



THE GOSPEL & TEACHINGS OF JESUS

Connex Group Workbook - Session 2 – Living & Showing the Gospel continued

Session 1: What does it mean to live the Gospel

Activity 1: Review of Homework Tasks

From your reading of the gospels over the past month discuss in pairs. What does it mean to live the gospel in today's world?

Feedback and discussion.

Teaching session 1

To live the gospel means to _____ the lifestyle of Jesus (1 Cor. 11:1). It is to put into _____ the teachings of Jesus (cf. Rom. 13:14; Lk. 6:46-49).

It is to experience the _____ of the Father upon one's life that brings about a radical change in one's _____ that reflects the image of God's son - Jesus (cf. Eph. 4:24).

Acts 4:13, *"When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus."*

To live the gospel is to be _____ by even non-believers that we have encountered the Lord Jesus Christ in faith (cf. Acts 19:15-17).

A definition of a Christian is someone who follows Jesus as a result of _____ him in faith. **Mt. 4:19-20**, *"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people."* ²⁰ *At once they left their nets and followed him."*

At the church in Antioch, believers were called _____ because they were characterised by *"the Lord's hand"* being with them, *"and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord,"* as a result of *"the grace of God"* upon their lives (Acts 11:21, 23, 26).

Two important aspects of Jesus' life that we are called to imitate are:

1. Sharing in Christ's suffering

Believers will identify with the teachings and lifestyle of Christ as well as accepting the _____ that may result as a consequence of their faith in Christ (1 Pet. 4:14-16; cf. Col. 1:24).

2. Demonstrating the love of Christ to others

Followers of Jesus will also be characterised by their love for _____ and their love for fellow _____ and other _____.

Appealing to the Torah (Det. 6:4-5; Lev. 19:18), Jesus summarised all the laws by declaring that the most important ones were, *"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ³⁰ Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. ³¹ The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."* (Mk. 12:29-31). This is often called the Jesus Creed.

There are only _____ commandments: Love God. Love others. If you love God and love others, you do all God wants of you.¹

To love God and others was a _____ command that Jesus instituted as a mark of those who would be his disciples. Jn. 13:34-35, *"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."* When we live in love, we live in the _____ society Jesus came to create.²

Missing words: imitate; practice; grace; lifestyle; recognised; encountering; Christians; suffering; God; believers; people; two; new; kingdom.

Activity 2: In pairs discuss some important aspects in imitating the lifestyle of Jesus as described in the gospel.

Feedback and discussion.

Teaching session 2.

Some other important aspects in imitating the lifestyle of Jesus described in the gospels include the following:

A. Proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom

The task of evangelism, is what we are calling "_____" (cf. Acts 8:1, 4). The challenge in proclaiming the gospel today is no less demanding and difficult than it was in the time of the early church.³

¹ McKnight, 125.

² McKnight, 125.

³ McKnight, 51.

The Christian task is not to coerce unbelievers into the kingdom but to _____ the gospel of the kingdom and to _____ that the Father will send more workers to proclaim the gospel and that He will draw men and women to himself (Mt. 24:14; Jn. 6:44; Mt. 9:36-38).

A key challenge facing believers today is that we will be _____ in our proclamation of the gospel (Rom. 1:16), hence, we need to pray as those early Christians prayed for boldness to speak the word of God (Acts 4:31).

