

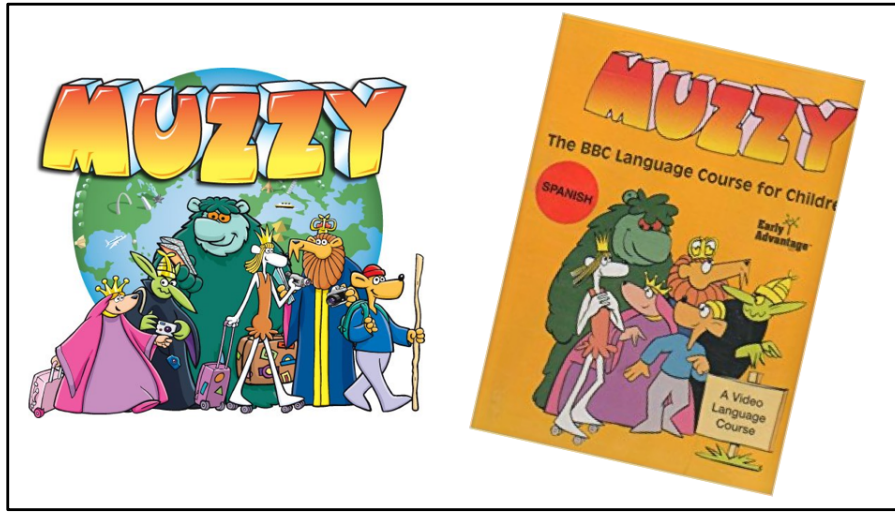


START SLIDE (Blank)

So tell me, how many of you have ever tried learning a new language?

I know some of you are planning to leave on international mission trips this year, some next week, others this Fall, some next year...

TR: Let me tell you about one of my first experiences in learning a new language...have you ever heard of MUZZY?



Story of Muzzy VHS Tapes...

TR: Sooo, for me and my brothers, Muzzy was a...



FAIL...

TR: So, what do you think is the best way to learn a new language?

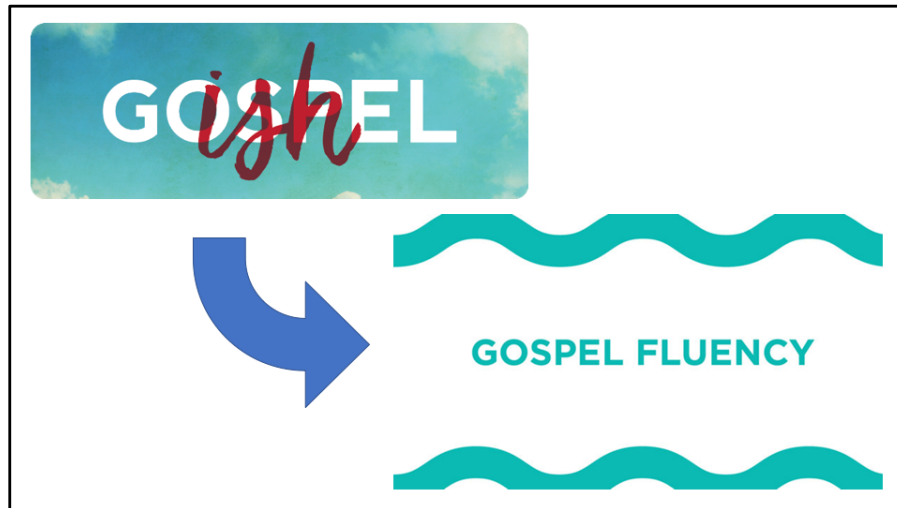


...READ SLIDE...

I'm going to read through a list of possible answers, and then (at BOTH campuses) raise your hand if I name the one you were thinking of...

