

Dr. Aaron Wheeler
10 Sessions

The Gospel

OZARK
CHRISTIAN COLLEGE
LINCOLN SEMINARY

The Gospel
Session One
Introduction

Notes for Session One:

Discussion:

1.) Before you began this lesson, how would you have defined the word *gospel*? What have you been taught about what the word means?
2.) This series begins by asking, "What is the gospel?" The answer to this question starts with unpacking what the word means in its English and Greek roots. Was there anything you learned in this section? How does this linguistic lesson affect how you understand what Jesus has done for us?
3.) This session states that the gospel has three essential parts: sin, repentance, and salvation. As a group, spend some time defining each of those terms in your own words.
4.) Do you agree or disagree with these three words being essential to the gospel? Is there anything that you would add or take away?
5.) The gospel will be unpacked by examining four different gospel paths, or "faces." How do you feel about this idea? Is there anything about this method of understanding that makes you feel uncomfortable?
6.) PRAY: Spend some time together praying for someone in your life who needs to hear the gospel. Ask that God would give you an opportunity to use what you will learn in this series.

The Gospel
Session Two
Guilt-Innocence (LEGAL) Gospel, Part 1

Notes for Session Two:

Discussion:

1.) This session introduces the first gospel face, the Guilt-Innocence, or Legal, gospel. How does this gospel define our key terms of sin, repentance, and salvation?
2.) Repentance begins with a feeling that creates the desire for change. What do you think about repentance beginning with a feeling of guilt?
3.) Salvation in this gospel is described as the doctrine of *substitutionary atonement*, where a substitute pays the legal debt of sin so that we can be saved. Have you heard of this doctrine before? Do you have any questions about that idea?
4.) Each gospel face can be seen in the story of Genesis 1-3. As a group, read the two main passages again together: Genesis 2:15-17 and Genesis 3:14-19. What was God's first law? Why do you think he created it? What do you notice about the punishments that God gives for these crimes? Do you believe they are fair and just? Why or why not?
5.) What hope do we find for salvation in Genesis 3:14-19? What does this say about God's plan for humanity?
6.) As we look ahead to seeing this gospel face in the Old and New Testament, what passages or stories come to your mind?
7.) PRAY: Spend some time together as a group asking that God would reveal his love for you in this gospel. Pray that he would show you in a new way how his forgiveness covers our guilt.

The Gospel
Session Three
Guilt-Innocence (LEGAL) Gospel, Part 2

Notes for Session Three:

Discussion:

1.) This lesson examines how the Legal gospel is understood in both the Old and New Testament. Examples were given from Leviticus 26:3-13 and Isaiah 53:4-6 from the Old Testament along with Matthew 20:28 and Romans 3:21-26 from the New Testament. What did you learn from these passages about what the Bible says concerning the gospel?
2.) Two more passages in the Old Testament to consider are:
    a.) Exodus 34:4-7
    b.) Deuteronomy 4:5-8

    Read these passages together as a group and answer the following questions.
    –What does Exodus 34 say about God's character? How does he hold both his love and his justice together?
    –In Deuteronomy 4 we see some of God's higher purposes for the law. Besides Israel, who else benefits from this situation? Why does God want Israel to obey his commands?
3.) Two more passages in the New Testament to consider are:
    a.) Romans 8:1-4
    b.) 1 Peter 2:21-25

    Read these passages together as a group and answer the following questions.
    –What does Romans 8 say about Jesus and the law? What has Christ accomplished for us in his death and resurrection?
    –1 Peter talks about Jesus entrusting himself to God's justice. What do you think that means? How did Jesus demonstrate faith in his Father?
4.) Many more passages in Scripture refer to this Legal gospel. What other ones would you add?
5.) This session concludes by examining how this gospel defines us. What did you notice within yourself as you heard this idea? What does God's forgiveness mean to you?
6.) PRAY: Pray together that God's loving forgiveness would define each one of us. Ask for his help in showing the same forgiveness to the people in our lives.

The Gospel
Session Four
Dirty-Clean (PURITY) Gospel, Part 1

Notes for Session Four:

Discussion:

1.) This session introduces the second gospel face: the Dirty-Clean, or Purity, gospel. How does this gospel define our key terms of sin, repentance, and salvation?
2.) As you think back to the last lesson on the Legal gospel, what does the Purity gospel add to the idea? How would our understanding of God be different if we only had one or the other? How do these two faces work together to reveal what Jesus has done for us?
3.) This gospel face addresses not just the sin we've committed, but also the sin committed against us. Why do you think this is important in understanding the gospel?
4.) When examining Genesis 1-3, this gospel looks at how the knowledge of good and evil from the forbidden tree defiled Adam and Eve. What do you think about this idea? Have you ever considered knowledge to be a bad thing?
5.) Read Genesis 3:6-11 again together as a group. What do you notice about Adam and Eve's reaction to God, and then God's response to them? What does this say about what sin did to them?
6.) As we look ahead to seeing this gospel face in the Old and New Testament, what passages or stories come to your mind?
7.) PRAY: Pray together that God would reveal his cleansing love to each one of us. Ask that he would give us an understanding of the new life we live in his love.

