



Gospel Identity: Family

Understanding Gospel Identity

The Great Commission

All authority - Gospel Power

Go make disciples - Gospel Purpose

Baptizing them into the name of - Gospel Identity

The Gospel Flow (p.55): What happens when we reverse the flow, emphasizing the DO without the DONE?

The Father's Work

Galatians 4.1-7: Adoption through Propitiation

v.1-3: Contrast Slave & Child: Motivates obedience? Nature of relationship? Hope for?

v.4-5: What did God do on our behalf?

v.6-7: What privileges are ours now that we are adopted? What responsibilities? (see article, p.60ff)

Sinclair Ferguson: Adoption is not a change in nature, but a change in status. If we fail to see this truth, we will reject the power of our adoption... Adoption is a declaration God makes about us. It is irreversible, dependent entirely upon His gracious choice, in which He says: "You are my son, today I have brought you into my family."

Richard Lovelace: It is an item of faith that we are children of God; there is plenty of evidence in us against it. The faith that surmounts this evidence and that is able to warm itself at the fire of God's love, instead of having to steal love and self-acceptance from other sources, is actually the root of holiness. . . . We are not saved by the love we exercise, but by the love we trust.

The Adopted Life

DNA: Orphans vs. Sons (p.62)

Which orphan tendency most describes you? How would living in the reality of adoption change you?

What is one area of "Sonship" that you'd love to see grow up in your life? What gospel truth is at its root?

J.I. Packer: Adoption is the highest privilege that the gospel offers... Adoption is a family idea, conceived in terms of love, and viewing God as father. In adoption, God takes us into his family and fellowship - he establishes us as his children and heirs. Closeness, affection and generosity are at the heart of the relationship. To be right with God the judge is a great thing, but to be loved and cared for by God the Father is greater.

Discuss: What are the *vertical* implications of this new, permanent status? How does it shape our worship?

A Gospel Family Culture

Discuss: Gospel Indicatives and Gospel Imperatives

Indicatives: What is true about God and his love for us in these passages? How is it good news?

Imperatives: How does the love of God inform and affect our relationships? How is it good news?

1 John 4.7-11: Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. 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.

Ephesians 5.1-3: 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.

Galatians 5.25-26: If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

Gospel Flow: Who is God? What has he done? Who are we? How do we live?

We Are Family: Love One Another

Family: We are dearly loved children, adopted by the Father. As Family, we love God and one another.

DNA: Acts 2.42-47 (see p.65)

What is the early church doing? What activities are they engaged in? Why?

What are the benefits of this kind of community? What is the cost?

What fears or hesitations do you have about being this committed to a particular community of people?

What gospel truths can free you to press in with this kind of all-of-life, one-anothering community?

Life In Community: Would you know how to be the church without a building, Sunday event, or paid staff?

The emphasis we place on community is based on our new identity as Family in the gospel. To live out and teach others to follow Jesus' command to love one another (and the myriad other "one anothers"), we need lots of life together. As children of God we love one another as brothers and sisters. Jesus said this is the way the world will know that we are his disciples – by our love for one another. The primary means by which we show the world what God is like and give tangible proof of the Gospel's power to save is through our love for one another.

Discuss: What practical steps are you going to take this week to live out your Family Identity? (p.67-68)

Who is your gospel family? How will you help build loving community in light of your identity as Family?