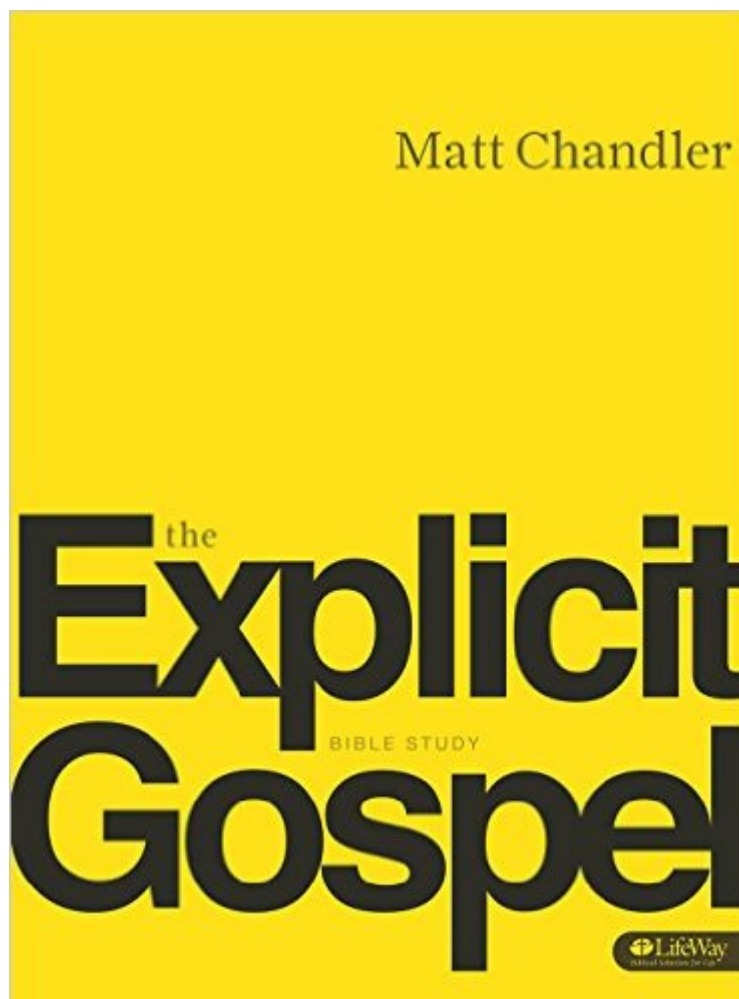


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# The Explicit Gospel - Member Book



## Synopsis

The Explicit Gospel - Member Book provides six weeks of Bible study content, learning activities, and group experiences. In an explanation that embraces the whole of Scripture, Matt Chandler defines what the gospel is • and what it is not. Written with Chandler's weighty and yet immediately understandable style, this Bible study includes the specifics of the gospel as well as its fullness, clearly outlining its massive implications on both personal and cosmic levels.

**Benefits:** Discover what the gospel does for believers after salvation. Shatter your preconceptions to reveal unexplored dimensions of God's grace. Be challenged to: Embrace and rely on the gospel to grow in Christlikeness. Persevere in your faith. Serve others in the power of Jesus. Celebrate your eternal redemption.

**Author:** Matt serves as Lead Pastor of Teaching at The Village Church in Flower Mound, TX. He has served in that role since December 2002 and describes his tenure at The Village as a re-planting effort where he was involved in changing the theological and philosophical culture of the congregation. The church has witnessed a tremendous response growing from 160 people to over 10,000 with campuses in Flower Mound, Dallas and Denton. Alongside his current role as lead pastor, Matt is involved in church planting efforts both locally and internationally through The Village and various strategic partnerships. Prior to accepting the pastorate at The Village, Matt had a vibrant itinerant ministry for over 10 years where he spoke to thousands of people in America and abroad about the glory of God and beauty of Jesus. His greatest joy outside of Jesus is being married to Lauren and being a dad to their three children, Audrey, Reid and Norah. Recently, Matt was named president of Acts 29, a worldwide church-planting organization. Over the last 10 years, Acts 29 has emerged from a small band of brothers to over 400 churches in the United States and networks of churches in multiple countries. Matt speaks at conferences throughout the world and has written a book, *The Explicit Gospel*, published in April 2012.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

So, we have another book on the gospel. The Explicit Gospel is authored by Matt Chandler, pastor of the Village Church in Dallas, TX. The book is scheduled to be released on April 30, 2012. Is this just "another book on the gospel" -- basic theology retweaked by a megachurch pastor -- or is this something worth reading and pondering? Let's take a look.