The Gospel
Session Five
Dirty-Clean (PURITY) Gospel, Part 2

Notes for Session Five:

Discussion:

1.) This lesson examines how the Purity gospel is understood in both the Old and New Testament. Examples were given from Leviticus 11:4-8 and Zechariah 3:1-5 from the Old Testament, along with Acts 10:15 and Hebrews 9:12-15 from the New Testament. What did you learn from these passages about what the Bible says concerning the gospel?
2.) Two more passages in the Old Testament to consider are:
    a.) Leviticus 10:10
    b.) Isaiah 64:5-6

    Read these passages together as a group and answer the following questions.
    –What does Leviticus 10 say about why God created the law? What is its purpose?
    –In Isaiah 64, the prophet reveals the hopelessness and completeness of our unclean state. What happens when we try to clean ourselves and the things around us?
3.) Two more passages in the New Testament to consider are:
    a.) Ephesians 5:25-27
    b.) 1 John 3:2-3

    Read these passages together as a group and answer the following questions.
    –How is the bride of Christ described in Ephesians 5? What does Jesus accomplish for us, the church, through his death?
    –1 John talks about becoming like Christ in his purity. What do you think this means? What hope does this give us in our present lives?
4.) Many more passages in Scripture refer to this Purity gospel. What other ones would you add?
5.) This session concludes by examining how this gospel defines us. What did you notice within yourself as you heard this idea? What does God's cleansing mean to you?
6.) PRAY: Pray together that we would have boldness in confessing our sin. Ask him what he would want you to share with trusted brothers and sisters in Christ.

The Gospel
Session Six
Fear-Power (SPIRITUAL) Gospel, Part 1

Notes for Session Six:

Discussion:

1.) This session examines the Fear-Power, or Spiritual, gospel. How does this gospel define our key terms of sin, repentance, and salvation?
2.) For some, this may be the strangest or least experienced gospel in their Christian life. Is that the case for you? Why or why not? What benefits do you see in embracing this understanding of the gospel?
3.) Why do you think that spiritual realities are often overlooked or misunderstood in our modern world? What problem would this create in our relationship with God?
4.) In looking at Genesis 1-3, this gospel focuses on the role of the evil forces and the existence of Satan as the serpent who tempts Adam and Eve. What do you notice about the antagonist in this story? What is he both able and not able to do here? What does this tell us about our spiritual battle with sin?
5.) Read Genesis 3:8-10 again together as a group. In looking at this through a different lens than the Purity gospel, we see Adam and Eve react out of fear. Have you ever avoided God in your life? Do you think this avoidance was ever rooted in fear?
6.) As we look ahead to seeing this gospel face in the Old and New Testament, what passages or stories come to your mind?
7.) PRAY: Pray together that God would reveal his power through his love for us. Ask that he would strengthen us in our battle against sin and evil.

The Gospel
Session Seven
Fear-Power (SPIRITUAL) Gospel, Part 2

Notes for Session Seven:

Discussion:

1.) This lesson examines how the Spiritual gospel is understood in both the Old and New Testament. Examples were given from Exodus 7-11 and 2 Kings 6:16-17 from the Old Testament, along with Luke 4:31-37 and 2 Timothy 1:7 from the New Testament. What did you learn from these passages about what the Bible says concerning the gospel?

2.) Two more passages in the Old Testament to consider are:
   a.) 1 Kings 18:20-39
   b.) Deuteronomy 31:3-8

   Read these passages together as a group and answer the following questions.
   –In 1 Kings 18, what problem was Elijah trying to solve? Why do you think he used this method to solve it? What did the people of Israel need to know about their God?
   –In Deuteronomy 31, the people are afraid. What does Moses remind them about God? What should their response to this be?

3.) Two more passages in the New Testament to consider are:
   c.) 2 Corinthians 4:4
   d.) Ephesians 6:10-20

   Read these passages together as a group and answer the following questions.
   –What does 2 Corinthians 4:4 say about those who don't believe in God and his gospel? What should we do about this?
   –Ephesians 6 is one of the classic passages about spiritual warfare in the Bible. What did you notice as you read it? What do you think it means to stand your ground against the devil's schemes?

