

# REKINDLING THE FIRE OF EVANGELISM

UNDERSTANDING THE GOSPEL



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## THE GOSPEL IS THE “GOOD NEWS”

The Gospel (Greek *euangellion*) is the “Good News.” In Luke 4:18 Jesus said that He came preach the Gospel. “The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.” Jesus preached the “Good News” to the least, the lost and the last. The “Good News” was not so much directed to their physical needs but to their spiritual ones.

## THE GOSPEL IS THE DEATH, BURIAL AND RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST

In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul informs us that the heart of the Gospel is the Death, Burial and Resurrection of Jesus Christ (1-4). The Death is that Christ died on the cross for the sins of humanity. The Burial is that His dead body was placed in a borrowed tomb. The Resurrection is that on the third day He bodily rose from the grave victoriously over sin and death. This is the Gospel Truth.

## THE GOSPEL IS COMPRISED OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST

The Death of Christ is a foundational part of the Gospel, without it there can be no burial or resurrection. In order for our sins to be taken away, there must be the shedding of blood (Heb. 9:22). Christ died as the Lamb of God “which taketh away the sin of the world” (Jn. 1:29).

### ***The Death of Christ is Vicarious***

The word vicarious means “to suffer for another person.” When Christ died on the cross, He suffered for the sins of all mankind. The writer of Hebrews says, “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death...that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man (Heb. 2:9).

### ***The Death of Christ Meets the Requirements of God’s Justice***

The death of Christ on the cross satisfies the Justice of God. Every human being falls short of God’s justice. The Bible let us know that Jesus died and rose again for our justification (Rom. 4:24-25). Those who receive Christ have been released from their prison sentence and have been declared right before God.

### ***The Death of Christ Appeases the Wrath of God***

John tells us that Jesus Christ is “the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world” (1 Jn. 2:2). The word “propitiation” means “to appease or satisfy.” The death of Christ on the cross satisfied the wrath of God against sin.

## THE GOSPEL IS COMPRISED OF THE BURIAL OF CHRIST

### ***The Burial Confirms Christ's Death***

There are many skeptics and even religions that maintain Jesus did not die on the cross. Despite these claims, the Bible and the secular historical record confirms the death of Christ. Christ's burial is also confirmation of His death. The Bible abounds with evidence of Christ's burial (Matt. 27:57-59; Jn. 19:38-40). The burial is the last word in the sentence before the exclamation point of the Resurrection.

### ***The Burial Has a Significant Symbolic Meaning***

In Romans 6:3-7 the Apostle Paul informs us of the symbolic meaning of Christ's burial. Just like Jesus was buried in the tomb, the believer has been buried with Him in death by baptism. When Christ rose from the dead, He left His grave clothes in the tomb. Likewise, when the believer rises with Christ to the newness of life, he leaves his grave clothes of sin and the old life in the tomb, figurately speaking.

## THE GOSPEL IS COMPRISED OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

The capstone of the Gospel is the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Without the Resurrection, all we are left with is a man who said wise things, did good deeds but died as a martyr for what he believed. Christianity rises and falls on the Resurrection. If it can be disproved the Gospel means absolutely nothing!

### ***It Was an Actual Resurrection***

There were eyewitnesses to the fact that it was an actual resurrection. One such eyewitness was the Apostle John. He witnessed the death of Christ (Jn. 19:26-30) and he was one of the first eyewitnesses of the empty tomb (Jn. 20:1-9). Later that day he saw the resurrected Jesus in person (Jn. 20:19-20). In 1 Corinthians 15:4-7, we are introduced to a host of eyewitness: Peter, the disciples, a larger group of disciples, five hundred brethren, James the half-brother of Jesus and finally Paul.

### ***It Was a Bodily Resurrection***

There are some who agree with the Resurrection in theory but don't accept it as a bodily resurrection. They see it as only a spiritual resurrection. Yet there is strong evidence from the Scriptures to support a bodily resurrection (Matt. 28:9; Lk. 24:39-40, 41-43; Jn. 20:27). Observe the following events in the life of Jesus on this earth after His resurrection:

He told the disciples to touch Him (Lk. 24:39). "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I

### ***It Was a Glorious Resurrection***

In His resurrected body, Jesus was able to do glorious and miraculous things. He was able to pass through walls (Jn. 20:19) and ascend into Heaven (Acts 1:9-11).