



The
FLOW
Adult CURRICULUM

#47

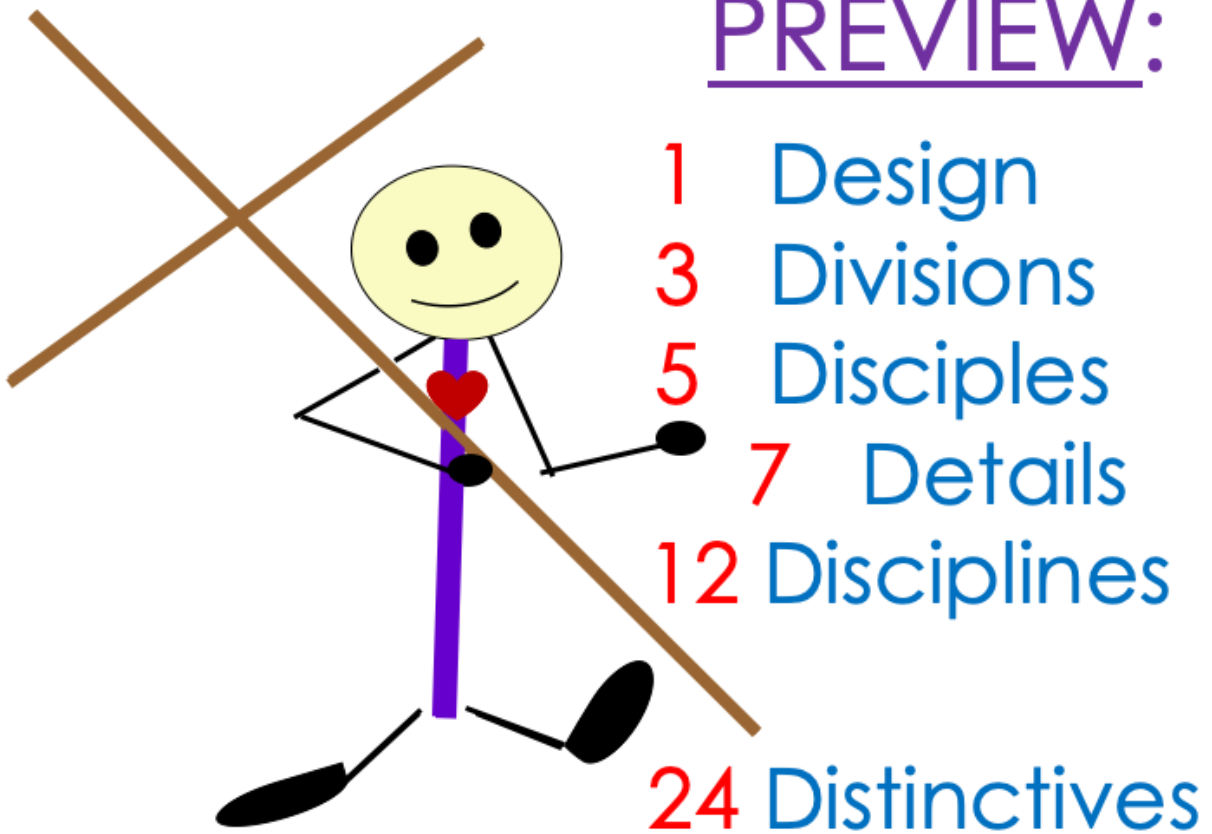
Proclaiming The Gospel (No matter what!)

Mark 16:15

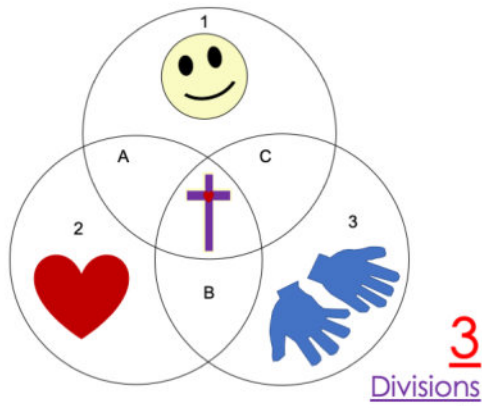
(Come And See Christianity book page 110)

The FLOW

PREVIEW:

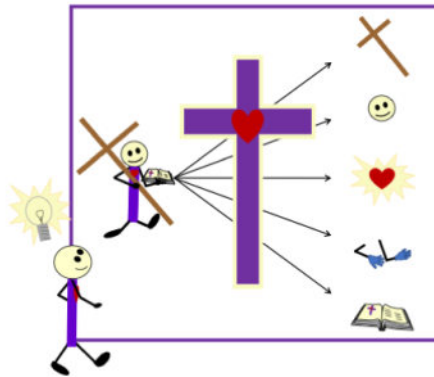


SECTION SIX: 12 Disciplines



The Disciple's "Hands" put into **action** the **truth** & **love** of God's Word, God's will, & God's ways. In short, when **each Christian's Head, Heart, & Hands** are united in purpose & power, the family of God is **living** as the **Body of Christ!**

