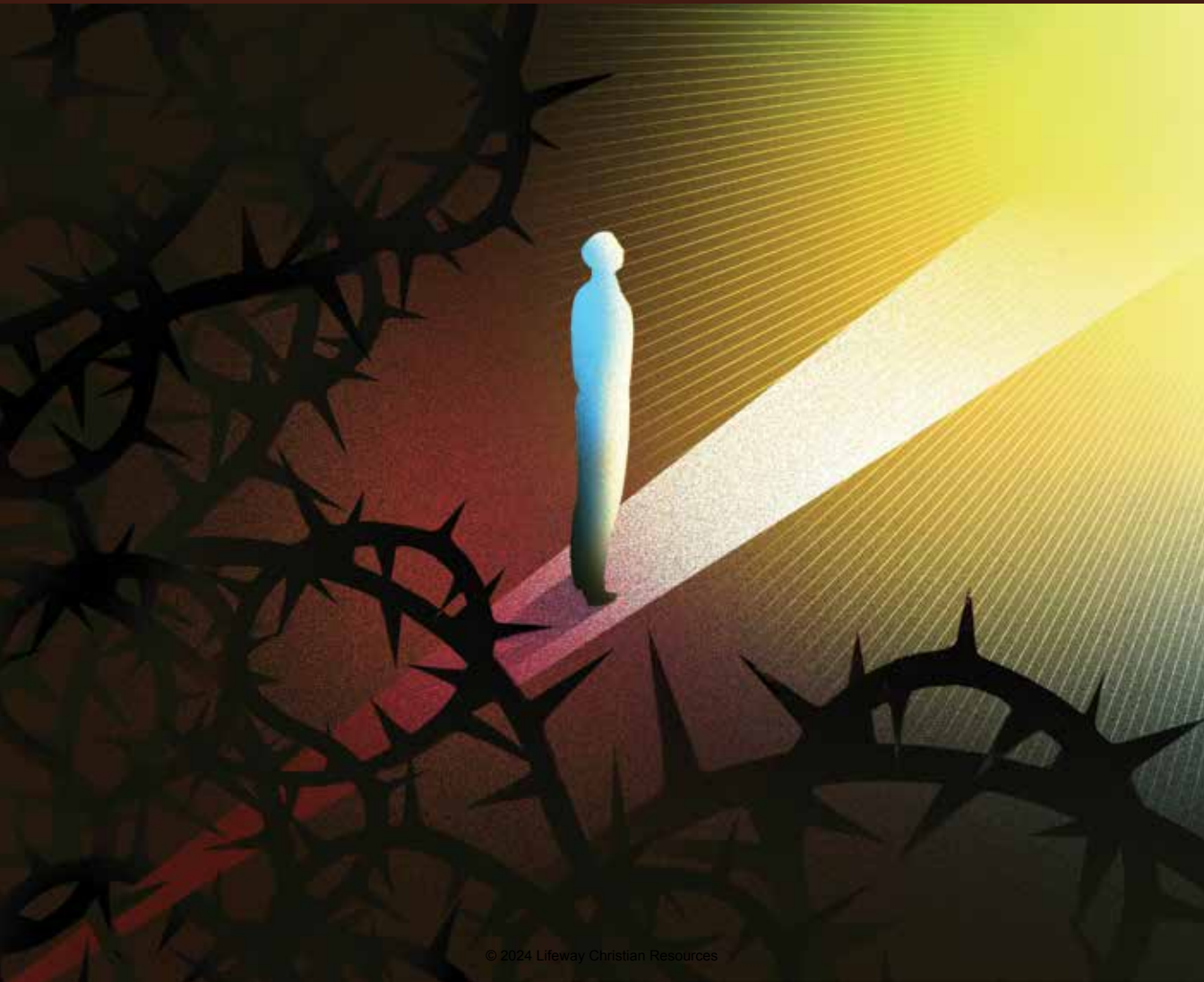




the **GOSPEL**PROJECT.

