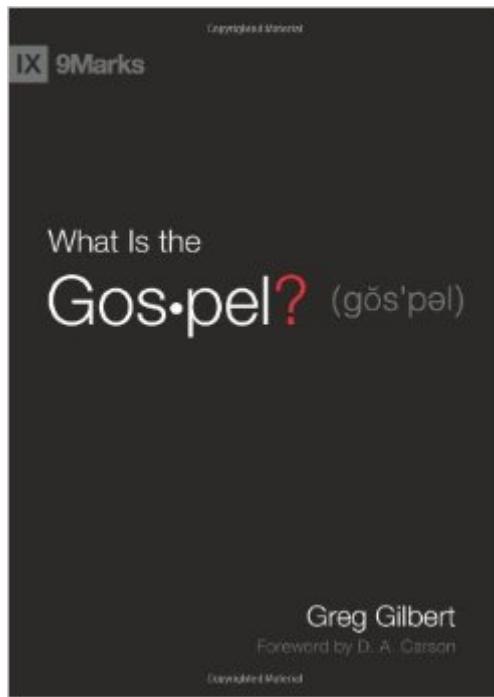


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# What Is The Gospel? (9Marks)



## Synopsis

What is the gospel? It seems like a simple question, yet it has been known to incite some heated responses, even in the church. How are we to formulate a clear, biblical understanding of the gospel? Tradition, reason, and experience all leave us ultimately disappointed. If we want answers, we must turn to the Word of God. Greg Gilbert does so in *What Is the Gospel?* Beginning with Paul's systematic presentation of the gospel in Romans and moving through the sermons in Acts, Gilbert argues that the central structure of the gospel consists of four main subjects: God, man, Christ, and a response. The book carefully examines each and then explores the effects the gospel can have in individuals, churches, and the world. Both Christian and non-Christian readers will gain a clearer understanding of the gospel in this valuable resource.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"What is the gospel?" The 9Marks blog asked the question and found that Christians who took the time to leave a response had very different answers. A quick survey of a dozen "What We Believe" pages on church websites will yield a dozen different explanations of the gospel. According to Greg Gilbert, an associate pastor for Capitol Hill Baptist Church, many of those explanations are not biblical. In his book, *What Is the Gospel?*, Gilbert turns to the Bible, specifically the sermons and writings of the apostles, as the ultimate authority for understanding the gospel. He writes, "We approach the task of defining the main contours of the Christian gospel by looking at what the earliest Christians said about Jesus and the significance of his life, death, and resurrection." Many

in this generation are confused about the Gospel, for our traditions, reasoning abilities, and personal experiences have lead us astray. Gilbert encourages us to do our duty to preserve the gospel in our generation. He first visits Romans 1-4. In Romans, Gilbert explains the purpose of Paul's writing and the main points he makes regarding the gospel in those opening chapters. Gilbert found that Paul asks and answers four key questions: 1) Who made us, and to whom are we accountable? 2) What is our problem? In other words, are we in trouble and why? 3) What is God's solution to that problem? How has he acted to save us from it? 4) How do I - myself, right here, right now - how do I come to be included in that salvation? What makes this good news for me and not just for someone else? These four questions provide the frame for the rest of this book. Gilbert devotes one chapter to answering each question.

Book Review By Jason Scott *What is the Gospel?* By Greg Gilbert

This short book (121 pages) is a must read for both Christians and non-Christians. Greg Gilbert masterfully explains the gospel in a balanced and crystal clear manner. Gilbert uses this book to answer four important questions: 1) Who made us, and to whom are we accountable to? 2) What is our problem? 3) What is God's solution to this problem? 4) and how do I became a part of this solution? Pg. 31 Gilbert explains that before we can talk about the good news (the gospel) first we must have an understanding of what the bad news is. Gilbert takes us on a journey through the creation of man, the fall of man, the redemption of man through the atoning work of Jesus Christ on the cross, and ultimately our restoration with our Creator in His Kingdom. Gilbert rightly emphasizes that the only way we can have restoration is through faith in Jesus Christ, and repentance for our sin that separates us from God. He also rightly emphasizes that the Cross of Christ must be the center of the Gospel. This is refreshing as there are many out there who are offended by stark cruelty of the cross and attempt to reach God in their own way. The cross is offensive, why should someone have to suffer in such a horrible way for us? Only when we understand how offensive our sin is to God, and realize that man had to suffer for their sin, will we humbly bow before Jesus and thank Him for what He did on the cross. Gilbert concludes this book by encouraging Christians to share the Gospel with others: "If you are a Christian, realize that you hold in your hands the only true message of salvation the world will ever hear.

What is the Gospel? That's a tough question especially for someone to attempt to answer in their first attempt at a book. Greg Gilbert has had some training for sure, however, in his work with Mark Dever, so I was pretty confident that he could do it. Actually, this is not my first experience with

Gilbert answering this question. I have recently read his addendum to Proclaiming a Cross-Centered Gospel where he takes this question on and I've had the privilege to hear Gilbert speak recently on this very topic. In his addendum to the written version of the T4G2006 conference, he addressed the debate as to whether the Gospel was the announcement of the Kingdom or the message of how to enter the Kingdom. In a nutshell, he answered that it is both and that either side by itself is tragically in error. When I heard Gilbert speak, he used to book of Romans to outlines his "four crucial questions." The questions are brought out early in this book: 1) Who made us and to whom are we accountable? 2) What is our problem? 3) What is God's solution to that problem? 4) How do I come to be included in that salvation? In this book, he does a good job showing how many passages throughout Scripture outline the gospel in the form of answering those questions. He devotes a chapter to each. First he discusses God as the Righteous Creator. With some clever satire, he shows how many Christians have reduced God to a "kind, affable, slightly dazed and needy but very loving grandfather who has wishes but no demands." Gilbert argues that in order to understand salvation, we must understand "that this loving and compassionate God is also holy and righteous, and that his is determined never to overlook, ignore, or tolerate sin." Next, the book moves to sin.

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