- PERSONAL TUTOR**
- SCHOOL/CLASSROOM**
- ONLINE TOOL – BLOGS, WEBSITES, VIDEOS, etc.**
- ROSETTA STONE/LANGUAGE SOFTWARE**
- FLASH CARDS/MEMORIZE VOCAB**

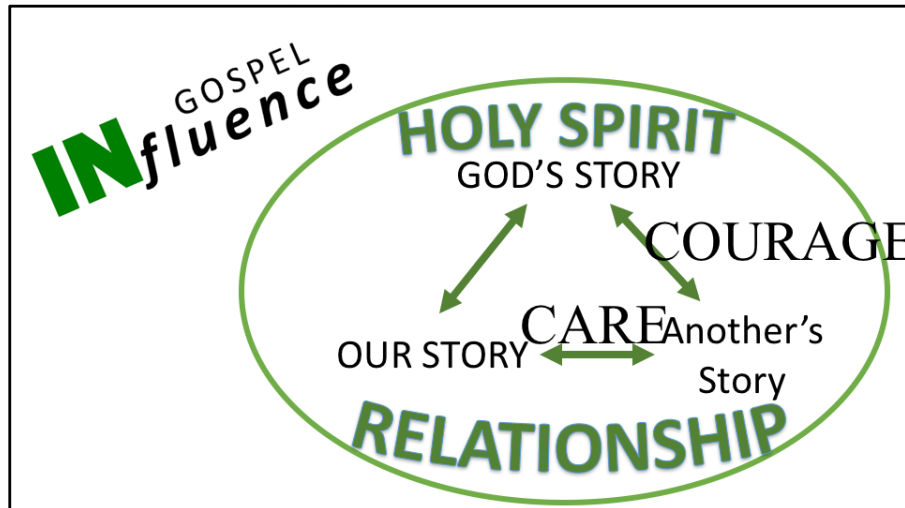
- **TEXTBOOK**
- **IMMERSION/LIVING ABROAD**
- **CONVERSATION PARTNER/GROUP**
- **OR how about a COMBINATION OF ALL OF THE ABOVE?
AND Time and Practice, Practice, Practice...**
- **Well, there is a lot of research and marketing out there for what works best...I know one couple that attends the Newwaygo Campus, and they are only speaking to each other in Arabic from now until they leave for their mission trip in the Fall.**
- **TR: Now, you know we're not talking about Arabic, Spanish, Russian this morning...we're talking about the language of the gospel and going from...**



Speaking GOSPEL-ISH to having greater GOSPEL FLUENCY...(a term I learned from pastor Jeff Vanderstelt...that's really resonated with me...)

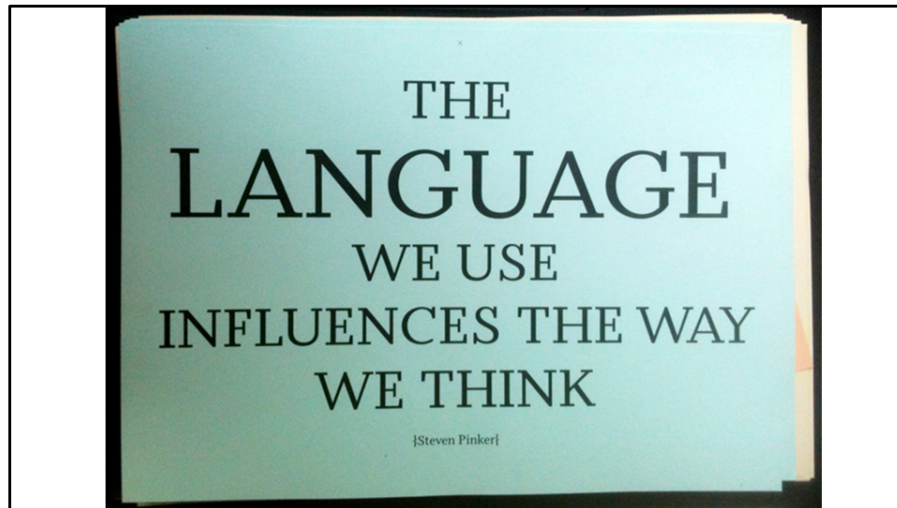
- **We're talking about Going FROM knowing a few gospel vocab words, some Jesus catch phrases, or giving a basic presentation TO someone...growing FROM that TO having a conversation WITH someone, listening first to their story and then sharing how the Big story of God, specifically the truths of Jesus, how that is good news in the everyday stuff of their life, their story.**
- **TR: I believe the more fluent we become in our native-tongue the gospel, (which became our native tongue when we were born again in Christ) the greater gospel INfluence (or effect)**

