

Vital Signs: A Love of God's Gospel

26 January 2020

Matthew 13:44-46; Romans 1:16-17

*To CARE for one another in truth and in love,
To GROW as followers of Jesus,
To SERVE those God has placed in our path.
– CG Mission Statement*

Icebreaker: What life experience has been a picture of God's grace to you?

Worship: Ephesians 2:4-5

(Read aloud three times, spending time in reflection after each, listening for what God's invitation to you might be.)

Bible Passage & Guiding Question *(The following question is intended to help frame your discussion. Keep it in mind as you read the bible passage and review the sermon summary together.)*

Bible Passage: Matthew 13:44-46; Romans 1:16-17

Guiding Question: What do you think it means to live a gospel-centered life?

Sermon Summary

Grace has the singular ability to strengthen, sustain and sanctify us. Our prayer should be to grow so strong in our experience and knowledge of it that it overflows in our lives. A healthy church is grounded in the Gospel, relentlessly Gospel-centered in all that it does.

Gospel in Me – We are called to joyfully treasure the Good News as our identity. The Gospel offers both forgiveness for our bad record and complete acceptance through Christ's perfect record. Meaning we cannot solely focus on what Jesus saves us from; we must also set our eyes on what we have been saved *to*. We have been made truly alive in Christ. It was worth everything for Him to purchase this new life for us... and it is worth everything for us to receive it from Him (Rom 8:1-6,11).

Gospel in Us – A healthy church is marked by the joy of Gospel community. Gatherings of believers are to be the means by which the world comes to see and understand the Good News of Christ. What is it about us that will set us apart as an example of God's love to the world?

- > **A community of praise:** We live unto God for His glory. We worship and express our thanksgiving to Him, because from Him we receive our dignity and truest freedom.
- > **A community of truth:** Our value is firmly rooted in what the Bible says about us. Removed is our need for people-pleasing, self-absorption and superficiality.
- > **A community of mutual responsibility:** A heart overtaken by the grace of Christ weeps when others weep and rejoices when others rejoice – loving and serving one another with utmost humility, engaging in one another's lives, taking on one another's stories.
- > **A community of hope:** A relentless commitment to the Gospel will produce relentless hope.

Gospel to the World – A healthy church is not ashamed to share the Good News. This free gift from our loving Father is one He has asked us to share. Our lives have been given a deep purpose; we have become bearers of the only news that will save this broken world! We are therefore indebted to our neighbors until we share this joyful truth with them. What if we allowed ourselves to feel this way? Paul did – and it sparked joy in him to spread the

Gospel to the world. What does it look like to live beyond ourselves? It means our community no longer lives for itself but is deeply involved in the concerns of its neighborhood. It means preparing our hearts and finding an eagerness to share the message of Christ with the world. Because the Gospel is our identity, our hope, and our goal.

Discussion Questions *(It's better to wrestle deeply with a few good questions than to gloss over many.)*

- What stood out to you from the sermon around the topic of the gospel in me, in us, and in the world?
 - What is the gospel?
 - How would you describe a self-identity that is formed by the gospel?
 - From Matthew 13:44-46, was Jesus teaching that one can purchase the Kingdom of Heaven?
 - Why or why not?
 - Who is the man and merchant of these two parables? What did they do and why?
 - What do these parables have to do with the gospel message?
 - From Romans 1:14-17, why was Paul not ashamed of the gospel?
 - What is revealed in the gospel?
 - How is a person saved and from what?
 - Discuss Paul's obligation in Romans 1:14-15, what did he owe and to whom?
 - What do we owe and to whom?
 - What do you think it means to live a gospel-centered life?
 - How does the gospel fit into your story?
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What Can We Be Praying For?

Pray for those you love who have never believed the gospel. Pray that the power of the righteousness of God will be revealed to them. Pray that you will follow Paul's example and be bold to share the gospel with a sense of obligation.

Engage & Experience

Here are some ways you might consider applying this theme:

- Live into your gospel identity by... reading and meditating upon Romans 8.
- Encourage gospel community by...loving and serving one another and engaging in one another's lives through listening to one another's gospel stories.
- Bear the gospel in the world by...prayerfully seeking opportunities to share the gospel message with a friend, neighbor, or co-worker.