

The Flywheel of the Gospel

Romans 1:8–17 | August 31, 2025 | Dave Geldart | Tru Community Church

1. Announcements

- **Welcome & Connect Card**
- **Giving**
- **Potluck** – stay even if you didn't bring anything! Chance to mingle (encourage you who call Tru your church home to intentionally look to sit with and connect with ppl you don't know as well. Inviting and hospitable! Take a step out of your comfort zone, ask someone their name and about their lives.
 - We'll be also sharing a few short words about how you can get in the Team Spirit in our church Body through our various ministries.
- **More info online, including events, past sermons with preaching notes and slides**

2. [1] Scripture Reading (Romans 1:8–17) – Adelle

⁸ First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world. ⁹ God, whom I serve in my spirit in preaching the gospel of his Son, is my witness how constantly I remember you ¹⁰ in my prayers at all times; and I pray that now at last by God's will the way may be opened for me to come to you.

¹¹ I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong— ¹² that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith. ¹³ I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters,^[a] that I planned many times to come to you (but have been prevented from doing so until now)

[2] in order that I might have a harvest among you, just as I have had among the other Gentiles.

¹⁴ I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish. ¹⁵ That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are in Rome.

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. ¹⁷ For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last,^[a] just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."^[b]

3. --PRAY--

4. [3] Introduction

- *Hook:* (bring the bike up on stage)
A few months ago, James preached and used a bicycle as an example. I figured imitation is the most sincere form of flattery..... SO I brought one of my kids bikes.
- *But I'm going to flip it upside down*

- “Have you ever tried spinning a bicycle wheel? Watch this.” (Flip bike upside down, spin the wheel with some force. Let it hum while you speak briefly.)
 - “When you first push, it takes effort. But once it’s moving, the momentum carries it forward. For a while.
 - If you add weight to it, the flywheel effect becomes even stronger — harder to start, but once it’s going, it keeps moving for a long time.
 - In this way, the wheel is functioning like as a flywheel. Engineers love flywheels because they **store energy and smooth out energy usage**.
 - They take uneven bursts of power and turn them into steady momentum.”
 - Most anything with a piston driven engine
 - Old timey tractors have them
 - Your riding mower
 - And manual transmission cars
 - Even some large power grids use giant heavy flywheels to store energy to smooth out the grid.
- *Set up text/series:* “We’re in a new series in Romans, *Walking in Victory*. We already talked last week about how much Paul had wanted to visit the church in Rome that he hadn’t gotten to visit yet. We see that more in our passage today.
- Today in our passage, Paul says something surprising (did you catch it?)

5. [4] Reread Romans 1:15-16

¹⁵ That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are in Rome. ¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes...

- Did you catch that?
 - It’s right there in verse 15: he is **eager to preach the Gospel to the Christians in the Church in Rome**.
 - That should stop us in our tracks if we’re paying attention.
 - Wake up!

Last Sunday we kicked off this series with the idea of the Gospel is the powerhouse of the Christian life.

→ The Arc Reactor that fuels not only our salvation but also our whole life lived on mission.

Today we’re leaning more deeply into that surprising truth:

6. [5] Point 1: The Gospel is for Christians (not just non-Christians)

- *Observation:* Paul writes to the **church** in Rome,
 - **[6] a group of believers whose faith is already known throughout the world (v. 8).** And yet, he says, “I am eager to preach the Gospel to you.”

- *Illustration:* Imagine our church receiving a letter from Billy Graham or Tim Keller (when they were alive), or Beth Moore, or your favorite preacher—and they say, “I can’t wait to come and preach... the Gospel to you!”
 - Wouldn’t you expect them to say, “I’ll come teach you about New Testament history, or leadership, or apologetics, or evangelism, or end-times”? But no—Paul says: the Gospel.
 - In another of Paul’s letters, this time to a church in Corinth, he writes in **[7] 1 Corinthians 15: Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. ² By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. ³ For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance^[a]: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures...**
- There it is again! Same sentiment:
 - The Gospel – Christ died for our sins, and rose from the dead
 - And he’s eager to REMIND BELIEVERS of that Gospel on which they were saved – and on which they’re continually taking their stand in life!
 - **[8] Pastor and author CJ Mahaney says:**

“The gospel isn’t one class among many you’ll attend during your life as a Christian – the gospel is the whole building that all the classes take place in! Rightly approached, all the topics your study and focus on as a believer will be offered to you ‘within the walls’ of the glorious gospel.”

