



## **ABOUT THIS STUDY**

It's pretty simple: we can't begin to share the gospel with anyone or live a gospel-centered life until we can know *the gospel* for ourselves. And, even more than just knowing it in our heads, we need to know how to articulate it for real impact and a changed life.

We're going to spend three weeks defining the gospel before we tackle *The Gospel-Centered Life*. To some, this might seem like a repetitive exercise with information that you learned and accepted years ago. But we all need a refresh, a reminder of the roots of our Christian faith before we can stand strong, deeply rooted in our faith.

As you go through this study with your 3D group, feel free to ask any questions that come to mind. Take time to ask the questions that might feel too basic or too obvious. This is the time to work through the basics—the root—before we can go share the good news with our neighbors, co-workers, and friends. Don't be shy!

## **HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE**

We suggest that you do one lesson each week. At the beginning of each lesson, there's a lesson overview that gives some suggestions on how long you should spend on each section. This is just a guide with rough estimates. Some sections might take your group longer, so don't worry if the discussion is going well and you aren't ready to move on to the next part.

Leaders, use the READ and ASK cues to help transition from reading passages to asking questions for discussion. The italics indicate suggested answers to help guide your discussion. Of course, there are so many more unique ways to answer each question, so please use the italics simply as a starting point.



## **A TIP TO KEEP IN YOUR BACK POCKET**

There's a lot more to the story of the Bible, but you can start with 10 words that you can count on each finger. These 10 words define *the gospel*: "God saved sinners through Jesus Christ's life, death, and resurrection."

Now, let's jump into the meaning of these words, so we'll know exactly what to do with those 10 words that we carry around.



## LESSON 1: THE BAD NEWS

### BIG IDEA

Let's start from the very beginning of the story. In order to understand *why* Christ died, we have to understand who we were created to be and who we are. It's like when a friend tells us there's good news and there's bad news, and we choose to hear the bad news first.

### LESSON OVERVIEW

1. BIBLE CONVERSATION [30 min]
2. DISCUSSION [15 min]
3. PRAYER [15 min]

### BIBLE CONVERSATION – 30 minutes

As we go on a journey starting in Genesis, we see that the beginning of the story started out beautiful.

**READ** – The first passages are in Genesis 1. Skim Genesis 1, focusing on Genesis 1:1; Genesis 1:4, 1:9, 1:21; and Genesis 1:31.

**ASK** – What do we learn about God from these passages?

*God is the Creator who created his creation with the original intention of being good. He created us as very good...*

**READ** – The next passage is Psalm 100:3. (Have someone read Psalm 100:3 out loud.)

**ASK** – What does this passage teach us about our identity?

*We were created by him and for him.*



**ASK** – What are some of the various places, things, or people from which you derive your identity?

**READ** – The next passage is Genesis 2:15. (Have someone read Genesis 2:15 out loud.)

**ASK** – What does this passage highlight about what we were created to do and to be?

*A picture of peace, created to be caretakers of his perfect creation...*

At this point, it seems like everything's going well. What could possibly go wrong?

**READ** – The next passage is Genesis 3:19, 22-23. (Have someone read Genesis 3:19, 22-23 out loud.)

**ASK** – What is wrong with the world? What enters the world at this point in the story?

*The original creation is broken. Sin enters the world. Sin has devastated everything...*

Here's the part about the *bad news*...

You are a sinner. Every one of us is born in rebellion, disobeying God and living for ourselves. Romans 3:23 tells us, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

The penalty for sin is death. Every one of us deserves death. Romans 6:23 tells us, "For the wages of sin is death..."



**READ** – The next passage is Isaiah 59:2. (Have someone read Isaiah 59:2 out loud.)

**ASK** – How would you summarize this verse? Have you considered the idea of wronging God, and what would be the just penalty for that action?

*Living for ourselves breaks relationship with God, leading to death physically and an eternal separation from him.*

### **TRANSITION TO DISCUSSION**

Next week we'll discuss the good news, the solution that our covenant-keeping God brought when we couldn't provide a solution on our own. It might seem difficult to sit in this mess, this point in the story where peace is lost. But we need to understand the beginning of the story, the basics of who God is and who he created us to be, in order to grasp how much we needed rescued and redeemed.

