

Lesson 6 - The Gospel as the Means of Discipleship:

Lesson Objectives:

- Assessing idols to destroy, and areas for growth
- Encouraging active participation in the Discipleship of Christ
- Bringing idols to light and releasing pride
- Reframing thinking around areas of life that are impacted by the Gospel (all of them.)

1. What is a "Disciple"?

- A "Learner" or "Pupil"
- One whose life is led after Christ's own life and teachings
- Being a learner requires humility, and willingness to be transformed.

2. All sin is idolatry..discipleship consists of removing the idols with the truth of the gospel. ● What is Idolatry?

- What did it look like in the Bible?
 - Baal (other gods)
 - Golden Calf (images of Yahweh)
 - Power and Security (Often, we see idolatry thrive when people try to be self-sufficient and all-understanding.)
 - Ritual is deeply intermingled with idolatry. As in the Bible, we have our own habitual, routine practices that reflect our priorities and focuses.
 - What does it look like now?
 - Daily prayers are replaced by routine technology scrolling
 - Prioritizing building savings and security for ourselves
 - Shaping God into who we think he is, rather than allowing Him to be bigger than our understanding.
 - Prioritizing our comfort by surrounding ourselves with those who agree with us.

3. In order to be a disciple we must die unto ourselves. We will fail every time if we think we can be our own savior. Pride in ourselves, our ability to be good, and our knowledge is nonsensical in light of the gospel.

- The Gospel offers an image of discipleship through Jesus Christ. Our lives and deaths should be modeled after Him.
 - Howard Thermin paints a portrait for us of the way Jesus entered the world.
 - A poor Jew. Low social standing & lacking wealth.
 - What did the life of Jesus look like?
 - Isolated, hated, abused, poor, humiliated, beaten, crucified.
 - What does that tell us about being disciples of the Gospel of Christ?
- Jesus offers insight into discipleship with his "You have heard it was said..." statements in his Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5.
 - Read Matthew 5:38-48
 - In the time of Jesus, Roman soldiers could assert dominance over Israelites/ foreigners by requiring them to carry their pack for a mile. This was meant to bring shame and

submission to them. What Jesus says we ought to do is to humble ourselves, and endure further humiliation.

- To go the second mile would actually turn the tables, and bring the agency to the one carrying the pack. Giving them the choice to die unto the self, and choose to display further grace.
- “The balm for that burning humiliation was humility. Humility can not be humiliated” - Howard Thurman, *Jesus and the Disinherited*, pg. 17
 - What this quote is trying to show is that the only release from humiliation is to die unto yourself. We are utterly shameful, and the sting of humiliation will only increase until we have the humility to release ourselves from our pride. In dying to ourselves, we find the relief of our humiliation, and rest in our dependency on Christ.
- In this way, discipleship requires creativity. We must consider what it looks like to turn the tables, to humble ourselves, and to bring this upside-down manner of life into the world we live in. In a world that says we must be proud, independent, and important how freeing it is to rest in knowing that you are not those things, but rather that grace flips “importance” on its head.
- It is important to recognize that humility is not solely a “you and God” experience. It is not only your personal acceptance- though that is the start. Humility causes you to be humble before yourself, before God, *and before others*. That is why it is crucial that we bring light to our idols.
 - 1 John 1:6-9 “If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”
 - The way to truly live humbly is to show your need for salvation to those around you. This is so opposite our culture, but is the true mark of someone with faith in their Savior. ○ Bringing your idols to light is saying, “I’m not scared to admit these faults because no matter how many I have- My savior has redeemed me!”
 - It is living in the freedom of confession, and in the freedom of knowing you are more flawed than you know and more loved than you could ever imagine.

5. “The gospel has supernatural versatility to address the particular hopes, fears, and idols of every culture and every person” (Keller, 44).

- The Gospel tells us that our identity is found in being an image bearer of God, and in the crucified and resurrected Christ. It calls us to live in community with all, not just those who look/ walk/ act/ talk like us and whose backgrounds match our own. It also brings us hope for eternity, and joy even though we endure temporary sufferings.
- **The Gospel addresses needs and transforms all areas of life. Consider how the message of the Gospel reframes these things...**
 - Discouragement and depression
 - i. No longer do we have to live in worry and despair at the state of the world. We

have the comfort of a God who has already won. Additionally, we serve a God who is constant, and who will not waver grace based solely on how you feel at any certain time. Discipleship does not exclude the poor in spirit.

- Guilt and self-image
 - i. The gospel shows us that grace is what defines you. Death unto yourself frees you from the shackles of shame and guilt.
- Love, relationships, and Sexuality
 - i. The gospel paints us an image of disciples dying unto themselves. Submitting regularly.
 - ii. Honest, open, communicative. Disciples are able to admit their faults to those we love. They do not esteem themselves so highly as to always avoid blame. It is no longer about being right.
 - iii. The model we have been shown of grace is one we can mirror to those whom we love. Share grace, forgiveness, humility.
- Our motive for witness
 - i. The gift of grace is one we ought to humbly and freely share with others. The gospel shows us how to witness by saying “Look how broken I am, what kind of God could love me? How good he must be.”
 - ii. People who are living in the freedom of grace would never hide the gift away from those around them. Truly accepting the call to discipleship means sharing that call, and welcoming others into that rest.
 - iii. Disciples do not hoard grace. They give it away freely.
- Family and parental expectations
- Our attitude towards racial, cultural, and class differences
- Obedience to human authority, Self-control
- Joy and humor