
A COLLECTION OF PAST & PRESENT DEFINITIONS OF THE GOSPEL

I. DEFINITIONS FROM CHRISTIANS IN THE PAST

Martin Luther

“At its briefest, the gospel is a discourse about Christ, that he is the Son of God and became man for us, that he died and was raised, and that he has been established as Lord over all things. This much St. Paul takes in hand and spins out in his epistles. He bypasses all the miracles and incidents (in Christ’s ministry) which are set forth in the four Gospels, yet he includes the whole gospel adequately and abundantly. This may be seen clearly and well in his greeting to the Romans, where he says what the gospel is, and then declares: ‘Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and designated Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord,’ etc. There you have it. The gospel is a story about Christ, God’s and David’s son, who died and was raised, and is established as Lord. This is the gospel in a nutshell.”

William Tyndale

“*Evangelion* (that we call the gospel) is a Greek word and signifieth good, merry, glad and joyful tidings, that maketh a man’s heart glad, and maketh him sing, dance, and leap for joy. . . . The gospel is published by the apostles throughout all the world, of Christ, the right David, who hath fought with sin, with death, and the devil, and overcome them. Whereby all men that were in bondage to sin, wounded with death, overcome of the devil, are, without their own merits or deservings, loosed, justified, restored to life and saved, brought to liberty and reconciled unto the favor of God, and set at one with Him again, which tidings as many as believe laud, praise, and thank God and are glad, sing and dance for joy.”

Zacharias Ursinus

“The gospel is . . . the doctrine which the Son of God, our Mediator, revealed from heaven in Paradise, immediately after the fall, and which he brought from the bosom of the Eternal Father; which promises, and announces, in view of the free grace and mercy of God, to all those that repent and believe, deliverance from sin, death, condemnation, and the wrath of God; which is the same thing as to say that it promises and proclaims the remission of sin, salvation, and eternal life, by and for the

sake of the Son of God, the Mediator; and is that through which the Holy Spirit works effectually in the hearts of the faithful, kindling and exciting in them, faith, repentance, and the beginning of eternal life.”

Jeremiah Burroughs

“The gospel of Christ in general is this: It is the good tidings that God has revealed concerning Christ. More largely it is this: As all mankind was lost in Adam and became the children of wrath, put under the sentence of death, God, though He left His fallen angels and has reserved them in the chains of eternal darkness, yet He has thought upon the children of men and has provided a way of atonement to reconcile them to Himself again. Namely, the second Person in the Trinity takes man's nature upon Himself, and becomes the head of a second covenant, standing charged with sin. He answers for it by suffering what the law and divine justice required, and by making satisfaction for keeping the law perfectly, which satisfaction and righteousness he tenders up to the Father as a sweet savor of rest for the souls that are given to Him. And now this mediation of Christ is, by the appointment of the Father, preached to the children of men, of whatever nation or rank, freely offering this atonement unto sinners for atonement, requiring them to believe in Him and, upon believing promising not only a discharge of all their former sins, but that they shall not enter into condemnation, that none of their sins or unworthiness shall ever hinder the peace of God with them, but that they shall through Him be received into the number of those who shall have the image of God again to be renewed unto them, and that they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.”

F. F. Bruce

“Only one saving message is attested by the NT. The ‘gospel to the circumcision’ preached by Peter and his colleagues did not differ in content from the ‘gospel to the uncircumcised’ entrusted to Paul (Gal 2:7), though the form of presentation might vary according to the audience. Paul’s testimony is, ‘Whether therefore it was I or they [Peter and his colleagues], so we preach, and so you believed’ (1 Cor 15:11). The basic elements in the message were these:

1. the prophecies have been fulfilled and the new age inaugurated by the coming of Christ;
2. he was born into the family of David;
3. he died according to the Scriptures, to deliver his people from this evil age;
4. he was buried, and raised again the third day, according to the Scriptures;
5. he is exalted at God’s right hand as Son of God, Lord of living and dead;
6. he will come again, to judge the world and consummate his saving work.”