we will have in our church family and in our communities...



- Remember...Gospel INfluence simply is...(Explain diagram)

TR: Take a look at this quote I found from Steven Pinker...



READ SLIDE...

“Learning another language is not only learning different words for the same things, but learning another way to think about things.” – Fiora Lewis

- **Do you remember what Paul said in Romans 12 about thinking...”Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind (your thinking, your filters, your mental framework, your worldview essentially), that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”**

TR: Essentially, we’re talking about Gospel THINKING...that will help us better live out our vision as a church family, God’s vision

for His church...



READ SLIDE...

TR: We are to be...



...as SALT and as LIGHT...IN our communities...

- **When we talk about being salt and light, we're really talking about being JESUS IN our communities...**
- **BECAUSE Jesus is the light of the world. Jesus is the true salt of the earth, the one who preserves and protects, who adds flavor and life...where there is rot, decay, and death...**
- **AND we are only able to be salt and light as much as we are IN Christ and Christ is in us, in our thoughts, attitude, actions, and speech...**

TR: So getting back to the original question...



...READ SLIDE...

- I submit to you today that the best way to become more fluent in the gospel is indeed IMMERSION, to immerse yourself in a gospel-saturated/Christ-centered community where you can practice, practice, practice...

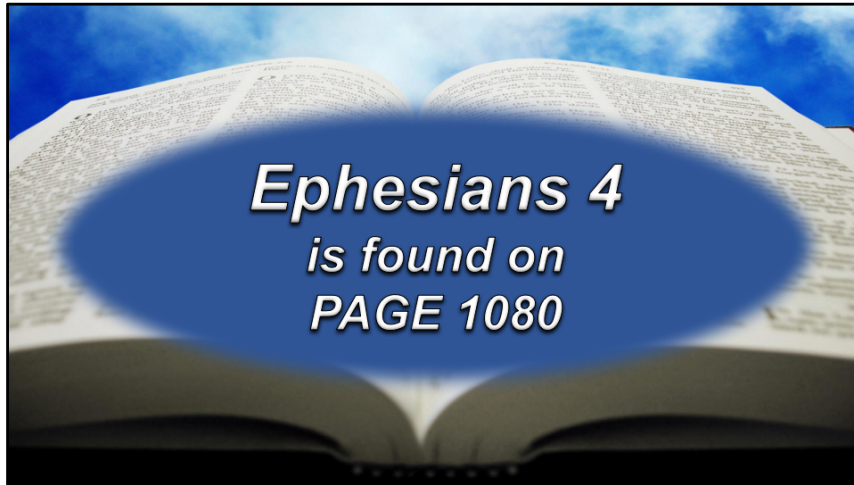


- **Get a conversation partner, or dive into a small group...and make it a habit at your small group to constantly bring up the truths about the good news of Jesus and how those connect to all that everyday stuff of life that people bring to the group with them...**
- **...practice, practice, practice until it becomes the norm, second-nature (really, our new-nature), until you can't help but make the connections when you hear the stories, watch the movies, read the books, listen to the music, hear the news...**
- **...AND you know you've gained fluency when "... you move from merely translating to interpreting all of life through the gospel.... For a language, It happens when you can think, feel,**

speak, even dream in that language ...and it becomes the filter through which you perceive the world and help others perceive theirs and yours.”