24 Family Distinctives:

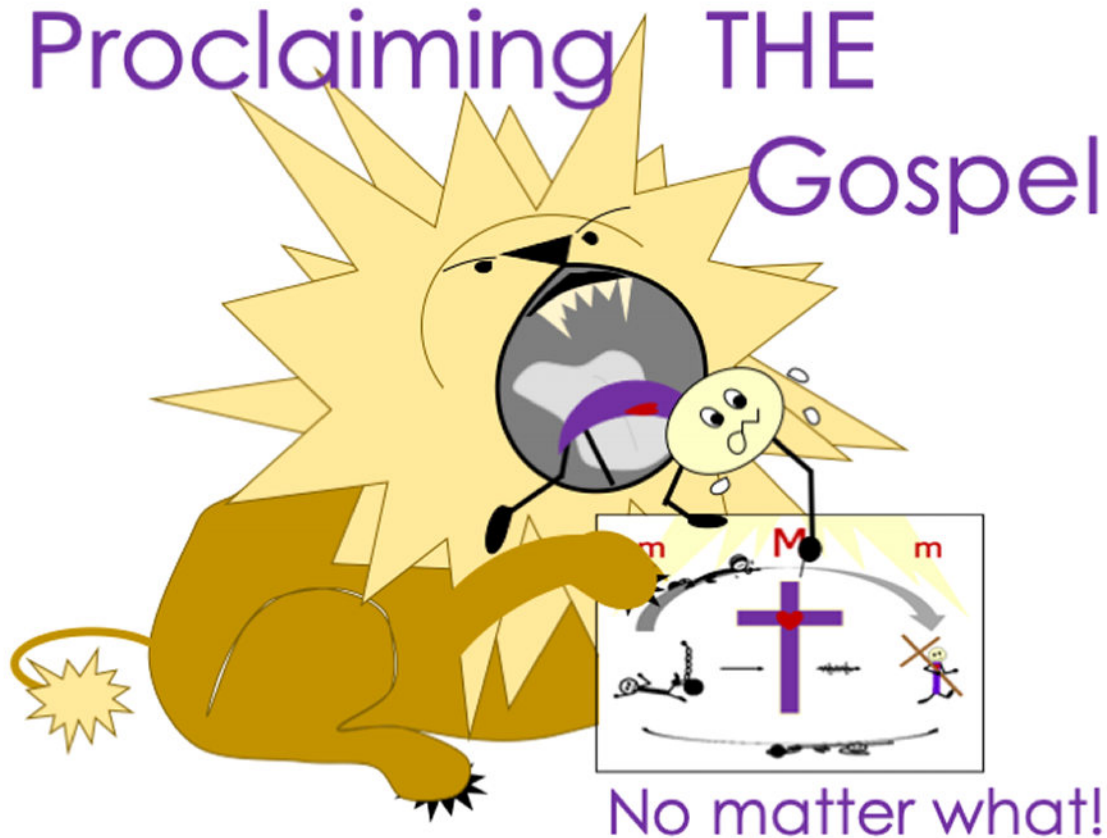


24 DISTINCTIVES:

The “distinctives” are a family portrait... When you add God's Word, God's Spirit, God's Truth, God's love, and God's people all together, the distinctives are what **we look, love, & live like :-)**

We are...

Proclaiming THE Gospel



INTRO:

As we begin to **see the beautiful, biblical portrait of Christ's faith-filled family** defined and described by God's Word, will, and ways, it is critical to remember that the Holy Bible is to ALWAYS BE our ultimate source, authority, and interpreter in ALL things pertaining to one's understanding of reality and application of truth in love.

**Remember,
The biblical Church is Christ's missional family...
Moreover, God's Word reveals our Father's will and His family's ways.**

[2 Timothy 3:16-17](#)

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17so that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Here are ***24 defining & describing HANDS-on DISTINCTIVES of Christianity:***

True Christians are biblically, miraculously, intentionally, missionally, and imperfectly...

1. *Responding to grace*
2. *Repenting of sin*
3. *Trusting the Bible*
4. *Obeying God's Word*
5. *Growing in Christ*
6. *Living Spirit-led*
7. *Praying for guidance*
8. *Following by faith*
9. *Dying to self*
10. *Carrying our cross*
11. *BE-ing The Church*
12. *Loving one another (truly loving one another)*
13. *Equipping the saints*
14. *Exemplifying supernatural unity*
15. *Ministering as ambassadors*
16. *Discerning matters shrewdly*
17. *Worshipping God vertically*
18. *Experiencing Him horizontally*
19. *Proclaiming the Gospel (no matter what)*
20. *Fishing for men*
21. *Making disciplined warriors*
22. *Winning spiritual warfare*
23. *Loving our King*
24. *Serving His kingdom*

PRAYER:

LORD, we seek to bless You with all that is within us. Help us here, we pray, to be that blessing as we come to better understand You and Your eternal truth in love (Ephesians 4:15). Help us to see with Your eyes and love with Your love, all that You would reveal to us through Your Word, Your will, and Your ways. May we grow in our grasp of Your realities, Your means of restoration, and Your mission of reproduction. In the holy name of Jesus, we pray. Amen and Amen

CONTEXT:

Macro

This lesson marks another major transition point in our curriculum's eye-opening explanation of Christianity. By way of review, we began in Section One with the reality of Almighty God having 1 Divine DESIGN (also known as a biblical worldview and the eternal application of Jesus Christ's Gospel). In Section Two, we addressed the 3 DIVISIONS (Head, Heart, and Hands) that make up the "being" in every human being. Next, in Section Three, we demonstrated how Christianity accounts for, defines, and describes all of humanity, every person, past, present, and future. We noted that all people can be identified as one of the 5 DISCIPLES – Lost, Lover, Learner, Leader, or Lifer. Moving forward, Section Four revealed, engaged, and explained the 7 fundamental DETAILS of God's Divine DESIGN... because **we all need to know what we need to know**. To be more specific, those seven truths are: The Foundations, The Framework, The Facts, The Fight, The Faith, The Family, and the truth about Forever.

Then, in Section Five, which we just completed, our focus shifted from HEAD based truths to 12 HEART shaping exercises or disciplines - each having the potential to strengthen one's personal relationship with Christ, His Church, and their collective mission: bringing God glory by finding & growing more glorifiers.

We used the acronym **J.E.S.U.S.'S. P. S.W.O.R.D.** to outline and harmonize a biblical, missional, and intentional methodology for growing in God's love - & His loving witness. The 12 HEART DISCIPLINES are: **J**ournaling... **E**ating-nothing (fasting)... **S**cripture-intake... **U**nderstudy of Scripture... **S**tewardship... **S**olitude... **P**rayer... **S**erving... **W**orshipping... **O**utreach... **R**elationships... and **D**evelopment.

Now, our curriculum and study will transition to The HANDS. This is where **Christians demonstrate to the world that Christ is in their worship & witness**. Whereas our time spent in the HEAD sections (1-4) focused on the truths that Christians need and seek to LEARN, and our concentration on the 12 HEART DISCIPLINES of section 5 helped us to grow in God's LOVE, our sixth and final section will **walk through the 24 DISTINCTIVES, which explain & exemplify how Christians are to faithfully LIVE... and fully BE The Church... together** – all by God's grace & ALL for His glory!

God's Word puts it this way:

"Let us not love with word and tongue but in action and truth." – 1st John 3:18

And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, [47](#)praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. – Acts 2:46-47

I. **DISTINCTIVES are FRUIT:**

It is important to realize that God's miraculous and authentic **Christian DISTINCTIVES are the FRUIT of saving grace and faith** (Ephesians 2:1-10). As Jesus described in John 15, people can do nothing outside of their abiding in Him and obeying His Word, will and ways. In short, there will be no fruit unless one remains attached to and provided for by the true Vine and divine Root. With that said, a cautionary note is worth sharing here, beware the counterfeits that abound around the world. ***Plastic fruit is deceptive vs. DISTINCTIVE!***

Galatians 5:22-25

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. ²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

II. **DISTINCTIVES are FAMILY:**



DISTINCTIVES, by definition, are those “distinguishing characteristics that are notable for having a special quality, style, and/or attractiveness” (Dictionary.com).

When it comes to God's family, the true Church, each Christian and their individualistic DISTINCTIVES are as unique as their potential. At the same time, in the same way that a billion unique snowflakes can be combined to make a single snowstorm, or countless swatches of scrap fabric can be sewn together to make a single quilt, so it is with God's family. The LORD creates His Christian family with a both/and combination of DISTINCTIVE uniqueness, as well as DISTINCTIVE love and defining unity.

Christianity's DISTINCT family (ecclesia) has a DISTINCTIVE unity (koinonia).

“By this all people will know that you are My disciple, if you have love for one another.”
– John 13:35

“The more genuine and the deeper our community becomes, the more will everything else between us recede, the more clearly and purely will Jesus Christ and his work become the one and only thing that is vital between us.”

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer

III. **DISTINCTIVES are WITNESS:**

The most biblical and healthy understandings of Christianity will include an embrace of two overarching and DISTINCTIVE purposes. Namely, per God’s Word, will, and ways, every Christian has received miraculous, saving grace, as well as the indwelling presence and power of the Holy Spirit, to:

1. Bring glory to God.

1 Corinthians 10:31

*So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do,
do all to the glory of God.*

2. BE Christ’s witness.

Acts 1:8

*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, **and you will be My witnesses** in Jerusalem (locally), and in all Judea and Samaria (regionally), and to the end of the earth (globally).”*

God’s DISTINCTIVE people have been filled with His Holy Spirit for the express purpose of living DISTINCTIVE lives. When the world sees the LORD’s loving family living out their divinely empowered and God-honoring worship, work, and warfare, the resulting fruit will serve as a faithful witness, built with supernatural, grace-based, and missional DISTINCTIVES.