FROM THIS WORLD TO THE WORLD TO COME

ADULTS / DAILY DISCIPLESHIP GUIDE / SUMMER 2024 / VOL. 12



GOD'S WORD TO YOU

THE GOOD NEWS THAT AWAITS US

“And they all lived happily ever after.”

This is the coda, the postscript that punctuates the tales of our childhoods. The prince is victorious. The dragon is defeated. The princess is rescued. The struggle is over. The battle is won. And finally, “they all lived happily ever after.”

The Bible has its coda as well. But unlike the happily-ever-afters of fairy tales, this is one of expectation—not for the end to come but for the next chapter to be written. A promise summarized in three words: “Come, Lord Jesus” (Rev. 22:20). This is the promise the entire story of Scripture builds toward. It is the deepest longing of the heart of God’s people. The first man and woman longed for the coming of the Son, the One whose heel would crush the head of the serpent (Gen. 3:15). Abraham longed for the promised Offspring through whom all nations would be blessed (Gen. 12:3,7). David longed to see his Lord, the Son who would sit on the throne of an unfading kingdom (Ps. 110:1). God’s people in exile and return longed for the coming of the Servant who would restore them (Isa. 49:6-7).

Then the long-expected One came—Jesus, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham, the Son of Eve, the Son of God—bringing redemption and peace with God by humbling Himself to the point of death and then being exalted in His resurrection (Phil. 2:8-11).

News of the reconciliation Jesus offered spread throughout the world. People of every tribe and tongue and nation believed and trusted Christ for the forgiveness of their sins. And as this good news continued to spread, the promise spread with it—the promise that tells of the day when Jesus returns to make all things new. When every tear will be wiped from every eye. When suffering, sadness, and death will be no more. In their place will be joy, gladness, and life everlasting as God dwells with His people forevermore.

But for now, we wait. And as we do, we join with our brothers and sisters across the centuries as we long for that day to come, echoing these words: “Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!”

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THE EDITOR

We've come to the end of the greatest story ever told and, of course, the good guys win! From Genesis through Revelation, we've seen sin enter the earth, but God already had a rescue plan on the ready. And as His people were faithful, then were not, then came back, then backed away, it was like a love story gone awry of faithfulness and unfaithfulness on the part of humanity. But God Himself was always faithful. God was always true, merciful, forgiving, and loving. What He promised always came true. Salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ, through His crucifixion and resurrection, was the climax of the story. Victory was won at that moment, but full victory would be realized when Christ comes back again.

In the meantime, like Paul and the other disciples, we are to tell the story of this good news of victory over sin and death. And we endure in doing so, even in suffering and trials and persecution, because the gospel of Jesus Christ is true and souls are in the balance. Our life's mission should be to share and testify to Christ crucified, that others may have the opportunity to receive and believe in His name. They may or may not, but those results are between them and God. We are still to share with others, through our words and our lives, the truth of how God has redeemed and restored us to be part of His family, as children loved by Him.

Then when Jesus returns, we will continue to worship Him like the angels and heavenly creatures. For we will be rewarded with His presence forevermore, thus experiencing joy upon joy upon joy. Our forever home is waiting with our forever Father. And that is great news indeed!

Y Bonesteele

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The Gospel Project for Adults

The Gospel Project®

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ALL AGES STUDY PLAN

VOL 1: From Creation to Chaos

(Genesis) Fall 2021

Unit 1: The Heavens Declare the Glory of God (Gen. 1–2; Pss. 8; 96)

Unit 2: Let Us Make a Name for Ourselves (Gen. 3–11)

Unit 3: I Will Make Your Name Great (Gen. 11–50)

VOL 2: From Captivity to the Wilderness

(Exodus–Deuteronomy) Winter 2021–22

Unit 4: Out of Egypt I Called My Son (Ex. 1–15)

Unit 5: To Dwell in the House of the Lord (Ex. 16–40; Lev.)

