

# OpenTheo

## The Gospel Scope & Literature

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### **For The King** - Rocky Ramsey

Like art, literature is also a field dominated by objective values. God's word is perfect literature and it sets the pace by which all other works of literature are made! Thanks for listening!

Key Text:

\* 2 Timothy 3:14-17

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## **Transcript**

This is what the gospel is. It's good news. It's a story.

It's a headline that's given to us. And that's why the gospel most certainly applies to literature because it sets the precedence. It provides with us principles.

Because it's God's Word, the words that he delivered to us is perfect literature. Don't think I will even ask you to make Jesus Lord of your life. That's the most preposterous

thing I could ever tell you to do.

Jesus Christ is Lord of your life. Whether you serve him or not, whether you bless him, curse him, hate him, or love him, he is the Lord of your life because God has given him a name that is above every name so that the name of Jesus Christ every knee shall bow and tongue confess that he is Lord. Some of you will bow out of the grace that has been given to you and others will bow because your kneecaps will be broken by the one who rules the nations with a rod of iron.

And I'll not apologize for this God of the Bible.

[Music] Welcome to the For the King podcast where we proclaim the edicts of the king over all his creation namely and chiefly that Yahweh the great I am reigns. The text I want to start off this episode with today is in 2nd Timothy chapter 3 verses 14 through 17.

But as for you continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you've been acquainted with the sacred writings which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness that the man of God may be complete equipped for every good work. Today on this episode I want to talk about the gospel scope and literature.

The gospel scope and literature. Literature being the form of art that is written. The written form of art, word craft.

It can be poetry, it can be any writings on a topic that's authoritative or worth reading because it's conveying some kind of universal principle about the topic. That would be the literature of the scientific literature is those things that pertain the writing, the prose that is concerning that field. So I want to talk about literature very broadly of how literature will be produced.

Both non-fiction works but I kind of want to hone in on fiction work or story because God's word is given to us in the form of story. There's different genres of the literature throughout God's word. There's apocryphal writings, there's poetry, there's narrative, there is history writing and wisdom literature.

There's a lot of different ways that the Bible is presented to us but God's word is presented to us always as true and authoritative as we just read in 2 Timothy. So on this series, the gospel scope series, Bryce and I earlier this year kind of finished up laying the foundation for just the gospel in general. All the different facets and ways that the gospel is precious to us as Christians.

But many Christians stop there, they just want to know about soterology or how one is

saved but they don't want to apply it to the world around them or the world that they live in or the things that they actually do on a day to day basis. So I'm trying to challenge you listener in this series, the gospel scope series with the application of the gospel, baptizing the nations with the gospel. Actually the gospel with hands and feet on it.

That's what I'm trying to present here and I want to talk about today how the gospel most certainly does apply to literature. So how does the gospel apply to this? Well the gospel itself is word craft, it is literature. It's presented to us in that way.

The gospel is good news in written form and it's meant to carry down the traditions of Christ's teaching, his life teaching and salvation. And that will make you wise for salvation as Paul says here in verse 15 of 2 Timothy. The sacred writings which are able to make you wise for salvation.

They're able to teach you the story of a man providing atonement on a cross for our sins. Living a perfect life, casting out demons, healing the sick and the poor and the needy. Teaching us God's law on the Sermon on the Mount, teaching us in parables about what his kingdom is like and how we ought to follow him as he continues to ask people follow me.

Make you fishers of men. This is what the gospel is. It's good news.

It's a story. It's a headline that's given to us. And that's why the gospel most certainly applies to literature because it sets the precedence.

It provides with us principles. Because it's God's word, the words that he deliver to us is perfect literature. So let me get into that more.

We had talked about the last, I'm sorry, the last gospel scope that I have done. So that would be not last episode, but the episode before that was talking about art and the gospel scope and art and how God himself setting the standard of beauty, setting the standard for what is lovely and good in the world now defines what art is. Art not being in the eye of the beholder, subjective, but art being objective.

