

EVERY TRACK EVERY WEEK

WEEK 11: Leader Study Guide

Too Good to Be True

-Welcome!

-Intro: Thanks for being here! Revisit last week's points

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**Exchange numbers or invite attendees to join your ETEW Facebook group.*

INTRO:

Hi, and welcome to Every Track Every Week. My name is _____ and I am involved with Texas FCA Motocross through _____. I've been involved with FCA MX for _____ years and my favorite thing about the ministry is _____.

This week's discussion is based upon episode #74 of our podcast "The Gospel Driven Athlete" titled, "Too Good to Be True." This week we are talking about how the gospel is actually quite unnatural for us as humans. We are going to discuss why this observation (or fact really) is why the gospel is such incredible news for us and how it allows us to rest fully in the accomplished work of Christ rather than our own work or accomplishments.

-Ice Breaker Question: *Most people are right handed. Anyone here left handed? Anyone ambidextrous (can write and accomplish tasks efficiently with both right and left hands)? Most of us are not ambidextrous. How does it feel when you use your opposite hand to try and accomplish a normal everyday task?*

The gospel as we will discuss today is a lot like using your opposite hand. It is awkward and downright unnatural. Often times we want to revert back to the hand that is easier to use, but God through the gospel wants to show us his way of righteousness.

-Question 1: *What is the gospel?*

***Answer:** The gospel is so complex that man can spend his life studying its significance and yet never be able to fully plumb its depths, but simple enough that a child can understand it. With that being said, in its simplest form, **the gospel is the good news message of how God saves His people.**

The gospel message is that while God requires perfection, and although our sins



and nature result in our falling way short of this perfection, Christ descended to us and accomplished perfect righteousness on our behalf. He offers this righteousness to us as a free gift by faith. He accomplished this righteousness by coming to the earth, living a perfect life in perfect obedience to the law (**Deut 6:4-5**), dying and suffering our penalty (**Romans 3:25**), and resurrecting to prove he had defeated death (**Acts 2:24**).

Additionally, the gospel is “*the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes...*” (**Rom1:16**). In other words, **it is the means by which God saves us**. The word salvation includes more than just being saved from going to hell forever. The word salvation is a holistic term that includes being declared righteous before God (*justification*), being made more like him throughout our life (*sanctification*), and ultimately being made perfect in holiness upon our death or upon His return (*glorification*).

God produces faith in us through the proclamation of the gospel message. This faith that God gives us enables us to be able to place our trust and hope (i.e. believe) in the person and work of Christ alone for our right standing before God. Or to say it another way- **trusting in the accomplished work of Christ (as told in the gospel) for our acceptance by God is how we are saved.**

The gospel is how God is glorified because it tells the story of Him accomplishing His eternal purpose of redeeming His people. (2 Corinthians 4:4)

As a shorthand summary, the Gospel is: God requires perfection. Man failed and continues to fail. But God, because of His great love, accomplished the requirement of perfection for man in the person of Jesus Christ and man receives this perfection through faith alone in Christ alone.

The Gospel is:

God Requires -> Man Fails.

God Accomplishes -> Man Receives.

-Question 2: *What makes it good news?*

***ANSWER:** This gospel is incredible news for us. God created us to be in perfect relation to him and to enjoy fellowship alongside him (**Gen1-2**). Our great grandparents Adam & Eve severed this relationship (**Gen3**) and because we take on their nature, we become guilty lawbreakers as well. Hence, the painful world we live in full of sinful lawbreakers.

Regardless of how good we feel we are compared to certain people we are extremely evil compared to, and in the sight of, a perfect God. So much so that his perfect justice demands that eternal offense be met with eternal consequences. This is the bad news of the law and what makes the good news so good.



The gospel is wonderful news for us because it provides the only hope we have in Jesus Christ. Jesus upheld Gods requirement and even better, through his life and death he not only bore Gods wrath so that, *“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” (Rom 8:1)* but he also grants us His righteousness so that God sees us as perfect law keepers- **1 Corinthians 1:30** *“And because of him [God] you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption,”*

Question 3: *Is the gospel something that we do or is it something that has been done? Why is this an important distinction to make?*

***ANSWER:** The gospel is the good news of Christ’s accomplishment- of what He has done. It is actually the exact opposite of what we have done. It is the left hand to the right hand. Or if you are left handed, the right hand to the left. We cannot confuse our work even as Christians with Christ’s. We do not save people, Jesus did. We participate in that by faithfully sharing the message of God news but it is not our broken works that ultimately bring people to faith.

The gospel is an objective reality outside of you and I that was “finished” (John 19:30) 2000 years ago- *When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, “It is finished,” and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. (Jn19:30).* It is because of that that we are free from condemnation. It is critical that we keep our subjective works and performance out of that picture or all kinds of confusion can ensue.

The gospel is not natural to us because we are created with a conscience and aim to be law keepers. However, because we have been separated from God, our definition of law keeping has been skewed in all sorts of directions. So the bible helps us. It tells us that the law is not a subjective standard (i.e. try your best) it is objective (perfect obedience). **James 2:10** *“For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it.”*

Therefore, what you and I do and accomplish is not objective good news because we all fall short. This is why it is important that we remember the gospel is not about us. It is not something we do. It is something that was done for us. And it was objective and is objective for all those who believe.

This is good news.

-Question 4: *Is the gospel unique in comparison to other world religions?*

ANSWER: The gospel is the unique attribute of Christianity which no other world religion contains. It speaks of a God who descends to man’s weakness and provides an external righteousness for his justification. In our natural thinking this is ludicrous. Internally we struggle with the concept that the guilty should go free.



But in God's economy, he loves lavishing free grace on the undeserving and has provided a legal way to do it justly through his son.

The fact that man has created hundreds of religions fits in perfectly with the narrative of the bible. In man's attempt to justify and redeem himself and the world he lives, man thinks up broken ways to attempt to head down a path of restoration. However, no remedy but Gods will be sufficient. We are all prone to this default mode of justification by works. We must get regular gospel doses to be reminded that righteousness is not granted in the way we think. We don't earn it. We receive and rest in it.

In all other world religions, there is a system in place for man to ascend to (or work his way to) God. This is opposite of the message in Christianity where God descends (in the person of Jesus) to man to accomplish for man what man was unable to do.

Relearning to think in terms of God's gospel and his free gift to you as opposed to what you do for him is like using your opposite hand. It is awkward and will always be to some degree. **1 Corinthians 1:18** *"For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God."*

-Question 5: *How should these facts inform our actions and our lives?*

ANSWER: The gospel creates gratitude which creates growth. We must constantly aim to dive the depths of these incredible truths and it is deep in the waters of God's love and free grace that we will begin to discover his love and we will overflow with love for him and our neighbor. We will start to then exhibit the fruit of obedience to the law which is summed up in loving God and loving our neighbor. **(Matt 22:37-40)**

The Gospel is:

God Requires -> Man Fails.

God Accomplishes -> Man Receives.

Rest in that.

-Lets pray.

