

## **What is the Gospel? (Gilberts)**

*A discussion guide for Chapters 2-5*

### Before reading the book:

1. What is the gospel? What does it mean to be a Christ follower? *On a physical piece of paper, write down a few paragraphs. Resist opening your Bible or searching online. Define the words you are using, as if you are explaining the gospel to someone who has never heard it before.*
2. What do you believe about God? Why do you believe that is true? *Again, try to define the words you are using. It is tempting to use words you have heard in church, but what do the words mean? Pretend you are telling someone who has no definition of God.*
3. Who do you say Jesus is? What do you believe about the person and works of Jesus? (Matt 16:13, 15) *Again, try to define the words you are using. It is tempting to use words you have heard in church, but what do the words mean? Pretend you are telling someone who has never heard of Jesus of Nazareth.*
4. If someone were to examine your words, intentions, goals, attitudes, workplace conduct, private behavior, internet history - all of your life - what would they believe about your relationship to Jesus? Are you an enemy, stranger, acquaintance, friend, servant, etc.?
5. *Pray earnestly for gospel clarity.* It is the Father's delight to grant understanding about the saving work of Christ to those who humbly ask and seek (James 1:5). Pray diligently for clarity as you continue to read the book and discuss it.

### Introduction:

1. Why is it important for you to have clarity on the gospel? *Write down however many reasons you can think of and share this with someone you trust. Ask them to pray for the Lord to give you clarity.*
2. *Read Matt 13:18-23 slowly and out loud.* What temptations might hinder the Word and the content of this book from taking deep root in your heart? *Share the temptations with a person you trust who will graciously and unapologetically hold you accountable.*
3. What questions do you have about God, sin, Christ, faith, and repentance? *Review these questions before you read the chapter and continue to add to them. Wisdom does not pop into our minds*

*like a lightbulb, nor is it discovered inside of us. It comes from diligently seeking answers from God's Word and God's people (Pro 4:7, 24:6).*

## Chapter 2: God the Righteous Creator

1. What does it mean for God to be righteous? What does it mean for God to be the Creator? What does it mean for God to be holy? *Write down definitions using the Scriptures. Review your answers with a mature Christ follower to make sure you have Biblical understanding.*
2. Do you wholeheartedly believe that God is the Righteous Creator? What are reasons that you do not believe or embrace Him as the Creator? (40-41) *List reasons that would cause you to doubt. Share these with someone you can help you process your doubts.*
3. Since God is the Righteous Creator, what implications does that have for your life? (42, 44-45) Are you the one in charge of your destiny? Do you define what is right and wrong? Do you define the purpose of life? Do you decide the terms of salvation?
4. Why is it loving and just for God to punish sinners? (44) Would it be fair if someone stole all your money and the judge allowed them to get away with it? Why not? Why do human beings reserve the right for justice, but deny that right to God?

## Chapter 3: Man the Sinner

1. What is sin? How does sin destroy your life? (48, 49) *Be specific about the effects of sin in your life and try to find answers in Scripture. For example, God warns in Proverbs that anyone who commits adultery (which includes watching porn, lusting after another person) destroys themselves (Pro 6:32).*
2. How do you seek to assert authority over God's will? On a scale of 1 to 10, how convinced are you that sin is high treason against the King of the Universe? (49, 52) *"1" represents indifferent or just head knowledge, "10" would be it grieves and burdens you.*
3. *Read Mark 7:14-23 slowly and out loud.* Where does sin come from? Why can't you blame your environment for sin? *You may have had a very difficult past; horrible things may have happened or been done to you. Jesus and those of us in the church grieve with you. In a spirit of grace and truth, the reality is that you are also sinful, and part of the process to true saving faith is being convinced of this.*

4. Do you truly believe that your sins have made you guilty before God? Why is a sin that seems small to us (e.g. not telling the whole truth, envying someone on Facebook, gluttony on Thanksgiving) worthy of eternal condemnation? (56)

#### Chapter 4: Jesus Christ the Savior

1. Who is Jesus? Who is Jesus *to you*? *After reading this chapter, write down a new answer to this question. Compare this answer with the one you wrote previously. How is it the same or different?*
2. Why is it necessary for Jesus to be fully God and fully man? (61). *This is important to get correct. Please review your answer with a mature Christ follower to make sure you have a Biblical understanding.*
3. Why did Jesus have to be sinless? Why did Jesus have to die? (65-69) *Provide Scripture references and details to your reason. Resist the temptation to write down a simple answer for the sake of finishing a question.*
4. Do you truly believe in the physical death and resurrection of Jesus Christ? What doubts or questions do you have about the historical event of his death or resurrection? *Ask the Lord to help you believe. Ask a mature Christ follower to help you. There is incredible historical evidence for the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.*

#### Chapter 5: Faith (Part 1)

1. What is *saving* faith? How is *saving* faith different from *demon* faith? (James 2:19)
2. How do you know someone has *saving* faith? (74-75) *Provide Scripture references and details to your reason. How can people prophecy, cast out demons, do good works in the name of Jesus, and yet not be saved? (Matt 7:21-23)*
3. What are things people add to faith to seek salvation? Why does God forgive *only* by grace through faith in Christ? Why can't your good works save you? (78)
4. If you were to remove the sins you are struggling with the most, why would you still be guilty before God? (78)
5. What truths does someone need to trust or believe in order to be forgiven of sin? What does someone need to believe about God, man, sin, Christ, salvation, etc. to be saved? *Be as specific as*

*possible and include Scripture references. This is a question of eternal importance. Make sure you have this 110% correct.*

### Chapter 5: Repentance (Part 2)

1. What is repentance? How is repentance different than working to sin less often? *Write down your answer and then check with a mature Christ follower. Again, make sure you have a Biblical understanding of this important gospel word.*
2. What is hindering you from repenting, from swearing allegiance to Christ as the Lord of your life? *Process these reasons with a mature Christ follower and ask the Lord to help you give up your life, to take up your cross, and bow the knee!*
3. Read Luke 14:25-33: What do you believe you would have to give up to follow Christ? *Write a detailed list with specific activities (pornography, weed, drunkenness, homosexuality, video games, sports, career, etc.)*
4. On a scale of 1 to 10, how firmly do you believe in Christ as Lord? If believing in Jesus as Lord meant you would give up your house, car, children, job, reputation, would you still believe? (69-70) *This is the reality for the majority of believers in the New Testament in the history of Christianity.*

### After reading the book:

1. What is the gospel? What does it mean to be a Christ follower? *After reading this chapter, write down a new answer to this question. Compare this answer with the one you wrote before reading the book. How has it changed?*
2. Do you truly believe what the Scriptures say concerning God, man, sin, Christ, faith, repentance, salvation through faith alone, etc.? If you say you believe, why aren't you humbling yourself to Christ as Lord? *Journal and pray through your answer. Share your answer with a trusted friend and Christ follower who can help you process this.*
3. *Pray earnestly for gospel clarity. It is the Father's delight to grant understanding about the saving work of Christ to those who humbly ask and seek (James 1:5).*