 - CJ Mahaney, “The Cross Centered Life”
- Paul is teaching them and us that the Gospel isn’t just the entry point to the Christian life, not just the front door we walk through once to get on to the real stuff—it’s the whole house we live in.
 - It’s the flywheel – always spinning, that powers the entire life of a believer.”

7. **[9] Point 2: The Gospel is FOR GROWTH TOO – IT’S the Power of God for Salvation—and SANCTIFICATION**

- **[10] Romans 1:16–17. “I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes.”**
 - Salvation here is not just a past tense event—it’s an ongoing reality.
 - Paul is using a present participle—to everyone who is believing.
 - Believing = TRUSTING, LEANING ON, BANKING ON
 - The power of God for ONGOING salvation – sanctification – in the life of a Christian IS THE GOSPEL!
 - I’m not ashamed to admit it = the Gospel that tells me I CANT DO IT, BUT what I couldn’t do for myself, GOD DID FOR ME
 - Still true for my life as a Christian, as I grow and become more like Christ, in my thoughts and actions, my beliefs, my TRUSTS,

- *I CANT DO THAT for myself either, for Sanctification TOO I MUST TRUST in the Gospel of a God who Does it FOR ME*
- *Illustration (bike wheel):* Spin the wheel again. “Initial salvation at Conversion is the push that gets the wheel moving. But the wheel doesn’t stop once you’ve pushed—it keeps turning. The Gospel’s power doesn’t stop at conversion! Amen?
 - *I wasn’t strong enough to get the wheel started for my own salvation*
 - *NOR AM I ANY STRONGER NOW to keep it going.*
 - *ONLY GOD*
 - *God’s power KEEPS IT GOING TOO*
 - **[11] Paul in Colossians 1:6 says, ‘The gospel is bearing fruit and growing all over the world, just as it has been doing among you since the day you understood it.’** It continues to grow, continues to bear fruit.”
 - More and more as we live and walk in it – in Victory!
- Some of us try to live the Christian life like pedaling without a flywheel. Jerky, exhausting, inconsistent.
 - Starting from a dead stop most every time.
 - Inertia working against us.
 - We run on bursts of self-effort.
 - But Paul says there is a better way: THE ONLY WAY – AND HE’S NOT ASHAMED TO SAY IT:
 - the Gospel supplies the steady power.
- *Transition:* “So if the Gospel is this essential and this powerful, why do we so often move on from it?”
 - *Why do so many of us think of the Gospel primarily in terms of that which gets us in the front door???*

8. **[12] Point 3: We Never Move On from IT – Never move on from Our Need for the Gospel**

- **[13]** ^{1:16} For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because **it is the power of God ...** ^{1:17b}—a righteousness that is **by faith** from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will **live by faith.**”
- We are SO FORGETFUL
 - **[14] Gal 3:3 Are you so foolish? After beginning by means of the Spirit, are you now trying to finish by means of the flesh?**
 - The Galatian believers, having accepted the Gospel to save them, quickly moved on from it, and having gotten in BY GRACE, apart from their effort, began trying to walk out the Christian life BY THEIR OWN EFFORT – apart from the Gospel.
 - **WE DO THIS TOO!**
 - So many of us come to Christ for our salvation of our souls, (and rightly so!)
 - But then once we become Christians, we come to church,
 - **and we FORGET THE GOSPEL – we fall back into old – WORKS BASED living**

