

What is the lesson from the gospel?

The lesson from the gospel is in the meaning of the word *gospel*, itself, "good news." The Lord Jesus announced the good news in John 3:16, "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." Eternal life in Jesus is the gift of God, spoken of in Rom 6:22-23, "22 But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." For people who are dead in their sins, this is good news (the gospel), indeed.

God has chosen this good news as the power to save those who believe. Rom 1:16 teaches, "16 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile." Paul, the speaker here, also taught the specifics of what we must believe. In 1 Cor 15:1-5, he taught:

15:1 Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. 2 By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

3 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve.

It is important to note that in verse 2 above, Paul conditioned our salvation through the gospel on the fact that we must hold firmly to the word. Jesus emphatically taught what one must do to be saved in Mark 16:15-16, "15 He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. 16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.'" The lesson of the gospel is that we must believe and do what Jesus said to do (be baptized).

How important is it that you follow through and obey the words of the savior? Peter put your obedience to the gospel in terms of the judgment of God in 1 Peter 4:17-18"

17 For it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? 18 And,

"If it is hard for the righteous to be saved,
what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?"

The outcome for those who do not obey the gospel is made clearer by the apostle Paul in 2 Thess 1:8-10:

8 He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 9 They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power 10 on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed.

It is also important to understand that there is only one gospel. Paul described the gospel as the word of truth as being one and the same in Eph 1:13-14:

13 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession — to the praise of his glory.

This gospel cannot be changed, not even a little bit. Paul warned that any changes would

result in condemnation in Gal 1:6-8:

6 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel – 7 which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!

We can only find this gospel in the inspired word of God revealed to us in written form in the New Testament. Paul described how we learn God's will, and he related it directly to the meaning of the gospel, which gets us directly back to your question. In Eph 3:2-6, he describes how the revelation of God comes to us:

2 Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you, 3 that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. 4 In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, 5 which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets. **6 This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.** [Emphasis added]

If you will believe and obey the Lord, you, too, may share in the promise in Christ Jesus.

May I invite you to attend a local church of Christ where you can have answered this and other questions. They will also be able to assist you in obeying the gospel of Christ.