

THE GOSPEL-CENTERED LIFE

What is the Gospel? I Corinthians 15:1-4, “Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures...”

EVERYTHING ABOUT THE CHRISTIAN LIFE DEPENDS ON THE FACT—WHAT CHRIST JESUS DID FOR YOU ON THE CROSS AND WHAT IT MEANS TO YOU AND WHAT EFFECT IT HAS ON YOUR LIFE.

What is a Gospel-centered life? Many churchgoers today are living a self-centered life. They are not Gospel-centered. They see the Gospel only as a ticket to go to heaven. It has no impact on their lives.

The Gospel-centered life constantly reflects on the message of the gospel and lives accordingly. This means, a person who lives a Gospel-centered life will keep reflecting on the reality that Christ died on the cross to deliver him/her from the bondage and power of sin to live a holy and godly life. Such a person is immensely grateful to God’s saving grace and unreservedly devoted to live a life worthy of the Gospel.

I. THE GOSPEL IS THE **REASON** FOR OUR GODLINESS

❖ I PETER 1:22-2:1-3

Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, *since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; for*

“All flesh is like grass

and all its glory like the flower of grass.

The grass withers,

and the flower falls,

but the word of the Lord remains forever.”

And this word is the good news that was preached to you.

So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

❖ TITUS 3:1-8

Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people. For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. *But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.* The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works.

Justin Kane: The Gospel is the reason why we RUN. The moment we lose sight of the Good news that Christ died and rose again for us to live a NEW life, we then partake and walk in our OLD one.

2. THE GOSPEL IS THE REFERENCE POINT FOR OUR GODLINESS

❖ I JOHN 4:9-12

In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

❖ EPHESIANS 4:32-5:1-2

Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

❖ I PETER 2:19-24

For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

❖ PHILIPPIANS 2:3-11

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Tim Challies: Living a gospel-centered life is really simply living in such a way that this gospel is central. Thus when any kind of a situation arises we can say, “How does the gospel apply to this situation?” Thus everything else flows out of that gospel and every question is answered in reference to it.

3. THE GOSPEL IS THE RIVER OF POWER FOR GODLINESS

❖ 2 PETER 1:3

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

❖ ROMANS 8:9-10, 13

You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness... For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

Paul David Tripp: Christ is the source for our daily righteousness. We have no internal desire or moral ability to live up to biblical standards on our own, but in Christ, we have everything we need for godly living (2 Pet 1:3).

4. THE GOSPEL IS THE RESTORATION IN OUR UNGODLINESS (WEAKNESSES)

❖ HEBREWS 4:14-16

Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

❖ I JOHN 2:1-2

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

❖ I JOHN 1:7-9

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Joe Thorn (Pastor of Redeemer Fellowship): When the gospel is central in our lives we have confidence before God – not because of our achievements, but because of Christ’s atonement. We can approach God knowing that he receives us as his children. We do not allow our sins to anchor us to guilt and despair, but their very presence in our lives compels us to flee again and again to Christ for grace that restores our spirits and gives us strength.

FINAL REFLECTION ON PHILIPPIANS 1:27,

- ESV “Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ...”
- GNT, “Now, the important thing is that your way of life should be as the gospel of Christ requires...”
- CEV, “Above all else, you must live in a way that brings honor to the good news about Christ.”
- NCV, “Only one thing concerns me: Be sure that you live in a way that brings honor to the Good News of Christ.”
- NOG, “Live as citizens who reflect the Good News about Christ.”

APPLICATION: If you really understand the Gospel of Christ and believe in it, let the Gospel be the *reason* for your godliness, let the Gospel be the *reference point* for your godliness, let the Gospel be the *river of power* for your godliness and let the Gospel be the *restoration* in your ungodliness. Let the Gospel reflect in the way you live your daily Christian life. Let our lives be Gospel-centered.