



**For the Love of Family: Putting on Gospel Lenses**  
D6Reformation Family Day, Feb 23, 2014

**Text: 1 Corinthians 15:1-4**

Friends, we'll be back in chapter 10 next week God willing, but today as we consider family, I'd like to consider it in light of some verses on the Gospel a few chapters ahead.

- Call me crazy, but I've come to believe that all the principles, techniques, to-do lists, retreats, conferences, and even biblical commands with respect to family won't truly and effectively work without an understanding and embracing of Christ's Gospel.
- For the believer, all of life is to be viewed through the lens of the **Cross**, including family. What we do sometimes though, is skip all that and go straight to how-to's. It's very tempting. Just give me a list, preacher! However, here is a helpful quote I found last week...

*"The gospel is not behavior modification, becoming a better person or learning to become more moral. It is not taking the life of Jesus as a model way to live or transforming/redeeming the secular realm. It is not living highly communal lives with others and sharing generously in communities who practice the way of Jesus in local culture. These may all be good things but they are not to be confused with the gospel. They should accompany the gospel, and should not be separated from the gospel and while God may use them to authenticate the gospel and make our proclamation of the gospel more fertile in hardened hearts, yet they are not to be viewed as replacements for the gospel."*

Did you notice the one characteristic of all of the above activities has nothing to do with what Christ has done for us, but all about what we do for him? The true gospel, rather, is news about what Christ the Savior, has already done for us (in his life, death and resurrection) rather than instruction and advice about what you are to do for God. Christ's accomplishment, not ours, is the essence of the gospel. Above all, the gospel of Christ brings good news, rather than instruction about our behavior. The gospel is not about what we do, but our acts inevitably spring up and overflow in thanksgiving due to what Christ has done for us.

In short, the Gospel is the life-altering news that Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man, lived a sinless life under the Law, died for sinners and rose again to reconcile them to himself, eternally victorious over every enemy that stood between God and man. Now, because of this redemptive work, there is nothing that separates those who believe from their Creator and all the benefits that He promises in him. D.A. Carson says the gospel centers 'upon Jesus Christ and what God has done through him. The essential points of the gospel are Jesus Christ's status as the Son of God, his genuine humanity, his death for our sins, his burial, resurrection, subsequent appearances, and future coming in judgment. That no one is justified but in the gracious work of Jesus Christ in his death and resurrection. It is not merely a recital of theological truths and historical events; rather, it relates these truths and events to situations of every individual believer.'"

<http://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/onsite/gna/whatisgospel.html>

- **What I'd like to propose is, with Christ's help, looking at family through the grid of Gospel.**
- See your marriage, your single life, your parenting or grand-parenting, your friendships, and any kind of relational dynamic (family structures, joys, pains, hurts, sins, forgiveness, love, holiness, insecurities, etc.) through the blood of the Lamb. Can you imagine what would happen?

### 1 Cor 15:1-4: A Few Thoughts

1. It wasn't just the Corinthians that needed to be reminded of the Gospel; we **all** need it from time to time. (v1)
2. Why? Because in it we **stand**. The Gospel of Christ is our anchor, our hope, our joy, and our peace. But how many of us actually look at family through its lens?
3. It is the Gospel that saves us! Christ's vicarious atoning work liberates us from sin, death, and hell! (v2)
4. Each believer must hold fast to the Gospel! (v2) Although it's not our own strength that saves us, we do have an obligation to keep Christ and His Cross front and center in our **thinking** and **actions**!
5. The Gospel is "**of first importance!**" (v3)
  - a. Christ died for sins in accordance to the Scriptures!
  - b. Christ was buried in accordance to the Scriptures!
  - c. Christ was raised on the third day in accordance to the Scriptures!
6. Now, take those eternal and wondrous truths and apply them to marriage! To parenting! To being single! Not to get results primarily, but because of **Christ**! We are talking about a total shift of attitude and motive here! 😊
7. Because of the transformative nature of the Gospel of Christ in those who believe, you can forgive! You can be faithful! You are **burdened** to disciple the children you love to the Christ you love! You can hate sin! You can repent! You can pray together! You can love righteousness! Why? Not because of what those things will bring to YOU...but to give glory to HIM!
8. In fact, it is taking our eyes OFF Christ and His cross in family that causes so much **dysfunction** in a Christian household. It is looking into the mirror instead of at the Master that gets us in trouble!

