



Life Lesson

THE GOSPEL IS GOOD NEWS

PURPOSE: To show that the Gospel is the Good News about the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus and to explain how we are to respond to this gracious offer.

PLAN: Compare the three points of the gospel in I Corinthians 15:1-8 with the three stages of our response stated in Romans 6:1-11.

INTRODUCTION: What do you hear in the news? Good news or bad news? This lesson is about the Good News. If it doesn't sound like good news when finished, then we've missed something.

Tell me something about your experience with religion. Has it been good news, bad news or no news at all? *This is a key question in learning about their religious background.*

I CORINTHIANS 15:1-2

What important fact do we learn about the gospel salvation in verse 2?
What do we have to do, according to this passage, in order for the gospel to save us?

I CORINTHIANS 15:3

What is the first point of the gospel message?
Write "died for our sins" underneath the picture of the cross.

Every word of this phrase is important. First, let's examine the word "SIN."

What would most people list as the three **big** sins? *Make a list: adultery, murder, stealing, etc.*

Of course what you and I think about sin is not what is important. We want to know God's opinion. Let's examine the Biblical concept of sin and see if we can find the root of the problem.

I JOHN 2:15-17

Who is this man thinking about? Where is his focus?
Write "Self" on the line below I. I John 2:15-17
What does pride have to do with the three sins listed?
Adultery - "Am I still desirable to other people?"
Stealing - "I want it now, I'll take it."
Murder - "You are in my way to getting what I want."
How are pride and self-centeredness shown? *I want my own way.*

Since the focus of this study is to show how God wants to restore a broken relationship, it is important to point out how pride destroys relationships.

There are two ways that pride can affect us. It will cause us to think either too much or too little of ourselves. In either case we will respond in a negative way to our sinfulness. We will condone it, ignore it, justify it, or resign ourselves to it.

EPHESIANS 2:8-9

The phrase "died for our sins" not only means that we are all sinners, it also means that Christ's death on the cross is the only way provided for our salvation. If there had been any other way to provide us with salvation, surely God would have used it. Let's look at Ephesians 2:8-9 where this is made very clear.

What saves us according to verse 8? *grace*
How would you define the word grace?
According to verse 9, can you do enough good works to earn your salvation?
When we really understand how free salvation is, what is eliminated in our lives?
boasting

See God's wisdom. Since pride and conceit are at the heart of sin, God's plan for saving us eliminates the source of our problem.

So to sum up the first point of the gospel: Christ died for our sins. We are sinners because we want to do things our way. This destroys relationships with others and with God.

I CORINTHIANS 15:4

Let's notice now the second part of the gospel message. The first part of verse 4 says that Christ was BURIED. Write "Buried" beneath the tomb.

Jesus paid a debt he did not owe, we owed a debt we could not pay. Christ entered the tomb as a cold corpse. He died in our place.

I PETER 2:24 "Jesus himself bore our sins in his body on the tree."

So when Jesus went into the tomb, what did he carry with him? *our sins*

Write "Our Sins" on the arrow line from the cross to the tomb.

II CORINTHIANS 5:21

Who is this verse talking about?

There's a true story from the concentration camps of World War II that really illustrates this idea of substitution. Between 1940 and 1945 some four million people were executed at the Auschwitz Concentration Camp in Poland. About one-half were Jews and the other half were political prisoners. Escape was almost impossible. The Germans had found a most successful deterrent: for every prisoner that escaped, ten innocent people were arbitrarily selected and condemned to die of exposure and starvation. In July of 1941, a successful escape was made and the prisoners were lined up and a list was read of the ten to be killed. When the name of a Polish Jew was read, he begged for mercy because he had a wife and two children. At that point a man who was not on the condemned list stepped forward and volunteered to take his place. That man was Maxmillian Maria Kolbe, a Franciscan priest arrested for hiding Jews from German authorities. The commandant allowed Kolbe to take the place of the Jewish man. A little over a month later - on August 14 - Kolbe, the last survivor of the ten, was put to death when a guard injected phenol into his heart.

The Jewish man survived the concentration camp and was united with his wife and two children. In 1988, he celebrated his 87th birthday. Every year on August 14, the anniversary of Kolbe's death, he returns to Auschwitz and stands and weeps before the entrance to the cell where Kolbe died. Several years ago this Polish Jew was interviewed on a television news special. As he told the story of Kolbe's self-sacrifice, he took the reporters and cameramen out to the backyard of his Warsaw home. There in the back corner he showed them a grave marker that read:

**MAXMILLIAN MARIA KOLBE
DIED AUGUST 14, 1941.
HE DIED IN MY PLACE.**

What parallel do you see in this event and the story of Christ's death? What list was our name on?

Now let's notice the third and last part of the gospel message:

I CORINTHIANS 15:4-9

What is the third step mentioned in these verses? *raised*
Write "Raised" on the line beneath the stick figure.

What does it mean to be "raised"? *Jesus was raised from the dead to eternal life never to die again.*

Notice all the proofs that Paul presents to show that the resurrection is a historical fact. Paul spends most of the verses offering proof of the resurrection.

The resurrection proves and confirms every claim that Jesus made about Himself. It confirms that His death was exactly what He said it was . . . the only thing that can save us.

Jesus' resurrection gained the victory over what things?
Make a list: Death, sin, devil, failure, etc.