Unit 6: Be Holy, Because I Am Holy (Num. 13–14; 20–21)

VOL 3: From Conquest to a Kingdom

(Joshua–1 Samuel) Spring 2022

Unit 7: Lord, Teach Me Your Statutes (Josh. 1; 3–4)

Unit 8: Fear the Lord and Worship Him (Josh. 2; 6–11; 23–24)

Unit 9: There Is No Fear of God Before Their Eyes (Judg.; Ruth; 1 Sam. 1–6)

VOL 4: From Unity to Division

(1 Samuel–1 Kings) Summer 2022

Unit 10: Because of Your Hardened Heart (1 Sam. 8–15)

Unit 11: Create a Clean Heart for Me (1 Sam. 16–17; 2 Sam. 6–7; 11–12)

Unit 12: If You Walk Before Me with a Heart of Integrity (1 Kings 1–12)

VOL 5: From Rebellion to Exile

(1 Kings–The Prophets) Fall 2022

Unit 13: Your Passions Wage War Within You (1 Kings 12–18; 2 Kings 1–5; Isa. 44)

Unit 14: Seek the Lord, All You Humble of the Earth (2 Chron. 24; Isa. 22; 25; 30; Zeph.)

Unit 15: He Has Made Every Nationality (Jonah; Nah.; 2 Chron. 36)

VOL 6: From Captivity to Restoration

(The Prophets, Ezra–Esther) Winter 2022–23

Unit 16: The Lord Keeps His Eye on Those Who Fear Him (Jer. 29–30; Dan.)

Unit 17: Take Refuge in the Lord (Ezra 1–6; Zech. 13–14)

Unit 18: For Look, the Day Is Coming (Esth.; Neh.; Mal.)

VOL 7: From Heaven to Earth

(The Gospels) Spring 2023

Unit 19: Here Is the Lamb of God
(John 1–2; Luke 2; Mark 1; Matt. 4)

Unit 20: God’s Love Was Revealed
Among Us in This Way (John 3–4)

Unit 21: Without Faith It Is Impossible
to Please God (Luke 4–5)

VOL 8: From Wonder to Rejection

(The Gospels) Summer 2023

Unit 22: The Works That I Do in My
Father’s Name Testify About Me
(Mark 4; 8; Luke 5; Matt. 9; John 10)

Unit 23: The Kingdom of God Is in Your
Midst (Matt. 5–7; 13; 24; Luke 15; 17)

Unit 24: God’s Glory in the Face of Jesus
Christ (Luke 13; John 11)

VOL 9: From Death to Resurrection

(The Gospels) Fall 2023

Unit 25: Jerusalem, Jerusalem,
Who Kills the Prophets
(Matt. 21–25; Mark 1; John 6; 14)

Unit 26: The Hour Has Come
(John 12; Matt. 26)

Unit 27: The King of the Jews
(Luke 22–23; Matt. 27–28)

VOL 10: From Many People to One People

(The Gospels, Acts) Winter 2023-24

Unit 28: I Am with You Always
(Luke 24; John 20–21; Matt. 28)

Unit 29: You Will Be My Witnesses
(Acts 1–2)

Unit 30: Every Day the Lord Added to
Their Number (Acts 2–5)

VOL 11: From One Nation to All Nations

(Acts and Epistles) Spring 2024

Unit 31: Every Knee Will Bow
(Acts 5–8; Phil. 2)

Unit 32: The Power and the Wisdom
of God (Acts 9–12; 1 Cor. 1; 12)

Unit 33: A Prisoner of Christ Jesus
(Acts 9; 13–14; Philem.)

VOL 12: From This World to the World to Come

(Acts, Epistles, Revelation) Summer 2024

Unit 34: Ambassadors for Christ
(Acts 15–19; 2 Cor. 5; Eph. 4)

Unit 35: That I May Gain Christ
(Acts 20–28; Phil. 3)

Unit 36: A New Heaven and a New Earth
(Rev. 4–5; 19–22)

HOW TO USE THE DAILY DISCIPLESHIP GUIDE

Central to your personal and group experience with The Gospel Project for Adults is the Daily Discipleship Guide. Here's how to make the most of your time with it:

BEGIN WITH PERSONAL TIME IN THE WORD

We recommend beginning your week with the daily devotions. These devotions lay a foundation for what will be explored and discussed in your group time as you build healthy rhythms of personal discipleship.



