

GOSPEL

A MOSAIC GOSPEL

The center of who we are and what we do at Mosaic is the Gospel, or the "Good News," of God's love and grace to us. It is the story of God and man that began in the Garden and leads to a cross just outside of Jerusalem. And that story continues today as God still invites us into a personal relationship with Him.

In our introduction, we explained why we chose Mosaic as the name for our congregation by examining what mosaic art is and how it is a great metaphor for the Church. A mosaic is made up of broken pieces that have been put together by an artist to create a beautiful picture. That is a great picture of the Gospel. God takes people who are broken by sin and through His grace, forgives and cleans them up, and places them into His Kingdom for His glory. From this mosaic metaphor for the Gospel, we consider three spiritual truths:

- All Are Broken: The Problem of Sin
- All Matter: The Cross
- One Gets the Glory: Our Response

ALL ARE BROKEN: The Problem of Sin

God created us in His own image to have a relationship with Him and to experience a full life assured of His love.

Jesus said,
"...I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."
 John 10:10b

...we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.
 Romans 5:1b

He did not make us robots to automatically love and obey Him, but He gave us a will and freedom of choice. We chose to disobey God and go our own willful way. We still make this choice today. As a result, we are broken and unable to have the kind of relationship with God that He intended for us. This results in separation from God.

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...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...

Romans 3:23

...your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you so that he will not hear.

Isaiah 59:2

For the wages of sin is death...

Romans 6:23a

On our own, there's no way we can attain the perfection needed to bridge the gap to God. Through the ages, individuals have tried many ways with no success. There are many misconceptions as to what it takes to become a child of God. Perhaps you have thought that you become a child of God by:

- Growing up in a Christian country
- Growing up in a Christian family
- Attending church services or Mass regularly
- Taking Communion
- Keeping the Ten Commandments
- Trying hard to be a good person
- Going to confession
- Performing some act of great sacrifice
- Praying fervently or reading the Bible faithfully

Can you think of other misconceptions?

"There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death."

Proverbs 14:12

ALL MATTER: The Cross

Perhaps the greatest statement in history of how much we matter to God is the Cross of Jesus Christ. Because God designed us for relationship with Him, we still long to know Him. But our brokenness not only separates us from God, it also makes us unable to do anything to restore that relationship. Jesus Christ is the only answer to this problem. In His death on the Cross He paid the price for all our sin. When He rose from the grave, He opened a way for us to have eternal life.

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.
John 3:16

But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
Romans 5:8

For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God...
1 Peter 3:18

For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus...
1 Timothy 2:5

He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.
Romans 4:25

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead...
1 Peter 1:3

ONE GETS THE GLORY: Our Response

In a mosaic, the broken tiles are held together by the mortar. For the Church, that mortar is the grace of God. How is our brokenness redeemed? By the hand of The Artist. God takes our brokenness and through the Cross of Christ, He redeems us and places us in the beautiful work of art that is His Church – not because of our goodness or merit, but because of His love. This is God’s initiative, and our response must be one of believing in this gift of grace and receiving it from The Artist.

What Is Grace?

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.
Ephesians 2:8-9

Grace is the free gift of eternal life and reconciliation with God that came as a result of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. God offers this gift to anyone who acknowledges Jesus as the Son of God, Savior, and Lord.

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What about Baptism?
Baptism is an act of obedience by a follower of Christ. It is a public declaration and picture of personal commitment to Christ. Mosaic's position is that baptism is for those who have trusted Christ as their Savior, and while it is not necessary for salvation, it is an important part of a new life in Christ.

According to Scripture, this gift of grace is offered apart from any "works" we might do to try and earn our forgiveness and salvation. What are "works"? Works are the good things we do (e.g.-volunteering, helping others, giving, being a "good" person, keeping the Ten Commandments, etc.).

This passage in Ephesians also says that grace comes to us "through faith." Other verses use the word "believe."

Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.

John 5:24

Believing means trusting and committing, acknowledging our sinfulness, accepting Christ's forgiveness, and letting Him control our life. Eternal, abundant life is a gift for us to receive.

How to Receive Christ

1. Admit your need (I am a sinner).
2. Be willing to turn from your sins (repent).
3. Believe that Jesus Christ died for you on the Cross and rose from the grave.
4. Pray to invite Jesus Christ to come in and control your life through the Holy Spirit (receive Him as Lord and Savior of your life).