4.) Many more passages in Scripture refer to this Spiritual gospel. What other ones would you add?

5.) This session concludes by examining how this gospel defines us. What did you notice within yourself as you heard this idea? What does God's power mean to you?

6.) PRAY: Pray together that we would be freed from fear. Ask that he would give us boldness to live in his gospel power.

The Gospel
Session Eight
Shame-Honor (RELATIONAL) Gospel, Part 1

Notes for Session Eight:

Discussion:

1.) This session looks at the Shame-Honor or Relational gospel. How does this gospel define our key terms of sin, repentance, and salvation?
2.) In the Relational gospel, the understanding of repentance begins with a feeling of shame. How are shame and guilt different from one another? What would be the consequence of not understanding this difference in our relationship with God?
3.) Shame was defined as being both internal and external. What is the difference? What happens when we live lives of isolation because of our shame?
4.) Genesis 1-3 is covered most broadly in this particular gospel. For example, this is the first gospel to look at Genesis 1 and God's original statements about humanity. As you see this progression from honor to shame, what do you notice within yourself? What does this say about our relationship with God?
5.) Read Genesis 3:8 and 3:23 again together as a group. In looking at how Adam and Eve both isolate themselves from God (3:8) and are isolated from God (3:23), we see total separation because of the effects of sin. In your own walk with God, when have you seen both happen in your life? Where do you most experience isolation from him and from others?
6.) As we look ahead to seeing this gospel face in the Old and New Testament, what passages or stories come to your mind?
7.) PRAY: Pray together that God would show you the power of his welcoming love. Ask that you would experience his acceptance and embrace of you.

The Gospel
Session Nine
Shame-Honor (RELATIONAL) Gospel, Part 2

Notes for Session Nine:

Discussion:

1.) This lesson examines how the Relational gospel is understood in both the Old and New Testament. Examples were given from Micah 3:4 and Isaiah 59:1-2 from the Old Testament, along with 2 Corinthians 5:17-20 and 1 John 3:1a from the New Testament. What did you learn from these passages about what the Bible says concerning the gospel?
2.) Two more passages in the Old Testament to consider are:
    a.) Isaiah 1:15
    b.) Isaiah 59:1-15

    Read these passages together as a group and answer the following questions.
    –Isaiah 1 is pretty straightforward. Why does God turn away from his people? What does this say about how sin affects our relationship with God?
    –Isaiah 59:1-15 was referenced in the video but is now read as a longer passage. What did you notice in reading this fuller description of Israel's sin problem? What stood out to you in this powerful passage?
3.) Two more passages in the New Testament to consider are:
    e.) Colossians 1:21-22
    f.) Luke 15:11-32

    Read these passages together as a group and answer the following questions.
    –What does Colossians 1 say about our reconciliation with God? What made this reconciliation possible?
    –Luke 15:11-32 and the parable of the father and his two sons is a challenging picture of God's love for us. Remember Luke 15:1-2 where the two audiences for these three stories are described. One son receives honor and reconciliation, but the other refuses. What made the difference? What does this say about our approach to God's offer of salvation?
4.) Many more passages in Scripture refer to this Relational gospel. What other ones would you add?
5.) This session concludes by examining how this gospel defines us. What did you notice within yourself as you heard this idea? What does God's restoration mean to you?
6.) PRAY: Pray together that God would heal you from the isolation you feel from him and from those around you. Ask that you would receive his gift of reconciliation.

The Gospel
Session Ten
Conclusion

Notes for Session Ten:

Discussion:

1.) This series began by looking at how we define the gospel but ends by looking at how the gospel defines us. Who are you in Christ? What does the gospel say about your identity?
2.) Of the four identities described here, which one stood out to you the most? Which of the four gospel faces had the deepest meaning to you?
3.) You were challenged to look at the story of the Gerasene Demoniac in Mark 5:1-20 and Luke 8:26-38. Read those harmonic stories together as a group and answer the questions: where do you see illusions, images, or references to the four gospel faces in this story? How did Mark and Luke use all four ideas to tell this story?
4.) Another challenge was to look at 1 John. Assign one of the five chapters to each person or smaller group. Read through John's descriptions of the gospel for references or images of the four gospel faces. How does John use all four gospel faces to explain what Christ has accomplished for us?
5.) What did you learn about this gospel in this study together? How will this change the way you present the gospel to others? What would it mean to listen for the type of bad news someone is facing, and how would you connect it to the good news of Jesus?
6.) PRAY: Pray that God will continue to teach you the depth of his love, and that as you are changed by the gospel, you will overflow in that love to others.

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