

# The Gospel – The Message of Jesus Christ

## Gospel Promises – A Hope and a Future

### The Gospel promises amazing benefits to those who obey it

God is the source of life and blessing. Mankind has willfully broken fellowship with God and in his sin is estranged from God and cut off from His life and blessing. In his sin, mankind is dying and separated from God. So often we find in Scripture the free offer to come and receive the blessing of God. God calls all estranged sinners to turn from their sin and to seek Him for life and blessing. God is seen in Scripture as inviting poor sinners to come to Him in repentance and receive once again the blessing and benefit of a right relationship with Him.

**Isaiah 55:1-3** - 55 "Ho! **Every one who thirsts, come to the waters;** And you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk **Without money and without cost.** 2 "Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, **And delight yourself in abundance.** 3 "**Incline your ear and come to Me. Listen, that you may live;** And I will make an everlasting covenant with you, According to the faithful mercies shown to David. NASB

This invitation from God is tied to repentance from sin. The picture is one of mankind turning from the evil of his sin which brings death, and returning to God who will have compassion on him and give him life. God freely offers forgiveness and restoration for those who will come to Him in repentance, and we are told to seek Him and to call upon Him.

**Isaiah 55:6-7** - Seek the Lord while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near. 7 **Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; And let him return to the Lord, And He will have compassion on him;** And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon. NASB

And so the Gospel announces reconciliation to God and offers to us the astounding benefits of a restored relationship and fellowship with Him. Indeed through our Lord Jesus Christ all the promises which God has made become ours!

**2 Corinthians 1:20** - 20 For **as many as may be the promises of God, in Him they are yes;** wherefore also by Him is our Amen to the glory of God through us. NASB

All the good promises of God in the entire Bible, both Old and New Testaments are said to be ours in Christ Jesus the Lord. These benefits are many and diverse, so much so that they are hard to categorize. The Scripture is filled with metaphors of life and blessing which are said to be the possession of those who have been reconciled to God through Christ. But chief among all these blessings is the fact that we have been restored in our relationship to God and we have received Him as our exceeding great reward. So complete is the cleansing from sin that we receive in salvation that we are now said to be the very temple of God and that He has come to live and reside inside of our being.

**Romans 8:9** - 9 However, you are not in the flesh **but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you.** But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. NASB

**2 Corinthians 6:16** - 16 Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? **For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I will dwell in them and walk among them; And I will be their God, and they shall be My people."** NASB

What glorious words.....we shall be His people! Imagine this, a people belonging to God, for God's own possession. Now it is one thing for us to make a commitment to God, for Him to be our God. But it is entirely another thing for God to make a commitment to us, that we should be His people. God keeps his promises! More than that He is the greatest power and authority in the universe, and He has the ability to make good on every promise He has made. So profound is this presence of God dwelling with us and making us His people, that He makes promises to us that are astounding in their scope such as Romans 8:28.

**Romans 8:28** - 28 And we know **that God causes all things to work together for good** to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. NASB

Now here is an amazing promise from God. Nothing in the life of a Christian believer will ever turn out ultimately for harm, but every single thing that happens in our life, both good things and bad things, God causes them to work ultimately for our good. God only has good designs for His people. The 17<sup>th</sup> century puritan pastor Thomas Watson writes of this verse; *“He who loves God and is called according to His purpose, may rest assured that everything in the world shall be for his good. Why should a Christian destroy himself? Why should he kill himself with care, when all things shall sweetly concur, yea, conspire for his good? The result of the text is this. All the various dealings of God with His children do by a special providence turn to their good! Psalm 25:10 – “All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep His covenant.”* It is an astounding promise indeed. Surely the Lord is with us to care for us and help us in our struggles. In fact, the Lord has promised to deliver us out of all of the afflictions that we face.

