

## INTRODUCTION

The gospel message is said to be the single most important revelation to mankind. It is in fact the central message to Christianity. But what is the gospel exactly and are we teaching it? We have the gospel of Matthew, the gospel of Mark, Luke and John. Then we also have the gospel message. We know the pastor preaches the gospel and we also are to go forth and preach the gospel. We are taught to share the gospel with friends and co-workers, neighbors and family. Is the church preaching the same gospel that the Apostles preached? Have we been teaching the gospel?

## THE MODERN VIEW OF THE GOSPEL

If your were to ask average Joe Christian what the gospel is, his answer would probably sound something like this quote from Harvest Pastor, Greg Laurie:

*“The gospel is the message that God will give us pardon from our sins and eternal life with Him in heaven, if we will turn away from our sins and turn to Him, accepting His Son, Jesus Christ, as our Savior and Lord.”<sup>1</sup>*

or something like “Jesus died on the cross for our sin’s so we could live forever with him in heaven”.

But read these next verses:

***“Now after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”*** (Mark 1:14–15, NASB95)

***“And He answered and said to them, “Go and report to John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have the gospel preached to them.”*** (Luke 7:22, NASB95)

***“Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.”*** (Matthew 9:35, NASB95)

Mark say’s that Jesus began his teaching ministry by “preaching the gospel”. Luke has Jesus sending word back to the imprisoned John the Baptist that “ the gospel is being preached”, and Matthew says that Jesus was going through all the cities and villages proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom. Yet this does not match up with the modern gospel message, for how can Jesus and the disciples’ be preaching the gospel if Jesus has yet to be crucified, buried, and raised from the dead? Why the disparity?

## THE GOSPEL DEFINED

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.harvest.org/knowgod/new-believer/foundations-for-living/gospel.html>

In the New Testament, *gospel* is the translation of the Greek noun **euangelion** (occurring 76 times) “good news,” and the verb **euangelizo** (occurring 54 times), meaning “to bring or announce good news.” Both words are derived from the noun *angelos* or “messenger.” In classical Greek, a **euangelos** (were we get the word evangelist) was one who brought a message of victory or other political or personal news that caused joy.

So the Greek word for gospel is not necessarily a religious term but a general term used of any joyful announcement, or messenger of a worthy message.

### THE GOSPEL NOT NEW

If Jesus had yet to die on the cross and be resurrected on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day, what was the good news message of the kingdom that Jesus and his disciples were preaching? We will need to go to the Old Testament to find out.

Why the Old Testament? Doesn't the gospel message originate in the New Testament? No, Paul says the gospel had already been preached previously in the (OT) Hebrew Scriptures.

***“The Scripture<sup>2</sup> (i.e. O.T.), foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel (i.e. euangelizo) beforehand to Abraham, saying, “All the nations will be blessed in you.””*** (Galatians 3:8, NASB95)

***“Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father’s house, To the land which I will show you; And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.””*** (Genesis 12:1–3, NASB95)

The word “Blessed” was a covenant term for those who would enjoy the fruits of the kingdom in the Messianic age after the resurrection. Jesus said, “blessed are the meek for they will what? ***Inherit – the earth***”.

### Paul Said the Gospel preached through the Prophets

***“But not all the Israelites accepted the good news (euangelion/gospel). For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our message?” Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ. But I ask: Did they (i.e. Israel) not hear? Of course they did: “Their voice has gone out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.” Again I ask: Did Israel not understand? First, Moses says, “I will make you envious by those who are not a nation; I will make you angry by a nation that has no understanding.” And Isaiah boldly says, “I was found by those who did not seek me; I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me.” But concerning Israel he says, “All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and obstinate people.””*** (Romans 10:16–21, NIV)

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<sup>2</sup> When Paul refers to scripture, he is referring to the Hebrew (OT) scriptures as the NT canon had yet to be written, gathered and assembled.

According to Paul, not only was the gospel preached through the prophets; it was also understood. Israel had both heard the gospel message and understood it, yet the majority was too stubborn and defiant to obey the message.

