

1. Week 1 Review – What do you mean by Good News?

- A significant gap exists between the scholarly interpretation of the Good News and its presentation within modern church settings and contemporary Christian discourse.
 - **Popular View:** how sinful people can attain heaven in the afterlife by believing in Jesus.
 - **Scholarly View:** the announcement of God’s Kingdom, and in particular, the role of Jesus as the Messiah.

2. Week 2 Review – Hebrew and Greek background to the word for Good News

- Both **Hebrew** (*Basar*) and **Greek** (*Euangelion*) words mean – to *bring* (verb) a message of good news.
- **Hebrew:** In the Old Testament, the prominent use of *Basar* is in Isaiah (40:9, 52:7, and 61:1)
- **Greek:** The term "*euangelion*" in Greek dates back to the time of Homer and originally referred to a divine gift for which a corresponding sacrifice was expected.
- **Roman Empire:** use of “*euangelion*” by the Roman Imperial Cult about the birth of Caesar Augustus.

3. Week 3 Review - The Original Proclamation

- The “good news” is a message (noun).
- The message refers to the Kingdom of God.
- Jesus – the Messiah – is the Son of Man from **Daniel 7** - who shares the throne with God and whose reign lasts for eternity.
- The book of Acts – is about the advancement of the Kingdom of God into the Roman Empire.
- **Acts 10: 34-43** is a succinct example of the original proclamation.

4. Week 4 Review – The Good News of Caesar Augustus?

- God chooses a moment in time coinciding with the Roman Empire and the reign of Caesar Augustus.
- Augustus Propaganda: son of god and savior, and his birth was good news for the world.
- **Priene Calendar inscription** – a proposal to restructure the calendar of Asia Minor to coincide with the birth of Caesar Augustus.¹

5. Week 5 – The Imperial Cult in the Land of Israel²

- Herod the Great built three temples to Augustus in the land of Israel.
- Peter’s confession in light of the Augustus temple near Caesarea Philippi (*Omrit*).³

¹ Calendar Inscription of Priene - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calendar_Inscription_of_Priene

² Josephus, *Jewish Wars*, Bk 1, Chap. 21, (403) and Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Bk 15, Chap 10, (363-364).

³ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Omrit>

6. Week 8 Review – The Search for Imperial Man

- Humanity was/is looking for a human being – Imperial man - who has the power of the heavens to regenerate time for the benefit of humanity.
- At the birth of Jesus, the imperial man was Caesar Augustus (**Luke 2: 1-11**).
- The ‘terror’⁴ or ‘guilt’⁵ of history is a massive problem for humanity because we exist across time, and three negative and corrosive emotions mark our past:
 - Guilt
 - Shame
 - Regret
- Our sins must be **judged** and **forgiven** to experience freedom in the present.
- Jesus is the cosmic judge who is sinless and has the authority to judge and forgive our sins.
- Christianity redefines the desire to regenerate into the regeneration of the individual soul.

7. Entering the Kingdom of God

- The Bible calls all humanity out of the destructive ways of the past and into a new **way of being**.
- This begins with God calling out Abraham to the Promised Land and a **way of being** that works toward personal responsibility, righteous action, and a responsibility of justice.
- The New Testament echoes this by indicating that anyone can become a “child of Abraham.” Those who respond to God in this **way of being** will be called a “child of Abraham.” See Gal. 3:29; Luke 19:9; Rom. 4:16; Luke 3:8.
- **Matthew 7:21** – “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will **enter the Kingdom of heaven**, but only the one who **does the will** of my Father who is in heaven.”

8. Return from Exile: Judgment and the Forgiveness of Sins

- All humanity is exiled from God’s Kingdom due to sin.
- Biblical examples are Adam & Eve and the Babylonian exile.
- If sin causes our exile, then **judgment** and **forgiveness** of sins usher in our return.
- **Acts 10:42** – “And He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that He is the One appointed by God to **judge** the living and the dead.”

⁴ Mircea Eliade, *The Myth of the Eternal Return*. <https://amzn.to/46o8hnr>

⁵ Ethelbert Stauffer, *Christ and the Caesars* - <https://amzn.to/48Sh9U2>

- **Judgment** and **Forgiveness** of our past frees us up to live in the fullness of life in the present.
- Trust in God (Faith) for the future allows us to live without worrying about the future (anxiety).

9. Walk the Path of the Kingdom⁶

Kingdom of Rome	Kingdom of God
Caesar as Lord	Jesus as Lord
<i>Piety</i>	Covenant
<i>War</i>	Forgiveness
<i>Victory</i>	Justice
<i>Peace</i>	Peace

10. **Entering the Kingdom of God** involves a dynamic, ongoing relationship with Jesus Christ, characterized by consistently acknowledging His lordship over our lives.

This commitment requires continual repentance to align ourselves with the values and teachings of His Kingdom. In doing so, we entrust our past to Jesus, inviting His judgment and grace to free us from the burdens that inhibit the fullness of life. By surrendering our future anxieties and fears to God, we open ourselves to the peace and assurance that only He can provide.

This entrance into the Kingdom is not merely a conceptual shift but a transformative, mystical experience. It is a perpetual communion with Jesus, where each moment is imbued with a sense of divine union and purpose.

- Psalm 15
- Matthew 5:20
- Matthew 25:34-40
- 2 Peter 1:5-11
- John 3:5 (born from above = the individual spiritual regeneration)
- 1 Corinthians 6:9

⁶ Crossan and Reed, *In Search of Paul: How Jesus' Apostle Opposed Rome's Empire with God's Kingdom*
<https://amzn.to/3QimWuC>