The following is a sample prayer to help you invite Jesus into your life and acknowledge Him as your Savior and Lord.

"Dear God, I want to be Your child. I want to experience abundant life. Lord, I know You love me, even though I have sinned many times and don't deserve Your great love. I now realize that all my good works are worthless and cannot save me. I am helpless to save myself. But I believe that Your Son, the Lord Jesus, died on the Cross for my sins! I believe that You raised Jesus from the dead. I believe that, by the same Spirit, You will one day raise all who believe in Him. By faith, I invite Jesus to become my Savior and Lord. I choose to let Him be the Master of my life. Thank You God for Your love and mercy. Show me Your ways. Amen."

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YOUR STORY

As a part of Discover Mosaic, we love to hear your stories. Please take some time to tell us about your relationship with Christ. A good outline to follow is:

My Life Before I Trusted Christ:

How I Came to Trust Christ:

My Life Since I Trusted Christ:

(The following is a great study to help you understand more how your life is changed when you trust Christ as your Savior.)

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THE BEFORE AND AFTER EFFECTS OF PERSONAL SALVATION:

Read the following identity statements from scripture:

Who I WAS before Christ came into my life...

- My mind was set on what my sin nature wanted (Rom 8:5; Eph 2:3).
- Because my mind was set on the flesh, that was death. I was locked into an existence separate from God (Rom 8:6; Eph 2:12; Col 1:21).
- My mind was blinded by Satan, and I was unable to see the truth of the Gospel of Christ (2 Cor 4:4; Eph 2:2).
- My mind was hostile to God (Rom 8:7).
- I was an enemy of God (Rom 5:10; Col 1:21).
- My mind was rebellious—unable and unwilling to submit to God (Rom 8:7).
- I was unable to please God (Rom 8:8).
- I was a slave to sin (Rom 6:20-21).
- I was a captive slave to Satan (2 Tim 2:26).
- I used to follow the sinful ways of this world and the ways of Satan (Eph 2:2).
- I was spiritually dead in my sins (Eph 2:1).
- Even my best efforts at doing what was right and being a good person were horribly corrupted by my sinful mind (Isa 64:6; Titus 1:15).
- I was separated from God (Isa 59:1-2; Eph 2:12).
- I was under the wrath of God and had no hope (Eph 2:3; John 3:36; Eph 2:12).

As you read about the identity of those who do not have Christ in their life, is it easy or difficult to believe these things about yourself? Why?

Who I AM now, because I am in Christ...

- I am salt for other people on earth (Matt 5:13).
- I am light for the world (Matt 5:14).
- I am a child of God (John 1:12).
- I am part of the true vine, joined to Christ and able to produce lots of fruit (John 15:1-5).
- I am Christ's chosen friend (John 15:15).
- I am chosen by Christ to bear fruit (John 15:16).
- I am Christ's personal witness sent out to tell everybody about Jesus (Acts 1:8).
- I am a slave of righteousness who pleases God (Rom 6:18).
- I am enslaved to God. This makes me holy and gives me eternal life (Rom 6:22).
- I am a son of God; I can call Him my Father (Rom 8:14-15; Gal 3:26; 4:6).
- I am promised an inheritance and will share in the glory of Christ (Rom 8:17).
- I am a temple where the Holy Spirit lives. His Spirit and His life live in me (1 Cor 3:16; 6:19).
- I am united to the Lord and am one spirit with Him (1 Cor 3:16; 6:19).
- I am a part of Christ's body, a member of His family (1 Cor 12:27).
- I am a new person, my past is forgiven, and everything is new (2 Cor 5:17).
- I am at peace with God and He has given me the work of making peace between Himself and others (2 Cor 5:18-19).
- I am a son of God and one in Christ with other Christians (Gal 3:26-28).

