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***Introduction***

 I believe that the best way to savor a delicious meal is not to cram it in all at once, but to slowly enjoy it one small bite at a time. That too is the goal of this devotional - that you hold in your hands. It is designed to help your soul feast on the glorious good news of the gospel one day at a time so that you may “*taste and see that the Lord is good*.” (Psalm 34:8)

 The format of the daily devotionals is simple. Each day presents one feature of the gospel message, and helps you “digest” it by dividing it into four parts:

**1.) Hear This:** This section provides a verse of scripture that sets the theme for that day’s devotional. When possible, I would encourage you to meditate on the verse and seek to commit it to memory.

**2.) Remember This:** This section provides you with a memorable principle so that you might understand the main point of that day’s material in a single sentence. For example, one day’s principle might be: “*The gospel reveals the perfection of God’s character*.” Again, it would be helpful to seek to memorize this section each day.

**3.) Know This:** This section is designed to give you a little more “meat” on that day’s topic. Some days will provide illustrations to shine light on the truth being presented. Other days will include other scripture references so that you may trace that day’s themes across the entire storyline of scripture.

**4.) Apply This:** This section is designed to help you not only to be a “*hearer*” of the word of God, but a “*doer*.” (James 1:22). In this section, you will find other scripture references for further study, suggestions for prayer and meditation, suggested talking points with others, and diagnostic questions to ask of your own heart.

 It is my prayer that this simple format will help you remember each truth deeply and understand it clearly. Perhaps you could use this devotional during your quiet times, as a discipling tool, or even as an evangelistic tract. However, you use it, my prayer is that this resource would help you understand the gospel clearly, and believe it joyfully.

In His love,

Pastor Seth Carter, First Baptist Church of Paintsville

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 1***

**Hear This:** *“For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures…” (1 Cor. 15:3-4).*

**Remember This:** Nothing is more important than knowing and believing the gospel.

**Know This:** We live in a society that is completely inundated with news. In just one click, we can receive the latest stories from our community, as well as the latest happenings in cities all over the world. We are certainly people who love to hear the latest news! While we can receive the most current news updates every day, there is one piece of news that is as old as the garden of Eden and still as relevant as today’s headlines. That piece of news is none other than the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. The gospel is a word that means “good news.” The good news of the gospel is that God sent His Son into the world around two thousand years ago in order to save sinners from His own wrath. Christ was supernaturally conceived in the womb of a virgin named Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit, and upon His birth was named Jesus (Matthew 1:21).

The good news of the gospel message centers around the truth that Jesus, the son of God and son of man, stepped into human history in order to pay for our sin and to offer His life as a sacrifice in our place. His death on the cross completely satisfied the demands of God’s righteous justice and made it possible for God to pardon us from the penalty our sin deserves. Three days after His death on the cross, Jesus was raised from the dead by the power of God to validate that He is truly the Son of God and that God had accepted His death as the perfect sacrifice for sin. In light of all that Jesus has accomplished through His life, death, and resurrection, all sinners, everywhere, may be completely forgiven, redeemed, and restored in right relationship with God and given eternal life when we place our faith in Him and what He has done on our behalf. There is no better news than this!

**Apply This:**

* *Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-11*. How would you describe the gospel’s importance based on this passage? Think of ways you can share this truth with others.
* Pray and thank God for the good news of the gospel that He has provided. Ask Him to help you understand the gospel more deeply in the coming days.

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 2***

**Hear This:** *“And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.” (Matthew 3:16-17)*

**Remember This:** The gospel reveals the perfection of God’s character.

**Know This:** In order to grasp the gospel message truly, we must have some basic knowledge of God’s character. The Bible teaches us that our God is not some kind of impersonal deity who is vastly removed from our lives, but rather He is the Lord who created the universe and sustains all things in the most personal way. The Bible also proclaims that God is One, existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The three persons of the Trinity are different from one another, and yet they are One being. This is unexplainable to our minds, but reality according to scripture. All three persons of the Trinity share the same essence and attributes; each one revealing the glory of who He is.

Since God’s character is holy and perfect, the only way sinful humanity can be reconciled to Him is through a sacrifice for sin that only He could provide. If God’s character were like ours, then the gospel would not be necessary. But because God is not like us, and infinitely perfect, the gospel is the only means by which we can be forgiven and redeemed. At the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, not only do we find our salvation, but also we find the most visible display of the character of our God. In the coming day’s studies, we will learn about the specific aspects of God’s character that are revealed in the gospel.

**Apply This:**

* Look up the following verses and write out the aspect of God’s character they reveal: *Mark 10:18, 1 Tim. 4:4, Nahum 1:7; 1 Sam 2:2, 1 John 1:5; Rom. 3:25-26, 2 Chron. 12:6; Isaiah 30:18, Deut. 32:4, Acts 17:31; Nehemiah 9:31; 1 John 4:8, 16, Psalm 86:15; 1 Cor.1:9, Isaiah 49:7, 1 Thess. 5:24, Lam. 3:22-23, 1 John 1:9, 2 Tim. 2:13; 1 John 5:20, Psalm 12:6, 26:3, 33:4, Num. 23:19, Isaiah 45:19, Rom. 1:25, Heb. 6:18; Ex. 34:6, Num. 14:18, Psalm 86:15; Psalm 68:5, 103:13, Isaiah 63:16, Eph. 4:6, 1 John 3:1; Mal. 3:6, James 1:17; Psalm 139:7-10, Heb. 4:13; Matt. 5:48*.
* Ask God to reveal more of His character to you as you study His Word.

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 3***

**Hear This:** *“Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!” (Isaiah 6:3)*

**Remember This:** The gospel reveals the holiness of God.

**Know This:**  As we discovered in yesterday’s lesson, the gospel reveals to us the perfect character of God. One of the aspects of God’s character most clearly revealed in the gospel is His holiness. The Bible clearly and repeatedly proclaims that God is holy. Like all of His other attributes, holiness is not something that God merely possesses, it defines who He is. God is holy. In fact, as the angels declare in Isaiah’s temple vision, He is perfectly and completely holy, “*Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts”* (Isa. 6:3).