“God created me—and you—to live with a single, all-embracing, all-transforming passion—namely, a passion to glorify God by enjoying and displaying his supreme excellence in all the spheres of life.”

- John Piper

The Christian Distinctive

What distinguishes Christianity from all other religions is that it is a *revealed* religion. Christianity is not about our search for God or our means of finding him. Christianity is not a religion that works its way upward. It is all about God coming to us — God in grace making himself known to us and making a way for us to enjoy fellowship with him.

And so, at the very heart of Christianity is, simply, a message — a message from God to us about what he has done to bring us to himself.

If Christianity is distinctively revealed religion, then it is also uniquely *authoritative*. It does not offer itself as the best and highest of human thinking about God or even the best or most successful of human efforts to know God. It professes to be nothing less than the unique word from God, his very own self-disclosure and the record of the actions he has taken in Jesus Christ to bring us into fellowship with himself.

One of Rudyard Kipling's characters declares, "The heathen in his blindness bows down to wood and stone; He don't obey no orders unless they is his own." That is to say, human religions lack authority — they form their own ideas and "discover" their own beliefs.

By contrast the Christian is "under orders," because unlike human religions, Christianity is a revealed religion — divinely revealed. We Christians are not our own touchstone of truth, and we do not confuse our ideas about God with His own self-revelation. We learn truth about God not from "inner lights" within ourselves but from God's own objective Word.

And apart from this external authority, there is no Christianity. This, at bottom, is Christianity's leading distinctive.

And so, we **Christians prize Scripture as God's Word. We joyfully submit to it. And we enthusiastically proclaim its message of grace in Jesus Christ to the world.**

- Dr. Fred Zaspel

Micro

The most important personal aspects of PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL are believing, loving, trusting, feeling, obeying, & abiding in & by it.

*Go into ALL the world and proclaim The Gospel...
- Jesus The Christ*

***“The biblical preaching of Christ is the whip that flogs the devil.
The biblical preaching of Christ is the thunderbolt, the sound
of which makes all hell shake.
- Charles Spurgeon***

*Proclaiming THE GOSPEL to a lost world cannot be just another activity to add to the church's crowded agenda. It must be central to who we are.
It forms our identity.
- Francis Chan*

Message

**“PREACH YOU CHRIST, AND CHRIST, AND CHRIST, AND CHRIST,
AND NOTHING ELSE BUT CHRIST.”**

When Charles Spurgeon surveyed the preaching of his own day, he lamented that, “There is very much rubbish about, brethren.” Now, after a century and a half, his observation appears equally penetrating and applicable. Spurgeon advised pastors to, “Preach you Christ, and Christ, and Christ, and Christ, and nothing else but Christ.” When opposition arose, his response was simple, “Let the dogs bark, it is their nature to do so. Go on preaching Christ crucified.”

...In Spurgeon's view, for a sermon to be “true preaching,” it must include “adoration of God by the manifestation of his gracious attributes.” Preaching was the PROCLAMATION of God's GOSPEL “which pre-eminently glorifies him.” Spurgeon also believed that to hear true preaching was “an acceptable form of worship to the Most High,” and was perhaps “one of the most spiritual in which the human mind can be engaged.” For Spurgeon, to preach Christ was to preach “the glory of heaven conjoined with the beauty of earth,” and to extol “the perfection of humanity united with the glory and dignity of Deity.” In his view, the job of the preacher was simple and direct because, “We are mirrors reflecting the transactions of Calvary, telescopes manifesting the distant glories of an exalted Redeemer.” As a result, he declared that “The nearer we keep to the cross, the nearer I think, we keep to our true vocation.”

Furthermore, Spurgeon believed the best preachers were men who knew *“the ins and outs of a sinner's heart,”* men who could *“talk from experience instead of from theory.”* Preachers were meant to imitate Christ whose preaching was *“meant for the worst of men.”* Preaching was to be clear, cut to the heart, and not be encumbered by human speculation. Spurgeon believed that, *“A true servant of Christ must never try to let the people see how well he can preach.”* Rather, preachers must preach Christ so simply that the hearers *“cannot misunderstand him even if they try to do so.”* Indeed, the sermon had to be clear and Christ centered because *“it must not be tolerated that Christ should be unknown through our silence, and sinners unwarned through our negligence.”* After all, it would be a tragedy for, *“the sheep [to look] up to the shepherd, and not [be] fed.”*

Spurgeon loved to preach the gospel. Indeed, He always believed *“The world need still be told of its Saviour, and of the way to reach him”* and so he never tired of telling the Old, old story. In honor of Spurgeon's legacy as the “Prince of Preachers” here are twelve of his quotes on preaching/proclaiming.

