

SIT TOGETHER:

Groups are intended to both deepen our love for one another and our love for God's Word. Give your group the time to catch up, chat, and naturally communicate. Organic conversations are best. Ice breakers are discouraged. If you see someone sitting alone, it is the leader's responsibility to sit with them.

STUDY TOGETHER:

Gather everyone together to begin the evening study. Explain the purpose of the four week study on "The Gospel for Everyday Life". As you spend your time together, a few reminders:

- Listen to how people define the gospel. If anything is added or taken away, lead them to define it correctly. Remember Colossians 4:6 and Ephesians 4:15.
- Don't be afraid to sit in the silence while you wait for others to speak. Give them time to think through their answers. Speaking too much will discourage others from speaking.
- Avoid telling personal stories that are off script. Continue to point people to the words of Scripture, not your words.
- Not everyone will speak into the conversation. That's okay. They will speak when they are ready.
- Give yourself plenty of time at the end to confess and pray. Don't rush this section but also be aware of how late it is. It's better to have time for people to have conversations afterward than to end and have to rush out the door.

PURPOSE: This study is intended to deepen our love for Christ by seeing our need for Him on a daily basis. The gospel not only saves us from our sins but saves us to a life of holiness. As we look to see our need for Jesus everyday, let's also encourage one another to remember the gospel.

Tonight, we will see from Scripture how the gospel not only transforms our relationship with God in the vertical, but the gospel transforms our relationship with others in the horizontal, both inside and outside the church.

PRAYER: Before watching the video, reading the text of Scripture, or asking the questions, take time and pray with one another. If able, have the ladies pray with one another and have the men pray with one another. Have each group ask how they can pray for one another. Leader, after a few minutes, close out the time of prayer.

Introductory Questions:

QUESTION: What was your biggest take away from last week's session on "Beholding is Better than Behaving"?

ANSWER: Answers will vary.

QUESTION: What, in your opinion, is a church?

ANSWER: Answers will vary. This will segue into the video

VIDEO: Watch the video, "A Gospel Family". (12:53)

The Gospel Makes Us Family:

QUESTION: What is the gospel?

This is the message of the gospel. The Gospel is the good news that a holy God sent us His sinless Son Jesus Christ who, through His death and resurrection, has graciously saved us from our sin, delivered us from eternal hell, and has called us to live holy.

The Gospel message is the past, present, and future work of Jesus Christ in our lives. Remembering the gospel is necessary not only in remembering what Christ has done for us, but what He continues to do in us.

OPENING SCRIPTURE:

Galatians 6:1–10 [1] Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. [2] Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. [3] For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. [4] But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor. [5] For each will have to bear his own load. [6] Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches. [7] Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. [8] For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. [9] And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. [10] So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith. (ESV)

QUESTION: Why is the term “brothers” (and by way of application “sisters”) a key part of this text in Galatians?

ANSWER: The intention is to show how the church is a family.

QUESTION: Why do we tend to think of a church more as a place rather than a people? What would it look like to see the church as the redeemed people of God?

ANSWER: Answers will vary.

For every McDonald’s in America, there seems to be 4 churches. There are churches everywhere in our country. In America, most people have some connection (even a small connection) to a church. Churches can be Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodists, Baptists, non-denominational, and many other denomination.

In America, we often define “church” poorly. From a Biblical perspective, church is not a place you go and be a part of, it’s a people and the way they live. Our culture has drifted from the intended design of the church.

The church is the redeemed people of God who gather together to worship God and encourage one another.

Here’s what the Bible says about the church. **The Body of Christ:**

Colossians 1:18 And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.

The Church universal: The body of Christ is a reference to all believers: past, present, and future that make up local churches.

The church local: The local church takes the entire body and breaks it into local communities. This allows for friendship, spiritual growth, counseling, discipleship, and gospel influence in its surrounding community.

Acts 20:28 Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.

Community within the local church: Jesus did not establish the church for people to check off and check out. No, he wanted people to grow together in friendship and in their faith.

QUESTION: What are some aspects of church that bring people together? Are these truly unifying? What is the unifying reality in the life of the church?

ANSWER: Answers will vary, but may look like people, music, programs, etc. These are external unifiers that don't unify everyone and are gifts of common grace. For example, if you go to a Jaguars game, you will be with people, hear music, have things to do, etc.

These are not truly unifying because they do not center on Jesus Christ, the one who truly unifies the church for his own possession.

DISCUSSION: Share your gospel story (the story of how Jesus saved you from your sins) with the group.

Plan and prepare for this portion of the study will be lengthy. Give everyone plenty of time to talk, but at the same time, keep people on track. Begin by encouraging one another on the importance of sharing our testimonies.

QUESTION: What are some reasons we tend to live in isolation, even within the local church?

ANSWER: Answers will vary, but a good segue into the next question would be having our sin exposed. Hold off on this until others have given their answers.