Now, literature is just, it's written art, right? It's word craft, like I said earlier. So my question is, are there also objectively bad stories, right? To determine your taste for a good story, I want you to answer this question in your mind as you're listening to this podcast. Do you enjoy the Old Testament stories? Do you find yourself skipping over them or just wanting to end up in Paul's epistles 24/7 or just end up in the gospel so we can learn about Jesus? But really the story of God's people that was paving the way and pointing us to Christ the whole way through types and shadows and imagery in the Old Testament.

Does that bore you? Does the Old Testament bore you? And if you find yourself bored of these Old Testament stories, you have a bad taste for story, for literature. You have a

bad taste. You have a bad taste for story.

God's word, the stories that he's given us are objectively good and beautiful and depict something great about the world. And I'm going to build on this more, the objective reality of this. So hang with me here.

But I want you to think of Samson and his strength being defeated by a small woman. Think about David and Saul's dance for the kingdom, the ascendancy of David and the downfall of Saul. Think of Moses visiting Pharaoh multiple times, demanding his people to be let go while God judges Pharaoh's nation, the entire nation.

The Bible is good literature. These are good stories, OK? Regardless, even the pagan that would deem them as myth, right, still understands that these are wonderful stories. That's why in secular universities, there are people that have studied the Bible their whole life because it's an interesting, captivating, historical document that also talks about true things, not just mythological stories from the past.

So the Bible is good literature, OK? So that's the claim I'm making, that the gospel, the story of Christ, the story of good, triumphing over evil, Christ, living a perfect life. Loving people with an unflinching love, being tenderhearted with the woman at the well, crying to see Lazarus, Lazarus's death and calling him out, seeing the faith of the friends of the man that is being lifted down on a mat for Jesus to heal the paralytic, right? This is a good story. And Jesus triumphs over and all over all the evil and through his death on a cross, the most, we love a good story with a twist in it, right? How does Jesus defeat death by dying? How is his kingdom spread by being destroyed? It is such a paradoxical reality.

And that's why it's the best story ever. It catches you off guard. It's not predictable.

It's good literature. So the gospel scope applies to literature in that it informs what principles ought to be in good stories. So let's do a case study with the book.

I'm going to do a fiction book, Lord of the Rings. OK, I love Lord of the Rings. Many people love Lord of the Rings, even pagans.

There are many nonbelievers that love that story. OK, and it was written by, yes, a Catholic man, J.R. Tolkien. Who knows if he actually was a born again Christian, right? I'm not going to get into all that.

I'm just looking at the story. I'm just looking at the Lord of the Rings story that is written by a Christian person, Christian man. So in Lord of the Rings, we have heroes, heroines.

We have masculinity and femininity being represented really well. We have many different Christ like arcs of the story. We have Gandalf the Grey being resurrected or being sent back to Middle-earth to finish and accomplish his work as the better Saruman,

hence Christ being the new Adam, finishing Adam's work.

We have a Christ like arc there. We have a Christ like arc in Aragorn as the king to be. Now, it's not a perfect parallel because Aragorn kind of, you know, in the movies he's portrayed as doubting himself, but that's not really present in the books.

He's not this, obviously Christ is a perfect king, but Aragorn slowly ascends to the throne. The stewards of Gondor are not defending the throne well and the glory of Gondor is fading, right? So this is the story of Lord of the Rings. We have Fertility.

There's just so many different little Christ like arcs in that story and it's a beautiful story. But the most important thing that that story has that people love is that good triumphs over evil. We have a battle.

We have good magic versus bad magic. We have a good wizard versus an evil wizard which can kind of remind us of Simon the Sorcerer and the Apostles. We have good spiritual power.

The kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power, right? We have a good spiritual power. And then we have an evil spiritual power which would be Saruman or Sauron and or liken them to Simon the Sorcerer or Satan's minions and the sons of Sceva and things like that. So there every single good story you can find the principle, like the totalizing principle or the ideas that are being articulated in the work of fiction.

