



Unit .29

Session .03

Trusting in the Gospel of Jesus

Scripture



**Romans 1:16-17; 3:23;
5:8-11; 6:23; 10:9-13**

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, first to the Jew, and also to the Greek. **17** For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, just as it is written: **The righteous will live by faith.** ... **23** For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; ... **8** But God proves his own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. **9** How much more then, since we have now been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from wrath. **10** For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, then how much more, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. **11** And not only that, but we also boast in God

through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received this reconciliation. ... **23** For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. ... **9** If you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. **10** One believes with the heart, resulting in righteousness, and one confesses with the mouth, resulting in salvation. **11** For the Scripture says, **Everyone who believes on him will not be put to shame,** **12** since there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, because the same Lord of all richly blesses all who call on him. **13** For **everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.**

Intro Options

Main Point:
The gospel is the good news that God has provided salvation to sinners through Jesus.

Option 1

In the game “Two Truths and a Lie,” someone shares two truths and one lie about his or her life, then the rest of the group has to decide which statement they think is the lie. Today, you will play a slightly different version of this game with your students.

Give each student an index card or a sheet of paper and a writing utensil. Instruct them to write on two truths about the gospel and one “lie.” The lie shouldn’t necessarily be a falsehood, but something non-essential to the gospel. For example, they might write, “Jesus died to save us. We are given Jesus’ righteousness. We must obey our parents.” Obeying our parents is a good thing, and we should do it, but it’s not an essential part of the gospel, thus this would be the “lie.”

Once the students have written their truths and lies, ask them to share their truths and lie with each other. (Alternate idea: you can have each student put their index card in a hat or basket, then draw a card out one at a time at random). Ask the rest of the group to state which things they think are essential (the truths) and which are extraneous (the lie). Explain that in today’s lesson, Paul will lay out the five “truths” of the gospel.

Option 2

Ask students to share the best thing that’s happened to them in the past week. Afterward, quiz them on some of the stories they heard. If the students heard a good story, they’ll likely remember it along with the name of the person who told them.

▪ Why are we likely to remember a good story someone shares?

Talk with the students about how the gospel is the greatest news anyone can ever share, and today’s lesson is going to focus on what that good news entails.

TEACHING PLAN

Read Romans 1:16-17.



Younger children often form friendships through playing games together. Older kids often make friends through conversations. Teenagers create strong bonds with one another as they share their thoughts, desires, dreams and struggles.


▪ Think about your best friend. What made you close?

Friends are close because unity exists in their relationship. They are loyal to one another and hold each other accountable. They also often enjoy doing many of the same things like watching the same movies, laughing at the same jokes, and listening to the same music. These same principles apply for the church. Despite being made up of different kinds of people, the church is brought into unity based what we have in common: the gospel of Jesus and the Spirit's work in our lives.

Paul was a former Jewish religious leader who persecuted and killed Christians. After Paul experienced the power of God, he became a bold missionary who planted churches made up of both Jews and Gentiles. Through the cross, Jesus is able to save all sinners who trust in the Lord Jesus, no matter their ethnicity.

However, sometimes the differences between people in the church can create division that hinders the mission of the church. When we live selfishly and the church is divided, we appear no different from the rest of the world. But when we live in unity, sacrificially serving one another in love, the world clearly sees the difference Christ makes in our lives.

▪ How should the church look differently than the rest of the world?

No person, Jew or Gentile, can ever be righteous on our own. We all need the grace available only through Jesus, and we're made righteous only according to the faith God gives to each one of us. As a Pharisee, Paul had failed to understand the gospel, so he persecuted the church. But as a believer, he now saw the truth about Jesus. He was not ashamed because the gospel was the only way for him and all who believe to be reconciled to God. 

Read Romans 3:23; 5:8; 6:23.



The Jews and Gentiles looked down on one another, but Paul made it clear for both that “there is no one righteous” because “all have turned away” from the living God (Rom. 3:10-18; Ps. 14:1-3; Eccl. 7:20). We all stand condemned and separated from God's blessings. No one lives up to God's standard of righteousness. We all fall short, and there is a penalty for our sin. “The wages of sin is death” (6:23), and we are absolutely “helpless” to make up for our sins (5:6).

