

What, exactly, is meant by "the gospel"—specifically, the gospel that, in Paul's words, is "the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith" (Rom 1:16)?

The answer I'm prepared to defend is that "the gospel" means the Christian witness, understood as both the *what* of witness, or the content it expresses either explicitly or by implication, and the *that* of witness, or the act of witnessing. This witness, as I understand it, is constituted explicitly as such by a twofold assertion, or by two assertions: the *christological* assertion that Jesus is (formally) the decisive re-presentation of the meaning of God for us; and the *theological* assertion that the meaning of God for us (materially) is the meaning decisively re-presented through Jesus.

I understand the witness constituted by these two assertions, and so the gospel, to be established by, and itself to belong to, the decisive re-presentation of the meaning of God for us through Jesus, who is accordingly called "(the) Christ." As such, it is what Paul speaks of as the "word" and the "ministry" of reconciliation that God has given to Christians in reconciling the world through Christ (2 Cor 5:18 ff.).

n.d.; rev. 10 October 2003