### **DISCUSSION – 15 minutes**

Did you learn anything new from these verses or from reviewing the beginning of the story?

Where do you see the brokenness in your own life? Who do you blame for these things?

How would you summarize what we've learned so far about the bad news?

### **PRAYER– 15 minutes**

Spend some time together in prayer using the ACTS model.



In *Adoration*, praise our Creator God for including us in his design for a beautiful creation.

In *Confession*, focus on the ways that we skip the bad news, we try to pretend we are sinless and can navigate life on our own.

In *Thanksgiving*, rejoice in our God who created us with a purpose and an identity.

In *Supplication*, cry out for the need for the good news.



## LESSON 2: THE GOOD NEWS

### BIG IDEA

We left last week in a bit of a mess, the bad news. In order to understand *why* Christ died, we had to first cover the part of who we were created to be and who we are. Now it's time to talk about the good news, the part where God moved forward in spite of our sin. The part where God promised to bring an ultimate deliverer.

### LESSON OVERVIEW

1. BIBLE CONVERSATION [30 min]
2. DISCUSSION [15 min]
3. PRAYER [15 min]

### BIBLE CONVERSATION – 30 minutes

As we saw last week, we can't provide our own solution to our problem of sin, which devastated everything and brought the penalty of death. God brought a solution. In the Old Testament, God promised he would save his people. God made a covenant promise to Abraham all the way down to David that he would provide a Savior for his people, anyone who would trust in him. The journey to the fulfilment of this promise is rocky, but God's unconditional promise stayed intact.

**READ** – The first passage is Isaiah 53:5. (Have someone read Isaiah 53:5 out loud.)

Isaiah was a prophet who announced God's surprising plan for his rebellious people. Remember, God had promised Abraham a world-wide blessing through his descendants. God had made a big promise to David about the ultimate deliverer coming from his line. But by the time Isaiah announced this plan,



Abraham's descendants and David's people had totally lost heart, not trusting in God's promises.

**ASK** – What is the most kind or undeserving thing that someone has done for you?

The reality is this: we deserve death. When we look at our sin, we see that we have earned death and eternal separation from God.

But, we have reached the good news!

Let's take a look at what the New Testament writers show us about the explicit fulfillment of all of the covenants in the person of Jesus Christ.

**READ** – The next passage is Romans 5:8. (Have someone read Romans 5:8 out loud.)

**READ** – The next passage is Mark 10:45. (Have someone read Mark 10:45 out loud.)

**READ** – The next passage is 1 John 4:10. (Have someone read Mark 10:45 out loud.)

**ASK** – How would you summarize the verses we just read?

*Jesus gives his life as a sacrifice to pay for our rebellion and disobedience.*

*Jesus gives us his obedience...*

**ASK** – If these things are true, why would it be good news? How would it impact your life?

Do you remember the 10 words to keep in our back pocket? We've talked about Christ's life and death. The rest of the story happens with Christ's resurrection.

If we skip his resurrection, we miss the rest of the story and the good news. Jesus, through his life, death, and resurrection, inaugurated the New Covenant.





**READ** – The next passage is Romans 6:5-7. (Have someone read Romans 6:5-7 out loud.)

**ASK** – What do these verses remind us about the good news?

*Jesus brought us from death to life. We have new life in Christ, who was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father...*

### **TRANSITION TO DISCUSSION**

The King has come! Jesus delivered us from the penalty of sin, teaching us of *grace*, undeserved favor. We put our faith in the Messiah, Jesus, who is worthy of our trust. He died for you and rose from the dead—for you. God’s Word promises a beautiful, everlasting life with our Savior, and he gives us glimpses of heaven right here on earth.

### **DISCUSSION – 15 minutes**

Did you learn anything new from these verses or from the reminders that Christ died for you?

When you think of God’s view of you, what do you think he thinks of you or feels about you?

Do you see any places in your life where God has been kind or generous towards you in a way that teaches you that God runs towards his children?

### **PRAYER– 15 minutes**

Spend some time together in prayer using the ACTS model.