1. *“Let the sun stop shining, and we will preach in darkness. Let the waves stop their ebb and flow, and still our voice shall preach the gospel.”*
2. *“My Master always went where He was most wanted-among the chief of sinners, and you know his preaching. It was a preaching that was meant for the worst of men.”*
3. *“Keep the word of God, and the word of God will keep you.”*
4. *“No reason exists why the preaching of the gospel should be a miserable operation, either to the speaker or to the hearer.”*
5. *“It must not be tolerated that Christ should be unknown through our silence, and sinners unwarned through our negligence.”*
6. *“True Gospel preaching does not decry holy living; nay, it sets up the highest possible standard and declares the way to reach it.”*
7. *“When a man has been in the fire, and has the smell of it still upon him, he is the one to warn others not to meddle with fire.”*
8. *“I love to preach a gospel of which I feel the sweetness in my own soul.”*
9. *“If you cannot catechize your own heart, and drill a truth into your own soul, you do not know how to teach other people.”*
10. *“I am determined, as far as ever I can, to preach the gospel plainly and simply, so that everybody may understand it.”*
11. *“If we are to see the church of God really restored to her pristine glory, we must have back this plain, simple, gospel-preaching.”*
12. *“Never was man blamed in heaven for preaching Christ too much.”*

- Drew Tillman

BIG IDEA: **PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL (No Matter What!) embodies the Christian's Christ-like and Christ-centered mission, method, and message, with the "no matter what" clause serving as an inspirational reminder & test... of both the PROCLAIMER's passion AND perseverance.**

PREVIEW:

1. PROCLAIMING
2. THE GOSPEL
3. NO MATTER WHAT!

TEXT:

Mark 16:15

"Go into ALL the world and proclaim the Gospel..."

1. PROCLAIMING

Illustration:

***The best preachers/proclaimers are plagiarists.
All they do is tell people what God has already said.
- Thabiti Anyabwile***

*The greatest aid to worship is the explanation of Scripture.
- John MacArthur*

*"We complain today that ministers do not know how to preach; but is it not
equally true that our congregations do not know how to hear?
- J.I. Packer*

Explanation:

Mark 16:15

***Go into ALL the world and PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL!
- Jesus The Christ***

PROCLAIMING is a word of forceful nuance. By itself, even before a proclamation's subject matter is identified, the generic act of PROCLAIMING is taking relatively aggressive action, assuming a certain degree of authority, and displaying purpose-filled assertiveness.

***PROCLAIMING is biblical. PROCLAIMING is bold.
PROCLAIMING is gentle. PROCLAIMING is respectful.
PROCLAIMING is obeying. PROCLAIMING is missional.
PROCLAIMING is loving. PROCLAIMING is needed.***

When it comes to authentic Christians and Christ's true Church, to be sure, like the command to "*Declare*" in Titus 2:15, PROCLAIMING is not sheepish whispering. Think about it... while PROCLAIMING may not be for the lukewarm or the faint of heart, faithful & forceful PROCLAMATION is the Messiah's mandated methodology; thus, PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL – NO MATTER WHAT is joyfully embedded in Christianity's missionary manifesto.

1 Peter 3:15

But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.

Application:

1 Corinthians 1:17

For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel—not with wisdom and eloquence, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

*"If I had only one sermon to preach, it would be a sermon against pride.
– G.K. Chesterton*

*The test of a preacher/proclaimer is that his congregation/hearers go away saying not, 'What a lovely sermon/message,' but, 'I will do something!'
– Francis de Sales*

***"The Bible does not say that we should aim at numbers,
but rather urges us to faithfully PROCLAIM God's
message in the boldness of His Holy Spirit.
This will build God's Church God's way."
– Jim Cymbala***

2. THE GOSPEL

Illustration:

We are not called to proclaim philosophy and metaphysics, but the simple gospel. Man's fall, his need of a new birth, forgiveness through atonement, and salvation as the result of faith, these are our battle-ax and weapons of war.

- Charles Spurgeon

Explanation:

Today, when obnoxiously lost souls and misguided church-goers reference THE GOSPEL; tragically, there tends to be a disturbingly-casual, deceptively-tamed and troublesome portrayal that is nothing less than an a Christ-less betrayal of THE GOSPEL's miracle, Messiah, and mission. What is being championed today, in far too many cultural, attraction model churches, is a counterfeit gospel that lacks the authentic's priceless value, eternal virtue, and grace-based, blood-bought victory.

THE GOSPEL cannot be down-graded, declawed, or domesticated!

Therefore, as healthy, biblical Christians, Christ's true Church family is called, commanded, and commissioned (John 20:21 and Matthew 28:18-20) to faithfully take and teach the defining, describing, and distinguishing truths that lovingly explain and exemplify the "THE" in THE GOSPEL... to ALL the world (Mark 16:15).

To be clear, THE GOSPEL is not just a gospel!

