

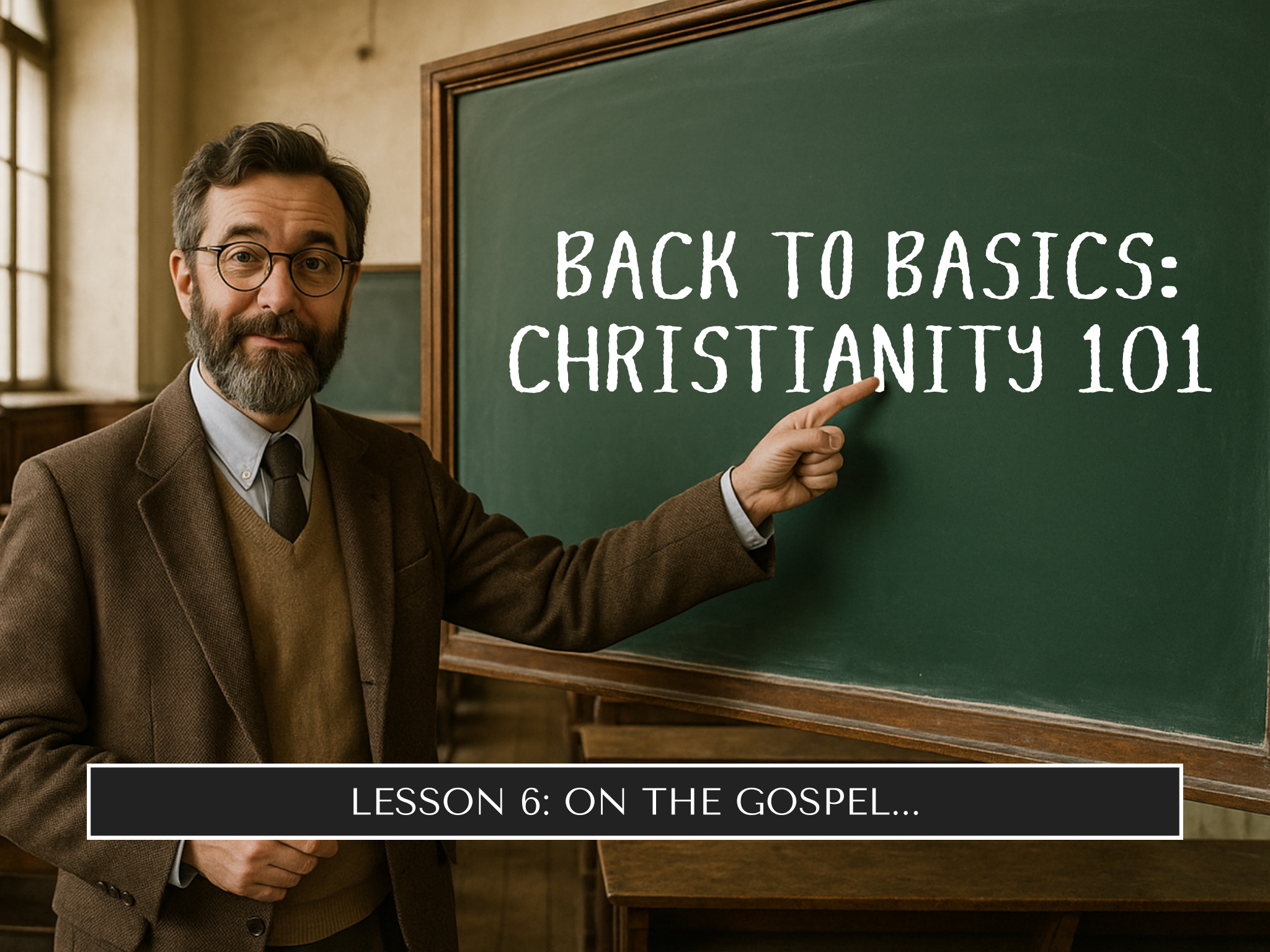
A man with a beard and glasses, wearing a brown blazer over a sweater and shirt, stands in a classroom. He is pointing his right index finger towards the text on a green chalkboard. The chalkboard has the text "BACK TO BASICS: CHRISTIANITY 101" written on it in a white, serif font. The background shows wooden benches and a window with a grid pattern.

BACK TO BASICS: CHRISTIANITY 101

Lessons:

- 1: God
- 2: The Holy Trinity
- 3: The Lord Jesus Christ
- 4: The church and the sacraments
- 5: Prayer and the Scriptures
- 6: The Gospel



A man with a beard and glasses, wearing a brown jacket over a sweater and shirt, stands in a classroom. He is pointing his right index finger towards the text on a green chalkboard. The chalkboard has the title 'BACK TO BASICS: CHRISTIANITY 101' written on it in a white, serif font. The background shows a window with multiple panes on the left and wooden chairs in the foreground.