In *Adoration*, praise our Father who sent his Son to die on the cross for our sins.



In *Confession*, focus on the ways that we skip straight to the good news, forgetting that we are sinners, undeserving of God's grace demonstrated through his Son's death and resurrection.

In *Thanksgiving*, rejoice in our God who sent Jesus as the ultimate deliverer, our Messiah, our Savior.

In *Supplication*, cry out for those in our lives who do not yet know the good news.

# Rooted



## LESSON 3: NOW WHAT?

### BIG IDEA

We started this study in the very beginning of the story in order to understand why it matters so much that Christ died for our sins and rose from the dead. The bottom line: we don't deserve this fulfillment of God's unconditional promises with no strings attached to the gift of complete forgiveness of sin. Before your 3D group starts studying *The Gospel-Centered Life*, let's spend time this week solidifying the roots of our faith to ensure stability as we walk forward.

### LESSON OVERVIEW

1. BIBLE CONVERSATION [30 min]
2. DISCUSSION [15 min]
3. PRAYER [15 min]

### BIBLE CONVERSATION – 30 minutes

A quick Google search tells you that plants have roots for two main reasons: Roots anchor the plant in soil and prevent it from blowing away from strong winds, and roots take up the water that's essential for life.

Let's talk about our roots that anchor us and prevent us from blowing away from the strong winds of the world. Let's talk about the roots that we need to continuously take up the life-giving water.

**READ** – The first passage is John 5:24. (Have someone read John 5:24 out loud.)

**ASK** – What do the verbs in this verse show us?

*You have heard his word. You are free to believe what God said and trust Christ as your Savior. "Has" shows us we have everlasting life right now, upon hearing*



*and believing. “Shall not” cannot be confused with might not. You have passed from death into life...*

**READ** – The next passage is Ephesians 1:13-14. (Have someone read Ephesians 1:13-14 out loud.)

**ASK** – What elements make a relationship stable? What are the results of having a stable relationship?

*Trust, security, confidence in the future...*

**ASK** – What does this verse in Ephesians say about the permanency of your relationship with God?

*We have been given the Holy Spirit as a promise, a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance, the confidence of our future...*

**READ** – The next passage is 1 John 5:11-13. (Have someone read 1 John 5:11-13 out loud.)

**READ** – The next passage is 1 John 3:2. (Have someone read 1 John 3:2 out loud.)

**ASK** – If these things are true, how would it impact your life?

*You have no need to fear... God has called you as his child and making all things new...*

Part of the “Now What?” is understanding what is yet to come. While all promises are fulfilled in Jesus, Jesus has yet to complete all of the plan. That is why we wait as the devoted church for an era to come, when he will return and finish what has been started.



**READ** – The next passage is Revelation 21:1-5. (Have someone read Revelation 21:1-5 out loud.)

**ASK** – How does this passage give us hope for the future?

*We trust in our covenant-keeping God to fully fulfill his promises... we walk forward boldly with confidence in the beautiful plan to make all things new...*

### **TRANSITION TO DISCUSSION**

As we move into a time of discussion, let's remember the goal of this study to understand what it means to live rooted in our faith, anchored to the Father through the work of Jesus Christ on our behalf for fullness of life, nourishment from our living water. We will continue to hash out where to carry our 10 words we have in our back pocket: "God saved sinners through Jesus Christ's life, death, and resurrection."

If you want to receive Christ today, right now, Romans 10:9-10 is a great place to go. If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

### **DISCUSSION – 15 minutes**

How would you summarize what we have learned about the gospel?

Where do we go to learn from the model of how to live like Christ, as we wait with full anticipation of his return?

Who are some people in your life who you feel ready to share the gospel with now that you can understand and articulate it yourself?

Can you point to a time when you received Christ in your life?



**PRAYER**– *15 minutes*

Spend some time together in prayer using the ACTS model.

In *Adoration*, praise God for his character and who you know him to be.

In *Confession*, focus on the ways we forget what he has done for us and for the whole world.

In *Thanksgiving*, rejoice in what God promises to do.

In *Supplication*, cry out for what is yet to come, for Jesus' return.