

## 2 TIMOTHY

THE GOSPEL: KNOW IT



## TEACH IT COFFEEHOUSE SESSION 4

### 1. Materials

For this session each student will need—

- his or her Bible and pen
- optional: journal page for Session 4 (Using the student journal page is optional in the coffeehouse setting because table space may be limited.)

You'll also need—

- a few good news/bad news jokes (We've supplied a couple.)
- pencils with erasers
- optional: a few spare Bibles for students who forget theirs

### 2. Session Intro

#### GOALS OF SESSION 4

As students experience this session, they will—

- discover the meaning of the word *gospel*.
- explore the message of the gospel.
- be challenged to view this message through fresh eyes.

#### PRAYER

Open your session by praying with your students that God will open the eyes of their hearts and that they will be receptive to what he wants them to see.

#### OPEN

*Good News/Bad News*

Ask students whether they've heard any good news/bad news jokes lately. Here are a couple jokes to prime the pump:

#### JOKE 1:

**Two 90-year-old men, Moe and Sam, have been friends all their lives. It seems that Sam is dying, so Moe comes to visit him.**

**"Sam," says Moe, "You know how we have both loved baseball all our lives. Sam, you have to do me one favor. When you go, somehow you've got to tell me if there's baseball in heaven."**

**Sam looks up at Moe from his deathbed and says, "Moe, you've been my friend many years. This favor I'll do for you."**

**And with that, Sam passes on.**

**It is midnight a couple nights later. Moe is sound asleep when a distant voice calls out to him, "Moe... Moe..."**

“Who is it?” says Moe, sitting up suddenly. “Who is it?”

“Moe, it’s Sam.”

“Come on. You’re not Sam. Sam died.”

“I’m telling you,” insists the voice. “It’s me—Sam.”

“Sam? Is that you? Where are you?”

“I’m in heaven,” says Sam, “and I’ve got to tell you, I’ve got some good news and some bad news.”

“Tell me the good news first,” says Moe.

“The good news,” says Sam “is that there is baseball in heaven.”

“Really?” says Moe, “That’s wonderful! What’s the bad news?”

“You’re pitching Tuesday!”

—from *The Christian Post* (<http://jokes.christianpost.com/5.htm>)

#### JOKE 2:

**Doctor:** I have some good news and some bad news.

**Patient:** What’s the good news?

**Doctor:** The good news is that your tests showed you have 24 hours to live.

**Patient:** That’s the good news? What’s the bad news?

**Doctor:** The bad news is I forgot to call you yesterday!

Transition into the study by sharing—

**In New Testament times there was only one way to get your news, whether good or bad—via personal messenger. If the news was good, such as the outcome of a victorious battle or the birth of a child, the message was called *euangelion* (yoo-an-GHEL-ee-on), which literally means “good news.” This is the word translated in the Bible as “gospel”—and there’s a reason why the Bible writers called the Gospel good news.**

### 3. Digging In

*Digging up News*

Tell your students—

1. Read 2 Timothy 1:8-2:10 from your Bibles and mark every mention of the gospel.
2. You’ll be looking for phrases such as “sound teaching,” “good deposit,” “things you have heard me say,” and “God’s word” because Paul is talking about the gospel when he emphasizes these things to Timothy.
3. If you are hesitant about marking in your Bibles, you can write lightly so the markings can be erased. It’s okay if you’re still not comfortable with it. Just make sure to remember any info about the gospel.

After a few minutes ask the group to tell you everything they found related to the gospel. Possible observations are noted below:



### INFO ABOUT THE GOSPEL

- Don't be ashamed of it (1:8).
- Paul is suffering for it (1:8).
- Through it Jesus destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light (1:10).
- Paul was appointed a herald, an apostle, and a teacher of it (1:11).
- Paul was not ashamed of it even though he was suffering (1:12).
- Keep it as the pattern of sound teaching (1:13).
- Guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit (1:14).
- Entrust it to reliable men, so they can teach it to others (2:2).
- Paul defines it as: Jesus Christ raised from the dead, descended from David (2:8).
- Paul was chained for it, but the gospel itself wasn't chained (2:9).

