



Welcome! I'm so glad you're here and I'm looking forward to all the Lord has in store for us this year. Is anyone else excited about this new year? Is anyone just glad that last year is over? I'm not sure how last year was for you, but my guess is that for some of you, it was really good. Maybe everything went well in your life and it's fair to say that it was one of your best years ever. While you may be excited about this new year, your only concern is that it might be hard to top last year because everything was so great. If that's you, we're all happy for you but I know not all of you will say that last year was the best ever. For some of you, last year was probably hard. Actually, "hard" might be a bit of an understatement because it was more like your worst year ever. Regardless of how this past year was for you and whether it was really good, really bad or somewhere in the middle, I think we can all agree that A LOT has changed since last year.

[LEADER NOTE: Think back over the past year. What has changed in the world that would impact your students? I shared this message coming out of COVID lockdowns, so we focused on how this changed school, church, sports and many areas of our lives. You might want to Google what has changed about the world in this past year, especially in your context. Think about areas like technology, education, church, sports, entertainment, etc. Show some pics as you talk about this to help students resonate with your message.]

Depending on your personality and temperament, some of you may love hearing about all these changes because you thrive on change. Maybe you've grown bored with how things are and you're ready for a new challenge or new adventure. For others, this may completely stress you out. You may feel overwhelmed or even fearful as we move into the unknown of a new year. Whether you love change or hate it, whether you thrive on it or are fearful of it, I want to make one thing clear tonight. In a world where so much is changing at an exponential pace, I want you to know: **THE GOSPEL HASN'T CHANGED**. This is the **BIG IDEA** for the message. As we jump into this new year, I can guarantee that many more things will change. Some of this will be good and some will be awful but amid all the change and craziness in our world, the gospel remains the same. As we start this new year, it's important that we begin to wrap our minds around this incredible truth that the gospel hasn't changed.

I'm not sure what all comes to mind when you hear the word "gospel." I'm guessing that for some of you, even those who grew up in church, it's probably a word you know but it may be hard to explain. For others of you, you might be pretty quick to say the gospel is Christianity 101 or the ABCs of our faith: **a**dmit to God that you're a sinner, **b**elieve that Jesus died and rose from the dead, and **c**onfess Jesus as Savior and Lord. You might even say it's the entry point to Christianity. While there is a sense in which this is true, it doesn't give the full picture because the gospel is way bigger and deeper. Instead of Christianity 101 or the ABCs of our faith, it's more like the A to Z of our faith.

As we start this new year, I want to challenge us to relook at this incredible, unchanging, beautiful gospel; not as an abstract theory or a theological concept, but for what it really is. As we begin to understand and live out the truth of the gospel, I believe it will literally change our lives: our hearts, our minds, and our relationships. Tonight, I want to spend a few minutes unpacking what the gospel is, what it's not, and talk about what we should do with it.

If you have a Bible, turn to Galatians chapter 1. Just like there is a lot of confusion about the gospel today, there was a lot of confusion back when the New Testament was being written. Paul wrote this letter called "Galatians" to a group of Christians who were part of the church in a place called Galatia. He wrote this letter to clarify what the gospel is, what it's not and why it matters.

### **Galatians 1:1-5 (ESV)**

*Paul, an apostle—not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead— 2 and all the brothers who are with me, To the churches of Galatia: 3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, 4 who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, 5 to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.*

At the very beginning of this letter, Paul tells us about the gospel. The word "gospel" actually means "good news." Think about the last time you got some really good news. Maybe you made your team, got a job, passed a big test, or received a nice gift. You probably celebrated this news, and it may have even changed your life at some level. As great as your good

This preview includes a select number of pages from this resource.

If you like what you see, download the entire resource today!

**[downloadyouthministry.com](http://downloadyouthministry.com)**