BACK TO BASICS: CHRISTIANITY 101

LESSON 6: ON THE GOSPEL...

On the Gospel...

How would you
explain the
gospel to
someone who
has never heard
it?



What is the Gospel?

- The word gospel simply means **“good news”**.
- It’s a story that spans the entire length of the Bible, beginning in Genesis 1 and ending in Revelation 22.
- Can be broken into 4 parts:
Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Restoration.



What is the Gospel?

- **Creation (Genesis 1):**
 - God creates the world and sees that it is good.
 - The world was perfect; free from sin or wickedness.
 - God created man in His image, to care for His creation and to represent Him on earth.
 - Being made in God's image doesn't mean we physically look like Him. It means He gave us qualities that reflect who He is.



What is the Gospel?

- **Fall (Genesis 3):**
 - In their free will, Adam and Eve, submitting to the temptation of Satan, chose to disobey God.
 - All of God's creation is now corrupted with sin, including our nature. We are separated from God, cursed to die.
 - **Original sin:** we inherit Adam's nature, which is bent towards sin and evil.



What is the Gospel?

- **Redemption:**

- Just as sin entered the world, God set into motion a plan to redeem mankind and reconcile us back to Him.
- God gave Israel the Law and the Prophets, but they disobeyed. So God allowed them to sacrifice animals as temporary coverings for sin.
- Jesus, God almighty, takes on flesh, becoming human. He lives a perfect life, fulfilling God's law, dies on the cross for our sins, and rises from the dead 3 days later.
- This sacrifice would cover all sins of those who believe in Him.



What is the Gospel?

- **Redemption:**

- Just as sin entered the world, God set into motion a plan to redeem mankind and reconcile us back to Him.
- God gave Israel the Law and the Prophets, but they disobeyed. So God allowed them to sacrifice animals as temporary coverings for sin.
- Jesus, God almighty, takes on flesh, becoming human. He lives a perfect life, fulfilling God's law, dies on the cross for our sins, and rises from the dead 3 days later.
- This sacrifice would cover all sins of those who believe in Him.



Atonement Theories (YA)

- So, what did Jesus' death on the cross accomplish?
 - **Christus Victor:** Christ defeats the powers of sin, death, and Satan through His death and resurrection.
 - **Ransom Theory:** Humanity was enslaved to Satan by sin. Christ's death is the "ransom" that frees us (typically from Satan).
 - **Recapitulation:** Christ "re-heads" humanity, living the perfect human life that Adam failed to live, and by His obedience restores humanity.
 - **Satisfaction Theory:** Sin dishonors God; humanity owes Him a debt of honor. Only Christ, as God-man, can offer the perfect obedience and sacrifice to restore that honor.
 - **Penal Substitutionary Atonement (PSA):** God's justice requires punishment for sin. Christ bears God's wrath and punishment in our place, satisfying divine justice.



Atonement Theories (YA)

- By denomination (Not exhaustive; some may hold to multiple, but these are the ones they emphasize)
 - **Orthodox:** Christus Victor, Recapitulation, Theosis.
 - **Catholic:** Satisfaction + Sacrificial/Eucharistic + elements of Christus Victor.
 - **Reformed/Evangelical:** Penal Substitution (PSA).
 - **Arminian/Wesleyan:** Governmental theory.
 - **Liberal Protestant:** Moral Influence.
- Orthodox/Catholics strongly reject PSA, as they feel it divides the Trinity. They do not agree with the penal part, but they do agree with substitutionary atonement to a degree.
- We hold to PSA: Jesus in our place [JIMP]



How do we respond?

- The Bible says we need to **repent, confess, and believe.**
 - Recognize that you need a savior, and turn away from your sin & towards Jesus.
 - Confess your sin to Jesus, and acknowledge that you can't change without His help.
 - And believe in Jesus by embracing the gift of salvation through the finished work on the cross.