- Yes, God has saved my soul
- But he's mad or disappointed with me NOW, because I'm not living like I should
 - I don't come to church very much
 - Or I can't seem to get my act together
 - I'll try harder, read my bible more (for a week or so)
 - Then I'll mess up, skip out, and then live in that guilt and spiritual distance we imagine our sin has placed between us and God
 - And so we sulk, mope, then try to get it together, have a burst of energy and effort, only to eventually slip up, and repeat the cycle

• **[15] Quote: Jerry Bridges, author and staff member of The Navigators,**

- **"The gospel is not only the most important message in all of history; it is the only essential message in all of history. Yet we allow thousands of professing Christians to live their entire lives without clearly understanding it and experiencing the joy of it. We tend to give a seeker just enough of the gospel to get him or her to pray a prayer to receive Christ. Then we immediately put the gospel on the shelf, so to speak, and go on to the duties of discipleship. As a result, Christians are not instructed in the gospel. And because they do not fully understand the riches and glory of the gospel, they cannot preach it to themselves or live by it in their daily lives."**
 - *Jerry Bridges, "The Discipline of Grace"*
- All of our problems, someone once said, come from a failure to understand and apply the gospel.
 - Not because the gospel is insufficient—the gospel is powerful!
 - The challenge is to NOT MOVE ON FROM IT
 - The challenge is helping people see the connections between the gospel and the actual patterns of their daily living – their thinking and behavior.
 - So that they STAY IN THE GOSPEL as they approach their daily lives.
- *Transition:* "This is why Paul says he is eager to preach the Gospel to Christians. And this is why we must learn to **preach the Gospel to ourselves daily.**"

9. [16] Point 4: Preach the Gospel to Yourself Daily (6 min)

- WE HAVE A CHOICE in the matter. Both for good or ill.
 - It's an ancient yet insanely vital (yet often forgotten) spiritual discipline
 - Just like reading the Bible
 - Spending quiet times in prayer
 - Worship
 - WE MUST PREACH THE GOSPEL TO OURSELVES DAILY

- *Flywheel application:* (spin the wheel one more time and let it hum while you close this section)
 - “Every morning you have to give the flywheel of the Gospel a spin in your heart. It will keep you steady, smoothing out the jerks and stalls of life. The more you return to it, the stronger and steadier it becomes.”
 - When you wake up, remember:
 - *I am accepted not because of my performance today, but because of Christ’s finished work.*
 - When you stumble and sin, run back to the cross instead of wallowing in shame.
 - Because Christ already died for our sins, we don’t need to grovel for forgiveness, we already have it!
 - When you succeed, boast in Christ, not yourself.
 - And let the Life of Christ play out in victory in your daily life.
- **This isn’t just for each of us individually, it plays out critically in our life together in the Body.**
 - A local church is healthy to the degree that its pastors and teachers can effectively, accurately, and broadly bring the gospel to bear on the real issues of people’s lives.
 - And it is healthy to the degree that its people have a deep personal understanding of the gospel, so they can live in light of it.
- **[17] Most necessary it is, therefore, that we should know this [Gospel] well, teach it unto others, and beat it into their heads continually.”**
 - Martin Luther, *St. Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians*, 1535
- EVERYTHING IN LIFE is connected to the Gospel. And WE forgetful believers MUST preach it to ourselves in our daily – moment to moment --- lives.

[18] APPLICATION: GOSPEL CIRCLES

- The Gospel Circles tool is a helpful way to apply it to our lives.
 - Our behaviors and actions flow from the Gospel and Gospel Truths
 - Otherwise we get fleshly-effort based religion
 - Or worldly license that leads to more sin and selfishness
- **Redrawing the Gospel Circles**
 - Here’s why the Gospel is the flywheel of the Christian life. It’s not just abstract truth—it applies right into the jerky, uneven places of life: our thoughts, beliefs, and behaviors. And when the Gospel gets moving in the center of those circles, it supplies the steady power to keep us going.
 - Then let the bike wheel spin again and tie the visual back to the circles.
- Everything flows from the Gospel, and we see this pattern in scripture everywhere
 - **[19] Take Romans 5:1-4**
 - Circles:

- **Gospel at the center**
 - [20] Romans 5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith,
 - Christ Died for our Sins
 - And rose from the dead
- **Gospel Truths** flow from that – things that are true BECAUSE of the Gospel – Not the Gospel itself, but important truths that are anchored in it
 - [21] we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ² through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand.
- **Gospel Behavior** = Our actions and decisions flow from what we know to be true BECAUSE OF THE GOSPEL
 - [22] And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. ³ Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; ⁴ perseverance, character; and character, hope.
- Find in SCRIPTURES everywhere
 - Many all 3 circles in same verse, passage.
- **How if the Gospel is NOT the center of our lives? – but instead we place our own experiences, perspective beliefs at the center**
 - **Connect an everyday struggle.** Example of Center: Anxiety.
 - *Core: Anxiety-my experience of Anxiety*
 - *Truth: I'm not really safe unless I'm in control.*
 - I feel fear and panic when things go wrong.
 - *Behavior: I overwork, I snap at my family, I obsess over details.*
 - **Apply Gospel:**
 - ***“He who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all—how will He not also graciously give us all things?” (Romans 8:32).***
 - The Gospel reminds you of a sovereign God who gave His Son for you—so he will certainly provide GRACIOUSLY.
 - **Truth** - The Gospel reminds me God is sovereign, loves me, and provides for me. I don't have to be in control of my life to be safe – God is.
 - **Behavior** – Anxiety begins to lose its grip. I relax my breathing, take a minute to pray, and then I respond with generosity, patience toward others, even when I'm still feeling stressed.
 - I no longer overwork, but embrace the gift of limits.
 - Wrestling with guilt and condemning thoughts?
 - Core-Condemnation & Shame
 - Truth-Not only have I done bad things, I AM BAD--- WHO I AM IS BAD. I have no inherent worth or value, I am condemned and without hope
 - Behavior – self-hatred that expresses itself in isolation, nihilism, which can lead to a life in pursuit initially of pleasure (all else in meaningless)
 - Other people become merely means to an end

- And I live either in denial or dark depression
 - addictions
 - Possibly even suicidal ideation
 - Apply the GOSPEL
 - Your sins are atoned for!
 - Truth
 - **Romans 8 1**Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, ² because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you^[a] free from the law of sin and death.
 - You are set free – victorious over sin and condemnation. You are given the life of Christ
 - Behavior
 - Choose gratitude in the midst of your dark thoughts
 - Rather than isolating or manipulating, you open up to others, letting them in.
 - You let God use your story for ministry, to draw others into forgiveness and victorious living, even when you feel unworthy and imperfect.
 - And the peace of Christ guards your heart. And you overflow in joy.
- **Do another quick example.** Example: Pride.
 - *Truth:* My worth is based on my performance.
 - *Truth:* I feel superior when I succeed, crushed when I fail.
 - *Behavior:* I look down on others. I treat them poorly.
 - *I overwork to try to prove myself and to achieve the good life.*
 - **Apply Gospel:** The cross says I was so sinful Jesus had to die for me, and so loved He was glad to.
 - The Gospel humbles us: we bring nothing but our sin; Jesus supplies everything.
 - ^{Romans 8: 23} **for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. ... ²⁷ Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded.**
 - **Truth** - My worth is in Christ, not in performance. In fact, my performance isn't nearly good enough to boast about!
 - **Behavior** - Pride is replaced by humility.
 - I begin to think of myself less, and am freed to care for others without trying to get something from them
 - And my patience for others begins to grow, and overflow into compassion and self-giving love.