**Psalm 34:19 - 19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous; But the LORD delivers him out of them all.** NASB

Again Watson writes, *“Are we in great trouble? There is a promise that works for our good, “I will be with Him in time of trouble.” (Psalm 91:15) God does not bring His people into troubles and leave them there. He will stand by them. He will hold their heads and hearts when they are fainting. And there is another promise, “He is their strength in time of trouble” (Psalm 37:9) OH! Says the soul, I shall faint in the day of trial.” But God will be the strength of our hearts; He will join forces with us. Either He will make His hand lighter, or our faith stronger.”*

Moreover, consider that all of the promises of who God is for His people in Scripture mean that He is for us the very same thing. He is said to be Himself, our strength, our refuge, our hiding place and the stronghold and defense of our lives.

**Psalm 27:1 - 7 The Lord is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the defense of my life;** Whom shall I dread? NASB

**Psalm 18:2-3 - 2 The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.** 3 I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised, And I am saved from my enemies. NASB

**Psalm 28:7-8 - 7 The Lord is my strength and my shield;** My heart trusts in Him, and I am helped; Therefore my heart exults, And with my song I shall thank Him. 8 **The Lord is their strength, And He is a saving defense** to His anointed. NASB

**Philippians 4:9 - 13 I can do all things through Him** who strengthens me. NASB

It is no small thing that God Himself is our God and that He has promised to be for us the very strength of our lives. In fact, the Scripture goes so far as to say that He has promised to meet all of our needs so that we will not be lacking anything we need.

**Philippians 4:19 - And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches** in glory in Christ Jesus. NASB

**Psalm 34:8-10 - O taste and see that the Lord is good; How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!** 9 O fear the Lord, you His saints; **For to those who fear Him, there is no want.** 10 The young lions do lack and suffer hunger; But **they who seek the Lord shall not be in want of any good thing.** NASB

**Romans 8:31-32 - 31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?** 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, **how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?** NASB

But the blessings do not stop here. God does not leave us in our helpless state of sin and death but He heals us and transforms us so that we begin to take on His very nature in ourselves. He has given us everything we need to become like Him. We are said to *“become partakers of the divine nature”* and to be *“transformed into His image”* more and more as we grow in His grace and knowledge.

**2 Peter 1:2-4 - 2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord;** 3 seeing that His divine power **has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness,** through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. 4 For by these **He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might become partakers of the divine nature,** having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust. NASB

**2 Corinthians 3:18** - 18 But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, **are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory**, just as from the Lord, the Spirit. NASB

As we follow Christ and walk in the Spirit we are being changed and taking on His very nature. We are being renewed day by day as we focus on Jesus and **“put on the new self”** which is in us by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Ephesians 4:23-24** - 23 and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and put on the new self, **which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth**. NASB

**2 Corinthians 4:16-18** - 16 Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, **yet our inner man is being renewed day by day**. 17 For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, 18 while **we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen**; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. NASB

Wow! We are God’s New Creation being fashioned in His very likeness! This is a profound Gospel promise. Jesus promised this wonderful blessing of the Spirit’s indwelling power to all who believe in Him.

