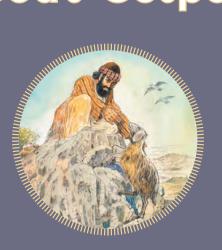
## God's Gospel



## Making HIM Known

God's Battle God's Gospel God's Names God's Promise God's Providence God's Wisdom God's Word

# God's Gospel

BY JILL NELSON



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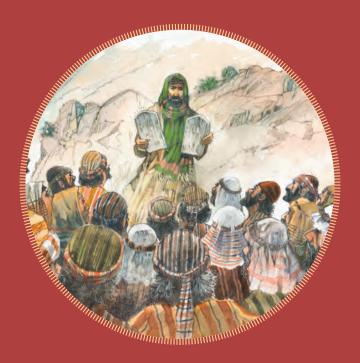
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Ror my grandson, David Glenn House. May the words of this book help you to "taste and see" the good news of the gospation in the hope that you would trust and treasure Jesus with all your beart, mind, soul, and strength.

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But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. —John 20:31

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This book was written to give parents an opportunity to present solid truth L to their children and to encourage real-life application of that truth.

Children receive more encouragement to learn when truth is presented by a trusted individual. Your positive, relational parent-child commitment will be a real benefit when you sit down together to read this book. Your time together

There is a greater impact when an individual *discovers* truth instead of just hearing it presented. Many questions have been incorporated into the text of this book to encourage your child to wonder and think critically. The process of discovery will be circumvented if you don't give your child adequate time to think and respond. After asking a question, wait for a response. If your child has difficulty,

<section-header><section-header><section-header><text><text><section-header><text><text> Questions and responses can be springboards for more questions and discovery as you interact with your child's mind and heart. The Holy Spirit is the real teacher, so depend on Him to give both you and your child thoughts and truths to explore together, and to bring the necessary understanding. Take the time to work through each story at a leisurely pace—giving time for interaction and further dialogue. The goal should be to get the material into the child, not

## Understandable

These stories have been written with attention given to explaining difficult or potentially new concepts. Some of these concepts may take time for your child to digest. Allow your child to ponder new truths. Read the story more than once, allowing the truth to be better understood and integrated into your child's theological framework. At times, have your child read parts of the lesson, giving an opportunity for visual learning.

Because vocabulary can be child-specific, define the particular words foreign to your child. Retell difficult sections in familiar wording, and ask questions to be sure your child understands the truth being taught.

### **Theological**

More than just acquainting your child with an understanding of redemption through the gospel, this book is building a foundation of biblical theology for your child. As your child begins to correctly understand who God is and how He interacts with the world, he or she won't just have a vague notion of God, but will be able to relate to the God of the Bible.

Because the Word of God has convicting and converting power, Bible texts are quoted word for word in some parts. Some of these verses may be beyond the child's understanding, so you may want to explain unfamiliar words or thoughts. Even though clear comprehension may be difficult, hearing the Word itself is a means that the Holy Spirit often uses to encourage faith in your child (Romans 10:17). Do not minimize the effectual influence of God's Word in the tender souls of children.

Since the Word of God is living and active, allow the child to read the actual Bible verses as much as possible. Also, encourage your child to memorize some of the verses so he or she can meditate on them at other times.

Essential gospel truths are presented throughout the book. Use this as an opportunity to share God's work of grace in your life, and to converse with your

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need to respond with heartfelt repentance and belief in the gospel. Look for daily opportunities to apply the truths of the gospel in the life of your child, showing how the gospel is pertinent to all of life.

## Prayer

Ultimately, our efforts are effective only if the Holy Spirit breathes on our teaching and quickens it to the heart. Pray not only before going through the stories, but also in the succeeding days, that the Holy Spirit would be at work bringing about true saving faith, evidenced by a growing love for Jesus and a desire to walk in obedience to Him.

hink about something really big, like a night sky filled with twinkling stars and a bright glowing moon. Can you reach out and touch them? Can you count all the stars in the night sky? How big is the moon? Could you hold it in your hands? How far away is it? Have you ever pretended that you

Now think about something very small, like a beautiful flower. Where have you seen flowers grow? Why do flowers need dirt and sunshine and water? And why do buzzing bees and pretty butterflies like flowers? Do they like the pleasant smell? What do flower petals feel like when you touch them gently with your

<section-header><section-header><text><text><text><text><text> Picture in your mind one more thing—absolutely nothing! That's right! Close your eyes for a minute and try to imagine nothing at all. Or maybe just imagine darkness (since that seems like nothing at all). Do you know that at one time, a long time ago, that is what it would have been like—no sky, no stars, no moon, no sun, no flowers, no dirt, no trees, no bees, not even people like you and me? But it wouldn't be true to say that there was NOTHING at all. Because there was

### *In the beginning, God* created the heavens and the earth. (Genesis 1:1)

What always was? God always was. Before there was anything or anyone else, there was God. Why was God there at the beginning, before anything else? Because He alone is *eternal*. That means that God had no beginning, and He will have no end. He was always there, and He has always been alive. It's hard for us to imagine not having a beginning, not having a birthday, but it's really true

So the very first words of the Bible tell us something very, very important. They tell us about the *most* important Person of all—the one true God who always was and always will be. But they also tell us about what God did.

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

God created something. What did He create? The heavens and the earth... Wow! That includes everything there is! How did God do such a huge

job? Did He have to go to a store to buy what He

needed? (Oops! There were no stores yet!) Did He have helpers? We don't need to guess at the answers. The Bible tells us how God created everything.

God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.God said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters."God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear."

God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit."

God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night."

God said, "Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth."

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## LEARNING TO TRUST GOD

- Read Genesis 1:1–25. How was God able to do such a big job? Why did He make the world to include so many different shapes, sizes, colors, smells, sounds, tastes, and textures? What does this tell us about what God is like? Read Psalm 19:1–4 and Romans 1:20.
- Because God is the one, eternal, glorious God who created all things, how should you act toward Him? Who created you? Who do you belong to? Read Revelation 4:11. What would it look like in your life to show that God is worth more to you than anything else?
- Activity: Read Psalm 148, and then plan to go to a park or nature center. Walk along the trails and point out specific things to look at, listen to, smell, and touch. Then turn your observations into praise refrains such as, "Praise the Lord, you fuzzy squirrels. Praise Him, you purple crawling beetles. Praise God, you tall, shady tree. Praise Him, you singing sparrow. Praise the Lord, you warm wind," and so on. How could you praise God as you walk along?

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