- **As we seek to win disciples in our communities, we all the more need to grow as disciples ourselves...and to grow and mature into Christ...**

TR: Turn with me, if you would, in your Bibles to Ephesians chapter 4...



. . . Which is page 1080 in the handout Bibles...and this time, I will also have the words on the screen...

- **This is Paul's letter to the church in Ephesus, and there are 6 chapters to it...the first 3 really focusing on what the Gospel is and what our identity is in Christ, and the last 3 then are all about how we ought then to live out of that new identity. Another way to look at it is that the first 3 are like the root (right thinking and belief) and the last 3 are the fruit of that belief.**
- **So chapter 4 is the start of that fruit and living out of the truths of the gospel and our new identity in Christ...**

TR: Follow along with as I read aloud...starting at verse 11....

Ephesians 4:11-13

¹¹ And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers ¹² to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, ¹³ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,

*ESV***READ SLIDE**

Ephesians 4:14-15

¹⁴ so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. ¹⁵ Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,

*ESV***READ SLIDE**

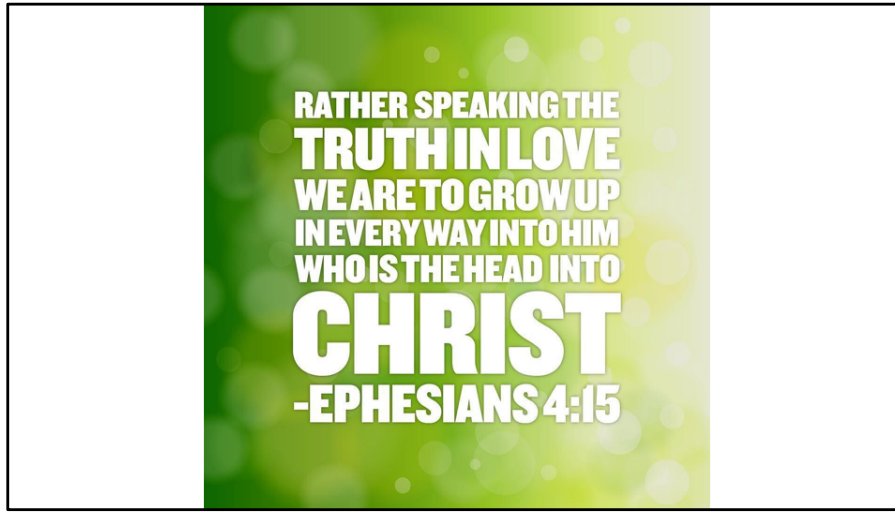
Ephesians 4:16

¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

ESV

READ SLIDE...

TR: What great stuff here, but I want to especially focus in on verse 15...



READ SLIDE...

- **We TOGETHER are to GROW UP in every way INTO Christ...**
- **“...to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ...”**
- **So that we’re not carried away by the false gospels of the world, but rather we have correct thinking, the true gospel, the Truth, Jesus...**
- **We are to speak the Truth in love to one another...in other words, we are to speak the good news of Jesus in love to one another...**
- **And honestly, how can we do that well when we’re in rows on**

Sunday morning? ...when we're looking at the backs of heads and only hearing a one way message from the front? Now you tell me, would you become more fluent in Spanish if you only went to a weekly lecture and didn't even make all the weeks because sometimes you had to miss class for whatever reason? No, probably not, it would be best to get in some sort of study group during the week in addition to your own personal studies. (That's how it was with me when it came to learning Greek and Hebrew)

- **You know, Sunday mornings are great, and I believe God does a unique and good work when all of the local body of believers gathers together to worship, but I also believe the transformational discipleship stuff of church happens not in rows, but in smaller circles...small groups, mentor relationships, mission trips, adventure trips...**

TR: Pastor Andy Stanley, one of the speakers I'm most looking forward to hearing this year at the GLS, says this...

