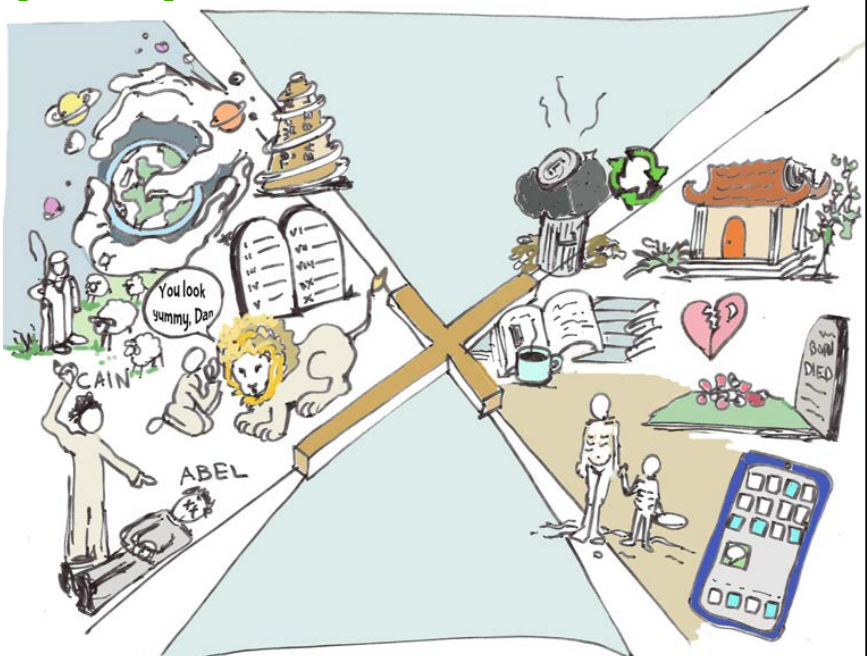


Good, better, best

- What makes someone a good/better/best...
 - Student?
 - Teacher?
 - Boss?
 - Employee?
 - Friend?
 - Leader?
- How does this topic make you feel?
- What makes someone a good/better/best Christian?

The Only Way

Acts 13:13-43



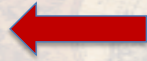
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The Early Church

Jewish people

“Near” to God

- Worshiped the true God
- Had God’s revealed word, the Bible (Old Testament)
- Had history of God’s work



Gentile people (not Jews)

“Far” from God

- Worshiped many gods, or no gods
- Did not know God’s words
- Had many traditions apart from the true God

Gospel: all need salvation through the same work of Christ

Expectation by the “near” people:

“far” had to come “near” to become Christian (and extra step)

Paul’s first journey to take the Good News to people who hadn’t heard it before

- Reaching out to “far” people while still speaking to “near” people
- Both “near” and “far” people heard him preach



Acts 13:13-43

13: Paul & companions to Perga; John Mark leaves

14-15: • Paul is now the leader

16-22: • No explanation for John Mark's departure

23-25: • Paul later refused to travel with him

26-31: • Perhaps: objection to ministry to Gentiles

32-37: • If there was outreach in Perga,

38-39: we aren't told about it

40-41:

42-43:

Chinese: page 1788

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Acts 13:13-43

13: Paul & companions to Perga; John Mark leaves

14-15: In Antioch: invited to speak in the synagogue

16-22: • Synagogue: mixture of "near" and "far" people

23-25: • Typical service: Shema, prayer, Scripture reading,

26-31: sermon, benediction

32-37: • The Shema begins: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our

38-39: God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with

40-41: all your heart and with all your soul and with all

42-43: your strength." *Deuteronomy 6:4-5*

- Paul was highly educated, and it was common to invite visitors, especially highly educated, to speak

Acts 13:13-43

- 13: Paul & companions to Perga; John Mark leaves
 14-15: In Antioch: invited to speak in the synagogue
 16-22: Judaism: God patiently worked for His purposes
 23-25: • God actively worked in Jewish history for His
 26-31: purposes: chose, blessed, led, endured, overthrew,
 32-37: gave, removed, testified
 38-39: • Saul=“asked for”, replaced with God’s choice:
 40-41: David (a sinner)
 42-43: • A man who followed God’s plan, including grace

Acts 13:13-43

- 13: Paul & companions to Perga; John Mark leaves
 14-15: In Antioch: invited to speak in the synagogue
 16-22: Judaism: God patiently worked for His purposes
 23-25: Jesus: the Promised One, and the greatest one
 26-31: • John the Baptist required repentance
 32-37: • even among the “near”
 38-39: • John was probably a highly respected reformer
 40-41: • John said: Jesus is immensely greater!
 42-43:

Acts 13:13-43

- 13: Paul & companions to Perga; John Mark leaves
 14-15: In Antioch: invited to speak in the synagogue
 16-22: Judaism: God patiently worked for His purposes
 23-25: Jesus: the Promised One, and the greatest one
 26-31: Jesus: rejected by Jerusalemites, and raised by God
 32-37: • This is the promised salvation!
 38-39: • Jews' rejection of Jesus fulfilled God's plan
 40-41: • God raised Jesus from the dead, as told by many
 42-43: first-hand witnesses
 • Proof that Jesus was God's chosen One

Acts 13:13-43

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 23-25: Jesus: the Promised One, and the greatest one
 26-31: Jesus: rejected by Jerusalemites, and raised by God
 32-37: Jesus: the Promised good news (Gospel)
 38-39: • Jewish prophecy was fulfilled in Christ
 40-41: • Especially through His resurrection
 42-43: • Jesus is greater than David (who died and decayed)

Acts 13:13-43

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 32-37: Jesus: the Promised good news (Gospel)
 38-39: Jesus: brought forgiveness and freedom from sin
 40-41: • For all, and needed by all
 42-43: • What Moses (and everything else) could not do
 • In Jesus, there is freedom from the power of sin
 • And being considered righteous

Acts 13:13-43

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 32-37: Jesus: the Promised good news (Gospel)
 38-39: Jesus: brought forgiveness and freedom from sin
 40-41: Warning: Believe, don't scoff (mocking disbelief)
 42-43: • Some people see and hear, but don't believe
 • Especially a problem among the "near"

Acts 13:13-43

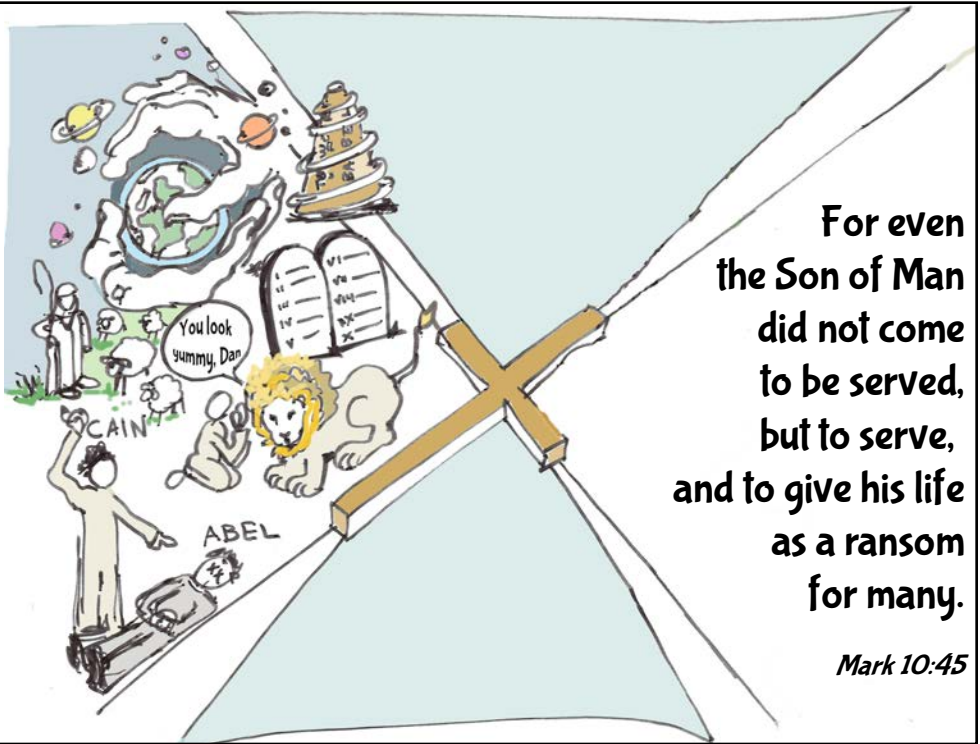
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 38-39: Jesus: brought forgiveness and freedom from sin
 40-41: Warning: Believe, don't scoff (mocking disbelief)
 42-43: Many: Enthusiastic belief
- Including among the 'near' who will rebel and try to block the 'far'
 - Paul urged them to continue in grace

The Big Idea

God's work with humanity
 is to save/forgive people
 through Jesus' historical death and resurrection
 the centerpiece of God's ongoing work
 for everyone **open to all**
 forever **needed by all**

Beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, Jesus explained to His disciples what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

Luke 24:27

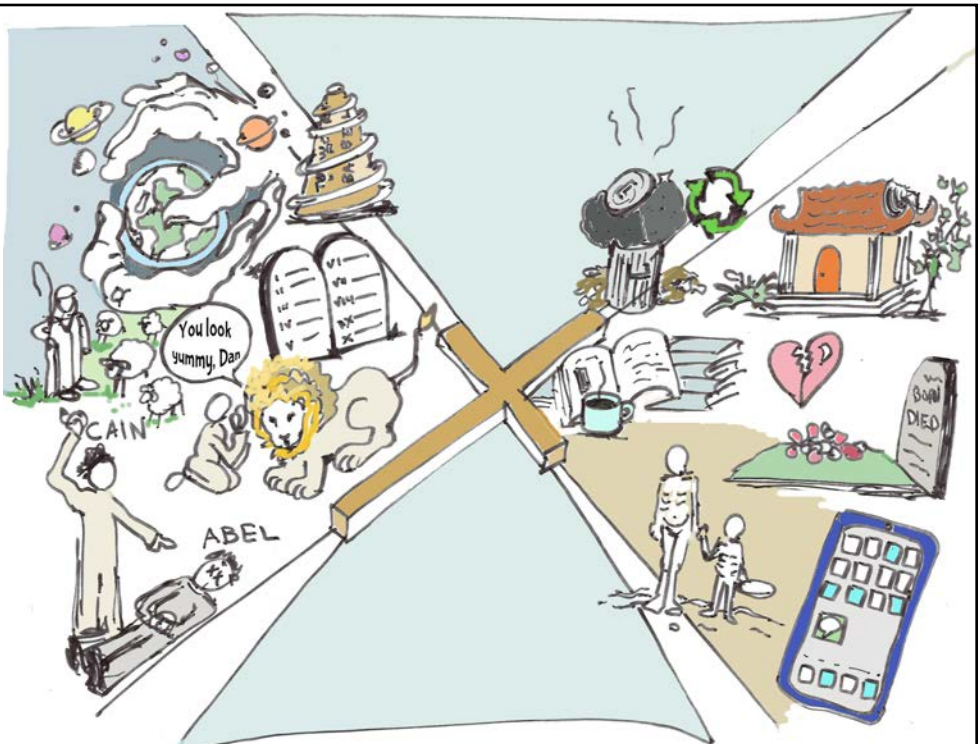


For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Mark 10:45

For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in Christ, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Colossians 1:19-20



The Big Idea

God's work with humanity
 is to save/forgive people
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 the centerpiece of God's ongoing work
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Application

**Rejoice in humility and dependence upon
 grace (salvation/forgiveness) through Christ**

- Seeing the **Old Testament** without reference to the saving work of Jesus is to miss its primary message
- Seeing **any part of life** without reference to the saving work of Jesus is to **miss the hope of God — others**
 - We so quickly go back to thinking we have to be good enough, or capable enough, or work hard enough, or ...
 - Relationships, career, self worth, family, church, health, ...
 - **“For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.” *Hebrews 10:14***

One Time Treatment versus Endless Treatment

Cure for spinal muscular atrophy

- Nearly all babies who have this die after a few years
- “Zolgensma”, \$2.1 million drug
 - This **one time, one-hour treatment** seems to cure it completely

Breathing: how long?

- Do it for as long as you want to live

The grace of Christ is like breathing:

- Grace (forgiveness from God) is the life as a Christian
- Yet we so easily leave it behind, wanting to be “good enough” instead

Application

Rejoice in humility and dependence upon grace (salvation/forgiveness) through Christ

- Seeing the **Old Testament** without reference to the saving work of Jesus is to miss its primary message
- Seeing **any part of life** without reference to the saving work of Jesus is to **miss the hope of God**

Application

Rejoice in humility and dependence upon grace (salvation/forgiveness) through Christ

Be profoundly humble before God & people

- This Good News should profoundly change how I see **myself** and others
 - “If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.” *1 John 1:8-10*

Application

Rejoice in humility and dependence upon grace (salvation/forgiveness) through Christ

Be profoundly humble before God & people

- This Good News should profoundly change how I see myself and **others**
 - “But I tell you, **love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you**, that you may be children of your Father in heaven.” *Matthew 5:44-45*

Application

Rejoice in humility and dependence upon grace (salvation/forgiveness) through Christ

