

EXPLORATION: BIBLE

By Chip Thompson

TRUTH CLAIM #11 – Jesus is the Savior of the World.

Prior to the birth of Jesus, an angel announced the good news, “He (Jesus) will save his people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21). This was the very first proclamation of the Gospel.

To the shepherds of Bethlehem, the angel said, “Behold, I bring you **good news of great joy** that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day **in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord**” (Luke 2:10-11). The words of this proclamation are loaded with meaning – In Greek, “**good news**” is the same word as “**gospel.**” Jesus was born “**in the city of David**” fulfilling the prophecy of Micah 5:2. He is the “**Savior... Christ the Lord.**” The Greek word “**Christ**” is this the same as the Hebrew word “**Messiah.**”

In simple terms, Jesus is the Gospel, the good news. He is the promised Messiah, the Savior, sent by God to save people from their sins.

Jesus said, “The Spirit of the LORD is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach the gospel” (Luke 4:18, quoting Isaiah 61:1). And later, Jesus commanded his disciples; “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to everyone” (Mark 16:15).

What is the gospel? It is of utmost importance to understand that the first four books of the New Testament; Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are called “the Gospels” for a reason. The life story of Jesus is the good news! Mark 1:1 begins like this, “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.”

First and foremost, the gospel is simple. The Apostle Paul warned us not to be deceived into moving away from “the simplicity that is in Christ” (2 Corinthians 11:3-4). Jesus said, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (see John 3:14-18, 36). Therefore, the simple gospel is – believe Jesus to receive eternal life.

Human logic says, that is too easy, surely we must work for something as valuable as forgiveness of sins and eternal life, but this is not what Jesus taught. When Jesus was asked the question, “What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?” He answered, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent” (John 6:28-29).

This simple gospel message is consistent throughout the New Testament, “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9). Salvation is a free gift for those who by faith believe Jesus.

The center point of the biblical gospel is the death of Jesus on the cross. To people living in Jesus’ day, salvation resulting from death on a cruel cross seemed ludicrous. Knowing this was the case, the Lord’s Apostles wrote, “For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God” (1 Corinthians 1:18).



The earliest image of the cross is in Nazareth, in the mosaic floor of what once was a Jewish Christian synagogue, which dates from 70 to 130 AD. This symbol was created by the Lord’s Apostles and/or Jewish believers as the focal point of this church.

The Bible calls Jesus, “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). In the Old Testament, atonement for sins required a blood sacrifice for “without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins” (Hebrews 9:22). The sacrificial lamb of the Jewish Passover pictures Jesus. The Bible says, “Indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us” (1 Corinthians 5:7). And, providentially, Jesus was crucified on the day the Passover lambs were sacrificed – this was no coincidence!

The cross is, moreover, the offer of a great exchange. “For He (God) made Him (Jesus) who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Corinthians 5:21). On the cross, Jesus paid the ultimate penalty and exchanged our sin for his righteousness. The gospel, the good news, is that Jesus died in our place and paid the penalty for our sins, so that we could be saved, “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree (the cross)... By his wounds you have been healed” (1 Peter 2:24, see Isaiah 53).

What must we do to receive this amazing gift – the gift of forgiveness of sins and eternal life? The Bible says, “If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation... For “whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Romans 10:9-10, 13).

Do you believe Jesus is the Messiah, the Savior of the world? Then why not pray and ask Jesus today to forgive you of all your sins and accept his free gift of eternal life. And, that is good news, that is the Gospel.

Questions? Comments? ephchip@gmail.com