DAY 1

READ:
Acts 15:1-5

FOCAL PASSAGE:
Acts 15:1

NOTES



KEY DOCTRINE #47: THE GOSPEL

The Bible teaches that the gospel is both an event and a story. First, it is an event that took place at a specific point in history, the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ for the redemption of sinners (1 Corinthians 15; 2 Corinthians 5:2). Second, the gospel is also the story of redemption that God has planned since “before the foundations of the earth” (Ephesians 1:4), which runs through Scripture, and which culminates in a restored and redeemed creation—a new heaven and new earth where sin, death, and suffering will never again plague humanity, and God’s people will live with Him forever (Isaiah 25:8; 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21). The event and story do not exist apart from or in conflict with one another, but together inspire us to a life of devotion and mission.

Imagine receiving pure gold as a gift and thinking to yourself, “I could really improve this by adding some aluminum to make it shiny!” By melting down the gold and aluminum, in the process of adding to the gold, the value is not added to but diminished. By adding a lesser metal, there might be “more metal,” but its value is not increased.

In the same way, the gift of the gospel comes to us free of charge. But any attempt to add to it does not make it better. Instead of increasing its effectiveness or value or ability to change people’s lives, adding to the message of Jesus Christ does not put people in right standing with God but only confuses them.

In Acts 15:1, some men from Judea commented that circumcision was needed of believers because it was the practice that God had given to Abraham as a sign of belonging to the covenant community of faith (Genesis 17:9-14). The sign did not make someone right with God, however, but was an outward expression of an inward need that the heart would be circumcised (Deuteronomy 10:6).

Any time we try to add to the finished work of Jesus Christ, we do not improve the message and its power to save but corrupt it.

What types of works do people add to the gospel?



STUDY THE BIBLE WITH YOUR BIBLE

Reading and studying the Bible is absolutely life-changing, and we believe the best way to study the Bible is to use the Bible you own. Whether you read from the CSB, ESV, NIV, KJV, or many other translations, the Daily Discipleship Guide helps you engage with the session not only with our book but your Book.



GET BACK TO BASICS

As you read and study, we recommend using the tool found in your Daily Discipleship Guide called the “7 Arrows of Bible Reading.” The 7 Arrows guide both novice and experienced students of the Word through the basic mechanics of Bible study by asking a few key questions of any passage (see pages 10-11 for more information).

7 ARROWS OF BIBLE READING

by Matt Rogers

There is often a vast disconnect between the awareness of the need for disciple-making and practical tools that actually aid in this work. Three factors are essential: Scripture, relationships, and time. Discipleship happens when the life-changing truth of Scripture is infused into genuine relationships over an extended period of time.

Our desire was to create a simple, reproducible strategy that would facilitate this process. This led us to develop a simple strategy for small clusters (2-3 people) to meet together regularly and talk about the Scriptures and apply them to their lives.

The seven arrows of Bible reading were an attempt at developing a tool for proper hermeneutics to power these relationships. We did not want our people to simply talk about the Bible. We wanted them to understand the Bible and know how to apply it to their lives. Each cluster would read a predetermined passage of Scripture and discuss it using these seven arrows.

- What does this passage say?
- What did this passage mean to its original audience?
- What does this passage tell us about God?
- What does this passage tell us about man?
- What does this passage demand of me?
- How does this passage change the way I relate to people?
- How does this passage prompt me to pray?

10

DISCUSS AND APPLY IN COMMUNITY

Each session concludes with a two-page discussion guide. This guide includes the key points of the session along with interactive questions and activities designed to address the needs of a variety of learning styles. Mark up the discussion guide, make notes, fill in the blanks, do the activities, write out questions and thoughts—make it yours!



