

# "Easy" Misses The Point

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**Do you ever feel there is more to the gospel than most people make out?**

Someone says,

"The gospel is easy, all you have to do is believe".

Well that sounds easy. What do I have to believe?

"Oh, just believe that Jesus died."

H-okay. Everyone dies – so that's not hard to believe. Does that make me a Christian?

"Well no, you have to believe He rose again from the dead, as well".

Okay. I can do that. Right, done.

"And that He went to heaven. And that He is coming back."

Okay. Anything else?

"Well, you must believe in God and believe you're a sinner." "And you have to worship, and trust in the blood, and get baptised." "You have to repent and pray as well, plus you should probably stop going to the pub."

Wait! Wait! I thought you said this was easy.

## **More than simple faith**

The truth is, the gospel is much bigger, broader, more profound, more meaningful and important than a few glib comments or a handful of trite religious suggestions. If you ever hear someone start a sentence with, "All you have to do to become a Christian is ...", you may put your fingers in your ears. Furthermore, ask any older believer and they will tell you, having spent many years listening to gospel preaching they still have much to learn, many doubts and struggle with faith most days.

## **More than a great offer**

The gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is not a set of facts to be believed, nor a

proposition to be accepted or rejected. It is the answer to a problem. It is help for the helpless. It is spiritual food and drink for spiritually starving souls, it is heavenly nourishment for all who hunger and thirst after righteousness.

The gospel is healing ointment for those wounded by sin, it is rest for the weary, comfort for the sad, it is the message of life-imparting power to dead sinners and takes its potency not from the freewill of the spiritually dead, but the sovereign will of the all-powerful creator and giver of life. The gospel is the message of the Lord Jesus Christ's accomplishments for the salvation sinners.

### **A big answer for a big problem**

You might say, "Now, that is complicated". "What do you mean the gospel is the answer to a problem? What problem?" The problem of sin, of course, with its progeny-in-tow, guilt, judgment and everlasting separation from God in hell. The gospel is the answer to that problem and encompasses everything God has done in Jesus Christ to save, deliver and recover His sinful, guilty people from the condemnation they otherwise deserve.

Just to be clear. Sinners are not saved by believing as a cause — or because they believe --- as if their faith is the condition of acceptance with God. The cause and source of salvation is the unique work of Jesus Christ. Sinners are saved because Jesus Christ substituted Himself in their place, carried the punishment for their guilt, shed His blood to cleanse their sin, and brought in a perfect righteousness that God freely bestows upon them. When the gospel brings that message to the ears of a sinner to be believed by faith, the benefits of the already-finished cross-work of Jesus Christ are applied to the individual's consciousness and enjoyed by the newly born again.

### **A finished work**

The gospel is God's account of what He has done to save His people, it is not what He hopes will happen. Salvation is experienced by all who trust in Jesus Christ the Saviour. Forgiveness is found, comfort obtained, and peace with God discovered when the sinner, confessing their sin, realises what the Lord Jesus Christ has actually accomplished at the cross and the sinner is given faith to trust it for themselves.

The gospel is not complicated, but neither is it easy to believe. In fact, humanly speaking it is impossible to believe. It will be resisted, refuted and aggressively denied by everyone until God the Holy Spirit enables faith and convinces the sinner to throw down their arms and submit to Christ. Only a work of grace can make a sinner able, and willing, to believe.

### **A glorious promise**

And one final thing. The gospel of Jesus Christ is a high tower from which eternity's glorious wonders are glimpsed from earth and the endless enjoyment of life with Christ may be seen. It is true, as Paul tells us, 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him'. Yet the gospel promises grace now and glory hereafter to all who believe. Salvation is not in believing, salvation is in the One believed, and faith to believe is God's gift to those He chooses to save.

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