

## The Gospel in a Nutshell

OK, that's a trite phrase. How can we possibly take the grand concept God's plan of salvation for humankind and reduce it down into a few words?

We can't. But there are a couple of examples where both Jesus and the Apostle Paul tried.

Once during Jesus' ministry, his disciples brought some Greeks to see him, Gentiles who had become "God fearers" - deeply interested in Jewish moral teachings.

Jesus condensed his mission and message into a simple metaphor for them:

**John 12:24** - "Truly I say unto you, unless a kernel of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone: but if it dies, it brings forth much fruit. He that loves his life shall lose it; and he that hates his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal."

To "hate your life in this world" is to acknowledge that nothing you've found yet has ever completely satisfied you, and you're willing to give it all up - to "fall into the ground and die" - to realize that ultimate meaning, your reason for being, and experience real life both now and eternally.

Later, the Apostle Paul explained how Jesus' death and resurrection fulfilled all this, in several passages from his letter to the believers in Rome:

**Romans 3:23** - "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

**Romans 6:23** - "...the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

**Romans 5:8** - "But God demonstrates his own love for us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

**Romans 10:9-10** - "...if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and thus has righteousness and with the mouth one confesses and thus has salvation."

These few simple sentences can be a gateway into a transformed life, if you can agree and believe.