To be more specific, the Holy Scriptures put forth THE GOSPEL from cover to cover and with many different contexts. Here is a small sampling. The Almighty's first recorded proclamation of THE GOSPEL is found in Genesis 3:15, before Adam and Eve are cast out of the Garden of Eden. The most memorized and widely shared pronouncement of THE GOSPEL comes from John 3:16, where Jesus was rebuking (John 3:10) one of Judaism's leading teachers. Continuing on, arguably, for many, the Apostle Paul's corrective letter to the church in Corinth offers the most succinct sharing of THE GOSPEL (see 1st Corinthians 15:3-4).

With that said, while fully affirming ALL of the aforementioned texts, this author's most frequent go-to passages tend to be: John 3:3, coupled with John 3:16, and John 3:36... By using a single chapter, three verse, 1-2-3 approach, it quickly helps people to see, per 2 Timothy 3:16-17, that:

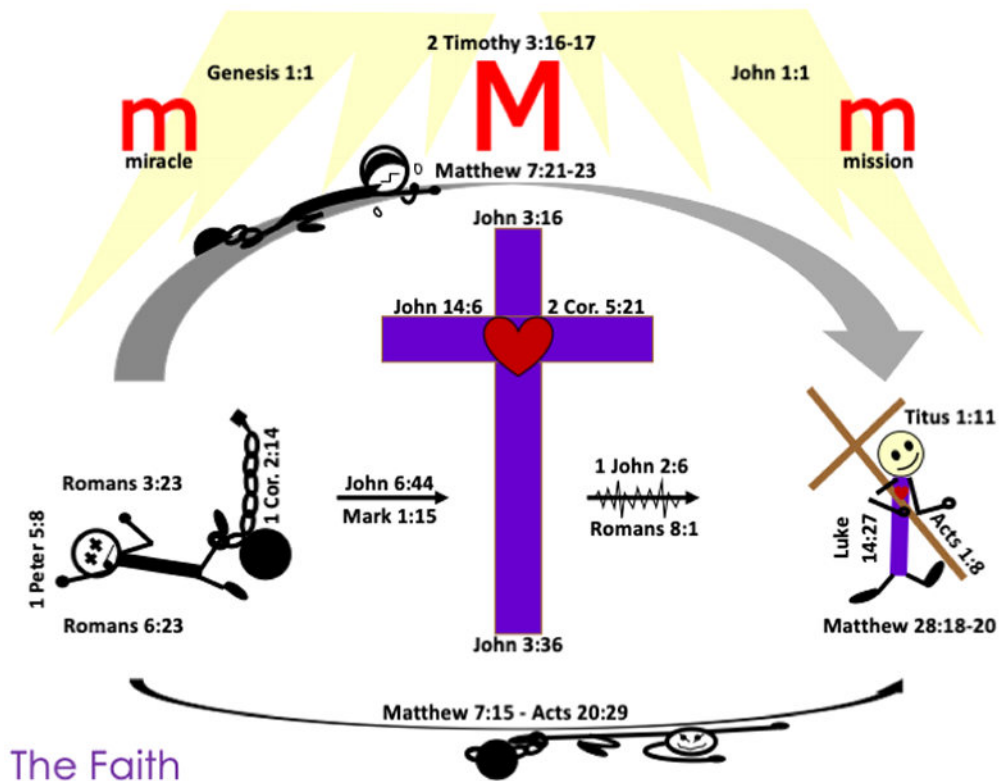
1). EVERYONE needs a miracle. 2). ONLY The MESSIAH can give/gift that specific miracle. And finally... 3). those who profess to "believe," MUST, by

definition, OBEY God’s Word, will, and ways. (Reader, rest assured, both John 14:15 & Matthew 28:19 undergird and galvanize these GOSPEL applications).

Perhaps the most comprehensive expression of THE GOSPEL is found in Ephesians 2:1-10. These verses represent Ephesians 4:15’s “truth in love,” the truth that Jesus said in John 8:32 “will set you free.” From this loving vantage point and perspective, it is easy to see the inspiration and theological support for our Stickman Gospel (a visual & biblical GOSPEL explanation that is also known as “The FAITH” in our Come And See Christianity curriculum).

Everything needed to move forward will come into focus through a careful UNDERSTUDY of the text... To that end, Ephesians 2:1-10 lays out a clear and definitive outline: **miracle, Messiah, mission.** “You were dead in your sins (v.1)... but God, rich in mercy (v.4)... you were saved by grace through faith (v.8)... NOT by your good works (v.9)... but rather FOR good works (v.10).”

Before transitioning to the NO MATTER WHAT! portion of this lesson, the reader is encouraged to pray and study, asking the LORD to help him/her to see and understand the often overlooked, yet missionally key relationship between THE GOSPEL’s sovereign grace and human responsibility (read also John 6:44 with Mark 1:5... as well as Romans 8:1 coupled with 1 John 2:6).



Application:

Accept, apply, & BE Christ's ambassador of Ephesians 2:1-10.

