

## How do you present the gospel properly?

There are a lot of Christians who present a false gospel in their evangelism. They don't do this on purpose, but they do it nonetheless. Let me give you some examples of bad presentations of the gospel message and then we will go through the right way to do it. You might hear something like...

"God loves you and if you give your life to Jesus, you will go to heaven."

or

"If you ask Jesus into your heart, you will become a Christian. Just ask Him to be your savior."

or

"Jesus loves you so much that if you trust in Him, He will save you."

Christians with good intentions often repeat these watered-down, insufficient presentations of the gospel so that when a person "asks Jesus into his heart," there is a strong risk of not receiving Christ properly. This is dangerous because it has the potential of inoculating someone from truly finding Christ in the future.

Let me illustrate this by looking at another presentation that is obviously wrong. Consider this misrepresentation of the gospel message: "If you ask Jesus into your heart, your life will get better." Okay, so this is obviously bad, but I want to focus on why it is bad. First, you don't receive Jesus so that your life will get better. You receive Jesus as a sacrifice for your sins so that you might be saved from the righteous judgment of God. Second, being a Christian doesn't mean your life gets better. Sometimes it can get worse when you start living for Him and your friends and family abandon you. Third, once the person has "tried Jesus" and his life failed to improve as promised, then he gives up on Christianity and is effectively inoculated from ever receiving Jesus again -- even if someone presents the gospel properly.

I hope you can see that presenting the truth is extremely important. We do not want to offer a misrepresentation of the gospel to people. At this point you might ask...

### ***So, what is a true presentation of the gospel?***

A true presentation of the gospel includes God, Law, and Gospel. It is basically like this:

God is holy and perfect and He requires holiness and perfection from us. Holiness is the inability to sin. It means moral perfection and it is something that God alone possesses. Holiness is an attribute of God's perfect nature. Therefore, since there is no one greater than God, and God is the greatest good, God is necessarily the standard of what is good.

The Law is a reflection of the character of God. The reason it is wrong to lie, cheat, and steal, etc., is because God cannot do these things. Because He is holy, He is incapable of lying, cheating, etc. Therefore, the Law becomes the standard of righteousness. But we are incapable of keeping the Law because we are not holy. We are sinners. Once this is said, you must ask the person if he has ever sinned. You might want to explain that sin is breaking the Law of God. You ask the person if he has ever lied, cheated, stolen, or been angry unrighteously, etc. He will answer "yes" to one or all of these, and that is when you tell him that he has broken God's Law and is a sinner. Furthermore, there is no law that has no punishment. A law without punishment is a slogan. The punishment for breaking God's Law is eternal damnation.

The Gospel is the good news that the judgment of God upon the person who has broken God's Law can be removed in the person of Jesus. This is done because Jesus, who is God the Son in flesh, was able to perfectly live the Law and offer a sacrifice to God the Father. His sacrifice is the death on the cross, which was the payment for the penalty of breaking the Law of God. He died there and three days later physically rose from the dead as proof that His words, deeds, and sacrifice were true. Therefore, if anyone wants to escape the righteous judgment of God, he must receive the sacrifice that Christ made on the cross. This is done by faith, by asking Jesus to forgive you of your sins.

Okay, so that is an expanded version of the true presentation of the gospel message. Notice that there are three elements: God, Law, Gospel.

I would like to note that there are a lot of people who present the salvation message in two parts, Law and Gospel. This is fine because they talk about the Law of God and mention God in the presentation of the Law.

***A condensed version might be...***

Of course, it is not necessary for you to offer such a fully-detailed presentation of the gospel, but you need to sufficiently understand the basics that underlie the salvation message so you can adapt your message appropriately. The basics of the gospel message might be presented like this:

God is perfect and holy and He requires nothing less than His own perfection. But, we are not able to attain His holiness. He doesn't lie, cheat, or steal, but we do these things. Therefore, there's a judgment upon us because we have broken the Law of God, we have sinned by lying and cheating and stealing. This judgment is eternal damnation. However, God the Father loves us so much that He sent God the Son, Jesus, who died on the cross as a sacrifice to pay the penalty for our sins. He died on the cross and physically rose from the dead three days later. This proves that His sacrifice was acceptable to the Father. Therefore, if you want to receive what Jesus has done to remove the wrath of God the Father, then you must receive Him and His sacrifice by faith. Would you like to pray and ask Jesus to forgive your sins against God?