

WEEK 3

THE GOSPEL IN OUR FORMATION.

The gospel changes everything! That statement continues to be true even after we put our faith in Christ. Until the day we die, all Christians need the Good News of the Gospel. So, as we speak the gospel to God in worship, we will naturally speak the gospel to the man in the mirror.

As followers of Jesus, we still struggle with our flesh. The struggle of the flesh will at times leave us feeling condemned. It is of vital importance that we rehearse the gospel to ourselves.

We can be reminded of the great lengths that God went to in rescuing us. (John 3:16) We can contemplate the humility of Christ who came to serve us. (Mark 10:45; Philippians 2:1-11) We can consider how Christ experienced temptations to the greatest depths but remained sinless. (Hebrews 4:15) We can examine the looming pain of the cross and his faithfulness to the Father that he would not despise the cross. (Mark 14:32-42; Hebrews 12:2) We can sit at the foot of the cross seeing our Savior become a curse for us. (Galatians 3:13) We can run to the empty tomb and celebrate the victory over sin and the grave. (John 20; 1 Corinthians 15:50-58) We can have confidence that our hope is alive and returning for his bride. (Acts 1:8-11; Revelation 21:1-8)

Rehearsing the Gospel to ourselves is part of how God sanctifies us. The world presents many false stories of a “good life” found in comfort, control, power, and pleasure. But the true story—the story of Jesus Christ found in the Scriptures—leads us to the best life. Rehearse these truths and you will be formed into his glorious image.

ASSIGNMENT

- Attend the third lesson.
- Work through the Group Discussion.
- Complete the homework.

Group Discussion

1. Briefly share the moment(s) when the good news of the Gospel first became good to you.
2. Have one person read John 15:13. What is your gut reaction to Jesus—the God of the universe—laying down his life for you and calling you his friend?
3. What is one way you have struggled with feeling condemned lately?
4. Consider 1 John 3:1a, “See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are.” Fathers, how do you look at your children, especially in the younger years of their dependence and need?
5. Pray Romans 8:12-17 together. Person one reads verse 12 and then prays a short prayer. Person two reads verse 13 and then prays a short prayer. Continue around the circle until all have prayed.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

HOMEWORK

1. Read 2 Timothy 1. How does Paul refer to Timothy in verse 2? By earthly standards, was Timothy actually Paul's son?
2. What motivates Paul's prayers in verse 4?
3. Who was the first convert in Timothy's family? How did the gospel first reach his heart?
4. What is Paul's encouragement to Timothy in verse 6? What does God's Spirit give our spirits?



CONNECT THE STORY

5. **Interpret:** Timothy's path to following Jesus and his primary discipleship relationship contain a mixture of familial and non-familial relationships. How does this shape our view of multi-generational discipleship within the church? Is it familial only?

6. Summarize Paul's gospel reminder to Timothy in verses 8-11 below.

7. What does Paul challenge Timothy to do in verses 13-14?



CONNECT THE STORY

8. Interpret: What role does Onesiphorus play in Paul's life? Why would Paul encourage Timothy to look to his example?



PRACTICE

9. Apply: How might you encourage a disciple to care for and support missionaries? How have you personally engaged with the missionaries sent from your local church?

10. Read 2 Timothy 2. What does Paul encourage Timothy to be strengthened by?

11. What three examples does Paul use in verses 3-7? How might each shape Timothy's discipleship?
12. What does Paul call Timothy to remember (again) in verses 8-13? Why does he endure everything for the sake of the elect?
13. What is Timothy to rightly handle in order to present himself as one approved in verse 15b? What is he to avoid that brings shame?
14. What is the outcome of correcting opponents with gentleness in verse 25b-26?



CONNECT THE STORY

15. Interpret: Thinking over what Paul says (2 Tim. 2:7), what does it mean not to get entangled in civilian pursuits, especially given the later context of the chapter?

16. Interpret: What are the shortcuts that athletes take today to win? How have you experienced the reality that there are no shortcuts in sanctification?



DEEP DIVE

17. Read the following excerpt. Then, answer the following question.

Just as with soldiers and athletes, farmers cannot take any shortcuts either. They must toil every day. The difference with this illustration is that farming, unlike athletics and sometimes the military, is not glorious or exciting. The farmer is not applauded by fans or civilians. He does not call a press conference when he bales his hay!

This is a good analogy for discipleship. Discipleship is not glamorous. It involves sowing, planting, plowing, and monitoring. Farming is also like pastoral work in that it is endless. The farmer does not clock in and clock out. He gets up early, he works the field, he cares for the animals, ... and he shoots wolves! He is devoted to his work.

Paul adds that the hardworking farmer deserved the first “share of the crops.” The farmer gets to enjoy some of the fruit of his labor. This is the other side to farming and likewise to pastoral work. There are tremendous blessings involved in watching people grow in holiness, seeing skeptics converted, and watching mission projects develop. Slow, careful, faithful discipleship eventually produces because we reap what we sow (Gal 6:7–8). Therefore, “we must not get tired of doing good, for we will reap at the proper time if we don’t give up” (Gal 6:9). If the farmer does not plow, he will not reap. Paul told Timothy (and us) to “keep plowing.”

Paul concluded these examples by saying, “Consider what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything” (v. 7). Here is Bible Study 10! Students of Scripture must “consider” God’s Word carefully in order to understand it. Students of Scripture should also study with this promise in view: “The Lord will give you understanding in everything.” Do not be lazy in Bible study. Work hard and believe that God will help you uncover its truths. To be a great student of Scripture, you need hard work and a heart of humility.¹

¹ David Platt, Daniel L. Akin, and Tony Merida, *Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2013), 166–167.

How have you experienced the slow growth of discipleship? How might you encourage a younger believer to continue sowing seeds even in the face of a discouraging harvest?



PRACTICE

18. Apply: Who is one person in your family or church family that you could encourage to be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus? (2 Tim. 2:1)

19. Apply: Send them a text message using 2 Timothy 1-2 as your outline.