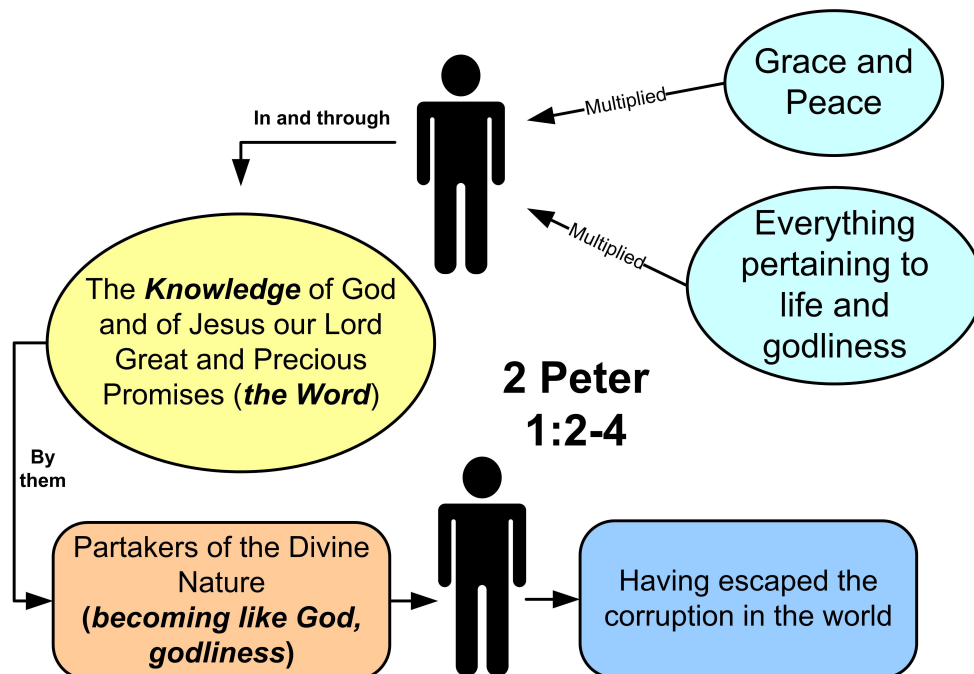
**John 7:37-39** - 37 Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, **“If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. 38 “He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, “From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.”” 39 But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive**; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. NASB

As this Gospel promise of sanctification is taking place we are literally taking on and enjoying the very nature of God. The Holy Spirit is now producing in us the very life and character of God so that we are said to bear the **“fruit of the Spirit.”**

**Galatians 5:22-25** - 22 But **the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control**; against such things there is no law. 24 Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. NASB

In these we are partaking in and enjoying the good fruits of God’s character. This is a *revelatory* process whereby God is revealing Himself in us and through us. This happens **BY** the ministry of the Holy Spirit **THROUGH** the revelation of the Word. Consider this chart on 2 Peter 2:1-4.

## Sanctification through the knowledge of God



Now of course this entire blessing comes to us through the life and death of Christ for us. The Gospel has purchased for those who believe these great and precious promises! But the Gospel promises do not stop with the sanctification process that is taking place here and now in the life of the believer. In fact this is just a temporal benefit which will *“well up to eternal life”* and become an eternal blessing that will never fade away! This will be accomplished finally for us at the resurrection when we will be glorified and eternally transformed, receiving immortal and imperishable bodies capable of experiencing the glory of God forever and ever.

**1 Corinthians 15:50-54** - 50 Now I say this, **brethren**, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, **but we shall all be changed**, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and **we shall be changed**. 53 **For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality**. 54 **But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality**, then will come about the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory. NASB

In fact, one of the very purposes for which God has created man is to become immortal and experience the richness of the glory of His being forever and to be His eternal dwelling place.

**2 Corinthians 5:1-5** - 5 For we know that **if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens**. 2 For indeed in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven; 3 inasmuch as we, having put it on, shall not be found naked. 4 For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed, but to be clothed, **in order that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life**. 5 **Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God**, who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge. NASB

Christian believers have the promise of this eternal blessing because through repentance and faith in Christ we have become *“children of God.”* This *adoption* into the family of God has given to us the benefits of eternal life, immortality, and an eternal inheritance of blessings beyond our greatest imagination. Through the Gospel we become adopted into the family of God to be loved by Him as His very own children.

**1 John 3:1-2** - 3 See how great a love the Father has bestowed upon us, **that we should be called children of God; and such we are**. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. 2 **Beloved, now we are children of God**, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, **we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is**. NASB

**Romans 8:14-17** - 14 For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, **these are sons of God**. 15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but **you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!"** 16 **The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ**, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him. NASB

Imagine the splendor of this glorious Gospel promise.... *“if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs of Christ!”* This is referred to in Scripture as our *inheritance*.