Be profoundly humble before God & people

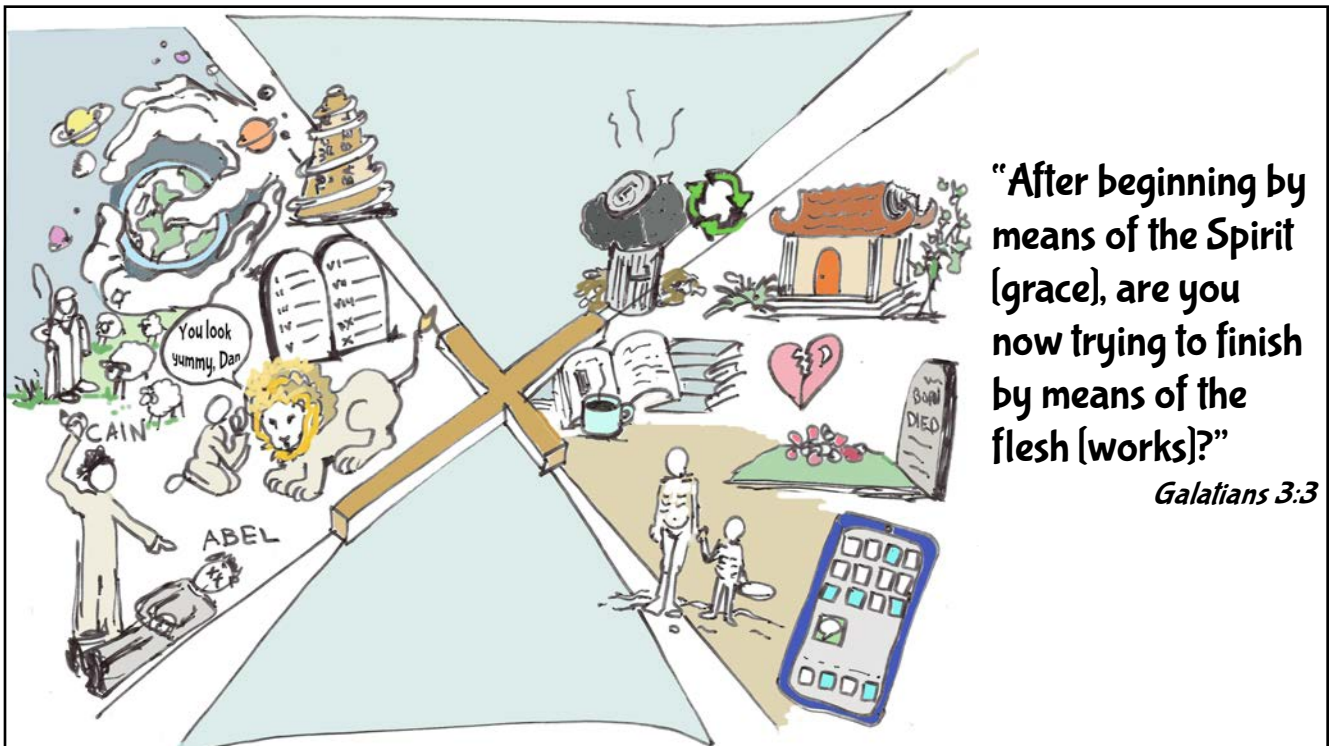
- This Good News should profoundly change how I see myself and **others**
 - “For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But **if you do not forgive others their sins**, your Father will not forgive your sins.” *Matthew 6:14-15*

Application

Rejoice in humility and dependence upon grace (salvation/forgiveness) through Christ

Be profoundly humble before God & people

- This Good News should profoundly change how I see myself and **others**
 - “**Do not judge**, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.” *Matthew 7:1-2*



A Good Christian

The lie

- A good Christian is someone who doesn't need grace as much anymore, because they are better people
- A good church is mostly up made of people who don't need grace as much anymore, because they are better people

A Good Christian

Someone who **keeps depending** upon the grace of Christ

- “After beginning by means of the Spirit [grace], are you now trying to finish by means of the flesh [works]?” *Galatians 3:3*
- “May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world.” *Galatians 6:14*

Someone who **keeps becoming** more and more like Jesus, **“full of grace and truth”**

- This can be particularly hard for “near” people

God’s work with humanity
is to save/forgive people
through Jesus’ historical
death and resurrection
the centerpiece of God’s
ongoing work
for everyone
forever

“After beginning by means of
the Spirit (grace), are you now
trying to finish by means of the
flesh (works)?” *Galatians 3:3*