The word “holy” means “separated”, “set apart”, or “marked off.” In light of that definition, God’s holiness can be described in two essential ways. First, God is holy in the sense that He is “separated” from all that He has made. God rules and reigns above all of His creation. This means that no matter how beautiful and majestic His creatures may be, God is set apart in holiness from every single one of us. As has been said many times, when we describe God’s holiness in this way, we are saying that “God alone is God.”

Secondly, God’s holiness can be described as His moral purity. Not only is God separated from all He has created in terms of the glory His being, He is also separated in His morality. In His holiness, God is completely set apart from all that is sinful, vile, and wicked. He cannot even look upon sin, nor tolerate it in any form. The Bible repeats this truth about God’s holiness many times:

*“God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.” (1 John 1:5)*

*“You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on wickedness.” (Habakkuk 1:13)*

*“For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness, nor shall evil dwell with You.” (Psalm 5:4)*

**Apply This:**

* Take some time to meditate on the holiness of God.

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 4***

**Hear This:** *“For the LORD is righteous; he loves righteous deeds; the upright shall behold his face.” (Psalm 11:7)*

**Remember This:** The gospel reveals the righteousness of God.

**Know This:** Just as God’s holiness is revealed in the gospel, so too is His righteousness. What do we mean when we say that God is *righteous*? Simply, we mean that God is morally perfect. In this way, God’s holiness and righteousness are connected. Whereas holiness refers to His moral purity, righteousness refers to His moral perfection. Our God is completely holy and perfectly righteous.

Just as we can think about God’s holiness being expressed in two ways, so too can we think about His righteousness. First, because He is perfectly righteous, God will always decree, act, work, and judge in ways that are perfectly consistent with His own nature. No one will ever be able to accuse God of doing that which is unjust or wrong. All that He is, and therefore all that He does is perfectly righteous. Consider the words of Moses in Deuteronomy 32:4, “*He is the Rock, His work is perfect; for all His ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice; righteous and upright is He*.”

To speak of God’s righteousness is to speak of His nature and character, but it is also to speak of the way He relates to His creation, specifically human beings (those made in His image). God will always relate to us, act towards us, and judge us in righteousness. There will never be a time when God lets sin go unpunished or righteousness go unrewarded. All who come before His throne of judgment will come to be judged according to the standard of His perfect righteousness. Consider the words of the Psalmist, *“But the LORD sits enthroned forever; He has established His throne for justice, and He judges the world with righteousness; He judges the peoples with uprightness” (Psalm 9:7-8).*

**Apply This:**

* Look up the following passages and determine how they speak of God’s righteousness: *Ecclesiastes 12:14; Proverbs 5:21, 15:3; Hebrews 4:13; Jeremiah 17;10; Hebrews 9:27*.
* One writer said, “*A God who would refuse to judge wickedness would not be loving, good, or righteous*.” How would you respond to this statement?

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 5***

**Hear This:** *“But God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8)*

**Remember This:** The gospel reveals the love of God.

**Know This:** People love to talk about love. A desire for love is reflected everywhere in our culture; in songs, movies, television shows, art, etc. Yet, while people do a lot of talking about love, hardly anyone is able to define what love really is or from where it comes. This is because the vast majority of people don’t know the God who is love (1 John 4:8).

The Bible clearly teaches that just as God is holy and righteous, He is also loving. However, it’s vital to understand that God’s love means more than emotions, attitudes, or persuasions. God’s love is more than something He does. Just like His holiness and righteousness, love is an attribute of God. Love is who God is. That’s why John says, “*He who does not love does not know God, for God is love”* (1 John 4:8). As one writer points out, “*God is the essence of what love is, and all true love flows from Him as its ultimate source*.”

Nowhere is the love of God more clearly on display than in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Just as the gospel reveals His offended holiness, as well as His righteous standard, so too does it gloriously show God’s surpassing love for us as sinners. As Paul says in Romans 5:8, “*But God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us*” (Romans 5:8).

**Apply This:**

* Look up the following passages and describe how they speak of God’s love: *Exodus 34:6; Psalm 86:15, 103:8, 145:8; Isaiah 30:18; James 1:17*
* Take time to meditate on the love of God today.
* Thank God for loving you even while you were dead in your sins.
* Thank God for loving you so much that He sent Jesus Christ to be your Savior.
* Consider who you may share the message of God’s love with today.

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 6***

**Hear This:** *“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9)*

**Remember This:** The gospel reveals the moral evil of mankind.

**Know This:** As we have discovered in previous lessons, the gospel clearly reveals the character of God. It especially reveals His holiness, righteousness, and love. Today, we learn that the gospel also reveals something about the character of mankind. We’ll discover that while the gospel reveals God’s total perfection, it also reveals our utter imperfection.

The first truth that the gospel reveals about mankind is that we are morally evil. The Bible clearly describes our condition before the fall into sin as one of goodness, glory, and honor (Gen. 1:26, 31). However, following Adam’s disobedience in the garden, every person has been born in a state of sin, shame, and reproach - the result of which is evil deeds. Everyone is born physically alive, but spiritually dead (Eph. 2:1). We are born with a sinful nature, one that is morally evil, bent toward wickedness and rebellion, and in constant hostility toward the holy God who created us in His image.

The truth about mankind’s evil nature is the main reason for why many are offended by the gospel message. People are used to hearing how good and worthy they are. Yet, the gospel tells us that we are sinful and wicked before a righteous God, worthy of only eternal punishment. Perhaps you struggle to see yourself in the horrible way the Bible describes you. Maybe you think you are the exception to the rule. Let me encourage you to be honest with yourself. If you only examine your life against God’s Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:1-17, cf. Matt. 5:21-48), you will quickly find that you are morally evil since you too break God’s laws every day in your thoughts, words, and deeds. If you would understand the gospel rightly, then you must understand that even if world around you says you are good, the God who created you and knows your heart says that you are evil.

