

Following Jesus in the 21st Century

Session 1 Study Guide

The Gospel: More Than Information

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Main Idea

The gospel is far more than a message to believe—it is the revelation of a Person to know and follow. God has preserved the true testimony of Jesus Christ through the apostles and the four Gospels so that every generation can know Him accurately and be transformed by Him.

"The gospel is more than information—it is transformation."

Key Truths

1. Before there was a New Testament, there was Jesus.

Christianity did not begin with a book but with the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

His followers witnessed His life firsthand and proclaimed what they had seen and heard long before the New Testament was completed.

2. God preserved the truth about Jesus.

The apostles faithfully preached what they had witnessed.

The next generations of believers carefully preserved that testimony, and God graciously provided the four Gospels so His church would never lose sight of the true Jesus.

Rather than relying solely on stories passed down through generations, we possess inspired eyewitness testimony.

3. Every generation is tempted to remake Jesus.

Just as a caricature exaggerates certain features until the original image is distorted, every generation faces the temptation to reshape Jesus according to its own preferences and culture.

The church must continually return to Scripture to see Christ as He truly is.

4. Theology must continually submit to God's revelation.

Theology is our understanding of God's revelation.

Scripture—not culture, tradition, emotion, or personal preference—must remain our authority.

Healthy theology produces healthy discipleship.

5. The gospel calls us to follow Jesus.

Salvation is not merely agreeing with facts about Christ.

Jesus calls us into a life of knowing Him, trusting Him, obeying Him, and becoming like Him.

The gospel transforms both our beliefs and our lives.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is it significant that Christianity began with the person of Jesus before there was a written New Testament?
 2. Why do you think God chose to preserve four Gospel accounts instead of only one?
 3. What are some ways modern culture attempts to redefine Jesus?
 4. Why is it dangerous to build our understanding of Jesus on feelings, traditions, or popular opinion instead of Scripture?
 5. How does following Jesus differ from simply believing information about Him?
 6. In what ways can we continually return to Scripture to ensure we are following the real Jesus?
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Personal Reflection

Take time this week to honestly consider:

- Is my understanding of Jesus shaped primarily by Scripture?
 - Are there assumptions about Jesus that I have accepted without examining God's Word?
 - Am I pursuing information about Jesus, or am I pursuing a relationship with Jesus?
 - What is one area where Jesus is calling me to follow Him more faithfully?
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Scripture References Used in This Message

- Luke 1:1
 - Acts 17:27
 - Hebrews 1:1–2
 - John 3:19
 - 2 Peter 1:10–11
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Additional Scriptures for Further Study

- John 1:1–18
 - John 20:30–31
 - Luke 24:27
 - Matthew 28:18–20
 - Acts 2:42
 - 2 Timothy 3:16–17
 - Jude 3
 - Hebrews 12:1–2
 - Colossians 1:15–20
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Closing Thought

The Christian life is not about creating a Jesus who resembles us. It is about allowing the real Jesus, revealed in Scripture, to transform us into His likeness. The gospel does not simply ask us to believe something about Christ—it invites us to know Him, follow Him, and become more like Him every day.