discipleship essentials

LESSON ESSENTIALS

INTRODUCTION TO EVANGELISM

LESSON 8: What is the Gospel Truth – The Problem of Sin

Adam's sin impacted all of humanity. But Jesus is His righteousness took the punishment of Adam's sin and ours upon Himself. This lesson will help you identify the concept of sin as an important part in the Gospel message. Read on to learn more about this concept so you can communicate it effectively.

The Gospels were written to draw man to God, so that he could have his sins forgiven and have eternal life. That's the reason why the Gospel continues to be relevant today.

The Gospel was written for the purpose of drawing man to God, so that he would receive the forgiveness of sin and the gift of eternal life.

Literally translated, the Gospel means 'good news'. Today, as the media overwhelms us with negative stories and depressing news, and as we experience hardship in our own lives, there seems to be a greater need for the Good News now than ever before.

God is the author of the Good News. He planned how man will be saved from his sins, who will save him, how it will take place and how this Good News will reach all mankind. As well, we believe that the written Gospels were divinely inspired by God through the Holy Spirit. Therefore, it is important for us to present the Gospel as from God and not from man when we are reaching out to our friends. As the apostle Paul writes in Galatians 1:11-12, '…the gospel that was preached by me is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.'

The Scriptures were written for the purpose of drawing man to God, so that people everywhere could receive the forgiveness of sin and the gift of eternal life. The Bible gives us clear answers to some of life's questions like the origin of man, the origin and cause of sin and the meaning of salvation.

Let's look at God's purposes in creating man. Revelation 4:11 and Isaiah 43:7 reveal to us that man was made for God – for His pleasure and glory. In fact, God created Adam and Eve in his image and gave them authority over the earth (see Genesis 1:26-28). It is clear that God's eternal purpose was for man to represent Him on earth and live for His glory. Adam and Eve experienced God's love and protection and depended on Him for all their needs. God in gave them an abundant life and revealed Himself to them in all His glory – holy and righteous.

However, when they disobeyed God by eating the forbidden fruit, they experienced a separation from God, both spiritual (Genesis 3:1-7), and later, physical (Genesis 5:3-5). This is how sin entered the world. In a perfect world, Adam and Eve chose to sin, and sin has been part of human nature since then. Every one of us is born into this sin.

It is important to explain the origin of sin to our friends of other faiths because it can be a good starting point to talking about evil. Many people today live in fear of spirits and demons, or of receiving punishment or repayment for any bad that they do. Learning about creation and the fall into sin can help them comprehend the origin of demons and the power that God has

over evil. When we understand what happened in the Garden of Eden, we are able to find answers to many other questions and give explanations for some of the apparent barriers in people's worldviews. Ephesians 2:3 spells out how man is a sinner by nature and, as explained in Romans 3:23, in practice. Ephesians 2:1-5 points out that God sees man as being spiritually dead in sin; a consequence of which is separation from God. Sin is not going to go unpunished because God is a righteous judge; the Bible clearly tells us that the result of sin is death.

The Devil wants to deceive us and keep us from joining God. When the Devil deceived Adam and Eve into sinning, he contradicted God and encouraged man to disbelieve God. He's been deceiving man ever since. The influence of the Devil in our lives results in disobedience and enmity against God. Disobedient people believe in their own efforts, goodness, ideas and ways of life rather than God's way of salvation. The result of disobedience is eternal separation from God (Rev 20:11-15).

The concept of sin is a difficult one to talk about, especially to people or individuals who are still separated from God. However, we must help our listeners understand the seriousness of sin so that they can fully understand the need for God in their lives. In communicating this, we need to use gentleness and respect, and not to accuse them or confront them. As Jesus gently taught and loved people, we need to take on the same attitude when communicating the Good News with our listeners.

Once our listeners fully understand the problem of sin, we need to tell them that there is a solution. Jesus longs to restore us and save us from our sins! This is the most important part of the concept of sin. Jesus came to set us all free from the consequences of sin and receive the gift of God, eternal life (Romans 6:23)! This gift is open to anyone who will receive it – it doesn't matter what they have done. By simply believing the Good News, repenting and inviting Jesus to live in them, He will. This exciting news we can communicate with joy. Although the Devil is trying to lead us toward destruction, Jesus steps in and provides us a way to be saved. Hallelujah!

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IN REVIEW

- The Scriptures are the divinely inspired Word of God.
- Sin came into the world through Adam and Eve, who were enticed by the Devil to disobey God. Not only are we all born into this sin, the Devil continues to entice people to committing further sin. But Jesus has offers salvation to all who will receive.
- While preaching the Gospel, it is important not to avoid speaking about sin. This helps our listeners understand their need for Jesus, and be receptive to the gift of eternal life.
- While we need to help our listeners understand about sin, we need to communicate the truth in love, and not in confrontation. Using accusatory or disrespectful tones may turn them away from our important message of salvation.

HAVE YOUR SAY

- What are some of ways in which you can preach the Good News? What are some of the topics that you need to include while preaching the Good News?
- What are some of the worldview barriers that you can address through your preaching?
- How can you make your unbelieving friends more conscious of their sins, without condemning them?

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