

<h1>EVANGELISM</h1>  <h2>Gospel, Good News</h2>	Transliteration: <i>Euaggelion</i> <small>(conversion from Greek to English)</small>	
	Pronunciation: <i>yoo-ang-ghel'-ee-on</i>	
	Strong's: G2098, 2097	
Definition: noun. A reward for good tidings, glad tidings of salvation through Jesus Christ, the proclamation of the grace of God made manifest in Jesus Christ, the gospel or good news of the words, deeds, life, death and the resurrection of Christ.		
This Month: The Year of Evangelism and the Spreading of the Gospel	Sermon: The Gospel of the Kingdom: Part 1	
Scripture Focus: Matthew 4:17-25		

This word is the distinctive New Testament Greek word for “gospel”, the good news given to us in Jesus Christ. The New Testament writers explain that Jesus is the consummation of God’s plan for us and that He gives the gifts of salvation, forgiveness and eternal life to those who believe in Him. Each of these gifts was purchased for us through the death of Jesus Christ as a sacrifice for our sinful nature. The term “gospel” occurs almost 80 times in the New Testament but with several distinctive tenses and nuances.

Originally used to describe the “good news” of military victory brought from a messenger to his commander, the New Testament writers chose this word to reflect the Good news or Good Message of the story of Jesus Christ and what it means to the believer.

According to Mark 1:1-4, the gospel begins with John the Baptist’s proclamation. The promised birth of John the Baptist is good news (Luke 1:19), not only for his parents but for all the people. John is sent to prepare them for the Messiah’s coming. John’s own preaching is “gospel” (John 3:18) for the same reason. The Messiah would be coming to execute judgment, a process that involves both condemnation and salvation (Luke 3:3-17). John’s message is gospel for sinners in that they are warned of impending doom and urged to repent before the ax falls. It is also gospel for the repentant in that they are promised forgiveness and membership in the Messiah’s community. The birth of the Savior Himself is announced as “good news” bringing of Joy (Luke 2:10-11).

After John the Baptist baptized Jesus, Jesus was authorized by God and anointed by the Spirit to proclaim the gospel (Mark 1:14; Luke 4:18). At the heart of His preaching stands the announcement, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel” (Mark 1:15).

Jesus’ gospel message focuses on the coming of God’s kingdom, an already/not yet phenomenon. Jesus’ first coming heralded the in-breaking of the kingdom into the world, but it is only after his second coming that the kingdom will be fully consummated and God’s rule will be completed. Wrong will be judged, righteousness established, and His people will be glorified.

The “gospel” of the kingdom of God emphasizes the omnipotent rule or control of God over His people and is noted in Matt. 4:23: “Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom”; Matt. 24:14: “And this good news of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the world, as a testimony to all nations”; and Mark 1:14: “Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God.”

After the resurrection of Jesus, the gospel was proclaimed by His eyewitnesses. The contents of this gospel are recorded in the book of Acts and Paul’s letters. Having risen from the dead, Jesus Christ again evangelizes (Eph. 2:16-18), doing so now through His appointed representatives (Rom. 15:16-18). More than that, Christ became and is the central theme of the gospel—the Proclaimer is now the Proclaimed. This is repeatedly affirmed by Luke (Acts 5:42; 8:4-5, 35; 11:20; 17:18) and Paul (Rom. 1:1-4; 10:8-17; 15:19-20; Phil. 1:15-18). ***Christ Himself is the central theme of the gospel message that has been entrusted to us to share to the world.***

References to the “gospel of (Jesus) Christ” are found in the following verses: Mark 1:1; Rom. 1:16; 15:19; 1 Cor. 9:12; 2 Cor. 2:12 and others. The Book of Acts in 20:24 mentions the “gospel of the grace of God” which emphasizes the compassionate and merciful expression of God’s love through the salvation of those who believe in Him.

Additional references to the general “gospel of God” occur in Rom 1:1; 15:16; 2 Cor. 11:7; 1 Thess.2:2; and to the “gospel of His Son” in Rom. 1:9. In the opposite of these references Paul speaks in Galatians of a “false gospel” being proclaimed by Jewish false teachers known as “Judaizers” who were speaking in defiance to the words of Paul.

Finally, in Eph. 6:19, the phrase “mystery of the gospel” is used referring to the hidden nature of God’s plan of salvation prior to the revelation of Jesus Christ which is now proclaimed by Paul.

The verb form, ***euangelizo*** is used nearly 60 times and the primary meaning of the verb is to “preach the gospel.” This usage can be found in the following verses: Matt. 11:5; Luke 4:18; Acts 8:25; 8:35; Gal. 4:13; 1 Thess. 3:6; and many others. “Preaching the word” is the meaning indicated in Acts 8:4; 15:35 and “preaching Christ” is the meaning in Eph. 3:8; Eph. 2:17 and Gal. 1:23.

Reflection questions:

What does the word "gospel" mean to you?

How did the word "gospel" take on new shades of meaning from the ministry of John the Baptist, the ministry of Jesus, to the ministry to which Jesus calls all his disciples today?

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