**The Big Idea of The Explicit Gospel**

The book claims that too often, the gospel is assumed, not explicit. The explicit gospel obliterated man-centered religion -- the moralism, idolatry, and religious hypocrisy that corrupts true Christianity. Chandler describes this explicit gospel, generously sprinkling in plenty of pastoral application along the way. Merely assuming the gospel leads to dangers -- big dangers. Chandler's cogent application of the explicit gospel strikes deep at the insipid idiosyncrasies of evangelicalism, delivering a message that is both solidly theological and lovingly confrontational.

**Overview of The Explicit Gospel**

Chandler organizes the book in three sections: 1) The Gospel on the Ground, 2) The Gospel in the Air, and 3) Implications and Applications. Even if you've been to seminary, you've probably never heard of a "ground gospel" or "air gospel," so let's explain what Chandler means. Ground and air, as he describes them, are vantage points for viewing the gospel. The gospel from the ground is the view of the gospel in our own lives. The chapters "God" (ch. 1), "Man" (ch. 2), "Christ" (ch.3), "Response" (ch.4), discuss the gospel from this perspective. Chandler describes the gospel in the air as "the big picture of God's plan of restoration from the beginning of time to the end of time and the redemption of his creation" (pg. 9).

**Summary:** Matt Chandler writes a hit-and-miss work on the Gospel, full of sharpened barbs that are occasionally convicting but are mostly mean-spirited and glitzy. **Strengths:** I really, really, really wanted to like this book. And indeed, I found parts of it absolutely brilliant. But we get a version of

Matt Chandler here that hardly sounds like himself. So the good: The best parts of the book are Chapter 6, Fall, and Chapter 7, Reconciliation. You get an epic scope of the human condition plus a God-scaled view of God's work through us on earth. Pastor Matt's unique voice, even when he's on rabbit trails, will keep you engaged. The rundown on Solomon is a tour de force of wit, vivid imagery, and a piercing look into the wrongness of our souls. And our mission through the cross is clearly outlined while avoiding a legalistic prison. Certainly Chandler can write. He's not exactly quotable but his style is clever, captivating, at times brutal. He is theologically sound in every which way, and despite some critics bashing his Reformed angle, he backs it up with Scripture. Just as in his preaching, he is one of the most biblical pastors out there. I loved the last couple stories of Matt Chandler overcoming the guilt of his former life and the heartbreaking account of his friend Kim. He has preached these before, but to see it in written form with extra details was stirring. He really brought home how the Gospel works here. Weaknesses: However, there are three main problems with the book that injure it beyond recovery. 1) The most glaring problem is its arrogant tone. Matt Chandler in preaching is bold, daring, and convicting. Matt Chandler in writing can be brash, jarring, and condescending.

This book is in your face which can do one of two things: put you on the defensive or blow your mind. Let me warn you, if you find yourself becoming defensive over his ideas in this book before you get upset and throw it across the room, ask yourself what it is that has brought out that emotion in you and analyze yourself a bit. Most likely, you will learn something about yourself that you didn't even realize was there. Had you thrown the book across the room, you will probably have missed something that could transform you in bigger ways than you could ever imagine. Read it, you will know what I mean. Now that I started with that, let me tell you what I liked about the book: -Occasionally when he tells stories, they are vivid stories that serve as poignant illustrations for what he is trying to teach. Not only does it entertain the reader, but you can definitely relate to where he is coming from. -He is so honest about his own sin. He doesn't preach at you, he is completely authentic in who he is and where he has come from and where he struggles currently. I think often times preachers who write books avoid talking about themselves because they fear it will look bad or hypocritical or that they have to maintain a "perfect" image to teach what they are trying to teach so people believe them. Not Matt. He is real and honest and that is effective. -Chandler has a way of understanding human behavior and pointing out, not just the massive ways we fall short, but the minute tiny things that we do on a daily basis that hurt us and we don't even realize it. We have so much to gain from that understanding in our sanctification.

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