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by Matt Rogers

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What does this passage say?



What did this passage mean to its original audience?



What does this passage tell us about God?



What does this passage tell us about man?



What does this passage demand of me?



How does this passage change the way I relate to people?



How does this passage prompt me to pray?

ARROW 1: The goal was for the clusters to start by summarizing the main point of the passage as succinctly as possible, ideally in one sentence.

ARROW 2: Next, the clusters sought to discern authorial intent for the passage by asking what it meant to its original audience. Since a text of Scripture can never mean what it never meant, it is necessary to begin by discerning what the text meant. Often this may require the clusters to consult other study tools or cross-reference other biblical texts to arrive at the meaning of the text.

ARROW 3: Thirdly, we asked what the text tells us about the nature and character of God and specifically His work through the person and work of Jesus Christ.

ARROW 4: Fourthly, the text was analyzed to see what it tells us about humanity. Bryan Chappell refers to this as the “fallen condition focus” of the text. What does the text reveal about sin and humankind’s need for the gospel?

ARROW 5: Then we moved the clusters to application. Since we had rooted the clusters in the meaning of the text, they were now positioned to rightly apply it’s meaning to their lives.

ARROW 6: From there we wanted our clusters to apply the Scripture to their relationships with others. Ideally, they would discuss how the text shaped both how they related to other believers and how they lived on mission in the world.

ARROW 7: Finally, the clusters rooted their prayers in the Scriptures. Hopefully, the previous six arrows kindled the flames of passionate prayer in the lives of the clusters—both for their own sanctification and for their mission to the lost.

With this model, we touched on three important areas for discipleship:

Scripture—Disciple-making was rooted in a rightful understanding of Scripture and not in simply doing life together, unpacking another sermon, or dependance on classroom instruction.

Simplicity—Disciple-making was simple enough for everyone to get involved. All believers could take these principles, a Bible, and a relationship with a young Christian and get to work.

Stickiness—Disciple-making through understanding and applying Scripture was etched in the minds of our young church. They could use these same arrows not only to guide their cluster discussions but also their personal Bible study, small group leadership, and comprehension of sermons.

These arrows have proven to be a unique tool in our disciple-making toolbox that the Lord is using to call and build faithful and fruitful followers of Jesus.

Matt Rogers is the teaching pastor at The Church at Cherrydale in Greenville, South Carolina. His church developed the Seven Arrows tool to help people read and understand Scripture within their small groups. The concept has gone on to form the basis of a 52-week devotional for teens from Lifeway Students, the Seven Arrows Bible from B&H, and is now featured in The Gospel Project for Adults and Students.

UNIT 34

+

AMBASSADORS

FOR CHRIST

“Unity in the Faith”

by Kevin M. Jones, Sr.

Did you know there are people who represent you and the interest of your nation to other nations? These men and women represent the collective voice of a government or people. They are called ambassadors. Although they hold citizenship for one nation, ambassadors are usually placed either short or long term in another nation. Ambassadors must know their nation intimately, maintain the interest of their nation, spread the message of their nation, advance the mission of their home nation, and work for peace between nations. This is not a small task. Many ambassadors have lost their lives in dedication to their mission. As believers we are called to do some of the same work as Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 5:20. Our work as ambassadors is for the kingdom of Christ.

KNOW THE MISSION

We have been called and equipped by the power of the Holy Spirit to do the work of God as His ambassadors. God makes His

appeal through us—human beings who were once sinners but are now citizens of a heavenly kingdom. God uses us to point people to the reality of His existence, care, love, peace, patience, and the gift of His grace. Never forget how significant you are to the work of God. Sharing the gospel is the work of an ambassador. Men and women need to understand that they are not at peace with God—even if they are unaware of their rebellion—unless they have accepted His gift of grace. Sadly, Satan’s job is to kill, steal, and to destroy; he does everything he can to distract believers from their task and numb unbelievers to their need for the gospel.

