

Aim of lesson

To enable the young people to identify the substance, scope and purpose of the gospel, and to prepare the ground for the next topic, which demonstrates that the gospel is consistently taught throughout the Bible.

Bible background

Mark 1:1; 14-15; Romans 1:16-17; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Galatians 1:6-12; 3:8, and the passages referenced in the Students' notes.

Preparation required

Read through the notes and make sure that you understand the material, then think through how you intend to approach the lesson: this could vary considerably depending on how willing the young people are to participate and how much they know.

Suggested outline of lesson

Introduction

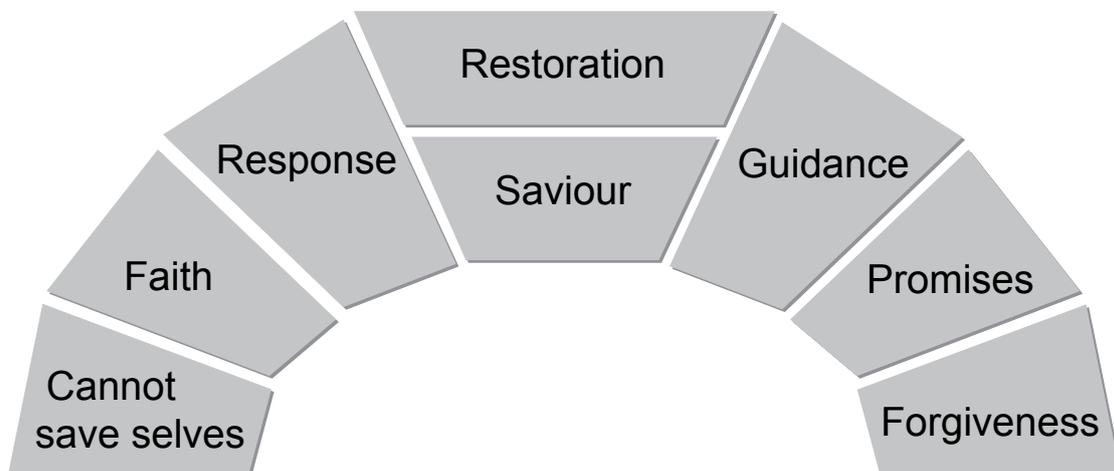
A popular view of the gospel is that it is 'about Jesus'. This, of course, is true; the gospel is essentially centred on the Lord Jesus and in seeking to widen its scope the emphasis on Jesus should not be lost. Nevertheless, an objective should be to clearly define the gospel as the plan for man's salvation in all ages, including both the Old Testament era and our own.

Building Blocks

Get the young people to think about the questions on the first page of their notes, then to look at

Mark 1:1, 14-15	The gospel is about Jesus Christ and the kingdom of God.
Romans 1:16-17	The power of God is at work to save believers by faith.
1 Corinthians 15:1-4	The gospel centres on the resurrection.
Galatians 1:6-12, 3:8	There is no other gospel, and it was preached to Abraham.

Then get them to read the passages that surround the 'Bridge of Salvation' and summarise their meaning, which in brief will be something like this:



Cannot save selves	We die because we are sinners, and there is nothing we can do to save ourselves.
Forgiveness	God does not ignore sin but provides a way in which our guilt is covered.
Promises	From the beginning God promised to provide a way of salvation through the sacrifice of a saviour
Faith	God requires each person to accept and believe in his plan of salvation and the saviour he would send.

Response	Our faith is shown to be genuine by our obedience and manner of life. If we do not sincerely try to please God by the way we live, then our faith is not real.
Guidance	God will walk with his people to bring them to his kingdom.
Saviour	Since we cannot save ourselves, God provides a saviour, who is the means of our salvation.
Restoration	Faithful people will be raised from the dead to live in God's kingdom.

The Lord Jesus Christ is, of course, the saviour and the whole of the gospel centres around him. The next topic points out however that this is not a New Testament subject: the elements of the gospel were understood by believers before Christ came; they could all, if they so chose, accept the gospel and enter salvation (hence John 8:56).

Only one Testament

Now make the point that since the gospel of salvation was preached to Abraham, there is no difference between the messages of the 'Old' and 'New' Testaments. If you have time you may be able to think then about the purpose of the law of Moses by looking at:

Romans 5:20	The law came to make sin measurable, and thus apparently worse, so that nobody could claim to be righteous in their own right.
Galatians 3:19-25	The law came to convince everyone that they needed a saviour.
Hebrews 10:1-4	The law was a shadow of the way of salvation which God had prepared.
Matthew 5:17-18	Jesus came to fulfil it, not to take it away.

Relevance to our lives

"it (the gospel) is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth" Romans 1:16

This verse defines the essential message of the gospel; it is by the will and power of God; it is the way he has decreed for man to receive salvation; man's part is to believe.

Prayer

'Teach us the gospel, O Lord, and help us to believe it, so that we may join all the faithful disciples of all ages to praise you in the kingdom when the Lord Jesus returns. Amen'

Other suggestions for activities

If there is a suitable event in the foreseeable future the young people may like to consider whether they might want to make a presentation using real building blocks.