

Bonus round: What's the _____ in seven words?

By [Steve Thorngate](#)

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The *Century's* seven-word gospel project, which [we started almost a year ago](#), got another wave of reaction recently when David Heim wrapped it up with [a short article in the magazine](#). I enjoyed reading the many additional entries posted here and elsewhere. Some favorites from readers here:

God loves you, so get over yourself. (aaronban)

God's determined to set creation right. (Anonymous)

Christ bids us come and die. (Anonymous)

God is love. Be love yourself. (revcraig)

Come in from the rain. (emcum)

God on the throne, not Caesar (Michael Mulberry)

With the possible exception of that last one, Scott McKnight is unlikely to be any more impressed with these than he was with our original list. [His response to the ones we published](#):

I'd classify them all as soterian gospels. In fact, I'd classify them as "God loves us" gospels. . . . Not one apostolic sermon in the Book of Acts focuses on the gospel as God's love for us in spite of who we are. Read the sermons in [Acts 2](#), [3](#), [4](#), [10-11](#), [13](#), [14](#) and 17. The focus is on Jesus. The gospel is about Jesus.

The gospel in three words: Jesus is Lord (or King). Five words: Jesus is the expected Messiah (or King, or Lord). Seven words: Jesus is the expected King who redeems.

[Michael Horton is not a fan](#) of most of our list either; many of his criticisms have to do with a lack of explicit justification language. He does, however, like Will Willimon's—"[God refuses to be God without us](#)"—which also happens to be one of

my favorites from the project.

On Facebook, my friend Julie and I toyed with the idea of a similar project summarizing the OT prophetic tradition. My entry: "Dammit people, love God! Love your neighbor!" Hers: "Righteous anger, mood-disorder meds not yet invented."

And Allen O'Brien had a fun, if somewhat less constructive, idea: "[What the gospel is not, in seven words or less](#)." He offered "Jesus Christ, my slightly judgmental genie." His commenters added some doozies:

Creative niceness trumps faith in doubtful Jesus.

They're going to hell, I'm not, neener!

Try harder, God will love you more.

Stealing candy = Holocaust. You're screwed. So Jesus!

U.S.A!! U.S.A!! U.S.A!! U.S.A!! U.S.A!! U.S.A!! U.S.A!!

So hungry... ooo crackers and juice!

I might go with the old line, "It's between him/her and Jesus" for its pious-sounding individualism. Or maybe I'd stick with "Pie in the sky, by and by."

Consider this an open thread, I guess. All comments welcome so long as they are seven-word summations of something.