*"You will receive power when My Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will BE My witnesses... locally, regionally, & globally"(Acts 1:8). Consequently, **NO EXCUSES!** "You have received everything you need for life and godliness" (2nd Peter 1:3). Moreover, "You can do all things through Christ who gives you strength" (Philippians 4:13). Therefore, "guard your life & teaching/doctrine. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers" (1st Timothy 4:16). Then, with "constant rejoicing" (1 Thessalonians 5:16), "Go make disciples of all nations... teaching them to **OBEY EVERYTHING** that I have commanded..." (Matthew 28:19-20). All the while, abide in (John 15:5-6) the defining words of our LORD Jesus: "If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you" (John 15:19... also James 4:4). And again, from the mouth of our LORD, "Unless you are willing to pick up your cross daily and follow Me, you cannot be my disciple" (Luke 9:23 & 14:27). Now go! "As the Father has sent Me/Jesus, so now I send you" (John 20:21). Finally, as you go, remember to "pray without ceasing" (1st Thessalonians 5:17), always praying missionally and selflessly, like Jesus in John 17:20-23:*

*20 "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word, 21 that they may all be one, just as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, that they also may be in Us, **so that the world may believe that you have sent me.** 22 The glory that You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one even as We are one, 23 I in them and You in Me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that You sent Me and loved them even as you loved Me.*

*Those transformed by THE GOSPEL are compelled to proclaim THE GOSPEL.
Every saved Christian on this side of heaven
owes THE GOSPEL to every lost sinner this side of hell.
- David Platt*

*Justification by faith alone is not one doctrine among others. It is THE GOSPEL.
- Albert Mohler*

***"The preacher is not a chef, he's a waiter. God does not want you to make the meal; He just wants you to deliver it to the table without messing it up. That's all.
- John MacArthur***

3. NO MATTER WHAT!

Illustration:

***“If Jesus preached the same message ministers preach today,
He would have never been crucified.”***

- Leonard Ravenhill

Joshua 1:6-9

6Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them. 7Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go. 8This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. 9Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”

***“The martyrs did not die because they believed THE GOSPEL,
they died because they PROCLAIMED THE GOSPEL!***

- David Platt

Romans 1:16

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile

The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.

- Tertullian

We will have to repent in this generation not merely for the hateful words and actions of the bad people, but for the appalling silence of the good people.

- Martin Luther King, Jr.

The badge of courage does not require that we walk through something dangerous. It simply requires that we continue to share God's love whenever and wherever we are.

- Tom White (The Voice of the Martyrs)

Explanation:

No matter what means... NO MATTER WHAT!

In Acts 1:8, the original Greek word that our English Bibles translate as ***“witnesses,”*** is the same root word from which we get the term ***“martyrs.”*** Mind you, our contemporary dictionaries define *“martyr”* as *“anyone who willingly endures great suffering or death on behalf of a belief, principle, or cause.”* When we combine Acts 1:8 with Christ’s call for all of His followers to *die to self* (Galatians 2:20) and *daily carry their own cross* (Luke 9:23 & Luke 14:27), along with 2nd Corinthians 5:20’s description of all Christians as *“Christ’s ambassadors,”* those whose privileges and responsibilities warrant their constant wearing of, per Ephesians 6:10-20, *“the full armor of God,”* we begin to sense and see the intensity with which the Christian call comes.

1st Peter 5:8 alerts the Christian to *“Beware! Your enemy, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion looking for souls to devour.”* 2nd Corinthians 11:14-15 goes even further, warning us: *“Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So, it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness...”*

Do not miss the directness that is designed into the Christian’s DNA... Jesus was being very clear, NO MATTER WHAT - the privileges of BE-ing a Christ-follower come with the responsibilities of actually following Christ. Everyday... all day... biblical believers are being sent out onto the mission field *as sheep amongst wolves*; consequently, we will need to ***“BE as shrewd as serpents, while remaining as gentle/innocent as doves”*** (Matthew 10:16). Life will be hard and messy. No doubt, it will be impossible to live well on our own... or in our own strength. But praise God, no true Christian will ever BE alone again! We have each other, God’s faith family, to *bear one another’s burdens* (Galatians 6:2), to *sharpen one another’s witness* (Proverbs 27:17), to do life together, to the glory of God (Acts 2:41-47). And... as good as that is... there is even more. According to Jesus in His last words recorded in the Gospel of Matthew, for every genuine, GOSPEL believer, our Creator, Christ, and King has promised *“to be WITH YOU ALWAYS, even to the end of the age.”*

***The Christian’s ‘NO MATTER WHAT!’
is grounded in and secured by Christ’s ‘ALWAYS WITH’ promise...
which is a part of the Christian’s PROCLAMATION of THE GOSPEL,
the Great Commandments, and the Great Commission.***

Proclaiming the gospel is not an activity in which we periodically engage.

- David A. Bednar

Application:

God of our life, there are days when the burdens we carry chafe our shoulders and weigh us down; when the road seems dreary and endless, the skies grey and threatening; when our lives have no music in them, and our hearts are lonely, and our souls have lost their courage. Flood the path with light, run our eyes to where the skies are full of promise; tune our hearts to brave music; give us the sense of comradeship with heroes and saints of every age; and so quicken our spirits that we may be able to encourage the souls of all who journey with us on the road of life, to Your honour and glory.

