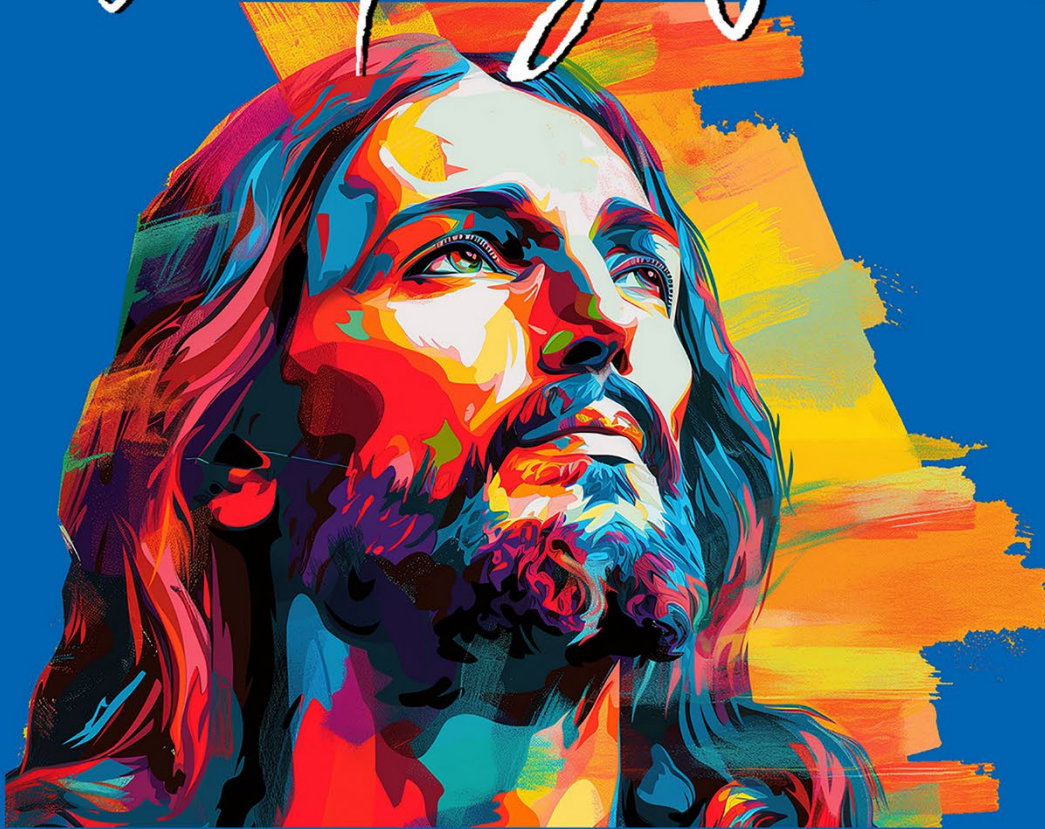


Finding Jesus



Embracing the Complete
Gospel of Jesus, the Christ.

Study Guide

CHARLES S. STUART

Let's Just Imagine!

Let's just imagine what might happen in our family, community, church, nation, and world if all believers **KINGDOM OF GOD ON EARTH!** helped usher in the

When people embrace their role in the Kingdom of God here on earth, their **EYES, EARS, MIND, HANDS, FEET & VOICE** will be used to reflect their faith.

They will use their **EYES** to look for needs that are unmet, and to watch over those in positions of authority.

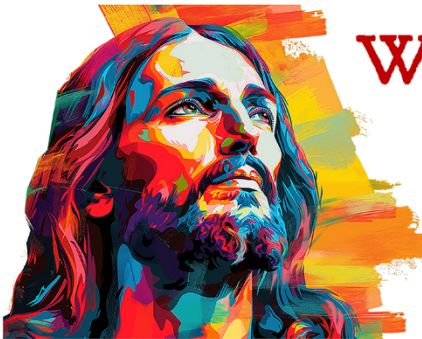
They will use their **EARS** to listen for the cries of those in pain, and to hear and address comments that demean those in need.

They will use their **MIND** to think of ways to get involved and to question for themselves what God would have them do for Him.

They will use their **HANDS** to do what is needed, remembering that it is through their hands that Jesus touches the "least of these."

They will use their **FEET** to go where needed...overseas, across the street or into the voting booth...to bring the Kingdom of God to those in need.

They will use their **VOICE** to speak up and out for those without a voice, and to hold those with power accountable to remember "the least of these" when making decisions.