## THE GOSPEL WHERE DOES IT BEGIN?

### The Garden

***“The LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, Cursed are you more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you will go, And dust you will eat All the days of your life; And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel.”” (Genesis 3:14–15, NASB95)***

The gospel/good news has its beginning in Genesis after Adam and Eve's sin. Adam and Eve's misguided challenge to God's uniqueness and authority had to be punished. But along with punishment came a blessing and a promise to humanity. The curse pronounced by God was the bad news that consisted of banishment from the garden and the resulting effects of sin on both mankind and the creation. But the good news (i.e. gospel) is that through the woman's (i.e. Eve's) seed, the enemy (and his works) would be destroyed.

**The Targumim** (singular Targum) are Hebrew Scriptures that were translated into Aramaic during the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century. This was done to accommodate the returning exiles from Babylon who had taken on the Aramaic language during their captivity. The Targum are not word-for-word translations but rather expanded paraphrases, incorporating the theology and perspectives of the translators of their times. It is interesting to see how the translator viewed this verse:

**“ I will put enmity between you and between the woman, between the seed of your sons and the seed of her sons; And when your offspring guards the mitzvoth of the Torah then they will smite you on the head but when he forsakes the mitzvoth of the Torah then you will bite them on the heel. However there is a remedy for them, but no remedy for you. They are destined to make peace in the end, in the days of King Messiah.”**

*(Targum Ps-Jonathan)*

*The fact that the Targumim connected a Messianic reference to this text is interesting indeed, for the bruising of the heel appears to be at the time the Messiah reigns”. (Hegg, Tim; The Messiah in the Tenach)*

### Noah thought to Be The Seed of Promise?

There is evidence that Noah's father believed his son whose name means "to provide comfort" would be the son of promise, the one that would bring comfort from the cursed ground and bring restoration to mankind and the earth.

***“Now he called his name Noah, saying, “This one will give us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands arising from the ground which the Lord has cursed.””***  
(Genesis 5:29, NASB95)

### **GODS COMMITMENT TO THE GOSPEL**

\*The gospel is reconfirmed, expounded and given through Abraham and his seed the same seed spoken of in Genesis.

***“indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies. “In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.””*** (Genesis 22:17–18, NASB95)

This same promise was expanded and reconfirmed through Abraham’s son Isaac and Isaac’s son Jacob.

### **Through The Prophets**

***“Get yourself up on a high mountain, O Zion, bearer of good news (i.e. messenger of the gospel), Lift up your voice mightily, O Jerusalem, bearer of good news; Lift it up, do not fear. Say to the cities of Judah, “Here is your God!” Behold, the Lord God will come with might, With His arm ruling for Him. (i.e. ref Messiah) Behold, His reward is with Him And His recompense before Him.”*** (Isaiah 40:9–10, NASB95)

“The Arm” of the LORD that would be seen as ruling for God is none other than the Messiah himself. (See other examples)

***“The Lord will reveal his holy arm before all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation that is from our God.”*** (Isaiah 52:10, LES)

***“O sing to the Lord a new song, For He has done wonderful things, His right hand and His holy arm have gained the victory for Him. The Lord has made known His salvation; He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations. He has remembered His lovingkindness and His faithfulness to the house of Israel; All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.”*** (Psalm 98:1–3, NASB95)

The gospel (good news) that Zion was to proclaim/preach was that the Lord’s right arm (or right hand); a reference to the Messiah would come and rule the nations. The Messiah would judge the wicked and bring his reward for the righteous and compensate those who put their trust in God. Jesus says the same in Revelation;

***“Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.”*** (Revelation 22:12, NASB95)

***“How beautiful upon the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news, Who proclaims peace, Who brings glad tidings of good things, Who proclaims salvation, Who says to Zion, “Your God reigns!””*** (Isaiah 52:7, NKJV)

Words spoken by the prophet Isaiah of the coming Messiah, the one prophesied beginning in Genesis, the one that would crush the head of the serpent and bring victory to God and his people and usher in the kingdom.

**So we come back to where we started in the New Testament**

### **A. JOHN THE BAPTIST PREACHES THE GOSPEL**

***“Now in those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven (i.e. The time of earthy rule of Messiah from Jerusalem) is at hand (i.e. has arrived).”*** (Matthew 3:1–2, NASB95)

What was John preaching in the Judean wilderness? He was preaching the gospel of the kingdom, that the promised kingdom had arrived because the promised king (seed) had come, therefore it was time to repent and ready oneself for the kingdoms arrival.