Andy Stanley (Summit 2017 Speaker)

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**“The church doesn’t
happen in rows.
The church happens
in circles.”**

READ SLIDE...

- He goes on to say, “People often come up to me and say, ‘I visited your church.’ I tell them, ‘No you didn’t. You visited one of our worship services. Our church meets in circles.’”
- Are you just attending one of our worship services? Or are you in a Christ-centered Small Group that’s seeking to be saturated by the good news of Jesus?
- If you’ve been around Trinity for any length of time, you’ve heard it said that we are a church of small groups...that discipleship, care, and mission happen best in life-on-life relationships...and that’s what we shoot for in our small groups...

- **This Fall, we are planning to launch an all-church 8-wk small groups campaign...where we are going to encourage everyone at both campuses to join a small group for 8 weeks, and we're going to all focus on the same thing...INfluence, gospel INfluence...connecting God's story to our story to another's story in the context of life-on-life relationship as led by the Holy Spirit...**
- **We want to cultivate an environment for every one of you to grow up healthy into Christ, and that's just not going to happen through coming on Sunday mornings alone...If you're a small group leader or think God's calling you to step up this Fall, then I'm challenging you to intentionally prayerfully start thinking through who you're going to invite to join you in practicing Gospel Fluency for those 8 weeks. And if you're not a SGL, then I challenge you to prayerfully intentionally start creating space in your calendar to be a part of a small group and seek one out. Now is the time...to create the space for growth to happen...here are the dates...we launch September 17 and**

finish up the week of November 5.

- **And here's what the groups are going to be focused on...learning God's story afresh, the good news of Jesus, sharing your stories, hearing others' stories, and looking for Gospel Gaps (places where Jesus is missing) and sharing the Truth in Love...exactly what Ephesians 4:15 is talking about...**
- **But I know many of you are busy...you got a lot going on, and so do I...that's often my story...So, let's practice some gospel fluency with this one...**

TR: I don't know about you, but I learn better by hearing more examples, so let's walk through one together like we did last week...

God's Story...

Creation ~ Fall ~ Redemption ~ New Creation

18

... So remember, It all starts with knowing God's Big story of redemption...

- **There are FOUR key movements...CREATION, FALL, REDEMPTION, and NEW CREATION...**

TR: Fluency in the gospel always starts with knowing well the big story of God and the good news of Jesus...

Ours and Others' Stories...

Creation ~ Fall ~ Redemption ~ New Creation
Identity ~ Problem ~ Solution ~ Ultimate Hope

...And then it's having the care and intentionality to listen to someone else's story...and everyone has roughly the SAME FOUR movements as the gospel...only we name them differently...IDENTITY, PROBLEM, SOLUTION, ULTIMATE HOPE...

- **Everyone basically lives out some sort of gospel story in their life...a good news story for them...that they believe will get them to their ultimate hope in life...**
- **The thing that we are trying to be prayerfully aware of, is who or what are they placing as the solution or hero of their story...and if it's not Jesus...then they are living a false good news story...a false gospel story...where their ultimate hope will ultimately leave them hopeless...**

- **So, let's start filling this out for my story...to use as an example...now we all have MANY STORIES or PIECES to our Stories...this is just one that live out sometimes and need to be reminded of the gospel again...**

TR: So, first off, what's my presenting PROBLEM?...

*Creation ~ Fall ~ Redemption ~ New Creation
Identity ~ Problem ~ Solution ~ Ultimate Hope*

I'M TOO BUSY

I'M TOO BUSY...

TR: Now, if I reflect more on this, in what or in whom do I find my core identity that I am living out of that's directly connected to my problem?...

Creation ~ Fall ~ Redemption ~ New Creation
Identity ~ Problem ~ Solution ~ Ultimate Hope

*I AM WHAT I DO/
HOW I PERFORM*

I'M TOO BUSY

I AM WHAT I DO or HOW I PERFORM...

