



GOSPEL CULTURE

When Faith comes to Life

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Prepared by Zwai Zulu

GOSPEL CULTURE

Preface

By Richard van Lieshout

The gospel is the good news about the person of Jesus, that is announced through words, spoken or written.

But the gospel, when truly believed upon, doesn't stay just as a concept in our minds. It travels to our hearts and starts to change the way we see our lives. We start to see ourselves differently, the people around us in our communities differently, indeed our view of the whole world changes!

This inner transformation then leads to an outward change in behaviour, in all three of these dimensions. The way we behave on our own, the way we interact with those around us, and the way we interact with the outside world all start to change.

This is the inevitable Gospel trajectory: from minds to hearts into all practical areas of life!

What this quite simply means then, is that the gospel is something that should be visible. To be sure, it is first heard, and then believed upon, which are all very internal! But the gospel comes not just as a doctrine but a power (Rom 1:16, 1 Cor 1:18, 1 Cor 2:4 & 4:20, 1 Thess 1:5), a power which ultimately transforms us from the inside out.

This journey is essential to every Christian individually, but as a Church we have a particular burden for this as a community.

Churches can very easily default to working only on their doctrine. To be sure, that's always where we start: orthodox gospel doctrine! But true gospel doctrine must create a gospel culture.

By 'culture' we mean the intangibles of our church community or, everything that is said without actually being said directly! It's what you truly experience as a person having been part of our community for a while.

Tragically, a church can unsay by its culture what it says by its doctrine, and never even realise it. In other words, our behaviour can contradict our beliefs. This is terribly dangerous for those already in the community, but also for those on the outside looking in.

For example, it's one thing to say we believe in the doctrine of grace, but if a person only feels condemned in our Church community, then clearly our gospel culture doesn't match our gospel doctrine.

Only when an orthodox, true and comprehensive Gospel Doctrine combines with a Gospel Culture that is visible and felt in the beauty of human relationships, will we be truly harnessing the power of the gospel.

GOSPEL DOCTRINE + GOSPEL CULTURE = GOSPEL POWER



Community Group

QUESTION TEMPLATE

Each week, use these questions to guide your discussions in conjunction with the weekly supplementary content

INFORMATION:

Refreshing & Digesting the Sunday message.

Read through the passage preached in the sermon.

- What main points/ideas stood out for you?
- What personal impact did the message have?
- Are there any practical applications/implications you're wrestling with?

ACTIVATION:

Accentuating the message through a personal & thorough study of the supporting text(s).

Read through the supporting passage(s).

- Slowly interrogate the passage trying to understand it, using the resource provided.
- How do the principles in this text align with the Sunday text?
- Are there any new applications/implications from this text?

IMPLEMENTATION:

Ensuring principles learned in previous weeks are applied and integrated into life.

- Were there any personal decisions/intentions made the previous week?
- If so, how has it gone in the week with integrating this principle in daily life?
- How have you progressed with the other Gospel Culture principles to date?

PRAYER:

Honest, personal, vulnerable prayers for individual transformation.

- It's likely that times of confession would be appropriate through this series, be willing to be vulnerable as a group.
- This should be followed by prayers of affirmation and receiving God's grace
- This in turn should be followed by prayers declaring trust in the Holy Spirit who empowers our transformation.



WEEK 1

EXTENDING GRACE TO OTHERS, ACCEPTANCE, AND SECURITY

Read: John 8:1-11

INFORMATION:

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Read through **Romans 15:1-7 & 14** which was preached in the sermon.

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ACTIVATION:

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Read through **John 8:1-11**

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1.TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

The Lord's enemies brought before him a woman guilty of adultery and asked him to say what punishment she deserved. Their main aim was not to address the sin but mainly to "trap him" as the passage asserts. They were looking at a way to accuse Him. "They fancied perhaps that He who preached pardon and salvation to "publicans and harlots might" might be induced to say something which would either contradict the law of Moses or His own words" (Ryle 210).

The Lord answered them with a heart-searching reply, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." He did not say the woman had not sinned, or that her sin was an excusable one. But the Lord demonstrated a powerful lesson for them. Here are two foremost:

2. APPLICATION

- As you reflect on this passage, what one principle or insight stands out as being particularly helpful, insightful, or difficult to grasp?
- What's one thing from last weekend's sermon that you hope we talk about as a group?
- From last weekend's sermon and the passage you have looked at (John 8:1-11), what are you most eager to apply in order to create Gospel Culture?

1. THE POWER OF CONSCIENCE

We read of the woman's accusers that when they heard our Lord's appeal, "being convicted by their own conscience, they went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even more into the last". As hardened as they were they felt something within which made them 'cowards'. God has left within even human being a witness that will be heard.

2. THE NATURE OF REPENTANCE

When the Lord had said to the sinful woman, "neither do I condemn you," He dismissed her with the solemn words, "go and sin no more." He did not simply say "go home and repent". He pointed out the chief thing which her case required – the necessity of immediate breaking off from her sin. The Lord extended grace to this lady. This is a powerful lesson, it the very essence of repentance, to 'forsake sin'. Ryle commenting on repentance says "That repentance which consists in nothing more than feeling, talking, professing, wishing, meaning, hoping, and resolving is worthless in God's sight."



WEEK 2

EXTENDING CORRECTIVE MUTUAL DISCIPLINE

Galatians 6:1-5

INFORMATION:

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Read through **Galatians 6:1-5** which was preached in the sermon.

- What main points/ideas stood out for you?
- What personal impact did the message have?
- Are there any practical applications/implications you're wrestling with?

ACTIVATION:

Accentuating the message through a personal & thorough study of the supporting text(s).

Read through **Matthew 18:15-17; Hebrews 3:13; Matthew 7:5.**

- Slowly interrogate the passage trying to understand it, using the resource provided.
- How do the principles in this text align with the Sunday text?
- Are there any new applications/implications from this text?