C. H. Dodd

“The Gospel” summarized in six parts: (1) The Age of Fulfillment has dawned, the ‘latter days’ foretold by the prophets (Acts 3:18-26); (2) This has taken place through the birth, life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:22-31); (3) By virtue of the resurrection, Jesus has been exalted at the right hand of God as Messianic head of the new Israel (Acts 2:32-36); (4) The Holy Spirit in the church is the sign of Christ’s present power and glory (Acts 10:44-48); (5) The Messianic Age will reach its consummation in the return of Christ (Acts 3:20-21); (6) An appeal is made for repentance with the offer of forgiveness, the Holy Spirit, and salvation (Acts 2:37-41).”

Robert A. Guelich

“The ‘gospel’ . . . is the message that God acted in and through Jesus Messiah, God’s anointed one, to effect God’s promise of shalom, salvation, God’s reign.”

George Eldon Ladd

“My sense of God’s love and acceptance is grounded not only in the resurrected Christ but also in the Jesus of history. He taught something about God that was utterly novel to his Jewish auditors: that God is not only gracious and forgiving to the repentant sinner but is also a seeking God who, in Jesus’ person and mission, has come to seek and to save the lost . . . God has shown me that he loves me in that while I was yet a sinner, Christ died for me (Rom 5:8). This is not faith in history; it is not faith in the kerygma; it is not faith in the Bible. It is faith in God who has revealed himself to me in the historical event of the person, works and words of Jesus of Nazareth who continues to speak to me through the prophetic word of the Bible.

“Apart from the gospel of the kingdom, death is the mighty conqueror before whom we are all helpless. We can only beat our fists in utter futility against this unyielding and unresponding tomb. But the good news is this: death has been defeated; our conqueror has been conquered. In the face of the power of the kingdom of God in Christ, death was helpless. It could not hold him, death has been defeated; life and immortality have been brought to life. An empty tomb in Jerusalem is proof of it. his is the gospel of the kingdom.”

John Stott

“The good news is Jesus. And the good news about Jesus which we announce is that he died for our sins and was raised from death. In consequence he reigns as Lord and Savior at God’s right hand and has authority both to command repentance and faith, and to bestow forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Spirit on all those who repent, believe and are baptized. And all this is according to the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. It is more than that. It is precisely what is meant by ‘proclaiming the kingdom of God.’ For in fulfillment of Scripture God’s reign has broken into the life of men through the death

and resurrection of Jesus. This reign or rule of God is exercised from the throne by Jesus, who bestows salvation and requires obedience. These are the blessing and the demand of the kingdom.”

II. DEFINITIONS FROM CHRISTIANS IN THE PRESENT

Danny Akin

“I define the gospel . . . as being the good news that Jesus Christ came from heaven, died on the cross having lived a perfect sinless life, bore then in His body the full penalty of our sins, was raised from the dead. Those who repent of sin and place their faith in the perfect work of Christ can and will be saved. There’s the gospel.”

Alistair Begg

“Here’s the gospel in a phrase: Because Christ died for us, those who trust in him may know that their guilt has been pardoned once and for all. What will we have to say before the bar of God’s judgment? Only one thing. Christ died in my place. That’s the gospel.”

Jim Belcher

“The ‘gospel’ is the good news that through Jesus, the Messiah, the power of God’s kingdom has entered history to renew the whole world. Through the Savior God has established his reign. When we believe and rely on Jesus’ work and record (rather than ours) for our relationship to God, that kingdom power comes upon us and begins to work through us. We witness this radical new way of living by our renewed lives, beautiful community, social justice, and cultural transformation. The good news brings new life. The gospel motivates, guides, and empowers every aspect of our living and worship.”

Pope Benedict XVI

“The term has recently been translated as ‘good news.’ That sounds attractive, but it falls far short of the order of magnitude of what is actually meant by the word *evangelion*. This term figures in the vocabulary of the Roman emperors, who understood themselves as lords, saviors, and redeemers of the world. . . . The idea was that what comes from the emperor is a saving message, that it is not just a piece of news, but a changing of the world for the better. When the Evangelists adopt this word, and it thereby becomes the generic name for their writings, what they mean to tell us is this: What the emperors, who pretend to be gods, illegitimately claim, *really occurs here*—a message endowed with plenary authority, a message that is not just talk but reality. . . .