- **Even more than that, for me at least, it would be I AM WHO OTHERS SAY I AM...which ties directly to WHAT I DO AND HOW WELL I PERFORM AT WHAT I DO...**
- **Do you see how living out of that identity lends its self to being too busy and overwhelmed by things...because I've got to please my kids, wife, parents, church, boss, even God...**

TR: And what's the solution I turn to in order to overcome the problem, my functional savior...

Creation ~ Fall ~ Redemption ~ New Creation
Identity ~ Problem ~ Solution ~ Ultimate Hope

*I AM WHAT I DO/
HOW I PERFORM*

I'M TOO BUSY

*EFFICIENCY-
PERFECTION*

EFFICIENCY...Better tools, more control, doing it faster, doing it better, perfection...

TR: And then my ULTIMATE HOPE, my ideal future that I'm shooting for...

Creation ~ Fall ~ Redemption ~ New Creation
Identity ~ Problem ~ Solution ~ Ultimate Hope

*I AM WHAT I DO/
HOW I PERFORM*

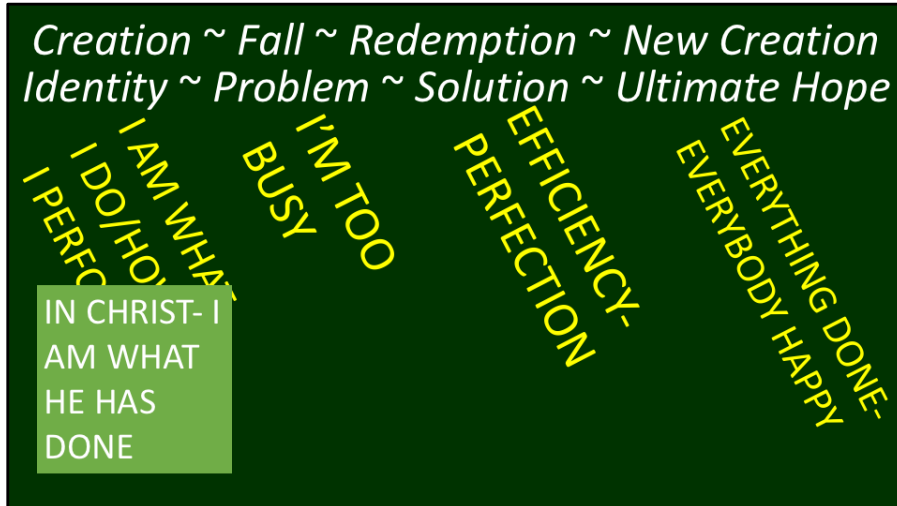
I'M TOO BUSY

*EFFICIENCY-
PERFECTION*

*EVERYTHING DONE-
EVERYBODY HAPPY*

EVERYTHING IS DONE and EVERYONE IS HAPPY...

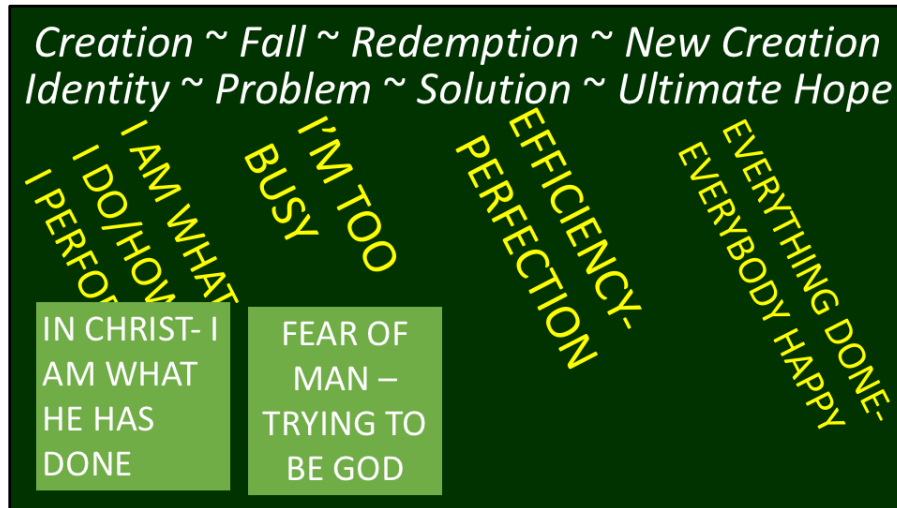
- **But we all know that's not true...that's wrong thinking...it's a false Gospel...where is Jesus?**
- **TR: Do you see the gospel gaps?...Let's first address my identity...**