Jesus' death looks like failure and defeat, yet God touched it with His power and changed it into victory and success. He can do the same with our failures.

**The three parts of the gospel are: DEATH, BURIAL, RESURRECTION.
Is this good news?**

TRANSITION TO PART 2

Many people know these three facts, but it doesn't produce any change in their lives. Now we want to see how to get the good news off the page and into our lives. The Bible clearly tells us how we are to respond to the GOOD NEWS.

ROMANS 6:11

What do you think the Bible means by being "dead to sin"?

Write "dead to sin" under the cross.

How many sins does the average dead person commit in one week?

You are to be as dead to sin as a dead person is. There should be as little chance of getting you to sin as there would be getting a dead person to sin.

GALATIANS 2:20

Do you see how this verse explains Romans 6:11?

What parallels or contrasts do you see between step one of the gospel and step one of our response to the gospel?

The important thing is not how many times or how far you fall after you make the turn but whether or not you get up and continue in the same direction toward the Lord.

See the arrow illustration.

ROMANS 6:3-4

How does verse 4 say that we are buried with Christ?

Write in "Buried in baptism."

This refers to immersion in water.

Draw a wavy line across top of box to represent water.

What do we take with us to the grave of baptism?

Write "SIN" on the arrow drawn from the cross to baptism.

What parallels do you see between part two of the gospel and step two of our response?

ROMANS 6:4-8

Verse 4 says that through death and burial we, too, may live a what? "_____!"
Write "New Life" under the stick figure.

COLOSSIANS 2:12

How are we buried with Jesus? *in baptism*
When we are buried with Jesus in baptism, through what are we raised with Jesus?
faith in the Power of God

Baptism is an act of obedience to the will of God. We are not trusting in the act of baptism to save us, but in God who has the power to save us whenever and however He wants.

ROMANS 6:17-18

If we follow the example of the Roman Christians, how should WE respond to this "form of teaching"?

Emphasize "wholehearted" obedience as opposed to ritualistic compliance to rules and regulations.

II CORINTHIANS 5:17

Does this sound like GOOD NEWS?

God will change us in terms of what we DO and who we ARE.

A person might say: "Well, I am just an impatient person . . . always have been."

**Our response should be: "But that person is now DEAD and God will create a new YOU!"
To believe God is to believe that He can change you.**

LESSON REVIEW:

Where do you think you are in terms of your response to the Good News?

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

For those whose religious background is one of infant baptism, gently point out that death must PRECEDE burial.

For those whose background teaches that salvation precedes baptism, point out that resurrection does not precede BURIAL.

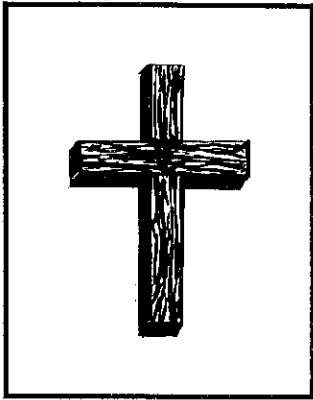
Holding firmly to the word and wholeheartedly obeying the true form of teaching is significant.

We must not change the gospel!

WORKSHEET

The Gospel is Good News

1.



Christ _____

I Cor. 15:3

3 big sins:

I John 2:15-17

Eph. 2:8-10

2.



I Cor. 15:4

I Peter 2:24

II Cor. 5:21

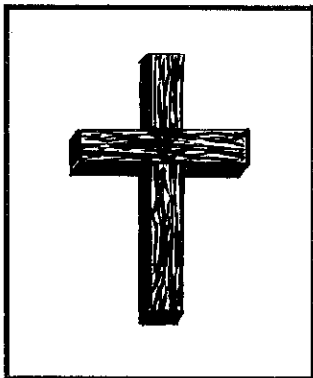
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I Cor. 15:4-9

Victorious over:

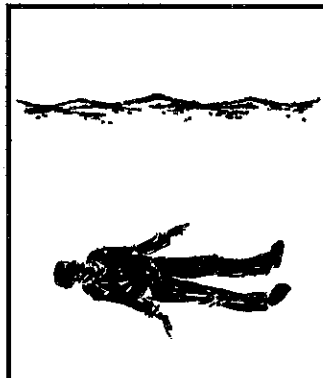
1.



Rom. 6:11

Gal. 2:20

2.



Rom. 6:3-4

3.



Col. 2:12

Rom. 6:17-18

II Cor. 5:17

THE STORY OF MAXMILLIAN KOLBE

There's a true story from the concentration camps of World War II that illustrates the idea of substitution. Between 1940 and 1945 some four million people were executed at the Auschwitz Concentration Camp in Poland. About one-half were Jews and the other half were political prisoners. Escape was almost impossible. The Germans had found a most successful deterrent: for every prisoner that escaped, ten innocent people were arbitrarily selected and condemned to die of exposure and starvation. In July of 1941, a successful escape was made and the prisoners were lined up and a list was read of the ten to be killed. When the name of a Polish Jew was read, he begged for mercy because he had a wife and two children. At that point a man who was not on the condemned list stepped forward and volunteered to take his place. That man was Maxmillian Maria Kolbe, a Franciscan priest arrested for hiding Jews from German authorities. The commandant allowed Kolbe to take the place of the Jewish man. A little over a month later - on August 14 - Kolbe, the last survivor of the ten, was put to death when a guard injected phenol into his heart.

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