The Gospel In Summary

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INTRODUCTION

- Christianity is about putting together a lot of little pieces and making sure that we get the whole construction correct.
- As Christians, we are building a life that is to be a glory to God.
- I want tonight to look at several summary statements in the New Testament letters that give us a foundation for what it means to really be a Christian.

1 Summary Statements: What It Means to Be a Christian

2 Corinthians 7:1; Ephesians 4:1–5:2; Colossians 3:1–17

- Let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.
- Walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called.
- Be imitators of God as beloved children, and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave himself up for us.
- Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father.
- These passages cover a lot of the basis of what the New Testament is telling us about being a Christian.

2 They Cause Us to Have a Big Picture Focus

- They cause us to have a big picture focus. This is the big picture. This is what Christian living is all about.
- As we meet week after week after week and we have Bible classes that are honed in on specific subjects or specific verses, we sometimes could perhaps lose sight of the bigger picture.
- They give us a big picture focus so that we don't get lost in the minutiae or get lost in the details.

3 It Defines What Serving Christ Is All About

1 Timothy 4:12; 1 Peter 3:9

- Did you see all of the references to the way we speak? The way we think.
- I know you're there to get an education, but the greater goal is to imitate Christ.
- Instead of returning evil for evil, give a blessing instead.
- Christ acted on behalf of the unlovely. He died for sinners. Will we go out of our way to help the unlovely?

4 True Spiritual Growth Doesn’t Just Happen

2 Peter 3:18; Colossians 3:16

- True spiritual growth doesn’t just happen.
- Growth happens in the lives of active worshipers.
- They participate with their hearts and their minds. They participate with a view to change.
- Growth happens in the lives of those who refuse to remain as they are right now.
- You’ve got to construct a plan for your speech.
- Growth happens finally when you are convinced that God’s way is best. If you’re not convinced of that, you won’t do the work.

5 These Summaries Are Designed to Deliver Us

- These summaries are designed to deliver us. Do we look at the New Testament as a book about deliverance?
- We were in the bondage of sin, and God delivered us unto a new and better life.
- That’s what we’ve been reading. This is the new and better life.
- We walk out of here and immediately we start hearing another sermon.
- We begin listening to the wrong sermon and tuning out the sermon that calls us to a higher and better kind of living.

THE CHALLENGE

So, how are we going to respond to these summaries as they challenge us about serving Christ?

MY NOTES