

Winter 2017 Life Group Leader Huddle

Developing Gospel Fluency

Connecting With One Another

If your group members were asked to describe “the gospel,” what do you think they would say? What would they include? What would you include?

To what degree would you say “the gospel” is factored into your group discussions? What about in your times of sharing and prayer?

Gospel Conversation (video, J.D. Greear, Greg Gilbert, Trevin Wax)

J.D., Greg, and Trevin named several things Christians tend to rely on in their faith other than the person and work of Christ:

- Their personal “experience” of conversion (and whether it was or is “sincere”)
- A list of things to do (e.g. pray, read the Bible, attend a small group, serve your community, etc.)
- Good feelings of confidence or security
- Moralistic guidelines, expectations or values
- Participating in a mission to re-make God’s world

In your experience as a Christian or as Life Group leader, what else would you add to this list?

Listening With “Gospel Ears”

From *The Gospel Primer*, by Caesar Kalinowski

“Even before beginning to follow Jesus and understanding life from the perspective of God’s story, every person has these same four parts to their story – and in all the countless little stories and narratives that flow out in normal conversation.” 82-83

Creation	Fall	Redemption	Restoration
A fundamental belief about your <u>ORIGIN</u> – who or what gives you your existence, made you into who you are, and shaped you into the person you are today.	A central belief about the cause of <u>BROKENNESS</u> in the world and in your life, and a deep desire for justice (fault and punishment).	A solution, remedy or <u>SAVIOUR</u> you are <u>TRUSTING</u> in to redeem your or the world’s brokenness.	A picture of the <u>FUTURE</u> when everything is as it <u>SHOULD</u> be.
<i>Who or what do you credit or blame for who you are today or for the situation in which you find yourself?</i>	<i>Why are things, people, you not the way they are supposed to be, and who is to blame?</i>	<i>Who or what will rescue you and redeem what is broken in your life?</i>	<i>What will the world or your circumstance look like when all is as it should be? Who or what will be the focus of this world or circumstance?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GOOD: What can you affirm in this person that displays God’s image and points to his purpose for them? • GAPS: What are the gaps in this person’s life (wounds, issues, hurts, failures, regrets, excuses) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GODS: What is the “heart idol” this person is relying upon for rescue? (see next page) • GOSPEL: Which aspect of the gospel will sound like good news to him/her? What does Jesus offer that is better than their god? 	
<i>Examples:</i>	<i>Examples:</i>	<i>Examples:</i>	<i>Examples:</i>

- Why is this so important to you?
- Why is this upsetting you?
- How would your god’s view of you change if this did/didn’t change or work out?
- Who is ultimately responsible for this in your world?
- How’s that working for you?
- Are you finding deep satisfaction from that thing or person?

- What if that goes away?

Heart Idols

I find ultimate meaning, security or direction in...

- **Power** – being able to influence/decide the fate of others
- **Approval** – having people (or certain people, e.g. parent, teacher, religious leader, social circle) approve of who I am or what I am doing
- **Comfort** – not being required to do anything uncomfortable, unsafe, or risky
- **Control** – not having anything happen that I didn't want to happen
- **Helping** – being another person's "savior" in some way
- **Dependence** – being the object of others' (or a specific other's) care
- **Independence** – not having to rely on anyone at all, being "self-made"
- **Work** – always having something to do
- **Achievement** – reaching certain milestones (financially, academically, etc.)
- **Materialism** – accumulating enough stuff
- **Religion** – fulfilling the right or enough obligations or God, gods, or some moralistic framework
- **Individual person** – making a specific person (boy/girlfriend, spouse, friend, celebrity, authority figure) the object of my worship and dependence
- **Irreligion** – being free of obligation to God, gods, or some moralistic framework
- **Racial/Cultural** – claiming superiority/supremacy based on my racial, ethnic, cultural background
- **Inner Ring** – being part of the "inner circle," the privileged
- **Family** – making my marriage, my children (their happiness, comfort, achievement, etc.) my ultimate goal
- **Relationship** – having a girl/boyfriend, marriage, set of friends, etc.
- **Suffering** – being a martyr or victim worthy of pity
- **Ideology** – allegiance to a particular explanation/solution for the world's problems (e.g. capitalism, socialism, racial supremacy, political party, narcissism, etc.)
- **Image** – having the appearance of some standard of acceptance, power, etc. in the eyes of others

How does the concept of "gospel listening" help you think about walking with people through the challenges they face?

