood of Jesus' sacrifice.

“and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. **To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood.**”

Revelation 1:5

Obeying the Lord's command [to hear, believe, repent, confess, be baptised and live a faithful life] is how we turn to God and gain eternal life.

Compare these texts and results:

“Therefore, after you've gone out, **make followers** from all nations. **Immerse [baptise] them** by the authority of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.” **Matt 28:19**

“**Change your hearts** and each one of you must **be immersed [baptised]** by the authority of Jesus the Messiah, **so that your sins may be forgiven.**
Then you will **receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**” **Acts 2:38**

“So, **change your hearts!** Come back to God, **so that He may wipe out your sins.**” **Acts 3:19**

Three days later Saul was **baptised** and **received the Holy Spirit.** **Acts 9:17-19**

“Don't wait any longer. Rise up, **get yourself immersed** **get your sins washed away,** trusting in His name.” **Acts 22:16**

Book of Acts	Sinner's Prayer	Heard	Believed	Repented	Confessed	Baptised
Pentecost	NO					
Five thousand	NO	Yes	Yes			
Philip	NO	Yes	Yes			Yes
The Eunuch	NO	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
Saul to Paul	NO	Yes				Yes
1st Gentiles	NO	Yes	Yes			Yes
Greeks	NO		Yes	Yes		
Proconsul	NO	Yes	Yes			
Jews/Greeks	NO	Yes	Yes			
Lydia	NO	Yes				Yes
Jailer	NO	Yes	Yes			Yes
Crispus	NO	Yes	Yes			Yes
Other People	NO	Yes	Yes			Yes
Paul's story	NO	Yes	Yes			Yes

THE WAY OF SALVATION

The purpose of God's grace: To offer us a way of **escape** from the ultimate consequences of our sins and help us back to a relationship with God.

The purpose of our belief: To direct us to **faithful obedience** to God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.

The purpose of our repentance:
To **turn us to God**, to **follow Jesus Christ**, turning away from our sinful activities of the past and to learn a new way of living.

The purpose of our confession:
To show that we believe in God and Jesus Christ and **are not ashamed of** our belief.

The purpose of baptism: to allow the blood of Christ to wash away the sins of our past life, to be saved, to receive the gift of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

1 Peter 3:21; Revelation 1:5;

It is at the point of baptism that God cleanses us from our sins by the blood of Jesus and adds us to the body of Christ, the church.

It is that from which we rise to walk in a new life, serving God, living faithfully until our bodily death, and granting us everlasting life with God.

Many teach that salvation is all of God
there is nothing man can do! **They say** that
Paul taught that **we can be saved by faith alone!**

It seems that **Paul** is confidently connecting
the faithful obedience of Jesus to the Philippians
by saying, “even as you have always obeyed...”

Many teach that salvation is all of God
there is nothing man can do!

Yet time after time **Paul** stresses
that we are involved, **we are to be obedient.**

Many teach that salvation is all of God there is nothing man can do! **They say** that **Paul taught** that **we can be saved by faith alone!**

Yet we see Paul begins in Rom 1:5; by saying:-
“Through Christ, God has given us the privilege and authority to tell Gentiles everywhere what God has done for them, so that they will believe and obey him, bringing glory to His name.”

He ends in Rom 16:26; by saying:-
“But now as the prophets foretold and as the eternal God has commanded, this message is made known to all Gentiles everywhere, so that they might believe and obey Christ.”

When we look at the world today
there seems to be so **many conflicting answers**
to the questions of **what is wrong in our lives?**
what is the gospel? and **how are we to respond to it?**

What about you?

Are you willing to listen to ‘another’
gospel message than the one that **Jesus,**
Peter, Philip, Ananias and **Paul** proclaimed?

Will you **choose** to believe the people who say
“You do not need to do anything,
just have faith, pray the sinners prayer
and join the church of your choice.”

Or will you rather **TRUST** the words of **Jesus, Peter, Philip, Ananias and Paul?**
“Now, don't wait any longer. Rise up, get yourself immersed [baptised] and get your sins washed away, trusting in His [Jesus'] name.”

“Each of you must turn from your sins (repent) and be baptized (in water) into the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift (indwelling) of the Holy Spirit.”

May you be blessed **as you make the choice** of listening to the gospel message **as revealed in the Bible** and so in faithful obedience **give your life to Jesus on His terms as He wants you to do.**

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Prepared by Graeme Morrison

graemestudy@gmail.com

www.graemebibleresources.com

“Let God's curse fall on anyone, including myself, who preaches any other message than the one we told you about.

Even if an angel comes from heaven and preaches any other message, let him be forever cursed. I will say it again:

If anyone preaches any other gospel than the one you welcomed, let God's curse fall upon that person.” Gal 1:8-9;