**Apply This:**

* Look up the following passages that speak about the evil nature of mankind: *Isaiah 64:6; Matthew 15:19; Romans 8:7*.
* In what ways does the society around you try to present the opposite message about the character of mankind?

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 7***

**Hear This:** “*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*.” *(Romans 3:23)*

**Remember This:** The gospel reveals that we are sinners by nature and by choice.

**Know This:** One day, when teaching a crowd of people what truly defiles a person, Jesus said, “*What comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person”* (Matt. 15:19-20). This is an illustration of the truth we discovered yesterday leading directly into to the truth we uncover today. Yesterday, we said that the gospel reveals the moral evil of mankind. That is, the gospel teaches us that everyone is born with an evil heart. Today, we add the fact that an evil heart is what leads us to live sinful lives. To state it more simply, every person is a sinner both by nature and by choice. This is the reason why every person stands guilty and condemned before God without excuse. Consider the testimony of scripture:

*“If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?” (Psalm 130:3)*

*“For there is no one who does not sin.” (1 Kings 8:46)*

*“As it is written: None is righteous, no not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.” (Romans 3:10-12)*

*“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23)*

*“Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God.” (Romans 3:19)*

**Apply This:**

* Take some time to meditate on the scriptures written above.
* Examine yourself. Ask God to reveal your evil heart and your sinful deeds to you.
* Ask God to give you a heart that grieves with godly sorrow over your sin.

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 8***

**Hear This:** *“It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.” (Rom. 3:26)*

**Remember This:** How can God be just and justify the guilty at the same time?

**Know This:** When I was in bible college, I took many classes in philosophy. In one semester of my “History of Philosophy” class, I remember our professor lecturing about some of the biggest questions that philosophers have wrestled with down through the centuries. He mentioned the most well-known philosophical questions regarding law and order, ethics and morality, truth and virtue, and evil and wickedness. I remember hearing those lectures and being fascinated by all that I was discovering. However, I also remember feeling a keen sense of emptiness as I realized that even the greatest philosophical minds could neither think up, nor answer the most important question in the universe, namely: How can a holy and righteous God be just and at the same time pardon the guilty?

This most important question is grounded in the truth we have already unpacked in previous days’ lessons; truths such as the holiness, righteousness, and justice of God. Just think, when we really begin to contemplate the implications of God’s good character, we are comforted, because it means that God is not an evil tyrant. But, as we think a little more, the fact that God is good also unsettles us as we think of what He will do to those of us who are not good. For what else could a holy and righteous God to do rebellious, glory-robbing sinners like us but condemn all of us to an eternal hell? That is what our sins deserve and He is perfectly just, isn’t He?

Herein lies the most important question one could ever ask: How can God be just and yet pardon me, a sinner who should be justly condemned? To put it a different way, how can God be perfectly holy and righteous, and yet become Father and friend to an evil sinner like me?

If this question burdens your soul, that’s appropriate and right. I only pray that it also leaves you hungering for the answer. We’ll consider God’s amazing answer to this most important question in tomorrow’s lesson.

**Apply This:**

* Think deeply on God’s good character and your sin. What comes to mind?

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 9***

**Hear This:** *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16)*

**Remember This:** The gospel is God’s way of satisfying His own justice.

**Know This:** We have recently considered the most important question in the universe: How can God be just and yet justify the guilty? This seems like an impossible dilemma, doesn’t it? So, how is it resolved? The answer comes from God Himself, and it comes in the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The gospel proclaims two unshakable truths. First, in His divine justice, God has rightly condemned all of humanity and requires complete payment/satisfaction for our sins committed against Him. Second, in His divine love, God took on human nature in the person of Jesus Christ, took our sins upon Himself, suffered the punishment for sin we deserve, and gave up His life in our place. In this way, the same holy and just God who demands the penalty of our sin be paid, has made the payment for us, the price being His very own blood. This is why the gospel is truly God’s good news!

**Apply This:**

* Take time today to think deeply on the perfect wisdom and knowledge of God. If you were left to solve this most important question, think of how inadequate your response would be.
* People tend to emphasize the love of God over the justice of God. Think about how the gospel message presents both truths simultaneously.
* Explain the following statement: *The cross of Jesus Christ is where the love and the justice of God meet.*
* Look up and meditate on the following passages to prepare your heart for tomorrow’s lesson: *John 3:16, 15:13; 1 John 4:8-10*

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 10***

**Hear This:** *“Pilate addressed the crowd once more, desiring to release Jesus, but they kept shouting, “Crucify, crucify him!” (Luke 23:20-21)*

**Remember This:** The brutality of the cross demonstrates the utter wickedness of sinful humanity.

**Know This:** Out of all the instruments of torture and death that mankind has invented, none can compare to the Roman cross. It is no accident then that the Lord Jesus offered up His life as a sacrifice for sinners upon such a device. The brutality of the cross serves to demonstrate two significant truths:

*1.) The cross demonstrates the world’s hatred of God*. As Paul Washer writes, “God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, and the world so hated God that it subjected Him to the worst form of torture and death.”

*2.) The cross demonstrates the weight of our sin against our holy God*. Our rebellion against God is so indescribably horrible, and the penalty for our rebellion so terrifyingly punishable that it could only be paid for by the very deepest suffering and painful death of the sinless Son of God.

While we could never comprehend the amount of physical suffering Jesus endured upon the cross, we must keep in mind that His suffering was far more than physical. Many victims died upon the cross in the ancient world, but only Jesus Christ suffered the unmitigated fury of God. In the coming days, we will reflect on all that Jesus suffered and accomplished for us at the cross.