“The Gospel is not just informative speech, but performative speech—not just the imparting of information, but action, efficacious power that enters into the world to save and transform. Mark speaks of the ‘Gospel of God,’ the point being that it is not the emperors who can save the

world, but God. . . . It is here that what the emperors merely assert, but cannot actually perform, truly takes place. For here it is the real Lord of the world—the Living God—who goes into action. The core of the Gospel is this: “The Kingdom of God is at hand.”

R. C. Sproul

“There is no greater message to be heard than that which we call the Gospel. But as important as that is, it is often given to massive distortions or over simplifications. People think they’re preaching the Gospel to you when they tell you, ‘you can have a purpose to your life’, or that ‘you can have meaning to your life’, or that ‘you can have a personal relationship with Jesus.’ All of those things are true, and they’re all important, but they don’t get to the heart of the Gospel. The Gospel is called the ‘good news’ because it addresses the most serious problem that you and I have as human beings, and that problem is simply this: God is holy and He is just, and I’m not. And at the end of my life, I’m going to stand before a just and holy God, and I’ll be judged. And I’ll be judged either on the basis of my own righteousness—or lack of it—or the righteousness of another.

“The good news of the Gospel is that Jesus lived a life of perfect righteousness, of perfect obedience to God, not for His own well being but for His people. He has done for me what I couldn’t possibly do for myself. But not only has He lived that life of perfect obedience, He offered Himself as a perfect sacrifice to satisfy the justice and the righteousness of God. The great misconception in our day is this: that God isn’t concerned to protect His own integrity. He’s a kind of wishy-washy deity, who just waves a wand of forgiveness over everybody. No. For God to forgive you is a very costly matter. It cost the sacrifice of His own Son. So valuable was that sacrifice that God pronounced it valuable by raising Him from the dead—so that Christ died for us, He was raised for our justification. So the Gospel is something objective. It is the message of who Jesus is and what He did.

“And it also has a subjective dimension. How are the benefits of Jesus subjectively appropriated to us? How do I get it? The Bible makes it clear that we are justified not by our works, not by our efforts, not by our deeds, but by faith—and by faith alone. The only way you can receive the benefit of Christ’s life and death is by putting your trust in Him—and in Him alone. You do that, you’re declared just by God, you’re adopted into His family, you’re forgiven of all of your sins, and you have begun your pilgrimage for eternity.”

D. A. Carson

“The gospel is integrally tied to the Bible’s story-line. Indeed, it is incomprehensible without understanding that story-line. God is the sovereign, transcendent and personal God who has made the universe, including us, his image-bearers. Our misery lies in our rebellion, our alienation from God, which, despite his forbearance, attracts his implacable wrath. But God, precisely because love is of the very essence of his character, takes the initiative and prepared for the coming of his

own Son by raising up a people who, by covenantal stipulations, temple worship, systems of sacrifice and of priesthood, by kings and by prophets, are taught something of what God is planning and what he expects. In the fullness of time his Son comes and takes on human nature. He comes not, in the first instance, to judge but to save: he dies the death of his people, rises from the grave and, in returning to his heavenly Father, bequeaths the Holy Spirit as the down payment and guarantee of the ultimate gift he has secured for them—an eternity of bliss in the presence of God himself, in a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. The only alternative is to be shut out from the presence of this God forever, in the torments of hell. What men and women must do, before it is too late, is repent and trust Christ; the alternative is to disobey the gospel.”

Knox Chamblin

“[Paul’s] gospel is ‘the word of the cross’ (1 Cor 1:17-18); nowhere is there a comparable reference to ‘the word of the resurrection.’ In 1 Corinthians 1:23-24 it is ‘Christ crucified’ who is identified as ‘the power of God and the wisdom of God,’ not as we might have expected (especially in the case of ‘power’), Christ resurrected. . . . Both the cross and the resurrection are ‘of first importance’ in Paul’s gospel (1 Cor 15:3-4). Unless Christ has risen from the dead, the preaching of the cross (and of the resurrection) is a waste of time (15:14); but once the resurrection has occurred, the cross remains central.”