- I am God’s child and will be given the inheritance He has promised (Gal 4:6-7).
- I am a saint, a holy one (Eph 1:1; Phil 1:1, Col 1:2).
- I am God’s masterpiece—His building project—made new in Christ to do His work (Eph 2:10).
- I am a citizen of Heaven with the rest of God’s family (Eph 2:19).
- I am a prisoner of Christ, so I can help others (Eph 3:1; 4:1).
- I am righteous and holy (Eph 4:24).
- I am a citizen of Heaven seated with Christ in Heaven right now (Phil 3:20; Eph 2:6).
- I am hidden with Christ in God (Col 3:3).
- I am an expression of the life of Christ because He is my life (Col 3:4).
- I am chosen of God, holy and dearly loved, one of His special people (Col 3:12; 1 Thess 1:4).
- I am a son of Light and belong to the Light and not to darkness (1 Thess 5:5).
- I am chosen to be part of God’s heavenly calling (Heb 3:1).
- I am part of Christ; I share in His life (Heb 3:14).
- I am one of God’s living stones, being built up in Christ as a spiritual house (1 Pet 2:5).
- I am a member of a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession (1 Pet 2:9).
- I am an alien and stranger to this world in which I temporarily live (1 Pet 2:11).
- I am an enemy of the devil (1 Pet 5:8).
- I am a child of God and I will be like Christ when He returns (1 John 3:1-2).
- I am born of God, and the evil one, the devil, cannot touch me (1 John 5:18).
- I am not the great “I Am” (Exod 3:14; John 8:24, 28, 58); but by the grace of God, I am what I am (1 Cor 15:10).

Since I AM in Christ, by the grace of God...

- I am now acceptable to God (justified) — I'm completely forgiven, I live at peace with Him (Rom 5:1).
- I am no longer a slave to sin; the person I used to be died with Christ, and now sin has no rule over my life (Rom 6:1-6).
- I belong to Jesus and won't be punished; I'm free from all punishment (condemnation) that my sin has brought on me (Rom 8:1).
- I have been placed into Christ by God's doing (1 Cor 1:30).
- I have been given God's Spirit to dwell in me so I can recognize the blessings that God has given me (1 Cor 2:12).
- I have been given the mind of Christ; I can understand what He is thinking (1 Cor 2:16).
- I have been bought with a price; I am not my own; I belong to God (1 Cor 6:19-20).
- I am God's possession, secure in Him (sealed) because I have been given the Holy Spirit as a promise guaranteeing me that I will receive all that God has stored up for His people (2 Cor 1:21-22; Eph 1:13-14).
- I have died with Christ, therefore I no longer have to live for myself. I can live for Christ (2 Cor 5:14-15).
- I have been made acceptable to God—righteous— (2 Cor 5:21).
- I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. The life I am now living is Christ's life (Gal 2:20).
- I have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in heaven through Christ (Eph 1:3).
- I was chosen in Christ before the world was created to be holy and without blame before Him (Eph 1:4).
- I was chosen by God (predestined) to be adopted as His child (Eph 1:5). I have been bought out of slavery to sin (redeemed) and forgiven, and I have been given His awesome grace (Eph 1:7-8).
- I have been made alive together with Christ (Eph 2:5).
- I have been raised up and seated with Christ in Heaven (Eph 2:6).

- I have direct access to God through the Spirit (Eph 2:18).
- I may approach God with courage, freedom, and confidence (Eph 3:12).
- I have been rescued from the dark power of Satan’s rule and have been brought into the Kingdom of Christ (Col 1:13).
- I have been forgiven of all my sins and set free. The debt against me has been canceled (Col 1:14).
- I have Christ living in me, the hope of glory (Col 1:27).
- I am firmly rooted in Christ and am now being built up in Him (Col 2:7).
- I have been made complete in Christ (Col 2:10).
- I have been buried, raised, and made alive with Christ (Col 2:12-13).
- I died with Christ and I have been raised up with Christ. My life is now hidden with Christ in God. Christ is now my life (Col 3:1-4).
- I have been given a spirit of power, love, and self-control and not a spirit of fear (2 Tim 1:7).
- I have been saved and set apart according to God’s plan (2 Tim 1:9; Titus 3:5).
- I have been made holy and have been set apart (sanctified) into Christ’s family; that’s why He is not ashamed to call me His brother/sister (Heb 2:11).
- I have the right to come bravely before the throne of God. I will be treated with kindness and I will find help (Heb 4:16).
- I have been given great and awesome promises so that His nature would become part of me (2 Pet 1:4).

ADAPTED FROM: Neil T. Anderson, *Victory Over The Darkness*
 (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1990), p.57-59

Which scriptures above are especially meaningful to you?