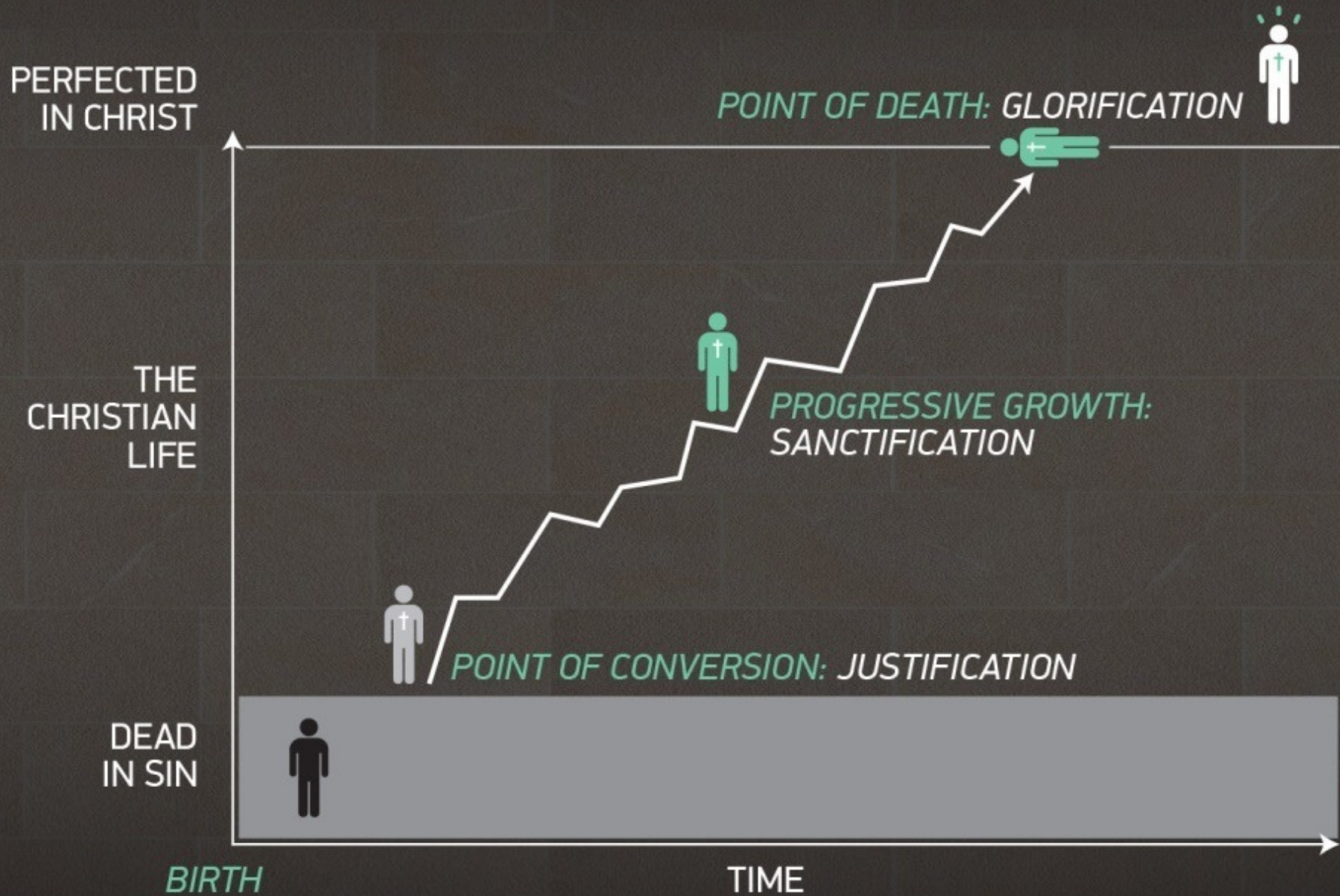


Ordo Salutis

- Order of Salvation
- All Christians believe:
 - **We start dead in sin** and can't save ourselves.
 - This is original sin: the idea that we can't save ourselves. Since we are dead in sin, God need to awaken us so we can respond. We are not neutral, blank slates with the ability to choose God; this is the heresy of Pelagianism.
 - **God's grace moves first.**
 - Yes, in EVERY Christian denomination, God always reaches out first. No one can come to Jesus unless the Father calls him first (John 6:44).
 - **We receive new life through Christ** (by faith, repentance, and baptism in some traditions).
 - Every denomination also agrees here: we must repent, believe, and then typically, baptism follows.
 - **We grow in holiness** (sanctification/theosis).
 - **We end in glory** with God forever.



THE PROCESS OF SALVATION



Ordo Salutis

- Here's where we differ:
 - **We start dead in sin** and can't save ourselves.
 - So far, so good. All denominations agree.
 - **God's grace moves first.**
 - All denominations agree, but with one caveat: when God's grace moves, can we resist God's call? Synergists like Catholics, Orthodox, and Methodists say yes, we have the freedom to resist God's grace. Monergists like some Lutherans, Reformed Christians, and Baptists say no; God's grace cannot be turned away. If God calls you, you will repent. This is called Irresistible grace, which is the I in the Calvinist acronym TULIP.