What is the Kingdom of Heaven? Is it Heaven  
**MATHEW AND THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN**

When reading the book of Mathew is will help to have a solid understanding of the Kingdom and how Mathew’s use of the term, “The Kingdom of Heaven,” relates to the promises of God. Mathew uses the term “Kingdom of Heaven” 32 times. A term that none of the other gospel writers use.

### **THE KINGDOM IN THE OT**

***“In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.”*** (Daniel 2:44, NASB95)

***“And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and men of every language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.”*** (Daniel 7:14, NASB95)

***“Then the sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.”*** (Daniel 7:27, NASB95)

***“I will make the lame a remnant And the outcasts a strong nation, And the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion From now on and forever.”*** (Micah 4:7, NASB95)

***““He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end.”” (Luke 1:32–33, NASB95)***

### **THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN**

Many strange ideas have been taught concerning the difference between the terms “Kingdom of God” and “Kingdom of Heaven”. Some have taught that the Kingdom of God refers to an earthly kingdom and the Kingdom of Heaven refers to a spiritual heavenly kingdom.

Others have attempted to make a distinction between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven, as though they were two separate kingdoms. They often explain that the Kingdom of Heaven embraces the “Church age” and the Kingdom of God will be set up during the Millennial Reign. The fact is, the two terms are used interchangeably in numerous places in scripture.

The kingdom of God and The Kingdom of Heaven are not two separate kingdoms. Thankfully Jesus didn’t leave us to guess what the Kingdom of Heaven is.

***“And Jesus said to His disciples, “Truly I say to you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. “Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.” (Matthew 19:23–24, NASB95)***

This phrase is not unlike the use of parallelism, a Hebrew literary device where the second part of the sentence interprets and further describes the first. Jesus repeats the same phrase here using two different names for the kingdom; first calling it the kingdom of Heaven and then the kingdom of God.

#### **The Term is Used Interchangeably**

***“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:3, NASB95)***

***“And turning His gaze toward His disciples, He began to say, “Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.” (Luke 6:20, NASB95)***

In Matthew Jesus speaks about not drinking wine again until he drinks it in the kingdom. The gospels use different phrases to describe the kingdom.

***“I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”” (Matthew 26:29, NIV)***

***“Truly I tell you, I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.” (Mark 14:25, NIV)***

So again we see that *the kingdom of heaven, the father’s kingdom, and the kingdom of God* are **all synonyms for the one same kingdom.**

We can learn a lot about a passage just by observing the reaction of those who were listening.

***“But when you give a reception, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, since they do not have the means to repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.” When one of those who were reclining at the table with Him heard this, he said to Him, “Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!” (Luke 14:13–15, NASB95)***

Here we have an interpretation from one of Jesus’ listeners that the kingdom had a direct connection to the resurrection and Messianic reign.

***“I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt 8:11)***

Question: According to the Bible where does the wedding banquet (feast) take place? Heaven or Earth?

### **The Disciples**

***“So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, “Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?”” (Acts 1:6, NASB95)***

## **C. JESUS PREACHES THE GOSPEL**

***“THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED,” (Luke 4:18, NASB95)***

***“Jesus was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people.” (Matthew 4:23, NASB95)***

***“and said to Him, “Are You the Expected One, or shall we look for someone else?” Jesus answered and said to them, “Go and report to John what you hear and see: the BLIND RECEIVE SIGHT and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the POOR HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THEM.” (Matthew 11:3–5, NASB95)***

Jesus was proclaiming that this verse had found fulfillment in him. The rest of the verse is future fulfillment of the kingdom after the Day of the Lord and the resurrection.

## **E. PAUL VIEWS THE GOSPEL AS OLD, NOT NEW**

***“Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, who***

***was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord,” (Romans 1:1–4, NASB95)***

**Paul say’s that he has been set-apart for the gospel; what gospel?**

**THAT GOPEL (GOODNEWS) PROMISED BEFOREHAND BY THE PROPHETS AND THE SCRIPTURES.** Notice here the cannon of the Bible had not been completed yet and there is no “New Testament” at the time of Paul writing this letter. So the Holy Scriptures Paul speaks of is the Hebrew Scriptures; “Old Testament”. Paul says that the gospel that he is to preach was and is the same gospel that was promised through the prophets in the Hebrew Scriptures.

