What is the Gospel?

We are Messengers

Framing scriptures: John 20:21 / Mark 16:15, Rom 10:13-15, Col 4:2-6

Jesus said to his followers after his resurrection,

“Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you.” (John 20:21)

Around that time he also said,

“As you go into the entire world, proclaim the gospel to everyone.” (Mark 16:15)

So Jesus’ followers are sent, and they are sent to the world to preach the gospel.

But what is the gospel we are meant to preach?

Gospel = good news – but what’s the good news?

Well, what’s the bad news? What’s wrong?

* Get feedback
* We have this intuition that things aren’t the way they’re meant to be
* Life is meant to be lived with God, sourced from him and serving him
	+ That’s how the world was made, and it was very good!
* But under the temptation of Satan, humanity rejected God and did what they thought was best. We have inherited the same tendency – the Bible calls it ‘sin’. We try and live our own way, rejecting God’s rule and also the life-giving relationship with him that we were designed for.
	+ So we live lives on a path to death – for ourselves and for others.
	+ You don’t have to look far to see the effects of sin in the world
* That’s the bad news.

The good news is, God’s love for us is greater than our rejection of him, he knew it would happen and he planned in advance to rescue and restore creation.

* God sent his son, born as a human and named Jesus, meaning “the Lord saves”
* Jesus lived a life without sin, in perfect relationship and obedience to God
* Jesus taught about how he was the king coming to bring order to creation
* Jesus was arrested and killed because he was rejected by his own people
	+ Satan brought about the greatest rejection of God ever seen – the rejection of the Son of God sent to save.
* The bible writers also reflected on Jesus’ death as God’s justice against the sins of humanity
	+ Though Jesus was innocent, and we were guilty, Jesus suffered the outcome of our sin, having his life taken from him. God gave Jesus to die for us.
* But it doesn’t end there! On the third day, Jesus rose from death, his life overcoming the power of the grave.
	+ Death could not hold him down and sin was forgiven.
	+ Satan can not accuse forgiven people and so even he was disarmed.
* Jesus returned to heaven to be with God the Father, speaking to God for us and drawing us spiritually into the life of God
* Jesus gave his followers the Holy Spirit: the same power that rose him from the grave, and the personal presence of God available to all
* And he sent his followers to participate in his work to restore all of creation back to God.

The last part of the gospel is what’s to come:

* There is this tension that we live in, between two points:
	+ Jesus has come, and he will return
	+ Jesus brought the Kingdom of God, and he will bring it in fullness
	+ Satan is disarmed, and he will be destroyed
	+ Sin is disempowered, and will be done away with
	+ The new creation has begun, and will be completed
* Jesus’s return will bring about the resurrection, when the dead are brought to life just like he was
	+ With the resurrection comes judgment, where Jesus will judge everyone and put everything right
		- All of what’s wrong will be completely reordered to be restored to good
		- Those who have shown by their lives that they don’t want Jesus as king (and continue to reject God) will have their way and be quarantined in hell
		- And humanity welcoming Jesus’ rule will be freed from Satan, sin and death, to once again live with God, gifted life by him and serving him with our lives, ruling over creation under his rule for eternity.
		- The Bible talks about heaven as a banquet, with good food and drink, good company and good things to celebrate.

This is something of a Kaleidoscopic gospel – there are lots of bits! But I’m trying to show you this is not just about sin, not just about me and Jesus – it’s a big picture that affects everything.

If I had to summarise the gospel in a sentence, I’d say *Jesus the King of all creation has come to restore everything to God’s good order and will return to complete what he started.*

The gospel of the Gospel – what the gospel writers wrote was seen as a summary of the gospel – it’s about Jesus’ life, death and resurrection!

**Video: Creation, Fall, Jesus, Restoration [Godtalk #2, https://youtu.be/U3txBlQFOcA]**

In this term, we want you to recognise that if you are following Jesus, you are sent by Jesus. But we want to move past just seeing that as a scary thing and being immobilised by fear! We want to celebrating ordinary attempts.

**Small group questions [from Godtalk, plus prayer net names and take home tasks:]**

1. Memorise the four points from the video (Creation, Fall, Jesus, Restoration) and practice going through them with someone you know (Christian or non-Christian).
2. Ask a friend or family member who is not a follower of Jesus, “who was Jesus?” and take a note of their answer. Offer your answer if asked in reply.
3. Pray for the person/s you named for the prayer net, that their heart will be prepared to receive Jesus and that he will send people to point them to him.