10.[23] REFLECTION Qs:

- **Belief / Thinking:** What do I believe about God, myself, and the world?
 - Am I believing the truth of the Gospel, or lies (self-reliance, condemnation, fear, pride)?
- **Emotions / Desires:** What do I want? What do I fear?
 - Are my desires being reshaped by the Gospel, or am I ruled by worry, anger, lust, comparison?
- **Behavior / Living:** How am I actually living day-to-day?
 - Are my choices, habits, and reactions flowing from the Gospel or from something else?

11. Conclusion

- [24] The Gospel is the flywheel of the Christian life. It is not just the push that gets you going, but the power that keeps you moving.
 - *Illustration recap:* “When this wheel spins, it stores energy and smooths things out. The Gospel does the same—it stores up the infinite power of God in Christ and applies it steadily to our lives.”
- **Don’t move on** from the Gospel
 - *So that’s the core challenge for us today, choose to live in the Gospel constantly. Learn to apply the Gospel to your decisions, struggles, fears, and temptations.*
 - Don’t put the Gospel on the shelf.
 - Don’t think you’ve moved on from it.
 - Draw from it constantly in your life as you become sanctified
- **Preach** the Gospel to yourself daily
 - Hourly, constantly
- **Use** the Gospel Circles
 - As a tool to preach to yourself
 - Use the Gospel Circles as you study the scripture, and as you approach various decisions and moments in your life.
- Let The Gospel be the flywheel that powers your daily walk of growth and victory.

12.[25] PRAY

ROMANS 1:8-17

⁸ First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world. ⁹ God, whom I serve in my spirit in preaching the gospel of his Son, is my witness how constantly I remember you ¹⁰ in my prayers at all times; and I pray that now at last by God's will the way may be opened for me to come to you.

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in order that I might have a harvest among you, just as I have had among the other Gentiles.

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¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. ¹⁷ For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”





WALKING IN **V**ICTORY
THROUGH ROMANS

ROMANS 1:8-17

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1 Corinthians 15: ¹ Now, **brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel** I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. ² By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. ³ For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that **Christ died for our sins** according to the Scriptures ⁴ that he was buried, that **he was raised on the third day** according to the Scriptures...



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4. PREACH THE GOSPEL TO YOURSELF

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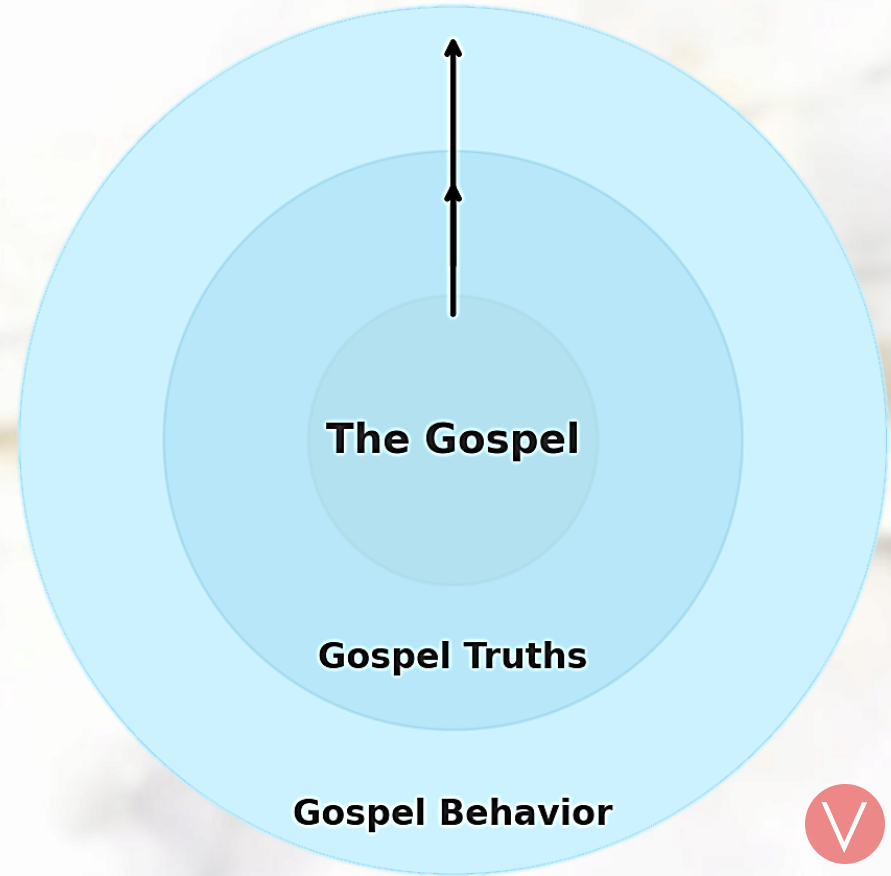
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Martin Luther, “St. Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians” (1535)