... It always goes back to being **IN CHRIST**...as Colossians says..."All things (including me) were created by Him, through Him, and for Him..."

- **I AM NOT** ultimately what I do or how I do it....**I AM WHAT HE HAS DONE FOR ME** and **IS DOING IN** and **THROUGH ME**...
- James Bryan Smith, "I am one in whom Christ dwells and delights, and I belong to an unshakable kingdom."

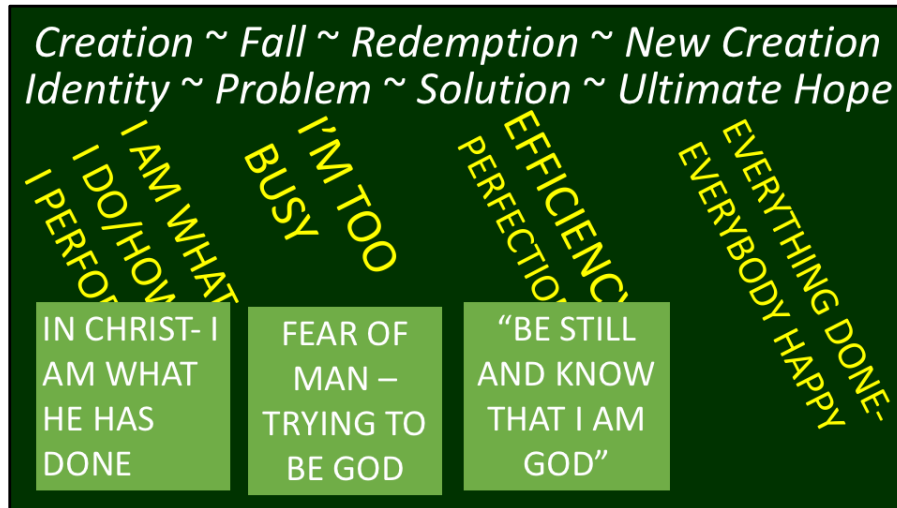
TR: How about my real problem?...



... I need to repent from trying to be God and do everything, and please everyone, and save everyone as if it all depended on me and that if I didn't do it, then I failed in some way...

- **My real problem is a fear of man, and believing the lie that God needs me...that I'm in control...that it's about what I do, and if I don't do...it's all going to fall apart...**

TR: So, I'm in desperate need of a real solution...



... I need to BE STILL AND KNOW THAT HE IS GOD...

- **Sometimes in the Frenzy...I just need to STOP and know that Jesus is God and is on His Throne and is In Control...**
- **Jesus died to set me free from my bondage to sin and needing to live out my false gospel story...**
- **LISTEN TO HIS WORDS that have Gospel INfluence (impact) in my life and remind me of the good news about the life I'm called to live in Him...**
- **READ MATTHEW 11:28-30 (FROM BIBLE)**
- **READ MATTHEW 6:33-34 (FROM BIBLE)**

- **Do you see how the truth about the good news of Jesus fills in the gospel gaps in my story?**