KNOW THE KING YOU SERVE

To be an ambassador of Christ, you must have knowledge of King Jesus and the kingdom you serve. We acquire the knowledge of our King through reading Scripture, personal devotion, prayer, and fellowship with believers. God has called believers from every nation, tribe,

Christ said the world would know us by our love for one another.

tongue, and ethnic group. We must be especially careful not to get distracted by this earthly kingdom where we reside that, if we are not careful, can sometimes feel like our true home. I am not saying we should not care about the world in which we live; I am saying that the kingdom of Christ is far superior to the current city, state, or nation where we hold citizenship.

REFLECT KINGDOM BEHAVIOR

It is our job as ambassadors to maintain the interest that Jesus Christ set in motion before His ascension. We should be concerned with the physical and spiritual protection of Christians in our community and at large. We should have a heightened sense of awareness for unbelievers and be just as concerned about their physical and spiritual well-being. It is also our job as ambassadors to maintain integrity, closely tied to the cultural identity of Christians. Galatians 5:22-24 describes how God's people should act, namely, bearing the fruit of the Spirit. These are just a few of the attributes a Christians should model. So when we think about being an ambassador, here are three tasks ambassadors should be doing:

1. The ambassador for Christ spreads the good news. Paul described Satan as the god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4) with a clear mission to blind unbelievers to their sin in a world riddled with godlessness, debauchery, lust, lying, jealousy, envy, murder, and more. Never forget the gospel and its power to reconcile sinners to God. Remind yourself of it daily. Tell others of the gospel daily.

2. A good ambassador represents the goodwill of their home. Although no worldly nation is perfect, their ambassadors try to make their home seem as close to perfect as possible. For Christ's ambassadors, the advantage we have is the love we share with one another which can be clearly seen by those around us. While we sometimes struggle to maintain perfect unity, Christ said the world would know us by our love for one another (John 13:35). Have you shown love to another believer today?

3. An ambassador remembers the placement is temporary. Our citizenship is in heaven, and Christ's ambassadors do not forget that. I suspect that many of us spend far more time tending to the needs of our temporal home than we do focusing on our eternal home. Many of

us spend time worrying about the rights we have as citizens in our residence. We must be diligent to keep our minds on the things above, else we will get continually distracted with civilian affairs, which Paul warned Timothy against (2 Timothy 2:4).

We should have a heightened sense of awareness for unbelievers and be just as concerned about their physical and spiritual well-being.

4. Christian ambassadors promote peace. Peace is found in the presence of God. It is found when we are in harmony and unity with God's Word, the Holy Spirit, and other believers. Paul said that God's business has always been about reconciling the world to Himself (2 Corinthians 5:18-19). We must plead

with unbelievers to come and find rest from their burdens and struggles in Christ alone (Matthew 11:28; Romans 5:1).

Be an ambassador for Christ. Know God intimately. Serve your local church and churches abroad. Spread the gospel and advance the mission of the church. Do this until Christ returns and we go home to be with Him forever.



I suspect that many of us spend far more time tending to the needs of our temporal home than we do focusing on our eternal home.

PRIORITIZING THE GOSPEL

+ **SESSION IN A SENTENCE:**

When questions arose about the gospel, the early church gathered to clarify that justification is through faith alone, affirming a core doctrine that unites all of God's people.

+ **BACKGROUND PASSAGE:**

Acts 15

+ **SETTING:**

As the church grew, people from non-Jewish backgrounds were coming to faith in Jesus Christ. At first, Cornelius believed under Peter's ministry. Then persecution caused believers to scatter and bring the gospel to Hellenists (Acts 11:20-21). Then Paul and Barnabas brought the gospel from Antioch throughout Asia Minor. Now the church had to deal with an important question: do you first have to become Jewish to follow Jesus? This question created a great conflict among believers who wanted to be faithful to the Bible.