**Apply This:**

* Many people wear cross necklaces, have cross bumper stickers on their car, etc. However, some do not even understand what the cross fully represents. How does the world’s view of the cross contrast with what we’ve learned today? (1 Cor. 1:18)
* Meditate on the words of the hymn “Hallelujah! What a Savior!”:

*“Bearing shame and scoffing rude, in my place condemned He stood*

*Sealed my pardon with His blood, Hallelujah, what a Savior!”*

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 11***

**Hear This:***“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” (Isa. 53:6)*

**Remember This:** On the cross, Jesus took our sin upon Himself.

**Know This:** When I’m sharing the gospel with children, I will often ask them, “How would you feel if you did something wrong and your parents punished your brother/sister instead of you?” While a parent would most likely never do that, it’s a concept every child can understand, and as sinners, we can understand that this is what Jesus did for us.

On the cross, our sins were *imputed* to Him. In other words, when Jesus hung upon the cross, God credited our sins to His account and considered them as belonging to Him. Because Jesus bore our sin in this way, He, the sinless Son of God was *declared* guilty and *treated* as such. Consider the following scriptures:

*“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” (Isa. 53:6)*

*“For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” (2 Cor. 5:21)*

**Apply This:**

* Thank God that He imputed your sins to Jesus, and offer praise and thanksgiving unto the Lord for taking your sin’s punishment upon the cross.
* Read Galatians 2:20. Reflect on how the doctrine of *imputation* impacts daily living.

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 12***

**Hear This:** *“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us---for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree.” (Galatians 3:13)*

**Remember This:** On the cross, Jesus was cursed in our place.

**Know This:** For many years, the Boston Red Sox were said to be under a curse. Known as “The Curse of the Bambino,” many fans said that the trade of Babe Ruth from Boston to the New York Yankees in 1920 placed a curse on the team leading to a drought of World Series wins. Finally, in 2004, the Boston Red Sox won the world series and the so called “curse” was ended.

To be under a curse is a frightful thought, and the Bible teaches us that every human being finds him or herself in such a predicament. Because of our sin against God, we are not only separated from Him, but we are also cursed by Him. As one writer says, “*To be cursed of God is to become an object of His displeasure and condemnation*.” This curse is the price of our rebellion.

Thankfully, God in His grace has moved to save us from the curse we were under. God sent His own Son into the world to become a curse for us and to suffer the ramifications of the curse of sin in our place. This is why Paul tells the church in Galatia, “*Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us---for it written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree*” (Gal. 3:13).

**Apply This:**

* In Galatians 3:10, the apostle Paul says that everyone who does not keep the Law perfectly is cursed by it (Deuteronomy 27:26). The reason is that no one can obey the Law perfectly. In fact, there were over 600 laws the Jews had to keep to be right in the eyes of God. The breaking of even one commandment put a person under condemnation. Trying to achieve salvation through obedience to the Law is futile. *Meditate on Galatians 3:10 and 3:13 thinking about the emptiness of legalism and self-righteousness*.
* Spend some time thanking the Lord for taking your curse upon the cross.

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 13***

**Hear This:** *“And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” that is, “My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?” (Matthew 27:46)*

**Remember This:** On the cross, Jesus was forsaken in our place.

**Know This:**  After God created the first man, Adam, the scriptures say, “*The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die*” (Gen. 2:15-17). God’s promise of death for disobedience, which Adam and his offspring have experienced, implies the idea of separation. In other words, “*the wages of sin is death*” (Rom. 6:23), and that death means being separated.

Being separated from Him is one of the most horrifying outcomes of our sin against God. Our sin has earned us three types of death/separation: physical death (the death of our physical bodies), spiritual death (being separated from perfect communion and fellowship with our Creator), and eternal death (being shut out from God’s glorious and good presence forever in hell).

One of the most beautiful and heart-wrenching truths of the gospel is that in order to save us from being eternally separated from Him, God sent Jesus into the world to take our sins upon Himself and to be forsaken in our place. God could have justly forsaken us, but instead, because of His great love, it is Jesus who cries out with agony from the cross, “*My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me*?”

**Apply This:**

* Read Isaiah *59:2.* Once a person becomes a Christian, how does sin still impact one’s relationship with their heavenly Father?
* Seek to memorize the heart-wrenching words of Jesus in *Matthew 27:46*. Meditate on the reality that the eternal Son of God was separated from His Father in your place.

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 14***

**Hear This:** *“God is a just judge, and God is angry with the wicked every day.” (Psalm 7:11)*

**Remember This:** On the cross, Jesus suffered the fullness of God’s wrath for us.

**Know This:** Most people have the perception that God is generally pleased with them, thinking their own “goodness” appeases Him. However, nothing could be further from the truth. The Bible teaches us that God is angry with sinful humanity. As Psalm 7:11 states, “*God is a just judge, and God is angry with the wicked every day.”* Far from being pleased with the wicked, God is angry at them.

Unlike human anger, the anger of God is not motivated by irrational emotion, but rather by His holiness and His love for all that is true and good. Because God is holy and just, He hates sin with all His being and expresses His wrath against it. Since humanity is born in sin, we are born under the wrath of God. Our sin causes us to shake a fist of rebellion in God’s face, and God’s holy response is one of just wrath.

The good news of the gospel is that though we deserve the unmitigated wrath of God for our sins, in His love, Jesus took the fullness of God’s wrath for us. As scripture teaches, on the cross, Jesus drank the cup of God’s wrath until it was completely empty and the justice of God was fully satisfied. Thus, we sing, “*In Christ alone, who took on flesh, fullness of God in helpless babe. This gift of love and righteousness, scorned by the ones He came to save: Till on that cross as Jesus died, the wrath of God was satisfied---for every sin on Him was laid; Here in the death of Christ I live*” (“In Christ Alone”, Stuart Townend).

**Apply This:**

* Read the following verses: *Jeremiah 25:15; Matthew 26:39,42; Isaiah 53:4-5*
* What was Jesus’s response in the garden when considering the wrath of God that He was about to experience?