***“For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the preaching of the gospel of His Son, is my witness as to how unceasingly I make mention of you,” (Romans 1:9, NASB95)***

The good news of the Messiahs coming was the good news of the kingdom, because the good news of the kingdom couldn’t come unless the Messiah came. The gospel of Jesus, and the gospel of the kingdom, and the gospel of God are **ALL the one same gospel!**

## **THE MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL**

What was the mystery of the gospel that Paul spoke of?

***“and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel,” (Ephesians 6:19, NASB95)***

For Paul the mystery that has been revealed is God’s specific plan of salvation; the details left out in the Old Testament. In Eph. 6:19 he speaks of the mystery of the gospel. Similarly, in Col. 2:2 he calls God’s mystery Christ himself. The mystery is ancient according to Romans 16:

***“Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, (i.e. the gospel of the kingdom being the foundation (context) of the good news by which Jesus the messiah’s coming made any sense.)***

***according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, (i.e. Hebrew scriptures) according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, (i.e. through apostolic preaching) leading to obedience of faith;” (Romans 16:25–26, NASB95)***

The mystery; it was kept secret for ages, but in the following verse and in Eph. 3:9–10 Paul indicates that it was revealed in the fullness of time. **The mystery relates to the inclusion of the Gentiles as well as the Jews in God’s plan of salvation** through faith in Messiah. (Rom. 16:25–26; Col. 1:26–27; Eph. 3:3–6).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Bellis, A. O. (2000). Mystery. In (D. N. Freedman, A. C. Myers, & A. B. Beck, Eds.) *Eerdmans dictionary of the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans.



The prophets had the prophecies and the promises, but they did not have all the details, such as the Messiahs coming, how the spirit would be distributed, how the gentile nations would be included into the Abrahamic promise, and the coming of the resurrection and consummation of the Kingdom.

Sometimes the word “mystery” is used in a more obscure sense to refer to something that is simply difficult to understand. Thus, theological puzzles can be called mysteries. Paul refers to the Jewish rejection of Jesus as “a mystery” that he is able to explain: God has hardened part of Israel “until the full number of the Gentiles come in” (Rom. 11:25–26). Other puzzles treated as mysteries include: **the nature of the general resurrection** (1 Cor. 15:51–55); **the time of Jesus’s return and the disbelief of many** (2 Thess. 2:1–12).

### THE GENTILE MYSTERY

Before Jesus, one of the great mysteries of the good news was how the gentiles would be included into the Abrahamic promises and receive an inheritance at the consummation of the kingdom.

It’s said that hindsight is 20/20 but imagine not knowing what we now know and reading the prophecy’s concerning the gentiles.

***“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey. I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim And the horse from Jerusalem; And the bow of war will be cut off. And He (i.e. Messiah) will speak peace to the nations (i.e. Gentiles); And His dominion will be from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth.” (Zechariah 9:9–10, NASB95)***

The prophecies were there; Zechariah says that the coming Messianic King would **“speak peace to the gentiles”** inferring some sort of inclusion in the kingdom, yet the prophecy doesn’t give details as to how this inclusion would come or to what extent it would come.

Paul says those details concerning the gentiles are now made clear.

***“if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel (i.e. the coming resurrection and restoration of the kingdom of God) that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister. Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions. Of this church (i.e. community of Christ followers) I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested (i.e. visible/knowable) to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you (you all), the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:23–28 NASB95)***

The hope of glory Paul's speaks of is the hope in sharing of the Messiah's glory at the ushering in of his glorious kingdom. It was the hope in the fulfilled promises, the resurrection of the saints, the cleansing and restoration of the earth and the Governing of Jesus the Messiah over the earth from Jerusalem in righteousness.

***“that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ (i.e. Messiah), which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body (i.e. faithful remnant of Israel), and fellow partakers of the promise (i.e. Abrahamic promises) in Christ Jesus through the gospel,”*** (i.e. good news of the kingdom) **(Ephesians 3:3–6, NASB95)**

The good news of the kingdom is that gentiles are now grafted in to the chosen people (Qahal/Ekklesia/Assembly) of God, members of the kingdom community, participants in the promised inheritance.