Ask—

**How important would you say the gospel is, according to Paul?**

**If someone asked you what the gospel is and why it's important enough to be chained for it (as Paul was), would you know the answer?**

Point out that when Paul talks about the gospel in 2 Timothy, he's either describing it or giving instructions related to it. Ask students to look at what they marked and to tell you basic info *about* the gospel.

Because there's no point in trying to follow Paul's instructions if we don't know what the gospel is, share that the rest of this session will focus on unpacking and describing what the gospel is all about—*knowing* it. Session 5 will focus on *doing* the gospel.

## 4. Cross-Checking

*This Just In*

Just what is the gospel? Share that, in the next exercise, the group will be putting the gospel under a magnifying glass—examining it from every direction. The verses they'll be reading come from every part of the Bible—the Old Testament, the four gospels (biographies of Jesus), and the letters. Explain—

**As you read each passage, note anything specific the Scripture tells you about the gospel, even if it's just indicating how the word is used. By the way, the word *euangelion* (yoo-an-GHEL-ee-on) can be translated "gospel" or "good news." A good starting point is to find these words in the passage and work out from there.**

The Scripture references and possible observations are noted below. If you're using the optional journal pages students can make their notes in the space provided.

### OLD TESTAMENT

#### Isaiah 52:7

*It involves peace and salvation.*

### JESUS/GOSPELS

#### Mark 1:1-15

- It's all about Jesus (v. 1).
- It is the good news of God (v. 14).
- It's a proclamation that the kingdom of heaven is near (v. 15).
- To experience it you have to believe it (v. 15).

## ACTS

### Acts 5:42

*Jesus is the Christ.*

## LETTERS TO THE CHURCHES

### 1 Corinthians 15:1-8

- Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures (v. 3).
- He was buried and was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures (v. 4).
- He appeared to Peter and then to the Twelve (v. 5).
- Finally, he appeared to Paul, too (v. 8).

### Colossians 1:19-23

- All of God's fullness dwells in Jesus (v. 19).
- God reconciled all things to himself through Jesus (v. 20).
- God made peace with all things through Jesus' blood (v. 20).
- Through Jesus our alienation from God and the warring factions in our own minds have been reconciled (v. 21-22).
- Through Jesus we are presented holy in God's sight, without blemish and free from accusation (v. 22).
- It holds out hope to us (v. 23).
- It has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven (v. 23).

## 5. Taking It Inward

*Skeptic's Forum*

After a few minutes ask—

**How would you describe the gospel to someone, based on the info you just uncovered? What are some points you'd want to include?**

As the discussion unfolds clarify that 1 Corinthians 15 is the go-to passage that spells out precisely what the gospel message consists of:

- Jesus Christ died for our sins, exactly as the Scriptures said he would (v. 3).
- He was buried and rose again on the third day, exactly as the Scriptures said he would (v. 4).
- He appeared in real life to many people (v. 6).
- Not only did he appear to people in real life after he ascended to heaven, he appeared to Paul (v. 8).
- A final point implied by the fact he appeared to Paul is that he still "appears" to people, including us—those who believe in him without the benefit of having seen him in person.

Then ask—

**Why would knowing and believing all this be good news?**

Tell your students that you're going to read the following questions. Ask them to choose a question they'd like to answer and to use the following guidelines in forming the answer.

- 1. Imagine you are talking with someone who doesn't believe anything about God. Maybe they believe human beings are just globs of chemicals that got here by accident.**
- 2. Base your answers on the information you uncovered in Scripture.**
- 3. Try to avoid "church speak." Bring a fresh perspective to what the gospel is and what the gospel means.**

## QUESTIONS

**What's the big deal about the gospel? Why does the world need it anyway?**

**Most people think good news is something such as the birth of a baby, the end of a war, the fact that they don't have cancer, or even getting an A on a paper. Why is this stuff about Jesus good news?**

**Lots of people today are cruising along just fine in life. They've got the dream career, the great family, the big home—and no fear of what will happen after they die. (In their minds hell doesn't exist.) Why should they care about the gospel?**

## **6. Wrapping It Up**

*World News Today*

Emphasize that the point of the last exercise wasn't to learn how to publicly defend the gospel (though that's a worthy pursuit), but to simply understand it better. After all, if we call ourselves Christians, the gospel is what we've said yes to.

Close by having a few volunteers pray for the group, asking God to help each student grasp why the gospel is good news and how it can change the way we live each day.