Mark Dever

“The good news is that the one and only God, who is holy, made us in his image to know him. But we sinned and cut ourselves off from him. In his great love, God became a man in Jesus, lived a perfect life, and died on the cross, thus fulfilling the law himself and taking on himself the punishment for the sins of all those who would ever turn and trust in him. He rose again from the dead, showing that God accepted Christ’s sacrifice and that God’s wrath against us had been exhausted. He now calls us to repent of our sins and to trust in Christ alone for our forgiveness. If we repent of our sins and trust in Christ, we are born again into a new life, an eternal life with God. Now that is good news.”

Derek Thomas

“The gospel is not ‘God loves us,’ but ‘God loves us at the cost of his Son.’”

David Dockery

“The heart of genuine gospel proclamation must be a firm theological understanding of what God has done in the person and work of Jesus Christ. . . . The basic themes that help us understand the biblical and theological aspects of the gospel message:

1. God as Creator and the place of men and women in God’s creation
2. The fall of humanity into sin

3. God's provision in Jesus Christ
4. God's salvation of men and women from their estranged, guilty, and dreadful plight
5. God's ultimate work of redemption

"In conclusion, we confess and affirm that Jesus Christ, as the God-man, has fully revealed God to men and women. Having lived a sinless life, Christ, as our substitute, died a death for the sins of the world. Having been raised from the dead, he now sits exalted at God's right hand, a position of honor and exaltation, exercising his rule and dominion. We gladly acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord, our prophet, priest, and king who has fully revealed God, who has reconciled men and women to God, and who now sits enthroned as ruler of God's kingdom and head of his Church. In him we place our trust and hope, offering our thanksgiving, praise, and worship for the gift of salvation he has provided for us by grace through faith."

Graeme Goldsworthy

"The gospel is the word about Jesus Christ and what he did for us in order to restore us to a right relationship with God."

"The gospel is the event (or the proclamation of that event) of Jesus Christ that begins with his incarnation and earthly life, and concludes with his death, resurrection and ascension to the right hand of the Father. This historical event is interpreted by God as his preordained programme for the salvation of the world."

"It cannot be stressed too much that to confuse the gospel with certain important things that go hand in hand with it is to invite theological, hermeneutical and spiritual confusion. Such ingredients of preaching and teaching that we might want to link with the gospel would include the need for the gospel (sin and judgment), the means of receiving the benefits of the gospel (faith and repentance), the results or fruit of the gospel (regeneration, conversion, sanctification, glorification) and the results of rejecting it (wrath, judgment, hell). These, however we define and proclaim them, are not in themselves the gospel. If something is not what God did in and through the historical Jesus two thousand years ago, it is not the gospel. Thus Christians cannot 'live the gospel,' as they are often exhorted to do. They can only believe it, proclaim it and seek to live consistently with it. Only Jesus lived (and died) the gospel. It is a once-for-all finished and perfect event done for us by another."

Tim Keller

"The 'gospel' is the good news that through Christ the power of God's kingdom has entered history to renew the whole world. When we believe and rely on Jesus' work and record (rather than ours) for our relationship to God, that kingdom power comes upon us and begins to work through us.

"Through the person and work of Jesus Christ, God fully accomplishes salvation for us, rescuing us from judgment for sin into fellowship with

him, and then restores the creation in which we can enjoy our new life together with him forever.”

Scot McKnight

“The gospel is the work of God to restore humans to union with God and communion with others, in the context of a community, for the good of others and the world.

“God loves you and everyone else and has a plan for us: the kingdom community. But you and everyone else have a sin problem that separates you and everyone else from God, from yourselves, from one another, and from the good world God made for you. The good news is that Jesus lived for you, died for you, was raised for you, and sent the Spirit for you—so you all can live as the beloved community.

“If you enter into Jesus’ story, by repentance and faith, you can be reconnected to God, to yourself, to others, and to this world. Those who are reconnected like this will live now as God’s community and will find themselves eternally in union with God and communion with others. Those who preach this gospel will not deconstruct the church. Instead, they will participate in what God is doing: constructing the kingdom community even now.”

