



What Does The Gospel Do?

DISCOVERING GOD'S WORD BIBLE STUDY SERIES

Q&A NUMBER: 30

www.GodSaidSo.com/QA30

What does the gospel do? The gospel is the good news of God about salvation in Jesus Christ, about a new covenant, and about the opportunity to be part of His kingdom. In addition, the gospel outlines the faith (the system of religious belief, teaching, and practice) that is acceptable to God (Philippians 1:27). But, how does the gospel impact our lives? Let's investigate.

Calls The Sinner To God

The Scriptures teach that God calls us (or, draws us) to Himself. 2 Peter 1:10 says, "Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble." John 6:44 says, "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day." And, Acts 2:38-39 says, "Then Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.'"

God is calling you. God is calling you to believe in Him and in His Son. God is calling you to turn away from your sin. God is calling you to devote your life to be obedient to Him. God is calling you to be part of His Kingdom (church). God is calling you to partake of all the spiritual blessings He provides through Jesus Christ. But, how is He calling you?

Many people today will attempt to answer this question by saying that God calls individuals by communicating directly with them (apart from His written word), whether by the Holy Spirit or by Himself. Some say that God calls them through particular events that happen in their lives.

However, God does not actually call people to Himself in these ways today. Instead, 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 explains how God is calling you. "But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." So, God calls us by the message

of His gospel! That is why God wanted His people to teach His gospel throughout the whole world (see Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16)! If God called people through direct or miraculous ways today, there would be no need for His gospel to be preached throughout the world!

Then, not only does 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 demonstrate that God calls us through His gospel; but, the other passages identified earlier demonstrate the same point. Why would the brethren Peter was writing to (in 2 Peter 1:10) need to be told to make their calling and election sure, unless God calls people through His message of the gospel? Right after Jesus said that the Father draws people to Himself (in John 6:44), Jesus says that we are “taught by God” and “everyone who has heard and learned from the Father” comes to Him (John 6:45-46). And, notice that the context in Acts 2:38-39 demonstrates God was calling those individuals through the preaching of the gospel being done by Peter and the other apostles (read the entirety of Acts 2). Therefore, you need to listen to the message of the gospel so that you can hear what God is calling you to do!

Converts The Sinner To God

One of the things God is calling us to do through the gospel is to abandon our sins and turn our lives over to His control. To be “converted” is to turn. It implies that we were walking in one direction, then we start walking in the exact opposite direction.

The Bible speaks about the need to be converted. Matthew 18:2-3 says, “Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.’” So, Jesus says that we need to turn away from our sins and become as pure and innocent as little children are! Then, Acts 3:19 says, “Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.” Notice how repentance, conversion, and being forgiven of sins are all tied together!

To be converted to God from our sins means that we stop walking down the path of sin (which results in eternal spiritual death) and, instead, walk on the path of righteousness (which results in eternal spiritual life). To be converted, then, is more than just being convinced that some things about God and about Jesus are true. To be converted is to take wide-reaching action based on those convictions. To be converted recognizes that we have wasted enough of our lives on the pursuit of our own earthly pleasures. Instead, we determine that we will turn our lives over to God’s control in order to glorify Him through our lives (see Romans 13:11-14; 1 Peter 4:3-4).

Think about the example of the Corinthians. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 says, “Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.” The ancient city of Corinth was known for its wickedness –

especially for its indulgence in sexual sins. And, as Paul writes to some who had become Christians in this wicked city, he identifies that they had previously been practicing many forms of sinful conduct – idolatry, fornication, homosexuality, theft, drunkenness, etc. But, notice he said that they “were” this way (“And such were some of you”). They had been washed, sanctified, and justified through Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of God.

Now, what brings about such a drastic change in life? The gospel! First, understand that it was the work of the Holy Spirit to make God’s message known (see 1 Corinthians 2:6-16). This He accomplished by guiding the apostles and prophets into all truth, as they wrote the things that we now have in the Bible (see John 16:13 and Ephesians 3:3-5). Therefore, it is because of the work of the Holy Spirit that we can read the message of the gospel – and the Corinthians were sanctified (set apart from their sins) because they heard and obeyed that message! Acts 18:8 demonstrates this to be true: “Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his household. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized.” Therefore, you need to listen to and obey the message of the gospel so that you (like the Corinthians) can be converted from your past sins and live entirely for God! Psalm 19:7 says, “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.”

Saves The Sinner From Spiritual Death

Ultimately, all of the work that the gospel does works for the salvation of the soul. In Romans 1:16, Paul said, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.” God’s power to save the souls of men from the consequences of their sins rests in the gospel! Consider how the gospel truly is God’s power to salvation.

The gospel outlines the problem of sin. The message of the gospel should make every person who hears its message knowledgeable about the great dangers of sin. James 1:14-15 says, “But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.” So, the gospel helps us to understand that sin occurs whenever we are enticed by our own fleshly desires (when we act to fulfill those fleshly desires in ways that are contrary to the instructions of God, 1 John 3:4). Then, the gospel tells us that the ultimate consequence of acting in a way that violates God’s laws is spiritual death/separation from God. Romans 6:23 says that this is what we deserve whenever we sin (the “wages of sin is death”). Revelation 21:8 identifies that if we die (physically) while living in our sins, we will experience the “second death” in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone (eternal punishment in Hell fire).

In response to the problem of sin, the gospel details our opportunity for salvation through Jesus Christ. Not only does the gospel describe the great problem of sin (demonstrating that mankind could never save himself from the consequences of his sin – by himself); but, the gospel details God’s solution to this problem. God’s answer is Jesus Christ. Romans 6:23 says, “For the

wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Jesus Christ, therefore, could say, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6). He is the one who offered His life as the sacrifice for the sins of this world – and was the only one who could make such a sacrifice! Therefore, salvation from sins and eternal life in Heaven is only possible through Him!

Then, the gospel identifies our personal responsibility to salvation. While the gospel describes the opportunity we have been given to be saved from our sins through Jesus Christ, the gospel also identifies that we do have personal responsibility regarding our own salvations. God does not automatically save everyone because Jesus Christ has given His life. For instance, even though “the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men” (Titus 2:11), we are taught that the majority of people will live in a way that will result in eternal punishment, with only few living so as to be eternally saved (Matthew 7:13-14). This is because most will not obey what the gospel requires of them! 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 indicates that those who “do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” will be “punished with everlasting destruction.” Therefore, we must listen to and obey the message of the gospel if we truly want to be saved from our sins and from eternal punishment in Hell!

Conclusion

The gospel of Jesus Christ is still living and active in the world today (Hebrews 4:12). It is doing the same things today as it did nearly 2,000 years ago when it was first preached. It is still calling people to come to God. It is still converting people to Christ. It is still saving souls. And, it will do all of these things in your life – if you will listen to and obey it!

Discovering God’s Word Bible Study Series

Study Number: QA30

Written by Eric Krieg

Copyright: Copyright © 2018 GodSaidSo Press. Please use this material to God’s glory and honor. Feel free to copy and distribute this material in any way that will bring God glory and help souls to be saved. However, you may not take any of the material out of context or change the material in any way. Please provide the author with the proper credit for the material.

Scripture quotations: Unless otherwise indicated, all scripture quotations are taken from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.