DAY 1

READ:

Acts 15:1-5

FOCAL PASSAGE:

Acts 15:1

NOTES



KEY DOCTRINE #47: THE GOSPEL

The Bible teaches that the gospel is both an event and a story. First, it is an event that took place at a specific point in history, the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ for the redemption of sinners (1 Corinthians 15; 2 Corinthians 5:21). Second, the gospel is also the story of redemption that God has planned since “before the foundations of the earth” (Ephesians 1:4), which runs through Scripture, and which culminates in a restored and redeemed creation—a new heaven and new earth where sin, death, and suffering will never again plague humanity, and God’s people will live with Him forever (Isaiah 25:8; 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21). The event and story do not exist apart from or in conflict with one another, but together inspire us to a life of devotion and mission.

Imagine receiving pure gold as a gift and thinking to yourself, “I could really improve this by adding some aluminum to make it shiny!” By melting down the gold and aluminum, in the process of adding to the gold, the value is not added to but diminished. By adding a lesser metal, there might be “more metal,” but its value is not increased.

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In Acts 15:1, some men from Judea commented that circumcision was needed of believers because it was the practice that God had given to Abraham as a sign of belonging to the covenant community of faith (Genesis 17:9-14). The sign did not make someone right with God, however, but was an outward expression of an inward need that the heart would be circumcised (Deuteronomy 30:6).

Any time we try to add to the finished work of Jesus Christ, we do not improve the message and its power to save but corrupt it.

What types of works do people add to the gospel?

DAY 2

READ:

Acts 15:6-11

FOCAL PASSAGE:

Acts 15:11

NOTES

Nothing causes greater offense than hearing that there are different standards for different people. Any group that would require one set of standards for one type of people and a different set of standards for another group would be called out for their biased, racist, or ethnocentric practices.

Thankfully, God is not a God of favoritism. When people come to Him, they all come with the same problem. Because we are all born in sin and are enemies of God, no one comes to God with an advantage. Paul can say that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23).

Because of the grace of God, every person enters into God's kingdom the same way: by grace through faith in Christ alone. There is no advantage, privileged status, or easier access for anyone to come. Through the miraculous work of regeneration, God gives salvation to those who believe. This belief is the same for everyone—a confession that we are sinners, a turning away from sin, and trusting in Christ alone to bring us to God. At the foot of the cross, we are all equal.

Who is someone that you could pray for today to receive the gift of eternal life?

DAY 3

READ:

Galatians 2:16-21

FOCAL PASSAGE:

Galatians 2:16

NOTES

Imagine that your house is on fire. Everyone has escaped without harm or danger. But suddenly a family member says, “I’m going to run in to get a few pictures because I want you to see that I really care about you!” If they were injured or died, we would see that as a needless tragedy. We would plead with them not to run into the flames for the sake of a few pictures to prove their love. That would be foolishness. However, if one of your loved ones was inside and someone ran in, saved your loved one, and yet lost their life, we would feel forever indebted to them for their sacrificial love.

Trying to save ourselves would make Christ’s atoning death pointless. But if we cannot save ourselves, then Christ’s death means everything. The good news of the gospel is not that we are merely helpless people trapped in sin and death, but that we have an all-powerful Savior, who came to give His life so that we might stand before God fully justified.

How would you explain justification by faith to someone who doesn’t understand this truth?

DAY 4

READ:

Acts 15:22-29

FOCAL PASSAGE:

Acts 15:22-23

NOTES

In a day and age where communication is fast and easy because of the instant nature of texts and emails, a written letter can be quite encouraging. Opening your mailbox to discover a hand-written letter shows the thoughtfulness of the individual. Instead of shooting a quick text or email, they sat down, wrote a letter, got an envelope and stamp, and then went to the mailbox to send it to you.

But imagine getting a letter from the person who has traveled just to deliver the letter to you. Suddenly, every word carries extra love and care.

When the Jerusalem church wrote to the Gentiles of Antioch, they took extra care to ensure that their message was not misunderstood. They wrote a carefully worded letter. They sent people along with the letter to ensure it was understood. And they wanted believers to come together around the gospel.