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 15***

**Hear This:** *“For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit.” (1 Peter 3:18)*

**Remember This:** On the cross, Jesus died in our place.

**Know This:** I was recently standing beside the bed of a dear friend and church member when he breathed his last breath and left behind his physical body to enter into the presence of the Lord. As I sorrowfully watched his heart rate slow and his breathing diminish, I was reminded of the unnaturalness of death. The Bible teaches that death was not a natural part of God’s good creation. Rather, it is God’s judgment upon humanity because of our sin.

In fact, physical death (the separation of the spirit/soul from the body) is one of the clearest evidences of God’s judgment against our sinful rebellion. We’ve all heard it said that the death rate is very high: 1out of 1 people die. The Bible agrees. The apostle Paul says in Romans 5:12, *“Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all people because all sinned.”*

However, another amazing truth of the gospel is that God has acted to save us from the power of death. To do so, He sent Jesus to experience death in our place. As we were reminded in yesterday’s devotional: “*Here in the death of Christ I live”* (“In Christ Alone,” Stuart Townend).

**Do This:**

* Read the following scriptures: Romans 6:23; Luke 23:46; 1 Peter 3:18
* What are some ways that the world system entices people to avoid/neglect the reality of death?
* *Read Psalm 90:12*. What do we gain as we reflect often on the reality of our own death?
* Spend some time in prayer thanking Jesus for tasting death so that you could taste life eternal.

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 16***

**Hear This:** *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16)*

**Ask Yourself This:** Today’s devotional is somewhat different than previous ones. We have covered eternally important truths, and today would be an excellent time to stop and ask yourself some crucial questions. Therefore, based on what we have learned about the gospel so far, especially regarding the recent lessons on the death of Christ, ask yourself:

* Do I believe that Jesus Christ died for sinners?
* If you don’t believe that He did, why are you going against the truth of God’s word?
* Do you believe that Jesus Christ died for your sins?
* Have you embraced Jesus as your Savior or do you remain indifferent to Him?
* Do you shamefully use what Jesus had done for you upon the cross as an excuse to live however you want? (If so, see Romans 6:1).

**Consider This:** If the reality of Jesus Christ’s death for your sins has truly impacted your heart, then you will give up every form of self-righteousness in order to trust in Him and His sacrifice alone (Phil. 3:1-11). You will also freely give up your own selfish desires, passions, and pursuits to follow and obey Him as Lord because you are so in love with Him (Luke 9:23, John 14:15).

If the reality of His death for your sins has not impacted you, and if it has not produced a love for Him that results in a desire to obey Him, then you do not know Him. Will you continue to look into the word of God? Will you please continue to search out His truth? Will you ask a believing friend/family member to continue to share the gospel with you? Will you ask that person to pray for you that God would open the eyes of your heart to see His glory, power, wisdom and love on display at the cross of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 1:18-25)? I can assure you, you will never be the same once you meet the risen Lord Jesus and have your heart transformed by the power of His gospel of grace.

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 17***

**Hear This:** *“And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins.” (1 Cor. 15:17)*

**Remember This:** Without the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead we would be without hope.

**Know This:** In recent days, we have been reflecting on the death of Christ. Now, for the next few days, we shift our attention to focus on His resurrection. The Bible is absolutely clear, Jesus of Nazareth rose bodily from the dead three days after being crucified and buried in a borrowed tomb. In 1 Corinthians 15, the apostle Paul states that He appeared to over 500 disciples before His ascension into heaven (1 Cor. 15:4-7). Thus, the resurrection of Jesus is a historical event and not a wistful fairy-tale. In fact, Jesus’s resurrection is so real, and so foundational that without it the entire gospel message would be a fantasy. As Paul states in 1 Corinthians 15:4, "*If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain*.” But praise God, Christ has been raised! Therefore, the gospel is true, Jesus is who He said He is, salvation is real, and eternal life is available through Him!

**Apply This:**

* In the coming days we will be learning about the realities that the resurrection of Jesus proves. In your own words, based on the character and promises of God, what do you think it proves?
* *Read 1 Cor. 15:13-19.* What six horrible consequences does Paul give if there were no resurrection?
* Spend some time thanking God for the life-changing power of Jesus’s resurrection.

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 18***

**Hear This:** *“[He] was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by His resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord…” (Romans 1:4)*

**Remember This:** The resurrection proves that Jesus is the Son of God.

**Know This:** When I played basketball in college, I reached the point when I could finally dunk the ball fairly easily. When I would come home on breaks, my friends would often ask me, “Can you dunk it?” I would respond, “You bet!” Of course, their response would be, “Well then, prove it!”

We are hardwired with the need for proof. Within us dwells a desire for claims to be backed by evidence. This was the case for the Jewish leaders in Jesus’s day. In John 2:18-19, the leaders asked Jesus for a sign to prove that He had the spiritual authority to cleanse God’s temple in Jerusalem. Jesus responded to their need for proof by declaring, “*Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up*.” Little did the Jewish leaders understand, Jesus was talking about the temple of His body instead of Herod’s grandiose temple. In other words, Jesus’s resurrection from the dead would be the sign of His supernatural authority, and proof that He truly is the Son of God, just as He said.

**Apply This:**

* Remember this crucial point: Jesus did not become the Son of God because of His resurrection, but was resurrected because He is the Son of God.
* Spend some time praising God for His faithfulness and for providing evidence that He is indeed trustworthy.

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 19***

**Hear This:** *“Jesus our Lord was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.” (Romans 4:25)*

**Remember This:** The resurrection proves that God the Father accepted Jesus’s death as the complete payment for our sin.

**Know This:** When I was a little boy, I used to love to go into the grocery store to buy candy bars. I always took great pride in being able to pay for one with my own money. I would gladly open up my Velcro Mickey Mouse wallet and pull out all the money that I had and hand it to the cashier. The employee would typically hand me back a few dollars, telling me that I had paid too much, and that it only required a certain amount for the price to be paid in full. Then, once accepting the right payment, with a smiling face, the cashier would hand me my candy bar and off I would go to enjoy it as quickly as I could.

