

Gospel-Centered



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WHY?

Because there is nothing bigger or better to talk about than the redeeming work of Jesus on the cross. The Gospel is God's ultimate act of restoration; it's how He has restored what was lost in the Garden: access to Him and eternity enjoying His presence. So there is no moving past the Gospel, as if it only impacts our salvation. A proper understanding of the Gospel and a centering of our lives around it impacts everything we do, from parenting children, to dealing with our co-workers, to shopping at Wal-Mart. It's the deepest truth we could ever hope to discover. Even as we look back to the Old Testament, the work of Jesus, the Gospel, was anticipated and expected. He is the better Jonah, spending three days in a tomb as Jonah spent three days in the belly of a fish. He is the better Moses, who is able to lead us into final and ultimate rest, defeating death and satisfying God's wrath on our behalf.

The Gospel Affects:

What we know: This is the aspect most believers have down because we know the Gospel story. We grasp that the Gospel is the message that God has SAVED us. So we learn the Roman's Road or use a tract to share the Gospel with someone until they ask a question we don't know and then we take them to the preacher. We've set up a culture that separates the professionals from the laity which can free us up from having to know the Gospel and be able to share it in different circumstances and contexts. THIS SHOULD NOT BE. We are a kingdom of priests and a called out people (see the scripture section).

What we experience: The power of the Gospel that saves us is also the same power that TRANSFORMS us. It is the power of God that grows us and allows us to obey. It is not by power or might or by will that we are able but through the power of the cross where sin was defeated. A question that should be asked is: How is the Gospel currently affecting my life? We need to preach the Gospel to ourselves as well as to each other, continuing to remind ourselves of our identity in Jesus.

How we live: The Gospel doesn't only save us and transform us but it also gives us PURPOSE in life. It guides how we live and impacts how we make our decisions. How do you decide where to live? Who to eat with? How to view your neighbors? Who you sit next to in class? Is it in light of the Gospel? This requires us to move from fitting God into our lives to fitting ourselves into His ongoing story. We must begin to understand that the normal, ordinary rhythms of our lives are to be carried out in light of what He has done on the cross. Because of this work, we surrender our agendas and become tangled in the tapestry of His work. (The above was adapted from a sermon by Bob Thune)

An Illustration: for all you visual people

A proper understanding of the Gospel is understanding that we are the SAVED and SENT people of God. Not one or the other which may play out in these ways:

How we understand:	SAVED	SENT	SENT & SAVED
Jesus	Gets me to heaven	Shows me how to live	Is my source of life and object of worship
Mission	Get people saved	Get people active in church	We live for the glory of God together

For Reflection:

How does your understanding of the Gospel affect how you view Jesus and your mission? In what areas of your life do you need to better understand, experience, or live the Gospel?

For further reading/study:

Scripture:

Matthew 28:18-20

2Peter 1:3-4

1Corinthians 10:31-11:1

Romans 12:1-2

Galatians 6:14

Matthew 22:36-40

Philippians 3:7-14

Romans 5:8

Books/Articles:

www.cdomaha.com/blog/?p=1144

A Gospel Centered Life by Bob Thune

You Can Change by Tim Chester

Radical by David Platt