If it finds its root in God's word. These are where good stories are made. Every single story has to play on the viewer's desire for good to triumph over evil.

Even through natural law, the pakins will desire stories like that. Now they get twisted and there's sexual deviancies in many movies now and there's lesbians kissing and Buzz Lightyear and all that. And our stories are getting worse.

I went watch the new Jurassic World Dominion and there was a lot of biblical symbology, sorry, symbolism in that movie. But the movie itself, like the story just sucked. It was awful.

Now we do have like in a sense good tripping over evil in that story. But the movies are just not as high quality as they once were. Hence why you see most of the movies nowadays are just reruns of a story from the past.

You have Star Wars being remade. You got the Hobbit series. You got all the Avengers stuff is just redos of the comics.

And then this new Jurassic World stuff is just a redo of Jurassic Park and the new Lightyear for the Toy Story franchise and Dreamworks and all that. It's just they're just reruns. Nobody's creative anymore because we have abandoned God's word.

So hopefully that makes sense with the case study being Lord of the Rings. So the gospel as the gospel permeates a culture, the stories will be higher quality. You'll get Lord of the Rings.

You'll get C.S. Lewis's The Chronicles of Narnia. You'll get good good. You'll get Moby Dick.

You'll get amazing amazing stories that people make. Okay. So the gospel not only and I want to liken all that that I just said to what Will and I were getting at in our my interview with Will about beauty and art and even my gospel scope episode with art.

You won't find at the top of the leaderboards on Spotify. You won't find a song that everything's out of tune. Everything's off beat.

The lyrics are incoherent. You can't understand what they're saying because it doesn't make any sense. You won't find that you will find a song with a beat that makes sense with notes that makes sense and the music is actually coherent.

That's what you'll get. Even though the words might be evil and wrong and all that right. You'll still get at least the music makes sense.

And that's the same the same way that the story you can. There's unbreakable principles that stories must have if you're going to write a fiction work if you're going to write literature and the gospel obviously will permeate nonfiction in the whole presuppositional apologists that God's word is the source of all truth. So you you will you will be abiding by that in your nonfiction works as you report on the world that God made in a real in a real sense.

So about fiction and nonfiction will have that but fiction is it's more clear because fiction is just depicting a story that captivates the hearts of humans of mankind and those things that captivate the heart. They can be evil and atrocious things but the principles embedded them will always be the same and you can have an objectively bad story. So the gospel like I said will not only produce good art but it will produce good literature.

God's word being the bedrock of it all. This is all of Christ for all life. This is the teaching of God's word that in him is all truth.

Jesus said I am the way the truth in life. All scriptures breathe out by God that the man of God may be complete equipped for every good work. You don't need the Enneagram to know how to do good things how to love your neighbor better.

Oh there are two. I need to make sure to cater to that. Oh you know go ahead and buzz off with that.

You don't need pagan psychology to teach you how to love your neighbor. No we need

God's word. We need that story to teach us how to live.

We need Lord of the Rings right to teach us something about the world because it's based on God's word. So a good story is only as good as it corroborates enhances and is in agreement with God's word. So I hope that made sense.

That is my claim today. That's what I'm getting at. We will continue with the gospel scope series.

Obviously I release these on Sunday Sunday being the new week. So I know I just released this past Wednesday but this Sunday would be the new week. That's why I'm uploading today.

So I hope you enjoyed that. Check me out on for the King podcast dot com. I have a gab.

I have a Facebook. Check me out on there. If you have anything that you want to speak about from the this episode or any episode you can reach me at for the King podcast at Gmail dot com.

If you want to come on here and have a good conversation with me let me know a topic and what you're interested in. And I'd love to have a conversation with you. Thanks so much for listening guys.

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So I think you really enjoy that. Just click on the link below. Thanks so much for listening guys to the King of the Ages and mortal invisible the only God be honored and glory forever and ever.

Amen. Soli Deo glory.

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