On the cross, through His sacrificial death, Jesus paid the complete payment for our sin debt, nothing more and nothing less. This is why He could cry out with His final breath, “*It is finished*!” Or, “*Paid in full*!” (John 19:30). As a result, God the Father accepted His perfect payment and His justice was satisfied. We know this because He then raised Jesus from the dead as proof. This is why the apostle Paul can write, “*Jesus our Lord was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification*” (Rom. 4:25). Jesus died to provide atonement for sin and was raised to secure our right-standing in the court-room of heaven.

**Apply This:**

* *Read Colossians 2:13-14.* What happened to our sin debt when Jesus died?
* How do you think Satan responded when Jesus walked out of the tomb? How did heaven respond?
* Praise the Lord Jesus for offering Himself as the perfect sacrifice for our sins.
* Praise God the Father for accepting His death as the complete payment for our sins and for proving that acceptance through the resurrection.

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 20***

**Hear This:** *“Jesus said to [Martha], “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?” (John 11:25)*

**Remember This:** The resurrection proves that every believer will be resurrected in the future.

**Know This:** How could Jesus have the power to raise His followers up from the dead---only by having the power and authority over death already. Thankfully, because of His own death and resurrection, Jesus has that authority! The Bible teaches that on one glorious day, He will resurrect all who have trusted in Him. This is why Jesus can comfort Martha at the death of her brother Lazarus with these words, “*I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die.” Then, in the midst of her grief, he asks her the striking question, “Do you believe this*?” (John 11:25). Friend, I would ask you the same. Jesus is the resurrection and the life. Even though death is inevitable, all who put their faith in Him will be raised to new life when He returns. “*Do you believe this*?”

**Apply This:**

* *Read 1 Corinthians 6:14.* By who’s power will believers be resurrected?
* Read 1 Corinthians 15:23. In what way is Christ the firstfruits?
* Read *John 20:27* and *Philippians 3:21.* What will our resurrection body be like?

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 21***

**Hear This:** *“Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.” (Acts 2:36)*

**Remember This:** The resurrection proves that Jesus is Lord of all.

**Know This:** The resurrection means two things. First, it means that Jesus has been raised from death to life by the power of God. Second, it means that He has been exalted as Lord and Judge of all to the glory of God. The Bible speaks of this second reality of the resurrection all over the New Testament. Consider the following scriptures that speak of Jesus’s exaltation:

*“Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.” (Acts 2:36)*

*“The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now He commands all people everywhere to repent, because He has fixed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom He has appointed: and of this He has given assurance to all by raising Him from the dead.” (Acts 17:30-31)*

*“Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Philippians 2:9-10)*

**Apply This:**

* The amazing reality of Jesus’s resurrection proves that becoming a Christian is not about following a list of dos and don’ts. It’s not merely about having a crutch to lean on in hard times. Being a Christian means knowing, loving, and following a living person, the Lord Jesus Christ, the One who died for your sins and rose again. Is this your conception of Christianity?
* Have you had a true, life-changing, spirit-transforming encounter with the risen Lord Jesus? That encounter can come as He speaks to you through His Word. Continue to diligently learn of Him as you study the Bible.

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 22***

**Hear This:** *“Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Romans 5:1)*

**Remember This:** Jesus’s death and resurrection has accomplished salvation for everyone who will call on His name.

**Know This:** There will never be a greater declaration of victory than the final words of Jesus upon the cross: “*It is finished*!” (John 19:30). What Jesus suffered upon the cross was all that was required for human beings to be saved from God’s wrath and eternal judgment. At the cross, God’s holy justice and righteous anger were completely satisfied as He poured out His wrath on Jesus, the One who bore our sins (1 Pet. 2:24). In this amazing way, through Christ’s atoning sacrifice, God is able to be both just and the justifier of those who put their faith in Christ (Rom. 3:26). At the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, “*steadfast love and faithfulness meet; righteousness and peace kiss each other”* (Psalm 85:10).

**Apply This:**

* The gospel gloriously declares that Christ has accomplished all that is necessary for our redemption. Consider the following scriptures and rejoice: *John 14:6; Acts 4:12; Romans 5:1, 8:1; 1 Timothy 2:5.*
* Have you called on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation?
* Who can you share the good news of the gospel with today?

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 23***

**Hear This:** *“[Jesus said], “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.” (Mark 1:15)*

**Remember This:** The gospel demands the appropriate response.

**Know This:** Perhaps you’ve heard it said, “*The news of the gospel is such good news! But how does this good news become good news for me personally*?” That’s the best question that anyone could ask because it assumes that the gospel calls for a response, and indeed it does. In order to receive the great salvation that Jesus has accomplished through His death and resurrection, personally, the Bible demands two things from every sinner: *1.) That they repent of their sins*. *2.) That they put their faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ alone*. In the coming days’ devotionals, we will discuss each aspect of this true response to the gospel.

**Apply This:**

* Memorize *Mark 1:15*.
* Read *Acts 20:21.* Is there any difference between the way a Jew and a Gentile responds to the gospel?
* Keep in mind: Repentance and faith are like two sides of the same coin. Repenting of sin is the result of having faith in Christ, and having faith in Christ leads to the repenting of sin.

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 24***

**Hear This:** *“…And they glorified God, saying, “Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life.” (Acts 11:18)*

**Remember This:** Repentance is a change of mind that results in a changed life.

**Know This:** There is not much talk of repentance in the church today. That is heartbreakingly sad because without genuine repentance there is no true response to the gospel and thus no salvation. In fact, many professing believers are deceived into thinking they have received eternal life because they have never truly repented. So, what is repentance? *Repentance is a work of God in a sinner’s heart that leads to a changed mind which results in a changed life* (see Acts 11:18; 1 Thess. 1:5, 9). True repentance “*that leads to life”* is a work that the Holy Spirit of God brings about in the heart of a sinner once he/she hears the gospel message. This God-wrought change of the “heart” refers to a change of who we really are at the core of our being, a change in our thinking, will, and emotions.

