

Gospel Power (future)

SECTION 4: NOTES

Review: Past Grace and Present Grace

Past-Tense Gospel: Good news of gracious acceptance - I am justified & adopted (live by faith)

Focus: Objective truth content of what Jesus did for us in history through cross & resurrection

Present-Tense Gospel: Good news of changed lives - new power (Spirit) & new motivation (grace)

Focus: Present, personal, subjective experience of the transforming power of grace by the Holy Spirit

Worse than we'd admit: How does a robust, biblical understanding of sin change us?

More loved than we can imagine: How does our acceptance in Christ & Spirit's presence change us?

Discuss: Why do we need both the objective reality and the subjective experience? What if we only have one?

Future Grace

Future-Tense Gospel: Good news of a new world coming - final freedom & renewed world (live with hope)

Focus: The confidence and security of a new world coming where everything wrong comes undone

Two Hopes: the future-tense of the gospel creates both personal hope of glory and universal hope of renewal

Personal Hope: Glory

Romans 8.18-25: The hope of future adoption and redemption - brought to completion personally

We are tasting the transforming power of grace (renewed day by day!), but long for completion

Romans 8.28-30: The confidence of future glorification - a past-tense, future reality!

Our future is incredibly bright - God is working for my good and his glory - a certain future

Romans 8.31-39: The logic of gospel confidence - if he gave his Son, what will he now withhold?

I don't *need* anything, and can trust that my Father will provide what I need, so I'm radically free

Discuss: How might a profound hope in the completion of this Story shape our lives today?

What is the evidence in our lives when we don't believe this personally & deeply? What behavior or emotions?

DNA: What is one struggle, sin, or hardship you'd love to be free from today? Why do you want to be free from it?

What difference does having "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col 1.27) bring to your struggle?

Hope For The World: Creation Renewed

C.S. Lewis: If you read history you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were precisely those who thought most of the next. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this.

Salvation: Finishing The Biblical Storyline

In the beginning, God created His ideal world and created humanity to steward and cultivate it: Shalom

Genesis 1.26-2.3: What might our world look like without the fall?

Genesis 3.1-24: What do you see unraveling in the fall?

Culture: the human heart amplified, what is “in us” being expressed, our worship writ large

When God rules hearts by his word, culture reflects his goodness, unity, and love (Shalom)

When God is not ruling, culture reflects our sin, perversion, and self-love (universal disintegration)

Isaiah 11.1-10: Prediction of the healing and restoring of Shalom

***Matt 11.1-6:** the “kingdom of God” is the restoring of Shalom culture by the re-entry of God’s rule in Jesus

Jesus proclaimed **and** demonstrated the kingdom of God - both central to his ministry

His miracles were not a “suspension” of natural order but a “restoration” of God’s original (and coming!) intent

Cornelius Plantinga: The coming of the kingdom of God represents a final state of cosmic redemption, in which God and God’s creatures dwell together in harmony and righteousness. It represents shalom – universal flourishing, wholeness, and delight... On the one hand, we need to avoid triumphalism, the prideful view that we Christians will fully succeed in transforming all or much of culture... On the other hand, we need to avoid the despairing tendency to write the world off and to remove ourselves to an island of like-minded Christians. The world, after all, belongs to God and is in the process of being redeemed by God... Christians have been invited to live beyond triumphalism and despair, spending ourselves for a cause we firmly believe will win in the end. In a vision lovely enough to break a person’s heart, John shows us that heaven comes to us and renews this world.

Discuss: Salvation is not about “going to heaven when you die” but about ordinary life being renewed, healed.

What will the future world be like? In what ways can we demonstrate that future world today?

A Community of Hope

Matt 5.14-16: Christian community is a city on a hill or a city within the city that is both a **sign** and **foretaste**

Sign: We’re a people pointing corporately to the cosmic renewal that is coming

Foretaste: We’re a people experiencing the profound Hope of the gospel personally