**Wouldn't it be lovely to live
in a world like that!?!**

Charles Stuart

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About the Author.

Charlie Stuart was raised in the church by faithful, loving parents whose lives of service to “the others” inspired Charlie and his five siblings to purpose their lives to serve others, particularly the “least of these.”



Charlie has been active in the local church all his life serving as: Deacon, adult Bible study leader (20+ years), member of a pastor search committee and all the other committees in the local church.

Charlie graduated from the University of Florida in 1973 with an undergraduate degree in Marketing, with a focus on Economics. He worked in the family's office products company for 16 years and spent the following 20 years as a professional speaker, author, and consultant.

He also made time to volunteer for 25+ years with the YMCA as a local board member and on national task forces for the YMCA of the USA.

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Finding Jesus

Embracing the Complete
Gospel of Jesus, the Christ.



One Gospel in Two Parts.

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One Gospel in Two Parts.

In non-religious terms the word “gospel” is a universal concept, statement, or belief that a group holds as most important to their ethos.

- * All aspects and efforts of the organization are directly linked to its “gospel.”
- * The group’s morals, ethos, and culture are aligned and guided by its “gospel.”
- * Acceptance of the “gospel” is required of any who call themselves members of the group.

Three definitions of “Gospel” are used in the church. First, all churches and their denominations agree that the term “the Gospels” refers to the collection of the four books (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) containing the life story and teachings of Jesus.

Second, the phrases “the Gospel,” “the Gospel of Jesus Christ,” and “the Gospel of Christ,” refer primarily to the salvation-only Gospel of Christ. It encompasses the story of the crucifixion of Jesus, the resurrection of Christ, and, by faith, the assurance that the believer is granted eternal salvation in the presence of God. This definition is also referred to as “being born again” or “being saved.” It is shared by up to one-half of the Protestants in America.

Third, for almost half of these Protestants the definition of Gospel is some combination of the Gospel of Jesus and the Gospel of the Christ.

A New Name. A New Beginning.

One thing I've learned in a career of marketing is that when a word or phrase takes on a meaning that doesn't reflect the full or desired context, changing the perceived *meaning* is difficult and likely impossible.

One Gospel in Two Parts.

For example, over the last few decades, the word “evangelical” has come to mean the extreme conservative, political right-wing radicals striving for their definition of “moral christianity.”

To return its meaning to its original context is unlikely. So, I propose a new name for the complete Gospel.

The Gospel of Jesus, **the** Christ.

I suggest using the words “Gospel of Jesus, the Christ,” to replace ‘the Gospel,’ ‘the Gospel of Jesus Christ,’ and ‘the Gospel of Christ.’

While my suggestion may seem like the others — the difference is subtle, but it is significant. It stresses the co-equal parts that make up the complete Gospel of Jesus, the Christ.

Adding “, **the**” after Jesus and before Christ allows the dual elements of the Gospel of Jesus and the Gospel of the Christ to receive emphasis indicating they are different, and yet the same.

“, **the**” also reminds us of the responsibility we must live like Jesus showed us while resting in the assurance of eternal salvation.

Here’s how it reads, including the implied understanding. The Gospel of Jesus, the Christ, is the combination of the Gospel of Jesus and the Gospel of the Christ.

One gospel. Two parts. It’s not either/or. It’s both/and.

The Gospel of Jesus is . . .

...the Son of God who came to show humankind what the “Kingdom of God on Earth” could be, and our role in helping usher it into reality.

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The Gospel of the Christ is...

...the Anointed One who died, then rose from the dead, securing, through faith, eternal salvation for His followers.

Typically, a person seeking answers approaches the church with questions about living or dying, or both. The Gospel of Jesus addresses the living questions, and the Gospel of the Christ addresses the dying questions.

One wonders how one-half of the Protestants in America think they are Christian, yet believe and obey only one part (Gospel of the Christ) and ignore the other part (Gospel of Jesus).



Since there is no way to see into the heart and mind of a believer, the only way to determine that believers have accepted the Gospel of the Christ is by observing how they live out the Gospel of Jesus.

It takes belief and revelation to accept the complete Gospel of Jesus,

“Faith” has two meanings in the New Testament.

Another example of how one word can hold several meanings is the word “faith.” The word “faith” has at least two meanings.

Often, but not always, Paul and other New Testament writers used “faith” in the context of salvation. For instance, in the Gospel of the Christ, Ephesians 2:8, “faith” is used in the context of salvation, and it is clearly speaking about the Gospel of the Christ —

“For by grace you have been saved (salvation) through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God.”