Perhaps it would be easier to understand repentance by seeing a concrete example through the testimony of Saul of Tarsus, later known as the apostle Paul. As “*a Hebrew of Hebrews*” (Phil. 3:5), Saul thought Jesus of Nazareth to be nothing more than a religious fake and a blasphemer worthy of death. He also believed that anyone who professed to follow Jesus was an enemy of the true God and worthy of imprisonment and death (Acts 9:1-2; 1 Tim. 1:13). However, upon meeting the risen Christ, while on the road to Damascus, Saul’s heart was changed and true repentance took place. In a moment, he realized that his deeply held beliefs about Jesus were wrong. He once believed Jesus to be a fake, but discovered Him to be who He claimed: the Son of God, the Messiah of Israel, and the Savior of the world. Saul once thought that a right standing before God was earned through obeying the law, but he realized he had no goodness or righteousness of his own of which to cling. (Rom. 7:18), and that salvation was a free gift of God’s grace (Eph. 2:8-9). He once believed that followers of Jesus deserved to die (Acts 8:1), only to realize that he was torturing those who truly belonged to God (Rom. 8:14-15). Through a single encounter with the risen Christ, Saul of Tarsus, the self-righteous Pharisee, repented and was transformed. He then began proclaiming the good news of Jesus that he once hated (Acts 19:18-22; Gal. 1:22-23).

**Apply This:**

* With a definition and example of repentance, now define it in your own words.

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 25***

**Hear This:** *“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.” (Psalm 51:17)*

**Remember This:** Repentance includes a change of mind, a change of emotions, and a change of behavior.

**Know This:** Repentance involves a change in the three most fundamental aspects of who we are as human beings:

*1.) A change of mind*. Repentance involves a change in the way a person thinks. In repentance, a person realizes his/ her thinking has been wrong and what God’s word says is indeed true. For examples see: *Psalm 51:3-4; Daniel 9:4-5*.

*2.) A change of emotions.* Repentance also involves a change in the way one feels about their sin before God. Genuine repentance leads to a godly sorrow over sin and a deep shame concerning one’s rebellion against God. Repentance also leads to a hatred for the sin and selfish passions that were once loved. For examples see: *Psalm 51:17; Jeremiah 31:19; Ezekiel 20:43; Romans 7:15, 24; 2 Corinthians 7:9*.

*3.) A change of behavior.* Repentance finally involves a change in the way one lives. A change of mind that recognizes God’s word to be true and authoritative and a change of emotion producing genuine sorrow over sin results in a change of the will that results in a changed lifestyle. A repenting heart is a heart seeking to obey the Lord in every way. For examples see: *Matthew 3:8; Acts 26:20; 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10*.

**Apply This:**

* Consider the following diagnostic questions to help you realize if genuine repentance has truly taken place in your heart:

***1.)*** Have your thoughts about God changed? What do you think about His Word and His character? Do you think that He is worthy of glory? Do you think that He is worthy of being the Master of your life? Do you think that He is better than anything this world can offer?

***2.)*** Have your thoughts about sin changed? Do you view your sin as a horrible offense against holy God? Do you feel guilt and sorrow over your sin?

***3.)*** Have your thoughts about salvation changed? Do you realize that you have no goodness of your own and that your only way to heaven is Jesus Christ?

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 26***

**Hear This:** *“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” (Hebrews 11:1)*

**Remember This:** True repentance leads to saving faith.

**Know This:** Everyone lives with a certain amount of faith. For example, every time a person sits in a chair, they are exercising faith in that chair to be sturdy enough to support him/her. Therefore, faith not only believes something to be true, but also acts on that belief. In the same way, biblically, faith means more than just believing that God exists (James 2:19). Faith means trusting God by taking Him at His Word. As one writer puts it, “*People with genuine faith do not merely believe there is a God, but they trust what He has said and rely upon it*.”

Understanding the Bible’s definition of faith, a person may ask the question, “*Well, how can I know that God’s word is really true*?” The answer to that question is found in understanding God’s character and being led by the Holy Spirit. A person who exercises saving faith can be confident in their salvation because God has made unbreakable promises about it in His Word (Titus 1:2-3), and because the Holy Spirit testifies in the heart that His Word is true (John 16:13; Romans 8:14-16; Galatians 4:6; 1 John 2:20, 27).

**Apply This:**

* How do most people define the word “faith?”
* *Read James 2:19.* What do the demons believe? How does their belief differ from true faith?
* *Read Hebrews 11:1*. Paraphrase that verse by putting it’s meaning into your own words.

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 27***

**Hear This:** *“Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness.” (Romans 4:4-5)*

**Remember This:** Saving faith means trusting only Jesus as our Savior, while rejecting any righteousness of our own.

**Know This:** Believing that Jesus is the only Savior and that one’s right standing before God is found in Him alone is the basis of true saving faith. Genuine saving faith is the result of true repentance and together they form the appropriate response to the gospel message. As we’ve said, when a person repents, he/she rejects any sense of personal goodness or self-righteousness that could merit a right-standing before God. The repenting sinner recognizes that even his/her best deeds are nothing more than filthy rags in God’s eyes and thus rejects them as a hope of salvation (Isaiah 64:6). Knowing his/her utter helplessness, the repenting sinner clings to Jesus Christ alone for salvation and righteousness before God. One writer excellently describes saving faith as follows, “*We know that if we are to be reconciled to God, it will not be as a result of our works for Him but as a result of His great work for us through Jesus Christ*.” For examples of the necessity of saving faith see: *Galatians 2:16; Romans 4:4-5; Ephesians 2:8-9*.

**Apply This:**

* One of the clearest pictures of true faith is found in the life of Abraham. Read about the life of Abraham in Genesis 12-22. What does Paul say about the outcome of Abraham’s faith in *Romans 4:3, 21*?
* Read *John 1:12, 3:16, 5:24*. What has God promised for those who put their faith in His Son?
* Consider the following diagnostic questions to help you realize if you are placing true saving faith in Christ:

***1.)*** Do you believe that salvation from sin and hell is found only in the person and work of Jesus Christ? Do you reject the notion of salvation being found in anyone or anything other than Jesus?