**Ephesians 1:10-13** - **In Him 11 also we have obtained an inheritance**, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, 12 to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. NASB

**Ephesians 1:18** - 18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are **the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints**. NASB

**1 Peter 1:3-6** - Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 **to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you**, 5 who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. NASB

What human words can describe the splendor and glory of these promises from God to those who believe in Jesus the Christ? None indeed! Learn then, that the Gospel holds out amazing blessings for those who believe which are beyond comprehension. Christ is an eternal fountain of life benefits, both temporal and eternal for all who trust Him for salvation from sin and death!

## The Gospel is a message of comfort, healing and hope

The Gospel is a message that brings healing and comfort to the poor sinner whose conscience is weighed down with the guilt and pain of sin. It is a promise of forgiveness from God that frees the conscience from this heavy weight. Jesus invites all people to humbly come to Him and receive this healing from the wounds of sin.

**Matthew 11:28-30** - 28 "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and **I will give you rest.** 29

"Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and **you shall find rest for your souls.** 30 "For My yoke is easy, and My load is light." NASB

Jesus freely invites people to come to Him, and in coming to Him He offers **"rest."** He offers **"rest"** to those who are **"heavy laden."** This presupposes that we realize that we are **"heavy laden"** under the burden of guilt and sin. You see Christ is inviting those who are under the conviction of the Holy Spirit, who mourn their sins against God, who realize they have ruined their life by many sins and have separated themselves from God, the very source of life by continual sin. The analogy so many times employed in Scripture shows the guilty sinner bruised and broken by the fall into sin, heavy laden and toiling under the burden of sin which only leads to death, seeking to fill the unquenchable hunger and thirst of their souls created by being cutoff from relationship with God, who alone is the fountain of life. But Jesus promises to fill the longing of the soul, and comforts us by filling the void in our hearts.

**John 6:34-35** - 34 They said therefore to Him, "Lord, evermore give us this bread." 35 Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; **he who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.**" NASB

The Gospel then is an invitation to come and receive the blessing and benefits afforded by forgiveness from sin, and healing from the hand of God who also comforts our wounded conscience by the Holy Spirit. Indeed God promises to restore to us the benefit of His blessing which is pictured in Scripture as a well-watered **"garden"** or a **"river of delights."**

**Psalms 36:7-9** - 7 How precious is Thy lovingkindness, O God! And **the children of men take refuge in the shadow of Thy wings.** 8 They drink their fill of the abundance of Thy house; And Thou dost give them **to drink of the river of Thy delights.** 9 **For with Thee is the fountain of life;** In Thy light we see light. NASB

In Christ we find a **"refuge"** from the scorching desert heat of sin under the **"shadow of thy wings"** and this is the **"precious lovingkindness of God"** where we **"drink the fill of the abundance of Thy house."** God comforts His people and restores the **"waste places"** of their broken lives and the **"wilderness"** of their wanderings in sin so that their lives are now like the **"garden of the Lord."**

**Isaiah 51:3** - 3 Indeed, the Lord will comfort Zion; He will comfort all her waste places. And her wilderness He will make like Eden, And **her desert like the garden of the Lord; Joy and gladness will be found in her, Thanksgiving and sound of a melody.** NASB

But notice the fruits of this garden are not tomatoes and cucumbers, they are **"joy"** and **"gladness"** added to **"thanksgiving."** These analogies in Scripture are vivid pictures of the healing of our souls as we are reconciled to God because in the dry arid climate of the Bible writers these **"rivers and gardens"** were analogies of fruitful and refreshing delights to those who thirsted and hungered. This is the comfort that God, who is said to be **"the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,"** gives to His Church as they abide in His peace.