But God, who loves in a way only He can, sent Jesus to die for us while we were still sinners (Ps. 63:3; Rom. 5:8). In love, Jesus substituted Himself on the cross for both Jews and Gentiles so that our sins could be forgiven and we would be reconciled to God and one another.

COMMENTARY

Romans 1

1:16-17 “The second clause in v. 16 explains (‘for’) why Paul is not ashamed of the gospel. For this gospel, whose content is Jesus Christ, ‘appointed Son-of-God-in-power’ (v. 4), mediates ‘the power of God leading to salvation.’ The term ‘power,’ as one might expect, is used widely in Greek philosophy and religion,¹³ but its NT background is undoubtedly to be sought in the OT teaching about a personal God who uniquely possesses power and who manifests that power in delivering (Exod. 9:16; Ps. 77:14–15) and judging (Jer. 16:21) his people.”¹

“The NT as a whole uses “salvation” and its cognates with much of the same broad range of meaning as the OT, whereas Paul uses the words only of spiritual deliverance. ‘Salvation’ often has a negative meaning—deliverance from something—but positive nuances are present at times also, so that the term can denote generally God’s provision for a person’s spiritual need. Particularly, in light of Rom. 3:23 and the use of ‘save’ in 8:24 (cf. vv. 18–23), ‘salvation.’ ... Verse 17 shows why (see again the ‘for’) the gospel is God’s saving power to everyone who believes (v. 16b): ‘in it [the gospel], the righteousness of God is being revealed.’ The verb translated ‘is being revealed’ is an important biblical term. Meaning originally ‘uncover,’ this verb and its cognate noun, ‘revelation,’ are typically used by Paul to refer to the eschatological disclosure of various aspects and elements of God’s redemptive plan. Sometimes this disclosure is an ‘uncovering’ to the intellect of various truths relating to God’s purposes. But in other places, picking up the language and concepts of Jewish apocalyptic, Paul uses the word to denote the ‘uncovering’ of God’s redemptive plan as it unfolds on the plane of human history.”²

Main Point:

The gospel is the good news that God has provided salvation to sinners through Jesus.

99 Essential Doctrines (p. 64, DDG)

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 Cor. 15; 2 Cor. 5:21). Second, the gospel is also the story of redemption that God has planned since “before the foundations of the earth” (Eph. 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 (Isa. 25:8; 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 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.

TEACHING PLAN

▪ How does the love of God compare with any other kind of love?


Through faith in Jesus, our sin is placed on Jesus who was nailed to the cross and His righteousness is given to us (Rom. 5:12-21). Our sin is erased by His blood, and because of His sacrifice, sin is rendered powerless, death is defeated, and the evil one is dethroned in our lives (Col. 2:14-15). Whereas we were once enslaved to sin, now we are free to live for the glory of God.

▪ How would you explain our need for forgiveness to someone who was not a follower of Jesus?

Read Romans 5:9-11; 10:9-13.



Our sin deserves God's wrath, and if not for the cross, we would remain relationally separated from God. But through faith in Jesus, both Jews and Gentiles are given what we could not earn—the righteousness of Jesus, which makes us right in God's sight.

Because of our sin, Jews and Gentiles were God's enemies, yet Jesus died to transform us into God's children, brothers and sisters in Christ. The basis of unity among all people is our shared need of God's grace, righteousness, and reconciliation. Through Jesus, God has reconciled Jews and Gentiles to Himself and to one another. Therefore, disunity, ethnocentrism, and prejudice are “deviating from the truth of the gospel” (Gal. 2:14). 

Everyone who believes—Jew or Gentile—and calls on the name of the Lord Jesus will be saved (Joel 2:32). The gospel unites people from every tribe, tongue, and nation. Let's join God by being missionaries to all people and agents of reconciliation. This is what God's new community looks like. This is what the power of the gospel creates.