In proclaiming the gospel, the apostles presented a clear _____ and _____ in their Apostolic Gospel:

1. The Gospel was framed by Israel's Story and the historical events of the life of Jesus

The gospel is a proclamation of God's kingdom, and it includes the _____ of the saving Story of Jesus – his life, his death, his resurrection, his exaltation, and his coming again – as the completion of the Story of Israel, and that is precisely what the writers of the four Gospels do (Lk. 24:27, 44-47; Jn. 20:30-31).⁴

2. The Gospel centres on the Lordship of Jesus.

In proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, we are also proclaiming a king of the kingdom, who is God and His Messiah - _____. Jesus is now exalted at the right hand of God (Acts 2:36).⁵

3. The Gospel summons people repent, believe and be baptised.

The gospel involves summoning people to _____ (cf. 2 Cor. 5:11). Apostolic gospeling is incomplete until it lovingly but firmly summons those who hear the gospel to repentance towards God, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and Baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (Mk. 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; 20:21).⁶

4. The Gospel promises forgiveness of sins and reception of the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The gospel saves and redeems. The apostolic gospel promises forgiveness, the gift of God's Holy _____, and justification (Acts 5:31-32).⁷ John the Baptist spoke about Christ baptising his followers with the Holy Spirit and bringing about a radical cleansing of their nature through the _____ of the Holy Spirit (Mt. 3:11-12; Acts 2:3-4).

Jesus promised that those who believed in him would receive the Spirit as "*rivers of living water*" flowing "*from within them*," following his ascension and glorification to the _____ hand of God the Father (Jn. 7:38-39; cf. Acts 2:33; Lk. 24:45-49).

⁴ McKnight, 51.

⁵ McKnight, 52.

⁶ McKnight, 52.

⁷ McKnight, 52.

B. Making the pursuit of the kingdom an expression of our vocation calling.

Because God is at work in whatever we do, we need to see what we are doing in the job or career that we are in as much more than making money and making provision for ourselves.⁸ We are to make the _____ of God's kingdom and a life of faith our ultimate goal and our vocation and career will fall into place (cf. Mt. 6:33; Col. 3:17).

C. Live our lives in the light of eternity.

Jesus' teaching on the kingdom was primarily shaped by a glorious vision of the New Heavens and New Earth, but also by a _____ (Jn. 14:1-4; Mt. 10:28; 18:8-9).

Jesus clearly believed that there was life after death and that the soul survives physical death to live within a restored heaven and earth, *i.e. eternal life*, or to be thrown into the fire of hell, *i.e. eternal punishment* (Mt. 5:5; 25:41, 46). In short, the destiny of all humans will be determined by their _____ to the teachings of Jesus (Mt. 10:32-33; 2 Thess. 1:8-10).

We need a restoration of the resurrection theology that emboldened the early church to fearlessly preach a resurrection gospel and the hope of _____ (Lk. 20:35; Jn. 14:19; Rom. 2:7; 2 Tim. 1:10; Rev. 12:11).⁹

Feedback and discussion.

Missing words: gospeling; proclaim; pray; bold; bold; structure; content; narration; Jesus; respond; Spirit; fire; right; pursuit; hell; response; immortality.

⁸ McKnight, 147.

⁹ McKnight, 51.

Questions for further study and reflection

1. Why does choosing the right vocation matter for a believer in Christ?
2. How can we separate the value of a vocation from how much money it makes? (cf. Lk. 12:21).
3. Paul gave various instruction about work to Christians who received his letters.
 - a. Read: Colossians 3:23-24.
 - With what attitude did Paul tell people to approach work?
 - What principle in these verses can help you see your work as something that matters?
 - b. Read: 2 Thessalonians 3:6-12.
 - What does Paul say about his own work ethics (cf. Acts 18:3).
 - How does he instruct the Thessalonians to approach work?
 - c. Read: 1 Timothy 5:3-8; 6:17-19.
 - What instructions does Paul give about providing for widows?
 - How does this affect the way you look at providing financially for others as giving meaning to your work, regardless of your job?
 - What does Paul command about the attitude of wealthy Christians towards their wealth and other people?

Homework Tasks

Look up a version of the Apostle's Creed and the Nicene Creed on line. What do they teach about God the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. Is there anything in them that you would disagree with or find contrary to the scriptures? Give reasons for your answers.

Bibliography

McKnight, Scot. *Following King Jesus – How to know, read, live, and show the gospel.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2019.