

Ways to Live

Week 4 – *Good News*

Pray

Class Overview / Review

The goal of this class is for us to know how to faithfully share the gospel in a clear and concise manner. The presentation that we are using – Two Ways to Live – is definitely not the only presentation of the gospel; however, we do feel it is one of the simplest, and most Biblically faithful presentations we've seen.

This class is split into 6 weeks with each week focuses on a different stage of the gospel presentation.

In the first week, our brother Josh Manley helped us look at God as the loving ruler of the world. He is a king who always does what is best for his subjects. He also made the world, fashioning it like a potter fashions clay, and he made us rulers of the world under him. He created man, in his image, to enjoy his creation, care for it, and supervise it under his good authority.

However, in week 2, we saw how Scripture is clear that we all have rejected our God – this loving ruler and creator. We have decided to live how we want, and not how He wants. We think we can determine what is right and wrong. We, who were to rule the world in obedience to God, have rebelled against Him. In so doing, we have failed to rule anything—ourselves, others, and the world. The root cause for the pain and suffering we see in this world is due to this rebellion. And this rebellion is complete. We, in our nature, are fundamentally set against God and His ways, and Scripture emphasizes that there is no health in us. We are dead in our sins and at enmity with God.

And last week, we looked at Scripture to understand God's reaction to our rebellion. He will not let our rebellion go on forever. Because of His justice, He hates evil and must put an end to it. We saw that God's response to our rebellion, to our sin, is first death, then judgment, then eternal division into two groups – one to heaven and everlasting life worshipping God, and the other to everlasting ruin in hell.

This is definitely not a happy ending because the universal problem of man's rebellion merits and earns a just and universal condemnation of all mankind to hell. And, this is where the story stops, right? Certainly, God could have justly stopped His actions at this point. It would be perfectly right and just for the story to end there. God would be shown to be sovereign and holy and just through His judgment of the wicked. Incidentally, that's what will happen to the angels; there is no hope for those who fell and became demons. Rather, they will face God's punishment and wrath.

But God, two of the sweetest words in the Bible, **BUT GOD** had a different plan for humanity. It was not because we somehow deserved better or were lovelier or were less sinful. No, it is only because God freely chose to have a different plan. Now that we have already seen our collective and individual problem in the past weeks, today, we will look at the crux of the good news of the Gospel. God loved the world and sent His Son in to the world to live in perfect obedience to Him, and then to die as a substitute for our sins. Scripture does not say why God loved us; it just tells us that He decided to love us, for His glory. And therefore, that is good news for us. In fact, it's the best news we could ever hear and it will always be good news — one day, all those of us who have repented of our sins and believed in Christ will gather together and glorify God for this good news. Ligon Duncan, one of Mark's good pastor friends, describes worship this way: "Worship is by the redeemed to the Redeemer about the redemption." And we will do this for all of eternity.

So this week, in the context of boxes 1-3, we will focus on this good news, where the whole course of humanity's history (and of this gospel presentation) changes. We will look at each component of this news and examine why it is such good news.

But before we go on to the fourth cell, are there **any questions** from the past three weeks or from the overview of the course?

Good News – Cell 4

Breaking down the fourth cell of the Two Ways to Live tract, there are six things we want to communicate. [Make a list on the white board]: 1) God loved the world, 2) Jesus is God, 3) became man, 4) lived a sinless life, 5) died on the cross, 6) satisfied God's wrath and brings forgiveness.

For each of these points, there are a multitude of Scripture verses that convince us of each point. I am going to have you guys read the verses out loud for the rest of us to hear God's Word. And since you have on your handout all the verse references and a summary phrase for each verse, you don't need to worry about writing these verses down or looking them all up now. Just sit and listen to God tell His Good News to us. And when you go home, you can look up the other references and meditate on them more in depth.

1) God loved the world.

- Romans 5:8, Paul writes that God loved us before there was any good in us
- 1 John 4:10 and John 3:16, God loved us and sent His Son
- Galatians 2:20, Christ's love is personal to individual sinners

"It should cause us great joy to know that it is the purpose of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to give of themselves to us to bring us true joy and happiness. It is God's nature to act that way toward those upon whom He has set His love, and He will continue to act that way toward us for all eternity (Grudem 548)."

We can see that even though God was perfectly justified in punishing all of us, He has, in His love, sent His Son to the world.

2) Jesus is GOD.

- Matthew 16:13, Jesus points to himself as the Son of Man, title of divinity from Daniel 7:13-14
- Mark 1:21-28, Jesus teaches with the authority of God
- Mark 4:35-41, Jesus shows his authority over nature
- Mark 5:1-20, Jesus shows his authority over evil spirits
- Mark 2:5, Jesus forgives sin, expressing the role of God
- Luke 5:13, Jesus shows his authority to heal
- John 1:18, John uses "God" in reference to Jesus.
- Romans 9:5, Paul refers to Jesus as "God."
- Hebrews 1:10, Jesus referred to as the eternal Lord.

"That Jesus possessed divine sovereignty, a kind of authority possessed by God alone, is seen in the fact that he could forgive sins (Mark 2:5-7). Unlike the Old Testament prophets who declared, 'Thus says the LORD,' he could preface his statements with the phrase, 'But I say to you' (Matthew 5:22,28, 32, 34, 39, 44)-an amazing claim to his own authority. He could speak with the authority of God himself because he was himself fully God. He had 'all things' delivered into his hands by the Father and the authority to reveal the Father to whomever he chose (Matthew 11:25-27). Such is his authority that the future eternal state of everyone in the universe depends on whether they believe in him or reject him (John 3:36). (Grudem 548)

Christ, as the Son of God, is God.

3) The Christ became a MAN and came into the world.

- Romans 8:3, God sent Jesus into the world.
- Matthew 1:20, Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit.
- John 1:14, Jesus came as a human being and lived among us.

"The pre-existent Son of God assumes human nature and takes to Himself human flesh and blood, a miracle that passes our limited understanding. It clearly shows that the infinite can and does enter into finite relations, and that the supernatural can in some way enter the historical life of the world." (Berkhof, 333)

Thus, although Christ was God, He also became a man, taking on flesh by being born and living in the world.