

Back to School: Reminding Ourselves of Who We Are and Why We Are Here

Week 2: Practical Gospel

Introduction: The Christian faith changed the world. In its original context, the early church was considered to be led by people who turned the world upside down. (Acts 17:6) The upside-down turn happened because the first followers of Jesus lived in such a way that their faith in Jesus made a tangible impact in the world around them. Slaves, women, children, foreigners, lepers, the abused, the outcast, and the lesser valued person all found solid ground at the Cross of Jesus. Although social status continued to divide people, faith in Jesus brought the rich and the poor, the master and the slave, the oppressor and the oppressed together in peace.

This world-changing faith is what practical gospel is all about. The practical gospel can be expressed quite simply as good news for everyday life!

Today, we have so compartmentalized our faith. We go to church—rather than living as the church. We schedule programs rather than entering into relationships. In short, we have, at the expense of those around us, contained the world changing power of the good news.

It's time to live in power and grace again. It is time for Cornerstone to embrace a full-bodied gospel that makes real world differences. As James declares, "faith that doesn't work is dead!" **James 2:14-17**

The Big Picture: The Good News of Jesus was always intended to make real time differences that are felt all the way to eternity!

Discussion:

Share:

- Was there ever a school subject you studied and wondered, "What difference will this make in my life?" What was that subject? Has it made a difference in your life?

Discuss:

Sermon Review:

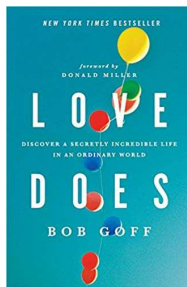
- Write down any questions or thoughts that stand out to you as you review the sermon together. Discuss them as a group.
- How does connecting people to Christ and His community make a difference in your life personally? What about in the lives of your immediate family? Co-workers? Neighbors? Fellow Church Members?
- Why do you think the Gospel must be practical?

- We believe the full life Jesus promised is experienced through regular and intentional engagement with Christ and His community. The following values identify for Cornerstone what it means to enter and experience the full life Jesus promised.
 - GRACE: Experiencing Regular Renewal and Refreshment through the Spirit
 - GROWTH: Learning and Applying the Word of God to My Everyday Life
 - GATHER: Experiencing Christian Community and Gospel Renewal with Others
 - GIFTS: Applying My Time and Talent for the Benefit of Others
 - GENEROSITY: Honoring God by Sharing My Resources to Benefit Others
 - GOODNESS—Expressing the Gospel at Work through Love and Good Deeds

Which of those values do you most regularly experience? How do you experience it?

Which of those values is most lacking in your life? How do you think Cornerstone can help you experience Jesus in that way?

Further Exploration on this Topic:



Love Does: Discover a Secretly Incredible Life in an Ordinary World by Bob Goff

From the Publisher: As a college student he spent 16 days in the Pacific Ocean with five guys and a crate of canned meat. As a father he took his kids on a world tour to eat ice cream with heads of state. He made friends in Uganda, and they liked him so much he became the Ugandan consul. He pursued his wife for three years before she agreed to date him. His grades weren't good enough to get into law school, so he sat on a bench outside the Dean's office for seven days until they finally let him enroll.

Bob Goff has become something of a legend, and his friends consider him the world's best-kept secret. Those same friends have long insisted he write a book. What follows are paradigm shifts, musings, and stories from one of the world's most delightfully engaging and winsome people. What fuels his impact? Love. But it's not the kind of love that stops at thoughts and feelings. Bob's love takes action. Bob believes *Love Does*.

When *Love Does*, life gets interesting. Each day turns into a hilarious, whimsical, meaningful chance that makes faith simple and real. Each chapter is a story that forms a book, a life. And this is one life you don't want to miss.

Light and fun, unique and profound, the lessons drawn from Bob's life and attitude just might inspire you to be secretly incredible, too.

Link: <https://www.amazon.com/Love-Does-Discover-Secretly-Incredible/dp/1400203759>