Roger Nicole

“Moved by His incomprehensible love for mankind, the Triune God was pleased not to abandon our rebellious and corrupt race to the misery and hell that it justly deserved, but to undertake to save a great multitude of human beings who had absolutely no claim on His mercy. In order to bring this plan into execution, the second Person of the Godhead, the Son, took unto himself a full human nature, becoming in all things like his brethren and sisters, sin excepted. Thus he became the Second Adam, the head of a new covenant, and he lived a life of perfect obedience to the Divine Law. Identifying with his own, he bore the penalty of human sin on the cross of Calvary, suffering in the place of the sinner, the just for the unjust, the holy Son of God for the guilty and corrupt children of man. By his death and resurrection he has provided the basis:

- for the *reconciliation* of God to humans and of humans to God;
- for the *propitiation* of a righteous Trinity, justly angry at our sins;
- for the *redemption* of a multitude of captives of sin whose liberty was secured at the great price of His own blood.

“He offered himself as an expiatory sacrifice sufficient to blot out the sins of the whole world and secured the utmost triumph over the enemies of our soul: sin, death, and Satan. Those who repent of their sins and believe in Jesus Christ are thus to be absolved from the guilt of all their sins and are adorned with the perfect righteousness of Christ himself. In gratitude to him they are to live lives of obedience and service to their Savior and are increasingly renewed into the image of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. This good news of salvation by

grace through faith is to be proclaimed indiscriminately to mankind, that is to every man, woman, and child whom we can possibly reach.”

J.I. Packer

“I formulate the Gospel this way: it is information issuing in invitation; it is proclamation issuing in persuasion. It is an admonitory message embracing five themes. First, God: the God whom Paul proclaimed to the Athenians in Acts 17, the God of Christian theism. Second, humankind: made in God’s image but now totally unable to respond to God or do anything right by reason of sin in their moral and spiritual system. Third, the person and work of Christ: God incarnate, who by dying wrought atonement and who now lives to impart the blessing that flows from his work of atonement. Fourth, repentance, that is, turning from sin to God, from self-will to Jesus Christ. And fifthly, new community: a new family, a new pattern of human togetherness which results from the unity of the Lord’s people in the Lord, henceforth to function under the one Father as a family and a fellowship.”

Michael Patton

“The Gospel is ‘good news.’ It is good news only to the degree that the bad news can be understood first. The world is a messed-up place. It is not just our generation that notices this, but every generation has had to deal with their share of problems. Today is not really any worse than it was 100 years ago or 1000 years ago. The good news is that God is fixing what is broken in every generation. This is called redemption. Redemption means to ‘buy back’ or restore to a previous condition. God is in the process of putting his messed up creation back in order. The Gospel is the good news that that which was broken is being fixed. But the brokenness had its genesis in us, mankind. God is different. He is perfect and demands perfection because of his character. In other words, as the Bible puts it, God is righteous. Our brokenness is due to choices that we have made. All of us have messed things up. This is called ‘sin.’ We have sinned through our selfishness, pride, hatred, and perversion of his creation. It is not the way it was supposed to be.

“God allows us to reject him and suffer the consequences, but he also offers us hope. This hope is the good news. It is the hope that God has not abandoned us. It is the hope for redemption. God loves us in spite of our perversion of good. God loves us in spite of our rejection of him. He did not wait for us to live up to his standard, which can never happen, but he sent his Son, Jesus Christ, 2000 years ago to live a life that we could not. God the Son became man and never failed, never perverted, and showed us who God is. Because Christ lived a sinless life, he could take the place of man, creating a new race—a redeemed race. Christ was rejected and killed on a cross by man. But God allowed this so that Christ could take the punishment that man—that you and I—deserved. In doing this, he died instead of you. He took your penalty of death and separation from God on an execution cross. But since he was God the Son and since he never sinned, he did not stay dead. After three days he came back to life and proclaimed victory over all the death, perversion, sin, and penalties that man had afforded creation.