**Acts 9:31** - 31 So **the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace,** being built up; and, going on in the fear of the Lord and **in the comfort of the Holy Spirit,** it continued to increase. NASB

**2 Corinthians 1:3-4** - 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, **the Father of mercies and God of all comfort; 4 who comforts us in all our affliction** so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. NASB

But the comfort that God gives is not temporary but is an eternal comfort that never ends. And this is the Gospel promise for all those who come to Christ. It is a promise of eternal healing,

comfort, and rest from the weight and burden of sin. Christ is an everlasting fountain of life and blessing for those who come to Him as He fills the longing of our hearts to be healed from a sin-sick world and His promise is the fulfilling of our hope for a place of delight and eternal abundance where we will no longer, mourn or cry or die.

**2 Thessalonians 2:16-17** - 16 Now may our **Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and given us eternal comfort and good hope by grace, 17 comfort and strengthen your hearts** in every good work and word. NASB

These amazing promises give us **“good hope”** of a heart and a world healed from the deadly disease of sin, and we long to see the world restored to that place of abundance and life like it was when God created it, when He called it a garden and blessed it with His presence everyday. This **“eternal comfort and good hope”** is available to all who simply come to Christ in repentance and faith to receive His healing and promise! To those who **“hope in God”** and trust Him to save them from sin and death and to provide for them eternal life, He promises His **“lovingkindness”** and His eternal blessing. This promise comes from the Almighty God who alone holds the power of life and immortality, and who alone is the faithful and true God who can offer such exceedingly great promises as these. Therefore the believer has **“good hope”** of the life and blessing of God who will show them lovingkindness and heal them from sin and death and give them rest for their souls.

**Psalm 33:18-22** - 18 Behold, the eye of the Lord is on those who fear Him, **On those who hope for His lovingkindness,** 19 To deliver their soul from death, And to keep them alive in famine. 20 Our soul waits for the Lord; He is our help and our shield. 21 For our heart rejoices in Him, Because we trust in His holy name. 22 **Let Thy lovingkindness, O Lord, be upon us, According as we have hoped in Thee.** NASB

To those who put their hope in the Lord and call upon Him to save them, He will surely answer and hear the cry of those who call Him.

**Psalm 145:18-19** - 18 **The Lord is near to all who call upon Him, To all who call upon Him in truth.**

19 He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him; He will also hear their cry and will save them. NASB

The Gospel is an invitation to come and be healed and restored. It is an invitation to come and receive life and blessing beyond our comprehension. Further this invitation goes out to all who will **“seek the Lord”** and who will **“call upon Him”** to save from sin. For all who **“seek”** Him and **“call upon”** Him, God promises to have compassion and to pardon their sins.

**Isaiah 55:6-7** - 6 **Seek the Lord while He may be found; Call upon Him** while He is near. 7 Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; And let him return to the Lord, And **He will have compassion on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.** NASB

God is seen in Scripture as the great Savior who saves all who call upon Him because He is gracious and compassionate. He will abundantly pardon those who repent of their sin and turn to Him for healing and forgiveness. His ear is seen to be turned to the one who calls, and His heart ready to forgive and heal.

**Psalm 116:1-8** - 116 I love the Lord, because He hears My voice and my supplications. 2 **Because He has inclined His ear to me, Therefore I shall call upon Him as long as I live.** 3 The cords of death encompassed me, And the terrors of Sheol came upon me; I found distress and sorrow. 4 **Then I called upon the name of the Lord: "O Lord, I beseech Thee, save my life!" 5 Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; Yes, our God is compassionate.** 6 The Lord preserves the simple; I was brought low, and He saved me. 7 Return to your rest, O my soul, For the Lord has dealt bountifully with you. 8 For Thou hast rescued my soul from death, My eyes from tears, My feet from stumbling. NASB

The promise held out in the Gospel is indeed the greatest of all, beyond any ever made!

**Revelation 21:3-7** - 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and **they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them, 4 and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death; there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain;** the first things have passed away." 5 And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true." 6 And He said to me, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. **I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. 7 "He who overcomes shall inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son.**" NASB