As much as technology makes communication fast and easy, it can also cheapen its effectiveness. Thoughtful notes with extra time and follow up are often needed so that people receive hard news in ways that are not only heard well, but received as encouragement.

Whom could you send a note to and follow up with for personal encouragement today?

DAY 5

READ:

Acts 15:30-35

FOCAL PASSAGE:

Acts 15:35

NOTES

In an age where people love statistics and measurable results, it is tempting to look at the ABCs of church growth. Is our **A**ttendance higher? Have we added or improved our **B**uilding? How is our **C**ash-flow? Because human beings want to see results, it is easy to look at the outward appearances of what might be considered success.

When Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch, their aim was not for something tangible for the people to have. Rather, they made it their aim to continue in what Jesus had said to His disciples before leaving for heaven: “Go and make disciples of all the nations” (Matthew 28:18).

As Paul and Barnabas had received greater confirmation and clarity from the Jerusalem church regarding what was required to be saved, they brought this news to the church in Antioch to strengthen the saints through preaching and teaching. It was important for these believers to understand how the Bible fit together so as to avoid the dangers of confusing the free offer of the gospel with the message of grace plus works for salvation.

In every age, there are some challenges that come to the gospel. Will we believe that we are saved by faith in Christ alone?

Who is someone that you could disciple in the faith?

VOICES from CHURCH HISTORY

“Obedience as the appropriate and necessary expression of devotion to Christ does not find its place in a covenant of works or of merit but in a covenant that has its inception and end in pure grace.”¹

—John Murray (1898–1975)

GROUP

NOTES

POINT 1: The church experiences division in applying the gospel (Acts 15:1-5).

Any time we attempt to add to the good news of Jesus Christ, we do not improve it but dilute its power.



From Day 1: **What types of works do people add to the gospel?**

KEY DOCTRINE #47: THE GOSPEL

The Bible teaches that the gospel is both an event and a story. First, it is an event that took place at a specific point in history, the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ for the redemption of sinners (1 Corinthians 15; 2 Corinthians 5:21). Second, the gospel is also the story of redemption that God has planned since “before the foundations of the earth” (Ephesians 1:4), which runs through Scripture, and which culminates in a restored and redeemed creation—a new heaven and new earth where sin, death, and suffering will never again plague humanity, and God’s people will live with Him forever (Isaiah 25:8; 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21). The event and story do not exist apart from or in conflict with one another, but together inspire us to a life of devotion and mission.



How do you guard yourself from adding to the gospel?

POINT 2: The church exercises wisdom in affirming the gospel (Acts 15:6-11,22-29).

Peter affirmed that faith is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone for all, Jews and Gentiles alike.

VOICES from CHURCH HISTORY

“The law says, ‘do this,’ and it is never done. Grace says, ‘believe in this,’ and everything is already done.”²

—Martin Luther (1483–1546)



How does God's grace work so that we might believe the gospel?

The church in unity and wisdom affirmed that faith is in Christ alone to not burden the Gentile believers.



How do we help others grow in Christ without burdening them?

POINT 3: The church encourages unity in advancing the gospel (Acts 15:30-35).

Because of their unity in the gospel, the church acted faithfully to continue in the mission of proclaiming Christ.



What steps can you take to stand for gospel unity?

By caring for the Gentile and Jewish believers, the Jerusalem church brought the church together and strengthened their faith.



How can we encourage others toward more unity?

MY RESPONSE

Because we have been saved by grace through faith and not by works, we proclaim the gospel message to everyone that justification is available through faith in Christ alone.

- **HEAD:** What questions do you have about the gospel that you need to grow in understanding?
- **HEART:** How can you increase your joy in the Lord today?
- **HANDS:** Whom can you pray for and proclaim Christ to this week?



Scan this QR code to access this session's Scripture passages.

VOICES from CHURCH HISTORY

“Oh, perfect redemption, the purchase of blood To every believer the promise of God; The vilest offender who truly believes, That moment from Jesus a pardon receives.”³

–Fanny Crosby (1820–1915)