“But this Good News does not apply to everyone. It is only for those who believe and trust in what Christ did for them. If you believe in him, you will have life. If you trust in him, not in yourself or your works, but in him alone, you will live forever, witnessing and being a part of a redeemed creation. One day Christ will come back to call into account all people. You can either stand on your own, giving account for your own sin or you can accept the free gift of salvation and stand with Christ. The bad news is that without Christ, you stand alone and hopeless. The Good News—the Gospel—is that you can stand with Christ full of hope.”

John Piper

“The heart of the gospel is the good news that Christ died for our sins and was raised from the dead. What makes this good news is that Christ’s death accomplished a perfect righteousness before God and suffered a perfect condemnation from God, both of which are counted as ours through faith alone, so that we have eternal life with God in the new heavens and the new earth.”

“The gospel of Christ is the good news that at the cost of his Son’s life, God has done everything necessary to enthrall us with what will make us eternally and ever-increasingly happy, namely, himself.”

“The Gospel is the news that Jesus Christ, the Righteous One, died for our sins and rose again, eternally triumphant over all his enemies, so that there is now no condemnation for those who believe, but only everlasting joy.”

“The Gospel is the good news of our final and full enjoyment of the glory of God in the face of Christ. That this enjoyment had to be purchased for sinners at the cost of Christ’s life makes his glory shine all the more brightly. And that this enjoyment is a free and unmerited gift makes it shine more brightly still. But the price Jesus paid for the gift and the unmerited freedom of the gift are not the gift. The gift is Christ himself as the glorious image of God—seen and savored with everlasting joy.”

Ed Stetzer

“The gospel is the good news that God, who is more holy than we can imagine, looked upon with compassion, people, who are more sinful than we would possibly admit, and sent Jesus into history to establish his Kingdom and reconcile people and the world to himself. Jesus, whose love is more extravagant than we can measure, came to sacrificially die for us so that, by His death and resurrection, we might gain through His grace what the Bible defines as new and eternal life.

Tullian Tchividjian

“The Gospel is the good news that in and through Christ’s life, death, and resurrection, God makes all things new.

“The good news of the gospel is simply this: in the midst of our hopeless and helpless circumstance, God sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to save sinners like you and me.”

N. T. Wright

“The gospel is the royal announcement that the crucified and risen Jesus, who died for our sins and rose again according to the Scriptures, has been enthroned as the true Lord of the world. When this gospel is preached, God calls people to salvation, out of sheer grace, leading them to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ as the risen Lord.

“The whole Christian gospel could be summed up in this point: that when the living God looks at us, at every baptized and believing Christian, he says to us what he said to Jesus on [the day of his baptism]. He sees us, not as we are in ourselves, but as we are in Jesus Christ.

“The gospel itself refers to the proclamation that Jesus, the crucified and risen Messiah, is the one, true and only Lord of the world.

“The idea of ‘good news,’ for which an older English word is ‘gospel,’ had two principal meanings for first-century Jews. First, with roots in Isaiah, it mean the news of YHWH’s long awaited victory over evil and rescue of his people. Second, it was used in the Roman world of the accession, or birthday, of the emperor. Since for Jesus and Paul the announcement of God’s in-breaking kingdom was both the fulfillment of prophecy and a challenge to the world’s present rulers, ‘gospel’ became an important shorthand for both the message of Jesus himself, and the apostolic message about him.

“I could try taking a Pauline angle. When Paul talks about ‘the gospel,’ he means ‘the good news that the crucified and risen Jesus is the Messiah of Israel and therefore the Lord of the world. Now, that’s about as brief as you can do it. The reason that’s good news: In the Roman Empire, when a new emperor came to the throne, there’d obviously been a time of uncertainty. Somebody’s just died. Is there going to be chaos? Is society going to collapse? Are we going to have pirates ruling the seas? Are we going to have no food to eat? And the good news is, we have an emperor and his name is such and such. So, we’re going to have justice and peace and prosperity, and isn’t that great?