Ordo Salutis

- **We receive new life through Christ** (by faith, repentance, and baptism in some traditions).
- Here's where we have a minor divergence: Catholics and Orthodox believe in a doctrine called Infused Righteousness, where God imparts grace unto us, resulting in inward change. For Catholics, justification (being made righteous before God) includes this inward renewal. Protestants agree that inward change is real, but we separate it from justification, linking it to sanctification. For us, Justification = God declares the sinner righteous by faith alone; adoption into God's family.
- The Orthodox also emphasize cleansing and union with God, rather than using legal terms. They prefer to speak medicinally.



Ordo Salutis

- **We grow in holiness**
(sanctification/theosis).
- Here's where we truly diverge, and where we find the bulk of our differences. We all agree that sanctification is the process of becoming more like God, and that our salvation isn't just a single moment; it's a process of true change that continues until we join Christ in heaven. However:
- Some Christians believe that sanctification requires cooperation with God (synergism - Catholic, Orthodox, Armenian). If one decides to apostasize or backslide, they jeopardize their salvation and could lose it. Others believe that God will work within us so that those who are called may persevere to the end (monergism - Lutheran, Reformed, Baptist). However, some monergists like Augustine believed that one could still lose their salvation, being elect for a time and be sanctified, but then eventually fall away.



Ordo Salutis

- **We end in glory with God forever.**
- Luckily, we all agree on this one too, although we'd use different names. Catholics use the term "Beatific Vision", which means to see God face-to-face. We would lean towards the word "glorification".
- Catholics would also add one more caveat: for those who die in a state of venial sin, they would go to purgatory first. Every person in purgatory is assured of heaven but must be purified or cleansed before entering.
- These small and subtle nuances make big differences in our theology and how we interpret Scripture.



Faith + Works?

- **Don't Catholics and Orthodox believe in a works-based salvation?**
- Officially, no.
 - Council of Trent: "If anyone says that man can be justified before God by his own works...without divine grace through Jesus Christ, let him be anathema." (Canon 1)
- However, they do condemn sola fide and affirm that works are needed to maintain salvation (Canon 9, 24)
- That being said, Pope Benedict XVI did say this: "Luther's phrase: 'faith alone' is true, if it is not opposed to faith in charity, in love."
- Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification (1999) between Catholics and Lutherans: "By grace alone, in faith in Christ's saving work and not because of any merit on our part, we are accepted by God."



Faith + Works?

- This is one misunderstanding about sola fide: we are saved by faith alone, but faith isn't merely an intellectual belief: it's a changed heart and mind as a result of the gospel, living in obedience and good works as we become more holy. Luther himself said **"Idle faith is not a justifying faith" (Commentary on Galatians)**, and Calvin famously said: **"It is therefore faith alone which justifies, and yet the faith which justifies is not alone" (Acts of the Council of Trent with the Antidote)**.
- All Christians would affirm, by the way, that God's grace is the only thing that enables us to do good works. We can do nothing good apart from Christ (John 15:5). So even in the synergistic view, good works are only performed with God's empowerment.



Have you
personally
trusted Jesus
as your Savior?
Are you living
out the gospel
in your daily
life?



On the Gospel...

Blooket



Additional Resources

- -Glorifying and Enjoying God: William Boekestein, Jonathan Landry Cruse, Andrew J. Miller
- -To be a Christian
- -Christian Beliefs: Wayne Grudem
- -👉 Accept Jesus Christ Today! 🏴 (My video on the Gospel)
- -The Gospel
- -What is the gospel? | GotQuestions.org
- -John MacArthur - What Is The Gospel?
- -<https://www.sdmorrison.org/7-theories-of-the-atonement-summarized/>
- -<https://www.crossway.org/articles/10-theories-of-the-atonement/>
- -<https://www.gotquestions.org/let-Us-make-man-in-Our-image.html>
- -<https://www.gotquestions.org/what-is-the-gospel.html>
- <https://christoverall.com/article/concise/penal-substitution-and-other-atonement-theologies/>



Word Bank:

- **Regeneration:**
 - The act by which God makes the sinner spiritually alive, enabling faith.
- **Justification:**
 - God declaring the sinner righteous.
- **Sanctification:**
 - Ongoing growth in holiness.
- **Glorification:**
 - Final stage in salvation where we join God in Heaven, seeing Him face to face.
- **Monergism:**
 - Regeneration and justification are completely a work of God alone.
- **Synergism:**
 - God frees our will but requires us to choose or reject His initial offering of salvation.