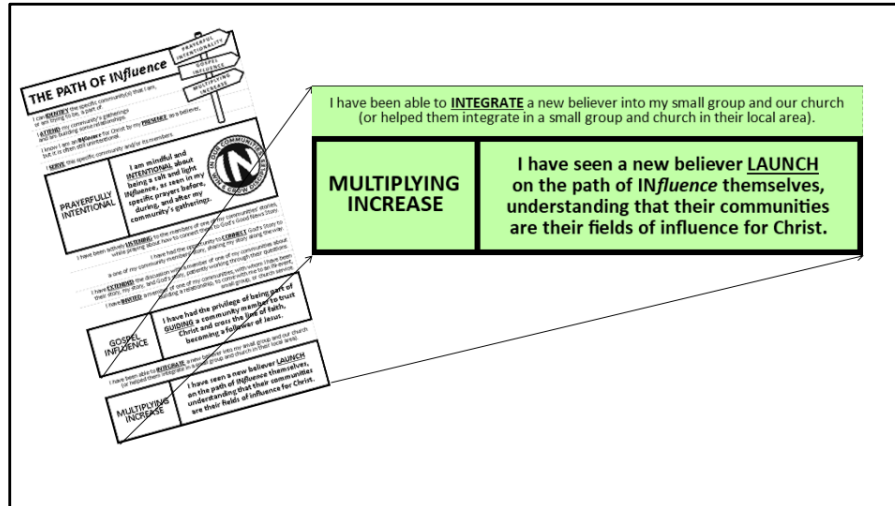
TR: My ultimate hope then...



... Is rooted in **HIS WORK** and knowing **HIS DELIGHT** and **HIS PEACE** forever in perfect relationship with Him when he comes again...

- **WHICH I CAN KNOW IN PART** even NOW, and but I will know **IN FULL THEN...**
- So, this is gospel fluency, making the connections in the everyday stuff of life...

TR: AND this is what we want to invite people to join with us in...



- If you take out the insert in your worship flyer, just like the last two weeks, you'll find our vision on one side and the Path of Influence on the other...
- these are some of the steps that we take with a person on that path of influencing someone for Christ.
- The last sign post on the path is about multiplying Increase, and one of the steps talks about integrating a new believer into a small group and thus into our church family...

TR: It's about INviting people into community where Jesus is at the center and they are growing up into Christ and growing in their own gospel fluency...they're practicing it with each other...immersed in it together...



...Learning how to better connect God's story to their own in the context of life-on-life relationships as led by the Holy Spirit...

- **AND the more that we're able to gain Gospel Fluency IN community, I believe the Greater gospel INfluence we will have IN our Communities...**
- **So, who are you going to prayerfully and intentionally INvite to join you in becoming more fluent in the gospel? Summer is a great time to learn a new language.**
- **Maybe it's just a conversation partner for now, and then I say go through the story framework in your worship flyer and start reflecting on and filling in your own story...**

- **AND don't forget to mark your calendars and make room for the 8-week all-church SG campaign on Gospel INfluence...Sept. 15 – November 5.**
- **We're going to need a lot more leaders in order to be able to get everyone into a small group (and not have it be a large group)...I think a lot of you could be leaders, that aren't yet...It's just an 8 week commitment, and there is one more small group leader retreat left at the SHACK, and I've got some rooms to fill, so let me know...We're going to be diving into more of this and practicing, practicing, practicing...**

TR: You know, the best way to learn a language...is actually to first know why you're even trying to learn it...



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- **For me it's this...I'm in desperate need of the good news of Jesus everyday in my life...**
- **And going back to my first sermon in this series..."THERE ARE DEAD PEOPLE WHO NEED TO BE RAISED AND RAISED PEOPLE (like many of you and me) WHO ARE LIVING LIKE THEIR DEAD"**
- **And GOSPEL-ISH is simply not going to cut it...**
- **I NEED THIS (hold up bible) IN HERE (my heart/mind) AND COMING FLUENTLY OUT OF HERE (my mouth), and so do you...**

Let's Pray...