- Augustine

Love God, Love People, Serve the World

Find the Lost, Grow the Found

PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL

NO MATTER WHAT!

Amen & Amen

Matthew 9:37-38

Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

We are so utterly ordinary, so commonplace, while we profess to know a Power the Twentieth Century does not reckon with. But we are "harmless," and therefore unharmed. We are spiritual pacifists, non-militants, conscientious objectors in this battle-to-the-death with principalities and powers in high places. Meekness must be had for contact with men, but brass, outspoken boldness is required to take part in the comradeship of the Cross. We are "sideliners" -- coaching and criticizing the real wrestlers while content to sit by and leave the enemies of God unchallenged. The world cannot hate us, we are too much like its own.

Oh that God would make us dangerous!

Those warriors who advance on their knees will never retreat.

- Jim Elliot

In Christ, troubles are turned into triumph, so in Him we look at what is coming as the times of the greatest triumphs the world has ever known! The conclusion of all things is that we win! The cross will prevail. This is the foundational truth that all of our understanding of these times must be based on. There will be no retreat in those who walk in the true light. When you open your shades at night, darkness does not come in and flood the room. Rather the light shines out into the darkness because light is stronger than darkness. The darker it becomes, the brighter our light will be. Where sin abounds, grace will that much more abound.

- Rick Joyner

Suffering inflicted on Jesus by others had the appearance at least of being involuntary. The sufferings of Gethsemane, deep in his soul, could touch him only because he willed it, to give us courage in our own fears, to set us an example, to merit for us the grace needed in our own interior conflicts.

- Ralph Gorman

*Have courage for the great sorrows of life and patience for the small ones.
And when you have finished your daily task,
go to sleep in peace. God is awake.*

- Victor Hugo

*We can walk without fear, full of hope and courage and strength to do His will,
waiting for the endless good which He is always giving as fast as
He can get us able to take it in.*

- George Macdonald

Beloved, I say, let your fears go, lest they make you fainthearted. Stop inspiring fear in those around you and now take your stand in faith. God has been good and He will continue to manifest His goodness..... Let us approach these days expecting to see the goodness of the Lord manifest. Let us be strong and of good courage, for the Lord will fight for us if we stand in faith.

- Francis Frangipane

CLOSE:

Notice here, at the close of this lesson, how our Come And See Christianity curriculum has come full circle, back to our beginning. By PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL, while learning, loving, and living out its miraculously missional privileges and responsibilities – NO MATTER WHAT, we are demonstrating to ourselves, our loved ones, and the world at large our witness... our all-in, HEAD, HEART, and HANDS devotion to God and His 1 DIVINE DESIGN, as defined and described in His Word, will, and ways.

Matthew 28:18-20

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

*"If we are desensitized to the horror of sin,
then we will be desensitized to the glory of righteousness.
- Thabiti Anyabwile*

*"Give me one hundred preachers who fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God, and I care not whether they be clergymen or laymen. They alone will shake the gates of hell and set up the kingdom of heaven upon earth.
- John Wesley*

For What?

*The true follower of Christ will not ask,
"If I embrace this truth, what will it cost me?" Rather he will say,
"This is truth. God help me to walk in it, let come what may!"
- A. W. Tozer*

***We all like to call the nation to repentance,
but what about calling the Church to repentance?
- John MacArthur***

*Our working is not added to God's working.
Our working IS God's working.
- John Piper*

*It is no use walking anywhere to preach...
unless our walking is our preaching.
- Francis of Assisi*

So What?

*What is the chief end of preaching? I like to think it is this:
It is to give men and women a sense of God and His presence.
- Martyn Lloyd-Jones*

Courage is contagious.

When a brave man takes a stand, the spines of others are often stiffened.

Down through the centuries in times of trouble and trial God has brought courage to the hearts of those who love Him. The Bible is filled with assurances of God's help and comfort in every kind of trouble which might cause fears to arise in the human heart. You can look ahead with promise, hope, and joy.

- Billy Graham

Hope has two beautiful daughters Their names are anger and courage; anger at the way things are, and courage to see that they do not remain unchanged.

- Augustine

Now What?

2 Timothy 4:5

But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.

Even a coward can praise Christ, but it takes a man of courage to follow Him.

- Anonymous

Matthew 7:7

As you go, proclaim this message: 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.'

PRAYER

Dear heavenly Father, thank You so much for the Truth and Love of Your Word, will, and ways. Please help us to absorb and apply ALL that You have shared and commanded in the Bible. May our heads be infilled with Your defining Scriptures, for the express purpose of informing, inspecting, and inspiring our sanctified hearts and serving hands.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen and Amen

Support Sermon:

"Evangelism's Troubling Clarity"

Matthew 3:1-2

April 14, 2024

Sermon Series: mMm - miracle, MESSIAH, mission