How might this influence the way we offer counsel to people? Pray with people? Challenge people?

What is the Gospel?

Understanding the simplicity and the rich tapestry of the gospel

Mark 1:14-15

1 Corinthians 15:1-4

Galatians 2:14-16, 19-20

Colossians 1:21-23

Titus 3:4-7

1 Peter 1:3-4, 18-21

Romans 1:1-6

2 Corinthians 4:4-6

2 Timothy 1:9-10

2 Timothy 2:8

Four Questions: According to the Gospel...

- ☐ Who is God?
- ☐ What has He done – especially in the person and work of Jesus Christ?
- ☐ Who am I/are we?
- ☐ In light of these truths, what do I/we do?

“You want them to be able to proclaim the gospel well, to trust in Christ more, and to cherish him richly when you sing songs? You have to give Jesus to them in every aspect of their life so the whole of their life is all about Jesus.”

-- Jeff Vanderstelt

Gospel Identity & Gospel Fluency (Jeff Vanderstelt)

“Every single question you ask, every single problem you face, every single situation you counsel through, can be dealt with in the life, the death, the resurrection, the ascension, and the second coming of Jesus Christ. Every one of them.”

-- Jeff Vanderstelt

WATCH “[MAKING MATURE DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST](#)” by Jeff Vanderstelt (requires Right Now Media log-in).

How would you describe your present ability to see your own situations through the lens of (a) the ‘gospel’ you are telling yourself, and (b) the gospel of Jesus Christ?

Unconscious
Incompetence
(Blissfully unaware)

Conscious
Incompetence
(Ready to Learn)

Conscious
Competence
(Putting into Practice)

Unconscious
Competence
(“Natural” Instinct)

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How do you think approaching mutual spiritual conversation, counsel and prayer from this perspective might impact your own life? The lives of people whom you are offering spiritual counsel?

What could you do to foster this kind of conversation and perspective within your group?

What questions or concerns does this approach to spiritual guidance raise for you?

The Gospel is the news that...

- ❑ **On the basis of the finished work of Christ** - in fulfillment of God's own promises, His faithful life of obedience to His Father, a perfect representation in life and teaching of God's will for us, his atoning death for our sins, his victory over death, his ascension to the place of supremacy and Lordship over all creation, from which he has sent the promised Holy Spirit to dwell in and transform those who trust in him, and his promised return to make all things new.
- ❑ **We can receive** - reconciliation with God and knowledge of the glory of God; salvation from wrath, sin's destruction, and condemnation; victory over sin, death and evil; the immediate availability to us of the good and just rule of God; eternal life; rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit; hope of eternal inheritance; the full renewal and re-creation of heavens and earth, saturated with God's own presence.
- ❑ **By FAITH** - i.e. trusting not in ourselves (our efforts, solutions, or excuses) or in any other counterfeit god or gospel but in what Christ has done, is doing, and will do.
- ❑ **Making us** – fearfully and wonderfully made, God's workmanship, loved, chosen, rescued, bought at a great price, son/daughter of our heavenly Father, forgiven, new creation, free, not condemned, saints, righteous and holy, free to boldly approach God, complete, temples where God lives, members of Christ's body, joint heirs with Christ, citizens of heaven, aliens and strangers to this world, enemies of the devil, ministers of reconciliation, salt of the earth and light of the world, living for God by God's strength.

God saves sinners.

-- J.I. Packer, 1959

"The Gospel is the news that Jesus Christ, the Righteous One, died for our sins and rose again, eternally triumphant over all his enemies, so that there is now no condemnation for those who believe, but only everlasting joy."

– John Piper

When Paul talks about "the gospel," he means "the good news that the crucified and risen Jesus is the Messiah of Israel and therefore the Lord of the world."

-- N.T. Wright

The 'gospel' is the good news that through Christ the power of God's kingdom has entered history to renew the whole world. When we believe and rely on Jesus' work and record (rather than ours) for our relationship to God, that kingdom power comes upon us and begins to work through us."

– Tim Keller

"The gospel is the work of God to restore humans to union with God and communion with others, in the context of a community, for the good of others and the world."

– Scot McKnight, *Embracing Grace*