

## What Is The Gospel?

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by Nathan Combs

There are many words in our Bibles that aren't like the words we use every day; words that seem like part of a special spiritual vocabulary. *Gospel* is one of those words. It's a word that describes the message Jesus taught and the early Christians believed. It's a word that's used as the title of the first four books of the New Testament (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John). It has a simple meaning in the original language, "good news;" but this leads us to another question. What is this news, and why is it good?

This gospel is a message about many things, but this is the core truth: Jesus of Nazareth is the king over all. Consider what Jesus Himself said as He began to travel around Israel preaching and collecting disciples: "Repent, for the *kingdom of heaven is at hand*" (**Matthew 4:17**). Throughout the rest of Jesus' story, we see a king very different from the average human ruler. Jesus spent His time healing people's bodies of all their diseases and casting out their demons. Most importantly, He healed people's souls by teaching them the way of heaven and forgiving their sins. On His road to becoming king, Jesus rolled back the power of Satan and the destruction, death, and sin he brought into God's good world. In short, Jesus brought heaven to earth.

This came to a climax when Jesus freely laid down His life. When someone becomes a king, that person is usually placed on a throne and crowned in front of an adoring crowd. When Jesus became king, He, too, was enthroned, but it was on a Roman cross. A crown was put on His head, but it was a crown of thorns. Instead of cheering supporters, He faced a mob of mockers and died beneath a sign that read, "This is Jesus, *the king of the Jews*." Even though this looked like Jesus' moment of defeat, His death and resurrection three days later made Him the glorious king He now is! Now, "all authority in heaven and on earth" belongs to Jesus (**Matthew 28.15**), and His people have gone everywhere preaching this message for two thousand years.

Why is it good news for us that Jesus is king? Because you and I face chaos that we can't rule over. We were born into a sinful, broken world, and we've all contributed to its brokenness. We've hurt other people, and we've been hurt ourselves. We live in bodies that eventually fall apart. We experience pain in many forms, and we've all come under the power of Satan. But if we will submit to Jesus as our king, He will free us and count us as righteous. He will give us a new life purpose: spreading the way of heaven to earth. One day, He will raise our bodies from the grave and give us new ones, so we can live and work with Him in a renewed world. The king has come! Will we repent and join the kingdom of heaven?

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