

Manger. Cross. Crown.

A Brief Summary of the Gospel

The person and work of Jesus is often summarized as “the gospel.” Gospel means “Good News.” Jesus’ work for us is good news, and the summary of His work can be described in three words: **manger, cross, crown**. These three words correspond with Jesus’ **life, death, and resurrection**.



Manger: The *presence* of God with us.

We all suffer alienation from God. But the manger means that God is not far away. **The manger is the incarnation—the God who takes on flesh**—even to the point of being born in an animal feed box (a manger).

- The manger means that God is not distant, but **near**.
- It means that He comes **to be with you**, so that you are not without him.
- It means that God **dwells** with you, even in the midst of all your messes.



Cross: The *pardon* of God for us.

We all suffer from guilt and shame before God. Every human being is plagued by sin – thoughts, words, and actions that go against God’s good intention. The cross is God’s **forgiveness** for sinful people. So God sends his Son Jesus on the greatest rescue mission of all time. He doesn’t ignore sin, but pays for it himself.

- The cross means **substitution**—His life for yours; his death *in your place, for your sins*.
- It means **justification**—you are made right by his sacrificial death.
- It means **forgiveness**— the punishment you deserve has been taken on by another.
- It means **cleansing**—in Christ, God has wiped away guilt and shame.



Crown: The *power* of God over us.

We all are left powerless at some point in our lives. The crown is the **resurrection power** of God. We believe that after three days in the grave, Jesus of Nazareth walked away from the tomb. “Resurrection” literally means “to stand again.” He now stands as our strong King, working his power over us even when we are powerless.

- The crown means that Jesus **did not stay dead** and that God is in the business of making **dead things alive**. In Christ, you will not die.
- It means that **Jesus wears a crown** as the supreme, ultimate king of the entire universe.
- It means you have a **powerful, victorious King**, especially when you are *powerless*.
- It means everything will be fully **set right** under the merciful rule of the crucified and risen One.