## THE MESSIANIC MYSTERY

The other mystery concerning the gospel of the kingdom was how the Messiah would come. There was what seemed like many conflicting prophecies. Would he come as a conquering king, or a suffering servant? Lowly riding on a donkey, or bursting forth for the heavens clothed in righteousness with thousand of angels?

Some prophecies made it sound like he may actually die! That seemed impossible. It was such a mystery that some of the sages believed there may be two different Messiah's that would come at different times. (Sound familiar, we struggle this way today when it comes to Bible prophecy; the fact is aren't given a detailed chronology.)

**The Disciples Find the Messiah –** The seed promised from Eve to Abraham

***“Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.””*** (John 1:45, NASB95)

***“and came and lived in a city called Nazareth. This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophets: “He (i.e. The Messiah) shall be called a Nazarene.””*** (Matthew 2:23, NASB95)

***“We tell you the good news: What God promised our ancestors he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus. (Ac 13:32–33)***

***“And opening his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture (Isa 53), Philip preached the gospel to him, Jesus.”*** (Acts 8:35)

### **Why did Paul spend so much time preaching Christ and talking about the cross in his letters to the churches?**

Because the coming kingdom of God was common knowledge among the Jews. Paul didn't need to spend time expounding on what was commonly known and taught in the synagogues. He spent time explaining the mysteries and the things that were once not understood but after the Messiah's work of redemption were now made known.

***“Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past,”*** (Romans 16:25, NASB95)

***“praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned;”*** (Colossians 4:3, NASB95)

***“The message of the cross is foolish to those who are headed for destruction! But we who are being saved know it is the very power of God.”*** (1 Corinthians 1:18, NLT)

## **CONCLUSION**

Believe In The Gospel

***“and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.””*** (Mark 1:15, NASB95)

***“Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.”*** (1 Corinthians 15:1–2, NASB95)

### **Satan attacks the very gospel message**

The gospel message lies at the heart of God, his character and his commitment to mankind and his creation - God the promise maker and God the promise keeper. It would only make sense that Satan would attempt to strike at the very heart of God's message.

### **The Watered Down Gospel**

If one were to keep watering something down indefinitely at what point would you no longer have the ingredients of the original object. If you take a baked potato for example and continue to add water, at what point does it become mashed potato? If you take mashed potato and continue to add water, at what point does it become potato soup? If you take potato soup and continue to add water, at what point does it become starch water? If a starving child asked you for a baked potato and you handed him a class of starch water and said “go and be filled”, would you be “feeding” that child real food? No. And it is the same way today. There are

people starving for real food from God, starving for good news. There are people that want to know the gospel and God's plan for mankind, but we are handing them a watered down version of God's majestic plan, in a message that no longer has any resemblance to the good news of the scriptures and we are telling them to "go and be filled". The idea that Christ died on the cross to save us from our sins so that we can live with him forever in heaven is a glass of starch water that no longer resembles the gospel of the kingdom.

**Summary Review for PowerPoint Slide**

1. The gospel is a general term of a message of good news
2. The gospel message is not original to the NT but began in Genesis
3. The message began as a promise that God would send a savior that would come through Eve's (seed/descendant).
4. The gospel message is reinforced and enlarged in the promise to Abraham, that through his seed (Messiah) all the nations of the earth would be blessed.
5. The gospel message of the good news of the kingdom is taught throughout the Old Testament.
6. The gospel of the kingdom is taught by John the Baptist, Jesus, and his disciples before the crucifixion.
7. The gospel of the kingdom is taught by the Apostles and followers of Jesus after the ascension.
8. The church is commissioned to go and preach the gospel of the kingdom to everyone (Mk 16:15)
9. The "Kingdom of Heaven" is not heaven but the promised future reign of Jesus on earth from Jerusalem.

***"This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come." (Matthew 24:14)***

In order to see (i.e. enter into) the future physical kingdom of God, one must receive the kingdom of God today (during the time of amnesty) by submitting to the rule (domain) of Jesus the Messiah.