### A Gospel Centered Motivation for Family

1. Think about family dynamics for a moment:
  - a. Being married requires extreme sacrifice: "I do" means "I'll die." Literally giving up all for another, all day, every day, until death.
  - b. Being single requires extreme sacrifice: a life of culturally ridiculous holiness with Satan throwing every sin in the book at you.
  - c. Being a parent requires extreme sacrifice in order to "teach" (God's Commandments) diligently to your children, and "talking" of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. (Deut 6:7)
  - d. And in every "condition" we find ourselves, we are called to radically love, radically forgive, radically correct and exhort, radically submit, and most of all, radically obey God's Word!
2. What would cause you to WANT to give and sacrifice so much, and to do so "according to the Scriptures?" What would motivate you to change everything in order to "do family" the way God commands? What is worthy (actually, "Who") of all that effort?
3. The answer is **Christ**: "His amazing, self-sacrificing love and undeserved kindness that He expressed for us on the cross. Remember, if you are His, it was His love and kindness that led you to repentance and faith in Him (Romans 2: 4). In the same way, by being reminded of the depths of His love for you, you will have more than enough motivation to deny yourself, pick up your cross, and live by His Word..." Ray Fournier
4. **So it's not some utopian illusion of family...it's Christ! It's not a white picket fence...it's Christ! It's not even some standard set by well-meaning Christians....it's Christ!**
5. Wherever you are along the *family* continuum...the goal for today is to honor Christ and His sacrifice. That's the same goal for tomorrow. And the day after...until either our deaths or eternity.

## Let's Get Some Gospel Lenses!

1. The Problem the Cross Addresses: **Sin**
  - a. From the Garden of Eden, man has had the problem of all problems: **sin**. It entered through Adam (and Eve) and as a result, death spread to all men. (Rom 5:12)
  - b. God is both infinitely loving AND infinitely just. Therefore, sin must be punished because God requires justice. (Acts 17:31)
  
2. The Condemnation of all men without the Gospel: The **Law**
  - a. From the Garden of Eden in the fullness of time, God showed us more of the holiness of His nature by revealing His **perfect** moral standard to Moses. We call them The Ten Commandments: *Exodus 20:3-17 ESV*

---

I. <i>You shall have no other gods before me.</i>	VI. <i>You shall not murder.</i>
II. <i>You shall not make for yourself a carved image.</i>	VII. <i>You shall not commit adultery.</i>
III. <i>You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.</i>	VIII. <i>You shall not steal.</i>
IV. <i>Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.</i>	IX. <i>You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.</i>
V. <i>Honor your father and your mother.</i>	X. <i>You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's.</i>

---

- b. We have all horribly broken each and every one of these Commandments.
  - c. It is the Law that holds the whole world **accountable**: *"Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the **whole world may be held accountable to God.**" (Rom 3:19 ESV)*
  - d. This is God's standard of judgment. Under such a standard, we are all guilty. (Rom 2:12, 3:23)
  
3. The Destination of all Lawbreakers: **Hell**
  - a. The legitimate reasons for fleeing to the Savior are brokenness over one's sin and a fleeing from the wrath to come!
  - b. *Rom 2:5-8 ESV* *But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed. (6) He will render to each one according to his works: (7) to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; (8) but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury.*
  - c. *Rev 21:6-8 ESV* *And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. (7) The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son. (8) But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death."*
  
4. The Solution to Man's sin crisis: **Grace!**
  - a. We should be blown away by the extreme, powerful, high, deep, and wide love of God in Christ and His glorious Gospel!

- b. *Joh 3:16-18 ESV "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. (17) For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. (18) Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.*
- c. *God so loved us that He poured out His hatred of sin on His own Son! (Jn3:16, Rom 1:18, 8:32) God's intent in Christ was and is to save! Jesus came to seek and save the lost! (Lk 19:10) Whoever believes in Christ is NOT condemned! (Jn 3:18)*
- d. *But this is key...whoever DOES NOT believe IS condemned, and will be judged according to the Law on the Day of Judgment. (Jn 3:18-19)*

*"In the end, by our own merit, we would all stand guilty before Almighty God and deserve to suffer God's Wrath on evil for eternity in hell. God Himself has determined that an eternity in hell is the fair and just punishment for rebellion against His Sovereign Rule through the breaking of His Law. Jesus, the very One who loved us so much that He suffered the wrath of God that we deserve for our sins on the cross, spoke about hell more than anyone else in the Bible (Matthew 5: 22, 5:29, 5:30, 8: 11-13, 10:28, 13: 41 – 43, 13: 49 – 50, 18:9, 22: 12 – 14, , 23:15, 23:33, 24: 50 – 51, 25: 30, 25: 46, Mark 9: 43 – 49, Luke 12: 5, 13: 28, 16: 19 – 41, John 15: 6 etc...).*

*On the surface this doesn't seem to make sense. How could Jesus' love and the reality of hell go hand in hand? Easy, love hates evil, warns others of imminent danger, and provides a way to be saved from that danger." – Ray Fournier*

-----  
 I agree brother Ray. Despite being hopeless in our sins, minds darkened, enemies of God and lovers of evil, Christ saved us. Hallelujah. He has given us eternal life. He was redeemed us from our wickedness and called us to good works. **Family Reformation** (or obeying the Lord's commands about family) is part of those good works. The motive to be a "good" husband, wife, son, daughter, single, parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, or friend is **Christ's cross**. Get that, and your family will transform.

*Eph 2:1-10 ESV And you were dead in the trespasses and sins (2) in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience-- (3) among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. (4) But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, (5) even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ--by grace you have been saved-- (6) and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, (7) so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. (8) For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, (9) not a result of works, so that no one may boast. (10) For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*

Amen.