



Discussion Guide

**Into the Word:**

It has been said that the word “Gospel” has been watered down. It has entered our everyday language. It is used to describe any kind of teaching or philosophy. The gospel of hard work or success. The gospel of the Atkins diet or a special exercise program. Televangelist speak of the gospel of health, wealth, and well being.

Would you agree that the word “gospel” has lost some of its meaning and power in today’s world? How does this affect our efforts when we tell people we want to share the gospel with them? What is the biblical perspective on the Gospel.

**Read John 3:16-21**

- a. What was God’s motivation for sending his Son, Jesus, to die on the Cross?
- b. Why do you think Christ felt it necessary to add that the Son did not come to condemn the world?
- c. Do you think that we have the same motivation when communicating the gospel message to others? Can the gospel be shared in a condemning way?
- d. Why do you think our motivations are important when sharing the gospel with unbelievers?
- e. Can you think of times when you have seen other Christians sharing the gospel because of other motivations?
  - What do you think their motivations were?
  - Do you think they were effective? Why or why not?

**Apply the Word**

- a) We live in a world that has been jaded and hurt by lies and people with ulterior motives. Fake news and other similar things have created a sense of mistrust among people. If our mission is truly “ For People to Know Jesus and Grow in Him”, how can we relate that mission to people in a way that they will know that we are sincere?
- b) As it was recently shared, here in Gordon County there are a whole lot more people not in church on any given Sunday than are. While we can give all sorts of excuses why, the bottom line is that the unchurched find our mission “unbelievable”. They find it unbelievable that we

want them to know Jesus and grow in Him simply because we haven't shown them a grace that is real. Paul wrote in Colossians that we are to *"Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone."* (Col 4:5-6) This means that most of our gospel explanations will be different and personal to a person that is experiencing a personal hurt. We should spend as much time or more time getting to know the person and listening as speaking. How is this different than what has traditionally been done?

**Prayer Time-**

Father, you are a personal God. You meet us in our personal need. Lord, help us as a church to reach out to our community with only one motivation, LOVE. Help us to see them through Your eyes. Help us to live our mission of sharing Jesus with people who need Him and then helping them to personally grow in His grace and truth.