

Class 2: The Unifying Principle - Gospel

- Review from last week:
 - What is Biblical Theology?
 - What is the purpose of Biblical Theology? (why do we do it?)
 - Who is the center of the Bible?
 - How do we come to know Jesus? How do we first come to know Him as He is and respond to Him in faith? Where do we see Christ clearest? So where do we start in Biblical Theology?
 - (Goldsworthy, Preaching) *The soundest methodological starting point is the gospel since the person of Jesus is proclaimed as the final and fullest expression of God's revelation of His kingdom. Jesus is the goal and fulfillment of the whole Old Testament and, as the embodiment of the truth of God, He is the interpretative key of the Bible.*
 - (Goldsworthy, According to Plan) *The significance of this is worth repeating: Jesus Christ in His life, death, and resurrection is the fixed point of reference for the understanding of the whole of reality. We must apply this fact to our doing of Biblical Theology. The gospel is the fixed point of reference for understanding the meaning of the whole range of biblical revelation. Thus, in order to do Biblical Theology we must start with a dogmatic basis, a presupposition or set of presuppositions that come to us from revelation.*
- If the gospel is the unifying principle of the Bible, first we must carefully define what the gospel is.
- Class 2 Objectives:
 - What is the gospel?
 - How does the gospel control our understanding of every part of the Bible?
- Kids Objectives:
 - What is the gospel? (The story of Jesus and how it applies to me)
 - What is a way to remember the gospel? (God, man, Christ, response)
- Review Kids Objectives:
 - What is theology? (Studying God in the Bible)
 - Who is the center of the Bible? (Jesus is the center of the Bible)
- Interaction: One sentence, what is the gospel?
- The Gospel is: The announcement of the BACKGROUND, REALITY, SIGNIFICANCE, and APPLICATION of Jesus' story
 - Gospel literally means good news - both the English word and the Greek word
 - Gospel comes from Godspel (*Gohd - spell*), which means 'good spell' or 'good story' or 'good news'
 - Gospel comes from *euangelion* - where we get our word evangel from (evangelism, evangelical)
 - *eu* means 'good' in Greek
 - *angel* is the same word we get the English word angel from
 - Some of you may know that angel is simply a messenger
 - So *euangelion* means 'good message' or, perhaps more literally, 'good announcement' - 'good news'
 - In Roman culture, the Greek word *euangelion* was used to announce the birth of a king
 - If a powerful king, like the Caesar, had a son who was to be a heir, the heralds would announce the 'good news' throughout the kingdom
 - So, to the Gospel writers, the word gospel would have meant the announcement of the birth of a king
 - As we dissect this message though, we see it has several parts
 - If the gospel is the announcement of the birth of a king, there is a reality that it is announcing - there has been a birth, a child has been born
 - And if the gospel is the announcement of the birth of a king, there is a significance that it is announcing too - the child that has been born is the king
 - It may or may not have been part of the actual announcement, but a gospel announcement at least supposed a background - you knew who this king was and why he was king and why his heir is important
 - And, again, it may or may not have been part of the announcement, but a gospel announcement also has

application to the one who hears it - is this good news for the hearer or bad news - is the hearer a subject of the new king, and enemy of the new king, what does it mean?

- When we talk about the Christian gospel in the Church, we often try to simplify it into one or several brief statements that we can easily wrap our minds around
 - In one sense this is good - it helps us distill the primary message of the gospel and helps us communicate it clearly to others - we need to do this for ourselves and others
 - But in another sense this can also be bad - in simplifying it into short statements of fact, we can sometimes lose sight of the great multi-dimensional nature of the gospel and start to emphasize one facet of the gospel over against all of the other facets of the gospel - we might start to emphasize the birth of a king over dealing with sin, or vice versa - we might over spiritualize it (lose sight of the historical reality of the gospel) or under spiritualize it (lose sight of the true spiritual consequences of dealing with sin and God's wrath)
 - So, we need to balance the need to look at the gospel as a complex, multi-faceted message but also distill it into simple terms so we can clearly communicate its message - this is what I want to do this evening
 - I'm not going to be as simple as possible - in our book for this week Greg Gilbert defines the gospel as God, man, Christ, response - and this is a good simple gospel that incorporates most or all of the facets of the gospel without doing harm to non-emphasized facets of the gospel
 - But, here we are trying to be a little deeper - to define the gospel a little more multi-faceted so that we can use the gospel to study out the message and the patterns of the whole Bible
 - Is this what I would use to tell an unbeliever about the gospel? Probably not
 - But I would want to make sure that my presentation to an unbeliever was true to this message
 - So, I'm going to use this definition - the idea of the announcement of a king and the parts of that announcement (background, reality, significance, application) to both try to summarize the gospel and to give a sense of the multi-faceted character of the gospel
- Kids Objective: what is the gospel? (The story of Jesus and how it applies to me)
- Kids Objective: what is a way to remember the gospel? (God, Man, Christ, Response)
- Background (what do we need to know to make sense of the gospel?): -- Romans 1/Acts 17 as background --
 - Creation (Who God is-God is the Creator and is rightfully in charge of His creation)
 - Romans 1:19-20
 - Acts 17:22-28
 - Colossians 1:15-16
 - Revelation 4:11
 - Creatures (Who we should have been-we must worship and obey our Creator)
 - Romans 1:20-22
 - Acts 17:26-30
 - Sin (Who we really are-we have rebelled against our Creator)
 - Romans 1:21-32
 - Acts 17:30
 - Romans 3:23
 - Judgment (What the current situation is-God is holy and just and is full of wrath at our rebellion)
 - Romans 1:18
 - Acts 17:31
 - Ephesians 2:1-3
- Reality (what are the historical events that make up the gospel? - first, where do we find these events?):
 - Jesus' virgin birth (the God-man)
 - Matthew 1:23
 - Luke 1:34
 - Why is this important enough for me to put on my list?
 - Jesus' perfect life (active obedience)
 - John 8:46

- Acts 3:14
 - II Corinthians 5:21
 - I Peter 2:22
 - Why is this important enough for me to put on my list?
- Jesus' sacrificial death (atonement/propitiation)
 - John 10:11
 - Acts 13:26-29
 - I Peter 3:18
- Jesus' exalted resurrection (victory and glory)
 - Matthew 28:6
 - Acts 2:24-32
 - II Timothy 2:8
- Significance (what do the historical events of the gospel mean for me?):
 - Redemption
 - What is redemption? Redemption from what?(from sin, the curse (God's wrath), and death)
 - Romans 3:24
 - Romans 5:9
 - Galatians 3:13
 - Reconciliation
 - What is reconciliation? Who is reconciled? (us to God)
 - Romans 5:10-11
 - II Corinthians 5:18-20
 - Colossians 1:19-22
 - Restoration
 - What is restoration? What is being restored?(the kingdom of God)
 - Mark 1:15
 - Acts 28:23, 30
 - Colossians 1:13
 - Recreation
 - What is recreation? What is being recreated? (new heavens and earth and a new people)
 - II Corinthians 5:17
 - Ephesians 4:24
 - II Peter 3:13
 - Revelation 21:1-5
 - Revelation
 - What is revelation? What is being revealed? (God's glory to us)
 - John 1:18
 - Isaiah 48:9-11
 - (Personal and Universal dimensions to each, related to now and not yet, perspectively related)
 - The bad news is that these things need to happen
 - The good news is that these things are happening and they have been fulfilled /accomplished in Christ
- Application (what do the historical events of the gospel demand of me?):
 - Repent
 - Acts 2:37-38
 - Acts 3:19
 - Acts 17:30
 - Believe
 - Acts 10:43
 - Acts 16:31
 - Romans 10:9-10

- Be baptized
 - Matthew 28:19
 - Acts 2:38
 - Acts 22:16
 - Obey
 - Matthew 28:20
 - John 3:36
 - John 14:21
 - (again perspectively related)
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- The Old Testament is all about the gospel because it:
 - Teaches us the background of Jesus' story
 - Foreshadows the reality of Jesus' story
 - Prepares us for the significance of Jesus' story
 - Gives us language to describe what Christ is and did
 - Gives us pictures and patterns that point to what Christ did
 - Anticipates the application of Jesus' story
 - So Biblical Theology is going to look at each passage, section and book of the Bible to see how it relates to the gospel
 - (Goldsworthy, According to Plan) *Again, we start from the gospel and move back into the Old Testament to see what lies behind the person and work of Christ. The Old Testament is not completely superseded by the gospel, for that would make it irrelevant to us. It helps us understand the gospel by showing us the origins and meanings of the various ideas and special words used to describe Christ and His works in the New Testament. Yet we also recognize that Christ is God's fullest and final word to mankind. As such, He reveals to us the final meaning of the Old Testament.*
 - (Goldsworthy, According to Plan) *Now that we have seen some of the Old Testament themes that are picked up in the New Testament, we are compelled to examine the whole Old Testament foundation of the gospel. Indeed there is a real sense in which the gospel cannot be the gospel without the Old Testament. As we move back to the beginning of the biblical story and follow it through until we arrive again at the gospel, we will do so with the Christian perspective that the progression of events will only find its true meaning in Christ. This can never be stated too often. The Old Testament is a story without an ending. Judaism and Islam have both provided their endings to the story that we as Christians cannot accept as valid. Jesus Christ is the goal of the Old Testament and provides its true meaning. Any understanding of, and commentary on, the Old Testament that does not show up this fact is at best incomplete and at worst un-Christian.*
 - In other (perhaps simpler) words, we are going to look for these themes (redemption, reconciliation, restoration, recreation and revelation) in the Old Testament
 - We'll look for how the themes are developed in a passage
 - We'll see how these themes grow through the Old Testament
 - We'll see how these patterns and themes find their fulfillment in Christ
 - So Biblical Theology is the study of the whole Bible (with some emphasis on the Old Testament) to see these things.
 - Review Objectives