

Knowing the Gospel: The Good News of Jesus Christ Made Simple

Lola Richey

Lulu

978-1-257-10824-4

Those who have studied the Bible know the joys and challenges of understanding the teachings of Jesus and his Apostles. Through the years, writers and publishing houses have compiled topical Bibles, concordances, and Gospel parallels that link and compare verses and show differences among versions of parables or the words of Jesus.

Attorney and CPA Lola Richey has created her own compilation from the New Testament with a subtitle that proclaims "The Good News of Christ Made Simple." She tackles many topics, such as who is Jesus, history through the four Gospels, the "Good News," Kingdom of God, Salvation, and sin, among others.

Her book combines assertions, such as "The central theme of the Gospel message is salvation," with numerous references to verses from both the Old Testament and New Testament. For example: "Salvation comes from the LORD" (Jonah 2:9). God is called 'Savior' (Hosea 13:4; Luke 1:47), and the Holy Scriptures reveal God as the 'God of salvation' (Psalm 68:19-20; Luke 3:6; Acts 28:28). The Gospel declares that God who saved the Israelites from Egyptian slavery, Jonah from the fish's belly, the Psalmists from death, and the soldiers from drowning (Exodus 15:2; Jonah 2:9; Psalm 116:6; and Acts 27:31) saves *all* people who trust Jesus Christ from sin and sin's consequences."

Occasionally, Richey quotes an entire verse from several published sources, but most of the time the references are simply cited for readers to explore on their own.

Although Richey has focused on the essence of Jesus Christ and His message, paragraph after paragraph of Scriptural citations appears to belie the book's premise of making the "Good News" simple for readers to understand. The book reads like a textbook and readers may be overwhelmed by the work they have to do to look up each verse.

Her final chapter, "Salvation Call," sums up the heart of the book and the Gospel message. "God loves you and He cares about all your needs," she writes. "God loved you so much that He became a Man through Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is God's only Son. God gave His only Son Jesus Christ to die for the sins of the entire world on the Cross at Calvary on a Friday afternoon more than 2,000 years ago. Then three days later on a Sunday morning, God raised Jesus Christ from the dead to offer salvation to all people."

This familiar synopsis is at the crux of Christianity. The material in Richey's book supports this premise, although there is little new. Commentary, personal experience, or application would have been useful.

Richey concludes by urging people to read the Bible daily and find a Bible-believing church in which to serve and worship. Those who find inspiration in her book may want to do just that.

LINDA SALISBURY (May 12, 2011)

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