The Gospel Family Is Marked By Gospel Restoration:

QUESTION: What does the text in Galatians 6 say we are to do when we see a brother or sister in Christ fall into sin and how are we to do it? Follow up: What would be some contrasting responses?

ANSWER: We are to restore them in a spirit of gentleness. Contrasting responses would be to ignore, condemn, gossip, delegate the responsibility to someone else. These responses are often contrary to the teaching of God's Word.

A person who is sinning needs our help. Paul says, "Restore him." The word means, make things right. It's used for repairing nets that are torn (Matthew 4:21).

Matthew 4:21 And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them.

Sin is a breakdown in the machinery of our life. It has to be repaired. If you find someone with a breakdown, do what you need to do in order to restore the person to good, godly

running condition. In other words, nobody who lives by the gospel can say about a brother's or sister's sin: "That's not my business. I don't have to add that to my burdens. It's his problem, not mine."

Restoration means to return something to working order. Biblical restoration means to return someone to be useful for the Lord.

If you have ever had a broken bone, you know how painful it is to have it set. The sinning believer is like a broken bone in the body, and he needs to be restored. The believer who is led by the Spirit and living in the liberty of grace will seek to help the erring brother, for "the fruit of the Spirit is love" (Gal. 5:22).

The overtaken ones need to be restored. They are not to be *ignored*. They are not to be *excused*. They are not to be *destroyed*. The goal is always *restoration*.

This job of restoration is often neglected in the church. We have a tendency to either pretend the sin never happened, or we tend to react too harshly towards the one who has sinned. The balance between these two extremes can only be negotiated by the spiritual. It should be normal to do what God says here, but it isn't. It is all too easy to respond to someone's sin with gossip, harsh judgment, or undiscerning approval.

QUOTE: "Let the ministers of the Gospel learn from Paul how to deal with those who have sinned. 'Brethren,' he says, 'if any man be overtaken with a fault, do not aggravate his grief, do not scold him, do not condemn him, but lift him up and gently restore his faith.'" (Luther)

QUOTE: "This suggests that gentleness is born of a sense of our own weakness and proneness to sin." (Stott)

Matthew 18:15–20 [15] "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. [16] But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. [17] If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. [18] Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. [19] Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. [20] For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them."

QUESTION: Why are we hesitant to help restore someone when they fall into sin?

ANSWER: Answers may vary.

The Gospel Family Is Marked By Gospel Love and Gospel Encouragement:

QUESTION: Galatians 6 calls for us to love those within our local Christian community by bearing one another's burdens and doing good to the household of faith. What does it look like practically to bear someone else's burden? How can you "do good" to others within the household of faith?

ANSWER: Answers may vary.

The legalist is not interested in bearing burdens. Instead, he *adds* to the burdens of others (Acts 15:10). This was one of the sins of the Pharisees in Jesus' day: "For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers" (Matt. 23:4). The legalist is always harder on other people than he is on himself, but the Spirit-led Christian demands more of himself than he does of others *that he might be able to help others*.

But there is a second contrast: he knows the love of Christ in his own heart. "The law of Christ" is: "Love one another" (John 13:34; 15:12). Paul has already discussed the "law of love" (Gal. 5:13–15), and now he is applying it. "Tender loving care" is not a modern invention, because Paul is urging it on believers in this passage. How much we appreciate it when the doctor uses tenderness as he sets a broken bone. And how much more should we use "tender loving care" when we seek to restore a broken life.

It takes a great deal of love and courage for us to approach an erring brother and seek to help him. Jesus compares this to eye surgery (Matt. 7:1–5)—and how many of us feel qualified for that?

John 13:34–35 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. [35] By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

QUESTION: How would loving others with a Christ-like love be an encouragement to others? If we know how encouraging it is to be encouraged, why are we hesitant to reciprocate encouragement to others in our church?

DISCUSSION: Take a moment to say something nice about someone in the group.

Hebrews 10:19–25 [19] Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, [20] by the new and living way that he opened

for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, [21] and since we have a great priest over the house of God, [22] let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. [23] Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. [24] And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, [25] not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. (ESV)

SHARE TOGETHER:

As you close out the group for the evening, take the time to have people share what is on their hearts. This is the time to take prayer requests, confess sins, and pray for one another. Encourage other people in the group to pray.

QUESTION: What sins do you need to confess?

James 5:15–16 [15] And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. [16] Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. (ESV)

ANSWER: Answers will vary.

QUESTION: Why must the local church be important in the life of a Christian?

ANSWER: Answers will vary.

QUESTION: What difference would it make in your life and in the lives of others if you went all in in the life and mission of Grace Life Church? Discuss amongst your group

ANSWER: Answers will vary.

GROUP PRAYER - Pray as a group that God will open your eyes further and further to the greatness and sufficiency of the Gospel within the local church.

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