



How would you explain the “Gospel” to someone not familiar with it?

In our Sunday Morning study of the book of Revelation, we were reminded of the need to proclaim the “eternal Gospel” to the folks around us. I asked the class the above question. And, just like Jesus frequently did, they turned it around and asked me the same question.

The word “Gospel” means “good news.” Below is one way I would tell that news. (Listen to the sermon “Jesus and State Fair Food” 9/2/18 on our website for another way.)

God created every one of us. And He creates us to have a relationship with Him. A relationship of perfect love and trust.

But something ripped that relationship apart. The thing responsible for that torn-apart relationship is our ‘sin.’ Sin is when we don’t trust that God knows what’s best for us. We think we know better and so we disobey what He’s told us.

You can’t have “Good” News without bad news. Our severed relationship with the God who created us is the “Bad News.”

Everyone is familiar with getting gifts, so I present the Good News with a gift analogy:

God’s deepest desire is to give us the gift of a mended relationship!

We are powerless to mend that relationship, but God loves us unconditionally, and doesn’t want us to be separated from Him for eternity.

As with any gift, it doesn’t do you any good for someone to merely “want” to give you one. They have to go and purchase it for you....

Jesus - God’s Son (God-in-the-flesh) paid the price to our mend our relationship when He took the punishment for our sin.

That’s what His death on the cross was all about. The Bible says, “The wages of sin is death.” God the Father paid His Son those wages that we had earned.

Again, as with any gift, having someone purchase a gift for you still doesn’t benefit you if you never open it.

We open the gift of that mended relationship by placing our trust in Jesus.

You’ve probably heard the Bible verse, “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.”

As that verse clearly states: The gift of a restored relationship with God means eternal life. And “eternal life” means “rising from our graves to live in a totally restored body (like Jesus had after He rose from the grave) to live on a totally restored earth!” We accept and open that gift and make it our very own when we admit that our sin/disobedience tore apart our relationship with God, and trust that Jesus did everything necessary to mend it when He took our punishment.

Finally, again as with any gift (especially one you really needed but could never afford) you send a “Thank You” note.

We send God a “Thank You” with our lives, by seeking to do what He asks us to do.

We don't go out and attempt to do the kinds of things Jesus did, because we have to as a way of earning our place in God's family. We do those things because we WANT TO as a way of saying, "Thanks God, for loving me so much that you sent your Son to take my punishment, mending the relationship I tore apart with You, and accepting me back into Your family."

Thanks for asking,
Pastor David

Send your questions to pastor@livingwordlutheran.net