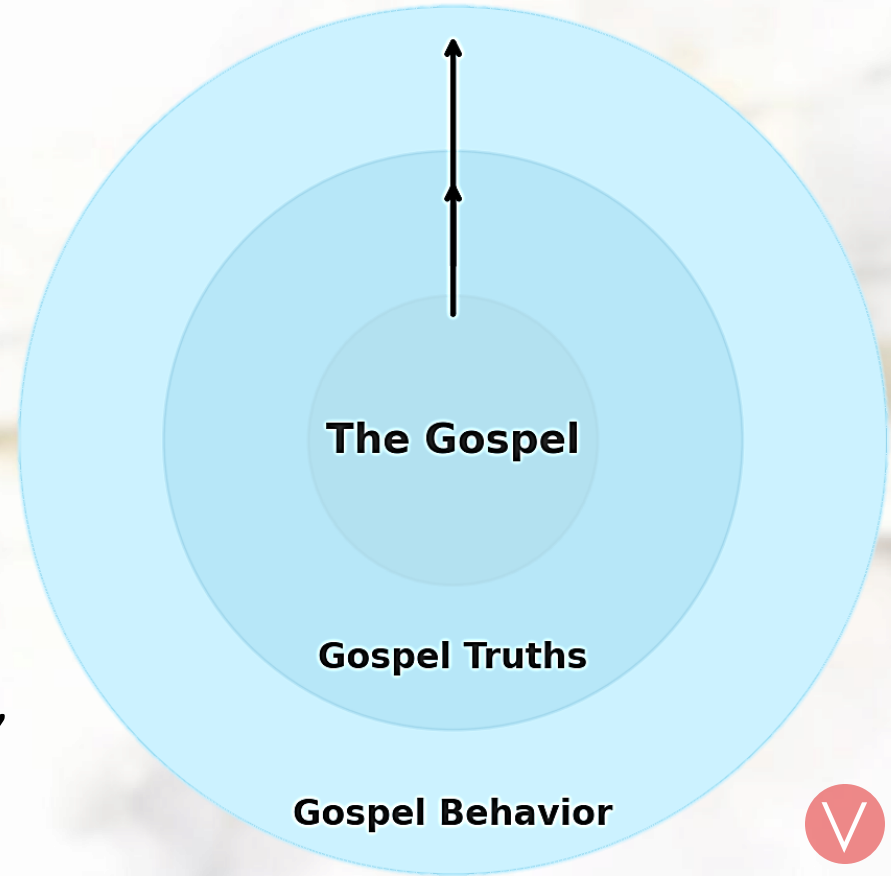
APPLICATION: GOSPEL CIRCLES



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Romans 5:1-4

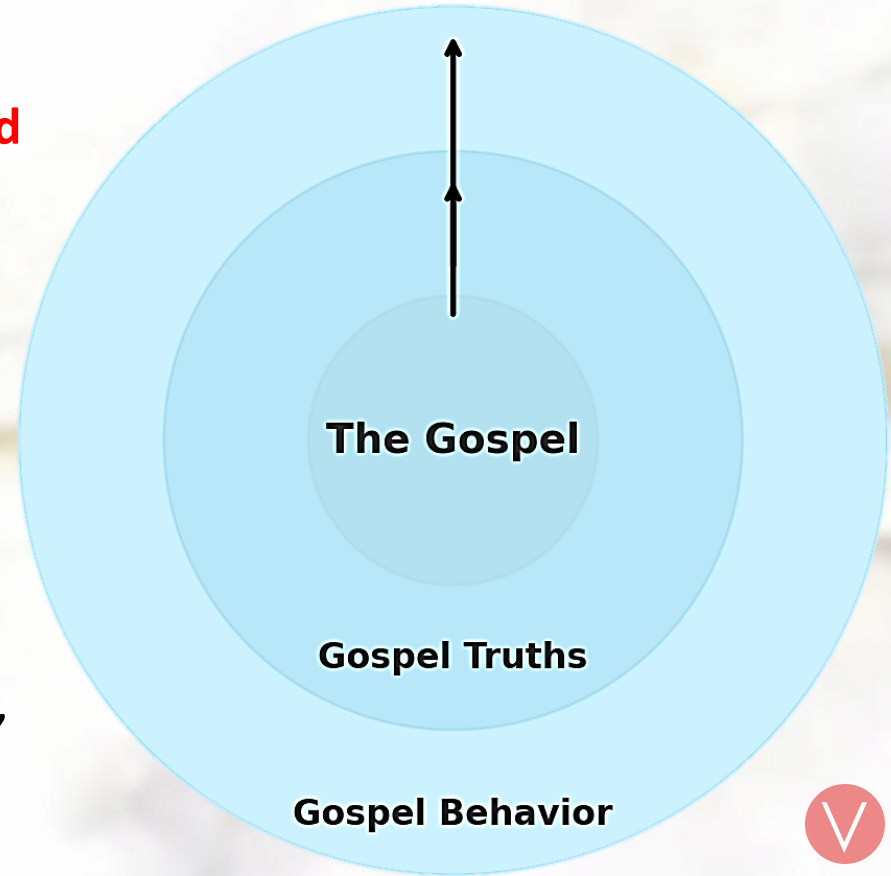
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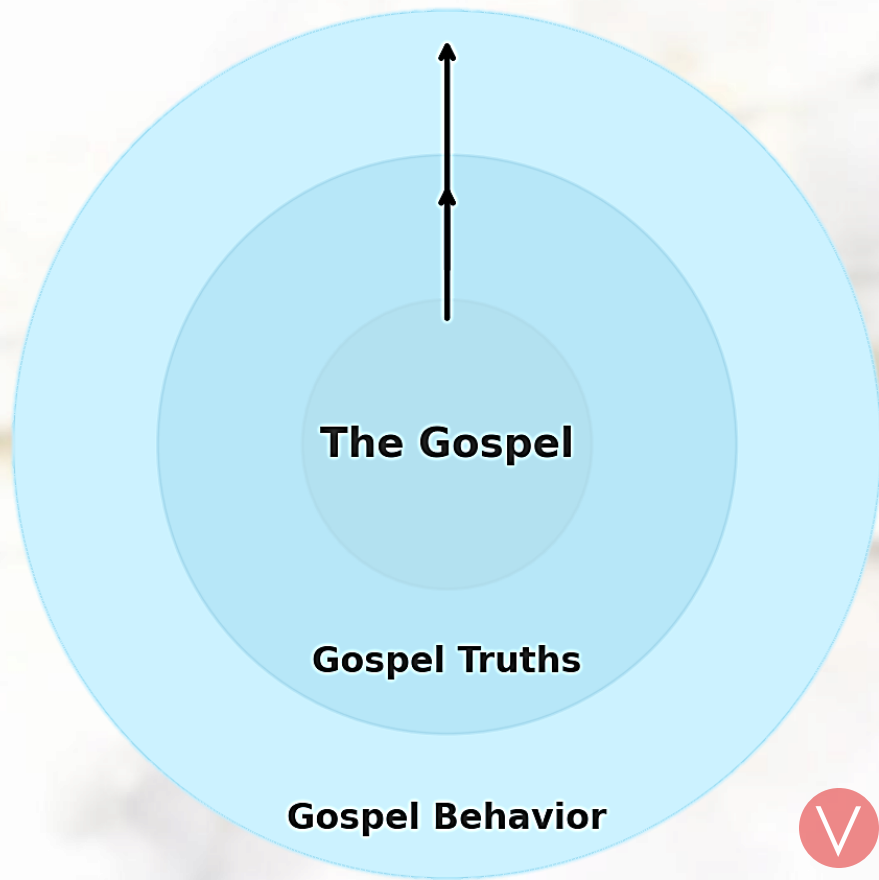
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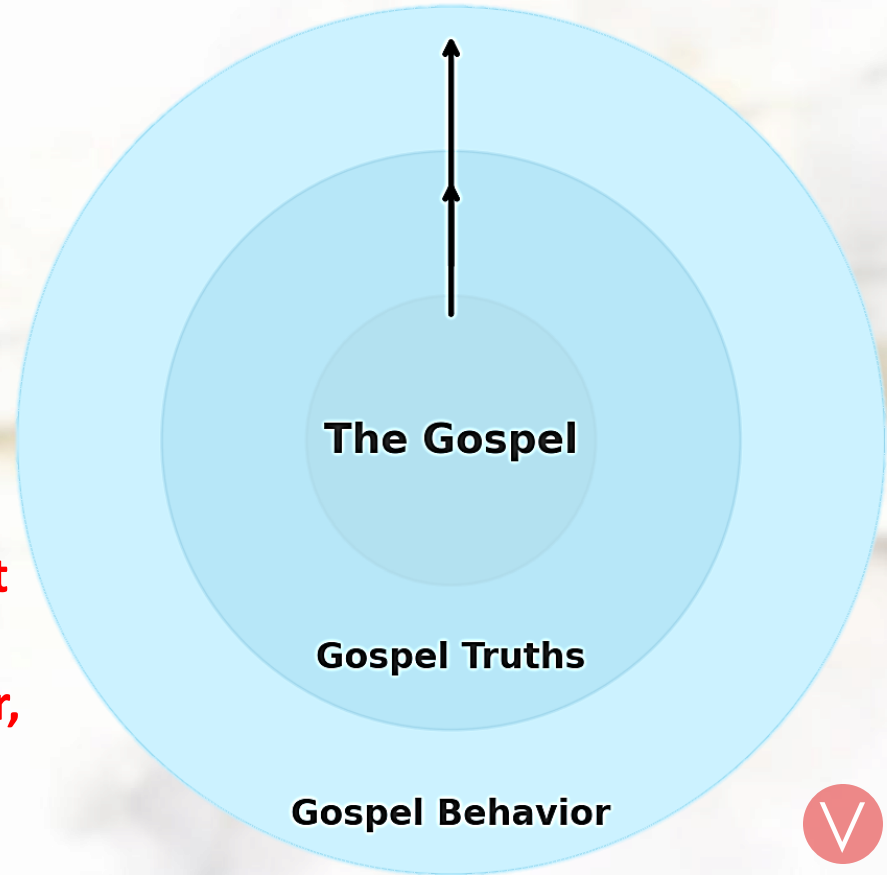


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APPLICATION: REFLECTION Qs

Beliefs: What do I believe about God, myself, and the world?

- Am I believing the truth of the Gospel, or lies (self-reliance, condemnation, fear, pride)?

Desires: What do I want? What do I fear?

- Are my desires being reshaped by the Gospel, or am I ruled by worry, anger, lust, comparison?

Behavior: How am I actually living day-to-day?

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APPLICATIONS

1. **Let** the Gospel be the flywheel of your Christian life.
2. **Don't move on** from the Gospel.
3. **Preach** the Gospel to yourself daily.
4. **Use** the Gospel Circles.





WALKING IN VICTORY
THROUGH ROMANS