

A Summary Of The Gospel

Introduction. Bob Woods tells the story of a couple who took their son, 11, and daughter, 7, to Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico. As always, when the tour reached the deepest point in the cavern, the guide turned off all the lights to dramatize how completely dark and silent it is below the earth's surface. The little girl, suddenly enveloped in utter darkness, was frightened and began to cry. Immediately was heard the voice of her brother, "Don't cry. Somebody here knows how to turn on the lights." In a real sense, that is the message of the gospel -- light is available, even when darkness seems overwhelming.

The Bible says the gospel saves (Acts 11:14) because it has begetting power (James 1:18; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14). But, of what is the gospel comprised? As one might imagine, it is simple to deduce and teach. For our lesson today, we will examine a simple summary of the gospel (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

I. **Facts To Believe**

- A. God exists and He sent His Son to earth (Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16).
 1. Jesus was born (Galatians 4:4; Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 2:1-7).
 2. He died on the cross (Matthew 27:45-54; Mark 15:33-39; Luke 23:44-48; John 19:28-30).
 3. He was buried (Matthew 27:57-61; Mark 15:42-16:1; Luke 23:50-56; John 19:38-42).
 4. He made multiple appearances after His resurrection, proving Himself to be the Son of God (Romans 1:4).
 - a) Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9-11; John 20:11-18).
 - b) The other women (Matthew 28:9-10).
 - c) Peter (Luke 24:34; 1 Corinthians 15:5).
 - d) The disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35).
 - e) The disciples with Thomas absent (Mark 16:14; Luke 24:33-43; John 20:19-25).
 - f) The disciples with Thomas present (John 20:26-31; 1 Corinthians 15:5).
 - g) The seven disciples by the Sea of Galilee (John 21:1-25).
 - h) The group of 500 disciples (1 Corinthians 15:6).
 - i) James (1 Corinthians 15:7).
 - j) The 11 disciples in Galilee (Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:15-18).
 - k) The 11 disciples shortly before Pentecost (Luke 24:44-53; Acts 1:3-12).
 - l) Paul (1 Corinthians 15:8).
- B. The purpose of His death was for our sins (Isaiah 53:4-6; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13; Hebrews 2:9; 1 Peter 2:22-24).

- C. He is presently at the right hand of God, making intercession for us (Hebrews 1:3; 4:15-16; 7:25).

II. **Commands To Obey**

- A. Jesus Himself was under command from God (John 12:49-50). Therefore, it is not illogical to believe that we are under commandment as well (John 14:15, 21, 23; 15:10, 14). The apostle John proclaimed that those who do God's commands would be blessed (Revelation 22:14). Therefore, someone must "receive" or obey the gospel (1 Corinthians 11:23; Galatians 1:9; 1 Thessalonians 2:13).
- B. Jesus and the apostles consistently proclaimed the requirements for salvation. A quick summary of the book of Acts will show several examples of what people did to be saved.
 1. Those at Pentecost (Acts 2:38, 41).
 2. The Samaritans (Acts 8:12).
 3. The Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:36-38).
 4. Saul (Acts 9:17-18).
 5. Cornelius (Acts 10:44-48).
 6. Lydia (Acts 16:14-15).
 7. The Philippian jailer (Acts 16:31-33).
 8. The Corinthians (Acts 18:8).
 9. The Ephesians (Acts 19:4-5).
- C. Application of these soul-saving truths has to be made (Matthew 7:21-24; Acts 20:32; James 1:21).

III. **Promises To Receive**

- A. When being obedient to the gospel, we receive promises (2 Peter 1:3-4). Some had believed that God was slack concerning them, but He is merely being gracious for all who want to obey (2 Peter 3:9).
- B. When we leave the world and follow Christ, we receive great material blessings (Matthew 19:28-29; Mark 10:28-30; Luke 18:29-30).
 1. Although we may sacrifice some earthly friendships on the altar of love to Christ, we will be rewarded with the reconstruction of relationships with God's people.
 2. Our Lord was Himself the first to exemplify this new adjustment in His own relationships (Matthew 12:46-50).
- C. We also have all spiritual blessings now in Christ (Ephesians 1:3; [redemption-Titus 2:14; justification-Romans 3:24; forgiveness-Ephesians 1:7; access to God-Hebrews 4:14]), but the greatest spiritual blessing we will ultimately receive is eternal life (1 John 2:25; 5:11). God cannot lie, therefore this establishes hope for the fulfillment of these promises (Romans 8:24-25; Titus 1:1-2; Hebrews 6:18-20).

Conclusion. James Russell Lowell said, "The greatest homage we can pay to truth, is to use it." Will you obey the gospel today? In order to receive these wonderful blessings, you must continue in the gospel (1 Corinthians 15:2, 58; Colossians 1:23; 1 Timothy 4:16; 6:12; 2 Timothy 3:4-15; 1:13; James 1:25). Will you repent and come back to God if you have failed to follow God's commands (Acts 8:22)?