

Gospel Fluency

Learning to increasingly speak the truths of Jesus to our own hearts, to the hearts of those in our family, and to the hearts of those we pray would join our family.

Who is God / Jesus?

What has he done or what is he doing?

Who are we in light of that work?

How should we live in light of who we are?

Gospel Fluency

Living out the Gospel of Jesus in all of life

God's Story, Our Story and Their Story...

Just as God's Story through Scripture can be seen through: Creation, Fall, Redemption and Restoration, we can better understand our story and, other people's stories through the same lens. Consider the following questions as you look at your life and listen to other people's story - all in light of God's Story.

- Creation: In what do we find our identity or sense of purpose and significance?
- Fall: Whom or what is the fundamental problem we blame for the things that are broken in our lives?
- Redemption: Whom or what are we looking to as our savior to rescue or deliver us?
- Restoration: What does transformation look like and what is our ultimate hope for the future?

Gospel Listening: Their Story

Listen & Learn, in order to Love & Share Jesus

“As people say out loud what they believe, they come to realize something is wrong.” Jeff Vanderstelt

“If I have only an hour with someone, I will spend the first fifty-five minutes asking them questions and finding out what is troubling their hearts and mind, and then in the last five minutes I will share something of the truth.” Francis Schaeffer

Keys for gospel listening

What is their story? What do they believe about themselves? The world? Their experience? Others? God?

- Where did you grow up?
- Do you have brothers/sisters?
 - Where do they live?
 - Are you close with them?
- Tell me about your parents
 - Where do they live?
 - Are you close with them?
- Did you do any sports/extracurriculars growing up?
 - What was your favorite?
- What was faith like for you growing up?
 - What tradition were you a part of?
 - Did you enjoy this or was it something you did because your family did it?
 - Was faith a part of everyday life?
- Are you married/how long have you been married?
 - Tell me about your wife

- Do you have any children?
 - Tell me about them (What are they into sports, extras)
- Where do you work?
 - What role are you in there? Do you enjoy it?
- I know you really enjoy ‘x’ (hobby, etc.), why do you enjoy it?
- Listen to and draw out their heart (to the longing, pain and need for Jesus) with love, patience and wisdom
- Listen to hear, understand and feel, not to give an answer
- Ask questions, seeking to know their heart
 - How are you doing?
 - What do you mean?
 - What is that like for you?
 - Would you share more with me about that?
 - Can you tell me more about...?
 - I heard you say ‘x’ - what did you mean by that?
- Listen to and seek wisdom from the Holy Spirit as you listen to someone share parts of their story so you’ll know questions to ask from what they say.

Notes:

Gospel Identity: Our Story

"We are saved by the power of God for the purposes of God so that God might be made known and Jesus might be glorified." Jeff Vanderstelt

Knowing our own stories and how Jesus is the hero of our stories is vital to listening well to others stories. It removes rooms for boasting because Jesus is the hero, not us. It also leaves no room for comparing ourselves with others and feeling better than them. Jesus is the only one better!

Knowing our own stories is also vital to our ongoing transformation into Christ's likeness because it reminds us who we are and whose we are. In light of what God has done, our identity changes. It's not about what we do, but what God has already done. Remembering who we are and whose we are helps us live for Jesus through His power, by the Spirit, rather than through our own power, by the flesh.

Our stories follow the Creation/Fall/Redemption/Restoration pattern. The answers to the questions asked in the 'Gospel Listening' *What is their story* question help shape our stories too, and can be used when thinking through our story.

How would you answer the following questions?

- What is your story (in 5 minutes)?
 - Creation: How do we now find our identity and sense of purpose and significance in Jesus rather than other people/things?
 - Fall: How have we accepted personal responsibility for whom or what we used to view as the fundamental problem we blamed for the things that are broken in our lives?
 - Redemption: How do we now know Jesus is the only savior and the only one able to rescue and deliver us?
 - Restoration: How is Jesus restoring our own life here and now? How might Jesus want to use us to help restore what's broken in the world?
- How is Jesus the hero of your story?
- Could you share your story of how God has changed your heart, mind and life? If not, what would help you to become comfortable with sharing your story?

NOTES:

Gospel Narrative: God's Story

Knowing God's story helps us to speak truth into our own lives as well as in the lives of people around us. Weeks 2 & 3, *Their story and Our story*, followed the Creation/Fall/Redemption/Restoration pattern because this is the pattern we see woven throughout the Scriptures in God's story. Since this is true, knowing God's story is essential in knowing our own story and knowing how to listen to others' stories.

- Were you to describe Creation from the Scriptures, what passage(s) would you use?
- Were you to describe the Fall from the Scriptures, what passage(s) would you use?
- Were you to describe Redemption from the Scriptures, what passage(s) would you use?
- Were you to describe Restoration from the Scriptures, what passage(s) would you use?

There are some key passages for these, but, more than one for sure for each of these.

- Outside these 4 movements in Scripture, are there others themes you feel are an important part of God's story? What are they? What passage(s) speak to these themes?

Gospel Speaking

The gospel goes beyond just saying helpful things. In Ephesians 4:29, we find three ways we speak to each other: #1) speaking unwholesome talk (bad words), #2) speaking helpful talk (good words) and #3) speaking the gospel (that which gives grace to those who hear).

We want to grow as a family into people who speak using the 3rd way.

- *How does the gospel bring good news to this situation?*
- *What about the gospel do we need to hear right now?*
- *What about the gospel have we forgotten or failed to believe?*
- *How is Jesus better than what we have or what we want?*

Notes: