

God, through Jesus Christ, welcomes you anyhow

By [Martin E. Marty](#)

November 14, 2011

What's the gospel in seven words? We asked theologians, pastors and others both to answer this question and to expand on this in a few sentences. To see all the responses together as they're posted, bookmark [this page](#). Add your own version [here](#). --Ed.

God, through
Jesus Christ, welcomes you anyhow.

The gospel begins
and ends with God. Jesus makes God's action good news. But the word "Jesus" alone doesn't help me; such Jesus is a nice guy, but I need *Jesus Christ*, God's anointed. God welcomes (or "accepts," etc.) *you*.

According to Luther, the words "for you" are the most important in the sacraments (and preaching). "Anyhow"--fill in sin, guilt, pride, the misfires of "spirituality"--implies that you weren't welcome without this transaction, and that you bring nothing to it.