

The Gospel

*You are far worse than you dare imagine,
and you are more loved than you could ever hope.*

The Word: Old English – *go(d)* = short for “good”...
spell = “tale, story”... It is
The Good News of Jesus Christ.

The Glorious, Good & True Tale...

Misery:

God created a good and perfect world and placed our oldest ancestors, made in His image and the capstone of His good Creation, in it... They rebelled, they sinned, foolishly trying to take God's place in their world, and all Creation “Fell” into a state of gross imperfection--the Curse of Death and Corruption became a reality. Mankind, every one of us since that time, has shown our utter inability and unwillingness fundamentally to change this situation, to reconcile ourselves to God, to restore life-giving goodness. We live in sin and death. And this is the rightful result for us all.

Redemption:

God called a people to be His special race for His redemptive purposes in His world: The Jews. They, our predecessors in faith, proved themselves unable and unworthy to carry this mantle as they naturally and faithlessly refused to trust and obey God in any consistent way. Like us all, they sowed rebellion and sin, and death and destruction, again, was the harvest they reaped, again and again. Yet, in the midst of the misadventures, God remained faithful. His irrepressible grace would not be denied: He continued to promise a glorious future connected to His special, anointed Servant, the Messiah.

Then Jesus arrived. He was not the heroic, military-minded deliverer people had in mind. He was a deeper and broader and higher Savior, the Light for the World. He was the mind and heart of God come to earth to seek and to save. And Jesus perfectly fulfilled His mission--He lived a sinless life. He boldly taught the truth. He miraculously healed diseases. He claimed to be God, and though it got Him killed by the religiously-appearing politicians, it turned out to be absolutely true!

And it also turned out that the whole tragic mess was exactly what God--Father, Son & Spirit--had planned from the beginning: Jesus' death became the God-ordained and empowered means of our restoration to God. Though none of us could or would ever deserve it, Jesus died for us, to remove the just and deadly penalty for our sins. And then, as the great illuminating and validating exclamation point on this historical reality, Jesus rose from death. He is risen! He is risen indeed!

Thanksgiving:

Jesus promises life in Him, everlasting life with and in Him rather than eternal death apart from God, to all who put their trust in Him. He said this: *“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life”* (John 5:24). Our good response to this Good News, in accordance with the gracious and mighty will of God, is to know by faith and name by an act of our will Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior with wonder in our minds, praise in our hearts and thanksgiving on our lips.