“Now, of course, most people in the Roman Empire knew that was rubbish because it was just another old jumped-up aristocrat who was going to do the same as the other ones had done. But that was the rhetoric. Paul slices straight in with the Isaianic message: Good news! God is becoming King and he is doing it through Jesus! And therefore, phew! God’s justice, God’s peace, God’s world is going to be renewed. And in the middle of that, of course, it’s good news for you and me. But that’s the derivative from, or the corollary of the good news which is a message about Jesus that has a second-order effect on me and you and us.

“But the gospel is not itself about you are this sort of a person and this can happen to you. That’s the result of the gospel rather than the gospel itself. It’s very clear in Romans. Romans 1:3-4: This is the gospel. It’s the message about Jesus Christ descended from David, designated Son of God in power, and then Romans 1:16-17 which says very clearly: ‘I am not ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of God unto salvation.’ That is, salvation is the result of the gospel, not the center of the gospel itself.

III. ORGANIZATIONAL AND REFERENCE DEFINITIONS

Antioch Network

“The gospel is the story about Christ, God’s and David’s Son, who died and was raised and is established as Lord. Churches forming the Antioch Network desire to join together to proclaim the good news that God’s Kingdom has come in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, the Lord and Messiah, in fulfillment of the Word of God. The gospel we declare evokes faith, repentance and discipleship—its accompanying effects include the forgiveness of sins, justification, reconciliation, adoption, wisdom and the gift of the Holy Spirit. We accompany our proclamation of the gospel with cooperative works of compassion and mercy for those in need or distress.”

The Gospel Coalition

“We believe that the gospel is the good news of Jesus Christ—God’s very wisdom. Utter folly to the world, even though it is the power of God to those who are being saved, this good news is christological, centering on the cross and resurrection: the gospel is not proclaimed if Christ is not proclaimed, and the authentic Christ has not been proclaimed if his death and resurrection are not central (the message is ‘Christ died for our sins . . . [and] was raised’). This good news is biblical (his death and resurrection are according to the Scriptures), theological and salvific (Christ died for our sins, to reconcile us to God), historical (if the saving events did not happen, our faith is worthless, we are still in our sins, and we are to be pitied more than all others), apostolic (the message was entrusted to and transmitted by the apostles, who were witnesses of these saving events), and intensely personal (where it is received, believed, and held firmly, individual persons are saved).”

Evangelical Dictionary of Theology

“The gospel is the joyous proclamation of God’s redemptive activity in Christ Jesus on behalf of man enslaved by sin.”

HeartCry Missionary Society

“The Gospel is the power of God for salvation (Rom 1:16) and the preaching of the Gospel is the great ‘means’ and ‘methodology’ of missions. The Gospel is, first and foremost, God in Christ reconciling the world to Himself (2 Cor 5:19). It answers the eternal question of how

a just God can rightly justify wicked men (Rom 3:26). It points to Christ alone, who bore the sins of His people upon the cross, was forsaken of God, and crushed under the full force of His just wrath against sin. The Good News of the Gospel is that through Christ's death, the justice of God was satisfied, and salvation was won for a great multitude of people. This is evidenced by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead—"He who was delivered over because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification" (Rom 4:25).

Sovereign Grace Ministries

"Jesus Christ is the gospel. The good news is revealed in his birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension. Christ's crucifixion is the heart of the gospel, his resurrection is the power of the gospel, and his ascension is the glory of the gospel. Christ's death is a substitutionary and propitiatory sacrifice to God for our sins. It satisfies the demands of God's holy justice and appeases his holy wrath. It also demonstrates his mysterious love and reveals his amazing grace. Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and man. There is no other name by which men must be saved. At the heart of all sound doctrine is the cross of Jesus Christ and the infinite privilege that redeemed sinners have of glorifying God because of what he has accomplished. Therefore, we want all that takes place in our hearts, churches, and ministries to proceed from and be related to the cross."

Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia

"The central truth of the gospel is that God has provided a way of salvation for men through the gift of His son to the world. He suffered as a sacrifice for sin, overcame death, and now offers a share in His triumph to all who will accept it. The gospel is good news because it is a gift of God, not something that must be earned by penance or by self-improvement."