THE WELL
COMMUNITY CHURCH

Gospel Roots

ABOUT THIS STUDY

It's pretty simple: we can't begin to share the gospel with anyone or live a gospel-centered life until we can know *the gospel* for ourselves. And, even more than just knowing it in our heads, we need to know how to apply it to our lives and then articulate it for real impact and a changed life.

We're going to spend four weeks defining the gospel before we tackle *The Gospel-Centered Life*. To some, this might seem like a repetitive exercise with information that you learned and accepted years ago. But we all need a refresh, a reminder of the roots of our Christian faith before we can stand strong, deeply rooted in our faith. The gospel is not just the ABC's but the A to Z of the Christian life. The gospel is more than just a message for sinners to be saved, but it impacts and transforms every aspect of our lives and world. Let's meet God in his Scriptures.

As you go through this study with your 3D group, feel free to ask any questions that come to mind. Take time to ask the questions that might feel too basic or too obvious. This is the time to work through the basics—the roots—before we can go share the good news with our neighbors, co-workers, friends, and family. Don't be shy!

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

We suggest that you do one lesson each week. At the beginning of each lesson, there's a lesson overview that gives some suggestions on how long you should spend on each section. This is just a guide with rough estimates. Some sections might take your group longer, so don't worry if the discussion is going well and you aren't ready to move on to the next part.

Leaders, use the READ and ASK cues to help transition from reading passages to asking questions for discussion. The italics indicate suggested answers to help guide your discussion. Of course, there are so many more unique ways to answer each question, so please use the italics simply as a starting point.

A TIP TO KEEP IN YOUR BACK POCKET

There's a lot more to the story of the Bible, but you can start with 10 words that you can count on each finger. These 10 words define *the gospel:* "God saved sinners through Jesus Christ's life, death, and resurrection."

Now, let's jump into the meaning of these words, so we'll know exactly what to do with those 10 words that we carry around.

Lesson 1

GOD'S INTENT – GOD SAVES SINNERS

BIG IDEA

In order to understand the gospel, we need to start at the beginning. It is important to have a foundational understanding of who God is, what His intention is in creation, and how we are designed for relationship with Him.

Life Question: When is a time you experienced intimacy and joy with the Lord? Where do you see the lack in your relationship with the Lord, or those around you?

BIBLE CONVERSATION // 30 MIN

As we go on a journey starting in Genesis, we see that the beginning of the story started out beautiful. Read Genesis 2, taking specific notice of verses 7-9, 15-17, and 20-25.[1]

- What do we learn about God from these passages?
- What are some characteristics of the world God created?
- What was God's intent in creating humans?
- What was the relationship like between God and Adam and Eve?

Obviously, this is not a picture of the world we live in right now. We'll see why that's the case in the next study. God never gave up on His intention for a sinless world and intimacy with His people.

[1] *Whether God created the world in seven days, orchestrated evolution over millions of years, or the other theories that exist about creation, let's set that aside and focus on the principles of the passage as they pertain to humanity's relationship with God.*

Read Revelation 21:1-4.

- How does this picture in Revelation compare to Genesis?

- How does this affect the way you read all of the Scriptures and how you see all of life?

DISCUSSION // 15 MIN

We see two beautiful pictures of a world that was and a world that is to come. In the next study we'll see what happened and how our present, broken world came to be. It's important to pause first and reflect on who and what we rejected in pursuing our own desires, and the future God promises us.

- Where do you see evidence of God's design in our world and relationships today, either flourishing or brokenness?

- Are you enjoying your relationship with God?

- What ways are you living for or running from God?

- What do you long for in your relationship with God and in his world?

PRAYER // 15 MIN

Spend some time together in prayer using the ACTS model:

In *Adoration,* praise our Creator God for including us in his design for a beautiful creation.

In *Confession,* focus on the ways that we reject God's design or run from our relationship with Him.

In *Thanksgiving,* rejoice in our God who created us with a purpose and an identity.

In *Supplication,* cry out for the need for the good news.

Lesson 2

SIN – GOD SAVES SINNERS

BIG IDEA

The picture of God's creation in Genesis 1 and 2 is starkly different to the reality of our world today. It is important to understand the root of the brokenness around and in us, how that sin impacts our relationship with God, and how it affects the world.

Life Question: Share a time where you were acutely aware of sin in your own life or the world.

BIBLE CONVERSATION // 30 MIN

Just one chapter after the beauty of creation, things start to unravel with significant consequences to us today.

Read Genesis 3, taking specific notice of verses 1-6, 8, 12, 14-19.

- What stands out to you from this passage?

- Why were Adam and Eve deceived by the serpent? What about his message made it enticing for them to eat from the tree?

- What is the root sin of Adam and Eve?
  Read Psalm 53:6. How would you define the condition of sin?
  Read Romans 3:23. How would you define the activity of sin?

- What changes occur with Adam and Eve after they eat from the tree?

- What is God's response?

DISCUSSION // 15 MIN

Sin is insidious with grave consequences. New City Catechism defines sin as the rejecting or ignoring God in the world he created, rebelling against him by living without reference to him, not being or doing what he requires in his law—resulting in our death and the disintegration of all creation. It involves actions, thoughts, attitudes, and heart postures. One of the dangers we face is not realizing the subtle ways sin controls our lives and creeps into all areas of life.

Read Romans 6:23.

- What is a wage?

- What does it mean for the wages of sin to be death? Do you believe this is a fitting consequence? Why or why not?