▪ What causes separation or division among people today? How does the gospel overcome these?

▪ What is confession? Why is it necessary for salvation?

COMMENTARY

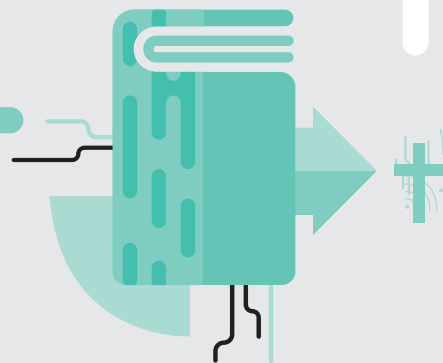
Romans 10

Main Point:
The gospel is the good news that God has provided salvation to sinners through Jesus.

“Paul is also well known as an apostle to the Gentiles, the missionary theologian who preached the “Good News” to Gentiles in the cities of the Roman world and developed a controversial policy whereby Gentile converts were not required to adopt Jewish customs such as male circumcision or kosher food-laws The creation of new communities of Jews and Gentiles in Christ was central to Paul’s purpose and to his understanding of history, since he identified here the fulfillment of God’s promises to Abraham and a sign of hope for Israel.”³

(p. 66, DDG) Christ Connection

God’s righteousness is revealed through the gospel. Because of sin, all deserve death and separation from God, but God provided Jesus to be our substitute, to pay our sin penalty, to remove our sin, and to provide His righteousness in its place. All who trust in Jesus will be saved.



Our Mission

God's Story has always been designed to connect with our story. It is because of His Story that our stories make sense, have meaning, and carry on into eternity. Use the questions below to help think through how His Story connects with your own. Suggested answers to these questions can be found on the right-hand side of the page for leaders.

Head



How does your relationships with other believers reflect Christ and His work?

What steps do you need to take to deal with conflict or division in your life?

Heart



When have you loved someone so much that you were willing to sacrifice for them?

How has your love for God moved you to live sacrificially for others?

Hands



How has your love for others moved you to live sacrificially?

Jesus died for us when we were God's enemies (Rom. 5:8). How do you live sacrificially for those you're not necessarily close with as a picture of the gospel?

Main Point:
The gospel is the good news that God has provided salvation to sinners through Jesus.



Head

People were created from the beginning to live in relationship with God. However, Satan sought to bring division between God and the people whom He loved, and tempted Adam and Eve to sin. When they disobeyed God's instruction, sin interrupted the peace and intimacy they had experienced with God. In its place brought conflict and division. Thankfully, Jesus's sacrifice made it possible for us to be reconciled to God. Today, we are called to live in relationship with God and in relationship with other believers. When we fail to live in unity with other Christians, we not only fail to reflect the heart of Jesus, but characterize the one who brought division in the first place. Let's commit ourselves to pursuing peace and unity with others, even if it requires sacrifices. That's what Jesus did.



Heart

In Mark 14:34-36, we see in the garden that Jesus didn't want to suffer. At times, we may be tempted to think that Jesus' life and the cross were simply formalities. After all, He is God. But the truth is that Jesus lived on earth as a human and He suffered. The way for God to offer forgiveness of sins was through the death of Jesus, the perfect Lamb of God. Jesus suffered the rejection, the humiliation, the excruciating physical pain, and even the wrath of God because of His great love for us. We are called, in kind, to live sacrificially—for the good of others and the glory of God—because of the love that's in our hearts.



Hands

In John 15:13, Jesus said, "No one has greater love than this: to lay down his life for his friends." Jesus was, of course, referring to His atoning death on the cross which paid the price for sin. However, it's also worth noting something Paul said: "I face death every day, as surely as I may boast about you, brothers and sisters, in Christ Jesus our Lord" (1 Cor. 15:31). Some translations use the language, "I die daily." Either way, Paul gladly put his life on the line every day as an expression of his love for God as well as for the people who God would use Him to reach. True love for God and others is expressed not only through the willingness to make sacrifices, but actually living a life of sacrifice.