

KNOW THE GOSPEL

Knowing The Gospel Transforms Us As Disciples And Empowers Us For Mission

THE PASSAGE

John 17:3; Romans 8:29; Galatians 6:7-8

1) The White Hot Why?

- Why Does the Compass Church exist? Matthew 28:18-20; John 17:3

2) Knowing Jesus

- Do we know about Jesus or do we know Jesus? Matthew 4:18-22

3) Knowing Jesus transforms us as disciples inward and outward

- As we know Jesus we are conformed into his image. Romans 8:29; Romans 12:1-2; Titus 2:11-14

4) Gospel Appetite

- "Spiritual disciplines are like wires that connect us to the power of the gospel" Gal 6:7,8; Ps 41

FOR FURTHER STUDY THIS WEEK

THE GOSPEL IS NOT JUST THE DIVING BOARD; IT'S THE POOL

BY J.D. GREAR

Christianity teaches something fundamentally different than every other religion. Every other religion says that if you change, you will be accepted. But Christianity says, “**Because** you have been accepted, therefore change.” Christianity doesn’t proclaim *good advice*, but *good news*. And that news transforms us from the inside out.

This is by no means an intuitive truth. And those of us in the church tend to forget it quite a bit. For many evangelicals, the gospel functions solely as the entry rite into Christianity; it is the prayer we pray to begin our relationship with Jesus; the diving board off of which we jump into the pool of the “real” Christian life.

The gospel, however, is not just the diving board off of which we jump into the pool of Christianity; *it is the pool itself*. It is not only the way we begin in Christ; it is the way we grow in Christ. As Tim Keller says, the gospel is not just the ABCs of Christianity, but it is the A–Z. All of the Christian life flows from the good news of what Jesus has done.

That’s why *growth in Christ is never going beyond the gospel, but going deeper into the gospel*. The purest waters from the spring of life are found by digging deeper, not wider, into the gospel well.

The gospel of grace is a radically unique and liberating message in a world of religious commands and restrictions. But it’s the only message that can really change us. Religion might be able to force outward conformity . . . for a while. But religion can never transform the heart. To borrow Jesus’ metaphor, it cleans the outside of the cup, but leaves the inside filthy.

Believing that you’ve been accepted by grace, though, transforms you in a fundamentally different way—in an organic way. It does two things in your heart that religion could *never* do:

1. It gives you peace and security with God, which produces love for God. In John 14:18, Jesus said, “*I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.*” A faithful father does not leave his kids wondering whether or not he loves them. When I have to go away on a trip, I don’t say to my kids, “*Daddy will be back soon . . . or maybe he won’t. Maybe I’m not your daddy at all. You’ll just have to wait and see if I come back. Sit around and think about that while I’m gone, and let that compel you to become better children.*”

That wouldn’t produce love and loyalty in my children. It might produce a little fear-based obedience, but it’s only a matter of time until fear-based obedience turns into father-loathing rebellion. God doesn’t want that for us any more than we want that for our own kids. He wants us to be at peace with him, and that begins by recognizing his compassion for us. *Understanding the love of God is the only thing that can truly inspire love for God.*

2. It releases power in your life. There are only two things that the Apostle Paul ever calls “the power of God.” One is the gospel; the other is Jesus Christ himself. The same power that surged through Jesus’ ministry during his time on earth is available to us today. It’s the power of the Holy Spirit, and it comes into our lives when we believe the gospel. As Paul put it, when we behold the glory of God in the face of Christ, we are transformed into glory (2 Cor 3:18-4:14). All it takes is a **look**. “*Look to me,*” Jesus says, “*and live!*”

Nothing we do should ever lack a gospel-motivation and a gospel-focus. Jesus is the ultimate hero of Scripture. He is the Lord of our churches. He is the *point*, he is our chief *plumb line*, and he alone holds the *power*.