- Where do you see the brokenness in our relationship with God play out in your own life? Community? World? Who do you blame? What do you believe is the solution?

PRAYER // 15 MIN

Spend some time together in prayer using the ACTS model:

In *Adoration,* praise our Father for his holiness.

In *Confession,* confess the condition of your sin, how you live for yourself. Confess the activity of your sin, the areas where sin impacts the way you act, think, feel, work, watch, love, etc. Be specific.

In *Thanksgiving,* rejoice that our God did not abandon us after we sinned.

In *Supplication,* cry out for strength and His empowering to fight sin.

Lesson 3

JESUS – THROUGH JESUS CHRIST'S LIFE, DEATH, & RESURRECTION

BIG IDEA

We left last week in a bit of a mess, the bad news. In order to understand *why* Christ died, we had to first cover the part of who we were created to be and who we are. Now it's time to talk about the good news, the part where God moved forward in spite of our sin. The part where God promised to bring an ultimate deliverer.

Life Question: Share a time where you experienced the tangible grace of God. Where do you see evidence in your own life or in the world of attempts to make things right in our own doing?

BIBLE CONVERSATION // 30 MIN

The gospel is a beautiful story because it doesn't end in Genesis 3.

Read Ephesians 2:1-10.

- How does this passage reflect the truths we've discussed so far in this study? How would you describe life before Jesus (v. 1-3)? How would you describe life after Jesus (v. 4-10)?

- What was God's motivation in acting?

- What is God's role? What is Jesus' role?

- What is man's role?

- What is now true of those who are saved?

DISCUSSION // 15 MIN

This passage is an encapsulation of the Gospel. It paints a picture of the life we lived before Christ and the beauty of his response. We are deserving of wrath, but God in his great love showed us mercy and grace. What a beautiful reality we live in! And what a wonderful God we follow!

- How do you view yourself on a regular basis? Like a child of wrath (v. 4) or alive with Christ (v. 5)?

- The verses focus on Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. Now read Matthew 10:45, John 3:16, 2 Corinthians 5:21, and 1 Peter 1:18 & 3:18. How would you summarize what Jesus did in order to save you?

- What should our response to God be?

- What does it look like to live in light of the grace given to us by God?

PRAYER // 15 MIN

If you've never placed your faith in Christ, this is a great time to do so. Declare you believe and ask God to forgive you.

Admit to God that you are a sinner in need of forgiveness.
Believe that Jesus is God's son and died and resurrected, and now offers you forgiveness.
Confess your faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior.

Spend some time together in prayer using the ACTS model.

In *Adoration,* praise God for what He has done for you through His son Jesus.

In *Confession,* focus on the ways we forget what he has done for us and for the whole world.

In *Thanksgiving,* thank Jesus for the circumstances, people, conversations, etc. that led to your belief and salvation in Jesus.

In *Supplication,* ask Him to help you live for Christ fully. And cry out for what is yet to come, for Jesus' return.

Lesson 4

WHAT'S TRUE NOW? GOD SAVED SINNERS THROUGH JESUS CHRIST'S LIFE, DEATH, & RESURRECTION

BIG IDEA

The Gospel impacts much more than just our eternal destination (which is still important!). It transforms the entirety of our lives now, both in how we live and our standing before God. Our restored relationship with God begins the moment we accept Jesus as Savior. Our final study in this Gospel Roots series looks at what is true of us now because of the work of Jesus.

Life Question: What is an area in your life you have seen God transform since becoming a Christian (think, do, love, relationships, identity, etc.)? In what ways do you struggle with feeling fully accepted by God?

BIBLE CONVERSATION // 30 MIN

God has blessed us tremendously in this life. Paul writes about that to begin his letter to the Ephesians. Let's look at the abundant ways God has shown us his love and mercy.

Read Ephesians 1:1-14.

- According to this passage, what blessings has God given to his children?

- What was God's motivation in giving you these blessings?

- Of all the blessings in v. 3-10, are there any that are particularly impactful/special/meaningful to you?

- What role does the Holy Spirit play in this passage? How does His role as seal give us confidence in our relationship with God?

- Read John 1:12. How does this summarize what we've just read? If you believe it, how will it transform the way you live?

DISCUSSION // 15 MIN

As we move into a time of discussion, let's remember the goal of this study to understand what it means to live rooted in our faith, anchored to the Father through the work of Jesus Christ on our behalf for fullness of life, nourishment in relationship with our loving God. We will continue to hash out where to carry our 10 words we have in our back pocket: "God saved sinners through Jesus Christ's life, death, and resurrection."

If you want to receive Christ today, right now, Romans 10:9-10 is a great place to go. If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

- How would you summarize what we have learned about the gospel? Complete each phrase:

  God created humanity...

  Humanity...

  Jesus...

  Now we...

- Can you point to a time when you received Christ in your life? If not, what is holding you back from trusting Him today? Are you ready to believe and follow Jesus?

- How does this good news impact your life and community today? How would you like to see it?

- Who are some people in your life who you feel ready to share the gospel with now that you can understand and articulate it yourself? How specifically is this good news for them (identity, purpose, brokenness, etc.)?

PRAYER // 15 MIN

Spend some time together in prayer using the ACTS model.

In *Adoration,* praise God for his great love and mercy.

In *Confession,* confess the ways we try to attain these blessings and our salvation through our own means.

In *Thanksgiving,* rejoice in the many blessings he has given us. Be specific.

In *Supplication,* cry out by name for salvation for our friends and family who do not know Jesus.