

GOSPEL FELLOWSHIP OF SUSSEX



The Gospel

What is the gospel?

The simplest answer to this question is that the gospel is Jesus Christ. Paul declares in Romans chapter one that the Gospel of God is his Son (Rom. 1:1-3). The good news in the gospel is that Jesus Christ rescues, restores and reconciles sinners.

Jesus is the gospel because he *rescues*.

Jesus is the gospel because he *restores*.

Jesus is the gospel because he *reconciles*.

The gospel is a person who comes to our rescue. The gospel is a person who mends our brokenness and heals our wounds. The gospel is a person who redeems us from slavery and brings us into relationship with God. The gospel is a person!

The person of Jesus Christ has been revealed in human history in two ways. First, he was revealed in the flesh as he lived and dwelt among us. But second, he has been revealed to us in the written Word of God, the Bible. But the gospel is more than words. It is more than theological propositions formulated into creeds and systems, because the purpose of the written Word is to bring us into a relationship with a person.

Men and women need to be introduced to the person of Jesus Christ in order to partake of the rescue, restoration and reconciliation that he brings.

What does it mean to be gospel-centered?

We believe that we never get beyond the gospel. Even after we have encountered the person of Jesus Christ for the first time, we continually need the rescue, restoration and reconciliation that he brings. This life of faith is a journey, a process. Therefore, we are devoted to living in the gospel as well as living out the gospel. The gospel becomes the center for all of life and living.

Living-In the Gospel

The gospel, because it consists of the persons of the God-head as real persons, is alive. It has power to produce and sustain life. Therefore, we live in the gospel as we are continually being rescued and transformed by it. The gospel continually produces fruit in our lives (Col. 1:6). Thus, we want to think in such a way that the gospel shapes everything about our lives and lifestyles. We want the gospel to give definition and to set boundaries, as well as to give form and substance to all of life. We want to live a life that is in line with the gospel (Gal. 2:14). We need to have a gospel-centered approach to such things as:

- Money
- Relationships
- Sexuality

- Food
- Suffering
- Rest, relaxation, vacation, entertainment
- Work
- Neighborhood
- Family

Living-Out the Gospel

The gospel, because it brings real people into vital union with the persons of the Godhead, becomes our identity. The very same power and person who carried Jesus along during his incarnational earthly ministry, continues to carry us along as we complete the earthly ministry of Jesus (John 20:21). We become the gospel. It is our identity. Collectively, we are the body of Christ; we are indwelt by his Spirit; we are living on earth in order to reveal Christ to the world. We not only live in the gospel but we live out the gospel. This means we need a gospel-centered approach to such things as:

- Community
- Mission
- Service
- Persecution
- Culture
- Race
- Politics
- Poverty

What is Community?

We want to be a congregation that lives in community. The church is a community. We are in communion with the Godhead and we are in communion with one another. All of the rescue, renewal and restoration that the gospel promises come to us in the community of saints. Change is a community project.

But more than that, the church, as Christ's body, exists to carry out the mission of Jesus to the world. That means each local church exists for their community. We are a congregation that live in community and a congregation that lives for the community. We live to serve the community and to bring it into a restored relationship with God. Ours is a ministry of rescue, reconciliation and restoration.