The full context is found in Ephesians 2:8-10.

One Gospel in Two Parts.

In Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John, the word “faith” is not used by Jesus in the same way it is used in the other New Testament books. Jesus often uses “faith” to mean “believe” as in Mark 5:34,

“He said to her, ‘Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace and be healed of your disease.’”

The full context is found in Mark 5:24-34.

Context Matters.

Words can take on different meanings when preachers, teachers, and readers truncate words or phrases, placing a period before the full context is completed. In the examples below the ~~line-throughs~~ indicate the words that are often left out.

2²⁴ You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith.

~~alone.~~

James 2:24

and

2⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God — ⁹ not the result of works. ~~so that no one may boast.~~ ¹⁰ ~~For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.~~

Ephesians 2:8-10

With enough repetition of the truncated verses, it becomes “gospel,” and is nearly impossible to replace with a single correction.

Note that Paul didn’t stop after “*it is the gift of God – not the result of works,*” he went on in verse 10, to finish his complete definition of faith.

Finding Jesus

2 ^{9b}~~so that no one may boast.~~ ¹⁰For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

Ephesians 2:9b-10

Here, in verses 9 & 10, Paul brings together the Gospel of Jesus and the Gospel of the Christ.

Paul's definition for "faith" included "faith through the Gospel of the Christ that leads to living out the Gospel of Jesus." It is important to note that Paul's "works" that did not secure salvation were the strict, legalistic, Mosaic Laws such as circumcision, and achieving righteousness by obeying them.

And that brings us to James.

A couple of thousand years ago a man named James wrote a letter. This James, generally accepted as the younger half-brother of Jesus, another son of Mary, knew the man Jesus longer and better than any of His disciples. As His younger brother, James watched Jesus grow up. He participated in the "growing up" as younger brothers do – playing games, getting in fights, teasing, and testing each other.

By the time Jesus embarked on His ministry at age 30, James had perhaps 20 years of up-close, personal, day-to-day observation of what Jesus did, who He was, and how He acted. Even with this intimate relationship, James did not believe that his older brother was the Son of God, at least not until Jesus rose and appeared to the disciples, and to him.

We can see in James's letter, written and circulated to Jewish followers of "the Way" in Jerusalem and scattered abroad, that "faith vs. works" was an important and debated issue.

One Gospel in Two Parts.

James's main theme in his letter is "living faith." In James 2:17, he wrote, *"So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead."* And in verse 24 he said, *"You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone."* The full context is found in James 2:14-26.

Why did James make this point?

I believe it is because he was related to Jesus, knew Him well, and knew His heart. James knew that Jesus "did what he said" because he (James) saw Him do it.

James knew that Jesus's life and words were consistent. And in his letter, James – perhaps knowing he only had this one chance to share his understanding of his brother and his God – made sure that the theme was simple, powerful, and without ambiguity.

In this passage James gave a clear definition that faith in the Gospel of the Christ is what assures eternal salvation. He also says that faith must move beyond an intellectual position, or "thoughts and prayers" – it must involve "works" that reflect the teaching of, and examples from, the life of Jesus to be true and pure.

James's definition for "faith" included "faith through the Gospel of the Christ" and the works found in the Gospel of Jesus defined as providing for the needs of a "brother or sister," whether they are a fellow believer or not.

Paul and James were saying the same thing.

Paul preached the complete Gospel of Jesus, the Christ. Any Gospel definition that does not include the Gospel of Jesus is not from Paul.

James preached the complete Gospel of Jesus, the Christ. Any Gospel definition that does not include the Gospel of the Christ is not from James.

If the question is, "Is salvation attained by faith or works?" my answer is "Yes!"

Finding Jesus

Following the Gospel of Jesus without following the Gospel of the Christ does not secure a person's salvation.

Rejecting the Gospel of Jesus calls into question a person's genuine faith in the Gospel of the Christ.

This book is not about changing the salvation Gospel of the Christ. It is about embracing the living Gospel of Jesus, along with the Gospel of the Christ, so that, together, we become fully functioning followers of Jesus, ushering in the Kingdom of God on Earth for ourselves and all those we touch with our lives. We become followers of the complete Gospel of Jesus, the Christ.

Where do you stand?

Do you agree there are two parts to the complete Gospel of Jesus, the Christ?

If you do, what can be done to elevate the Gospel of Jesus to its co-equal status with the Gospel of the Christ?

It seems clear that Jesus and Christ are different, yet they are joined through the mystery and love of God into the Complete Gospel of Jesus, the Christ.

CHARLES STUART