***2.)*** Do you believe that salvation is not at all dependent on your goodness or righteousness? Do you agree that apart from Christ even your best deeds are worthless in God’s sight?

***3.)*** Have you placed your complete trust in Jesus to save you and to change you?

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 28***

**Hear This:** “*You will recognize them by their fruits*.” (Matthew 7:20)

**Remember This:** Assurance of salvation comes through the evidence of a changed life.

**Know This:** Some of the scariest words in all of scripture are found in *Matthew 7:23*. There Jesus describes the sad fate of many people who professed faith in Him who will one day stand before Him in judgment only to realize that they were deceived and that He never knew them. Since someone can be deceived into believing they are saved but aren’t, the question becomes, how can a person know they are truly saved? In other words, how can a person have assurance of salvation?

The Bible teaches that those who have been born again on the inside (John 3:3, 5) always reflect it on the outside. Just like trees bear fruit, genuine believers bear fruitful lives as the result of a changed heart (Matthew 7:16, 19). As one writer says, “*Salvation is not a result of works, but works are evidence of salvation*.” This is why James writes, “*Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works…Faith without works is dead*.” (James 2:18, 26). Works don’t *earn* salvation: works *prove* salvation.

**Apply This:**

* Do you have assurance of salvation? Does your life reflect the change that God has wrought in your heart?
* Read 2 Corinthians 5:17. If you have truly embraced Christ as Savior and Lord, then you are a new creation in Him. What kind of new desires should that lead to in your life?
* Works do not save us, nor do they keep us saved. Salvation is by faith which produces works. Read *Ephesians 2:10; Philippians 1:6, 2:13*. What do those verses say about the continuing work of God in a believer’s life?
* Salvation cannot be lost (John 10:28-29; 1 John 5:13; Rom. 8:31-39). Even though believers can fall into serious patterns of sin and come under divine discipline (Heb. 12:8, 11), those who are truly saved are kept by God and will be glorified (Rom. 8:30). *Read Philippians 1:6*. What does God promise?

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 29***

**Hear This:** *“And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.” (John 17:3)*

**Remember This:** No one can fully comprehend all the glorious blessings of salvation in Jesus Christ.

**Know This:** As this series of devotionals on understanding the gospel begins to conclude, it is fitting that we finish by considering just *some* of the blessings of receiving God’s great salvation in Jesus Christ. Certainly, these are by no means all of the blessings of salvation, especially since believers will be discovering those riches for all of eternity. Let us at least consider five blessings of salvation:

*1.) Believers have gone from spiritual death to spiritual life.* Every person is born spiritually dead and unable to respond to God in love and obedience (Rom. 8:7; Eph. 2:1). Those who accept the gospel and trust in Christ have been spiritually made alive. For further study see: *Eph. 2:5; Titus 3:5; Ezekiel 36:26-27; Rom. 6:4*.

*2.) Believers are declared righteous before God.* As Romans 5:1 says, “*…we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*.” Through Christ, believers are justified in the heavenly court room. All sin is forgiven and Jesus’s perfect righteousness is credited to everyone who believes.

*3.) Believers have received eternal life.* Eternal life isn’t something that begins the moment after death, it’s something that begins the moment a person receives Jesus Christ (John 5:24). Eternal life is not just about living forever, it’s about living with and enjoying God forever in glorified resurrected bodies (John 17:3).

*4.) Believers are adopted into God’s family.* Through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, sinners go from knowing God as Judge to knowing Him as Father. Every believer is a son or daughter of God. (*See: Eph. 1:5; Gal. 4:5; John 17:23*)

*5. Believers are filled with the Holy Spirit.* God’s children are never alone. Jesus is always with His people through the presence of the Holy Spirit who resides within them. (*See: John 14:16-17; Rom. 8:14; 2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:14; 1 John 2:27*).

***Understanding the Gospel***

***Day 30***

**Hear This:** *“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be His people, and God Himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away. And He who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” (Revelation 21:1-5)*

**Remember This:** Through Christ, God is making all things new.

**Know This:** One day every person who has believed the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, trusting in Him as Lord and Savior, will be raised from the dead, glorified, and made completely like Him. They will live blessedly in God’s presence with resurrected bodies in a new heaven and a new earth where there is only peace, righteousness, and joy forever. In the new heaven and new earth, there will no longer be any sin, sickness, death, or heartache. The former things will have passed away and the Lord will have made all things new. Believers will forever be His joyful people and He will forever be our glorious God. This is the goal of the gospel; may it also be your eternal destiny in Jesus Christ (*See: John 14:2; Rom. 8:11, 17, 29-30; 1 Cor. 15:53-54; Phil. 3:20-21; 1 Thess. 4:16-17; 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1-5, 22-27*).

**Apply This:**

* What excites you most about the new heaven and the new earth?
* Describe what comes to mind when you think about God making all things new?
* Read *Colossians 3:1-4* and *Romans 8:18*. How does the knowledge of what’s to come in the future impact the way a believer lives in the present?

***Afterword***

It is my prayer that through this booklet, you have come to understand the gospel more clearly. And more than just understanding this message, it is my deepest hope that you have come to believe the gospel personally by repenting of your sin and placing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the One who died and rose again to purchase your salvation.

If you have questions regarding anything you have discovered in this booklet, or would like more help in understanding these truths that the Bible teaches, please contact us at First Baptist Church of Paintsville, Kentucky. You can find us online at fbpaintsville.com. Email us at fbcpaintsville@gmail.com. Facebook us at First Baptist Church Paintsville. Also, you can call our church office at 606-789-3168. There is always someone available to tell you about this good news of Jesus Christ and how you can personally come to know and be changed by Him today.

*“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.” (Romans 15:13)*

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