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1.TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

MATTHEW 18:15-17

This passage indicates how a sheep is brought back to the fold. The passage lists a number of steps that can/should be followed:

The first step (v.15) involves a caring, private admonition of the sinful disciple. The verb 'point out' means to 'rebuke' or to 'convince a person of his or her wrongdoing'. This reproof is to be conducted in private. This approach rules out potential slander or gossip. Slander and gossip have no place in a Gospel Community.

"you have won" (v.15b) - meaning to "gain" or "prevent the loss of", presents the goal of the process.

These steps must be conducted with family-like kindness. We see this through the use of 'brother'.

The second step (v.16) involves the enlistment of TWO OR THREE witnesses (refer to Dt. 19:15). These additional participants are to lend weight to the gravity of the situation, and maybe to certify to the church that restoration was being done correctly.

The third step (v.17) involves informing the entire church, this is to ensure the church is involved in the effort to restore the individual. If this effort is to fail, then the person was/is to be treated as an unbeliever.

HEBREWS 3:13

Encourage one another daily

As long as it is called 'Today'- this means while we have an opportunity, day after day we ought to encourage one another thus avoiding a hardened heart because of sin's deceitfulness.

Matthew 7:5

Hypocrite – one is a hypocrite who uses an apparent act of kindness to (removing the plank) to inflate his own ego. Before presuming to help others' faults, one must undergo some self-discipline and yield to the discipline of the Lord (Ps. 51:10-13)

2. APPLICATION

- As you reflect on these passages, what principles or insight stands out as being particularly helpful, insightful, or difficult to grasp?
- What's one thing from last weekend's sermon that you hope we talk about as a group?



WEEK 3

VULNERABILITY & CONFESSION

1 John 1:1-10

INFORMATION:

Refreshing & Digesting the Sunday message.

Read through **1 John 1:1-10** which was preached in the sermon.

- What main points/ideas stood out for you? ¹
- What personal impact did the message have?
- Are there any practical applications/implications you're wrestling with?

ACTIVATION:

Accentuating the message through a personal & thorough study of the supporting text(s).

Read through **James 5:16**

- Slowly interrogate the passage trying to understand it, using the resource provided.
- How do the principles in this text align with the Sunday text?
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1.TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF CONFESSION?

In the Old Testament, “*to confess*” is used in reference to verbal acknowledgment of one’s sin or of God’s name in faith. Confession results in the cleansing of sin and the restoration of one’s relationship with God (Leviticus 5:5; Psalm 32:5).

Another function of confession is God’s name. To confess the name of God means “to give thanks/ praise” to God (Joshua 7:19).

So confession conceptually involves a double function:

- to remove obstacles to fellowship with God,
- and to recover fellowship with others.

Coming back from Babylon, Ezra prayed, confessing, weeping, and throwing himself down before the house of God (Ezra 10:1).

This double function of confession continues in the New Testament. Epistles emphasize the importance of confession of sins as a basis of atonement and purification (1 John 1:9; James 5:16).

2. APPLICATION

- As you reflect on this passage, what principle or insight stands out as being particularly helpful, insightful, or difficult to grasp?
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WEEK 4

CHRISTLIKE LOVE

1 John 4:7-21

INFORMATION:

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Read through **1 John 4:7-21** which was preached in the sermon.

- What main points/ideas stood out for you? ¹
- What personal impact did the message have?
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ACTIVATION:

Accentuating the message through a personal & thorough study of the supporting text(s).

Read through **John 13:34-35; Romans 12:10; 1 Peter 1:22-25**

- Slowly interrogate the passage trying to understand it, using the resource provided.
- How do the principles in this text align with the Sunday text?
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1. TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

According to the Old Testament, some preconditions must exist for us to know what it means to love. First we have the capacity for relationships because we are made in the likeness of a personal God. He created us to reciprocate love back to him, in a relationship of mutual love. Secondly, the true meaning of love depends on a true understanding of God, whose love causes him to pursue human beings even though their hearts have turned away from him for other 'substitute' loves. This points shows that human beings still love but they love in a way distorted by sin. Sin causes us as human beings to live as though God does not exist. However, God in his mercy has chosen to intervene through his acts of redemption and through His word in order to deliver humans from the blindness and corruption of sin.

The story of God's love for his people is expanded by what the Father did when He sent Jesus Christ to pay the ransom for the sins of his people so that they might be healed of the rebellion and receive eternal life (John 3:16; 17:24). This love is free and comes to the one who trusts in Christ for forgiveness of sin and a new heart. The new heart inclines one to please God. The gift of the Spirit enables one to bear the "fruit" of love (Gal. 5:22-23).

Christ modelled genuine love by serving us (Mark 10:42-45). His love should motivate us and enable us to practice sacrificial service toward others (Matt. 22:39; 1 John 3:16). It should also cause us to practice forbearance, long-suffering, and forgiveness toward those who wrong us (Matt. 18:21-35). It should cause us to repay evil with good (Rom. 12:14). Our love for truth should motivate us to act in the best interests of others (1 Cor. 13:4-8) in the hope that they may become reconciled to God (2 Tim. 2:24-26).

**Brotherly love – the Greek word for this kind of love is philadelphia*

2. APPLICATION

- As you reflect on these passages, what principle or insight stands out as being particularly helpful, insightful, or difficult to grasp?
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WEEK 5

KINDNESS, GENTLENESS, & FORGIVENESS

Ephesians 4:32

INFORMATION:

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Read through **Ephesians 4:32** which was preached in the sermon.

- What main points/ideas stood out for you? ¹
- What personal impact did the message have?
- Are there any practical applications/implications you're wrestling with?

ACTIVATION:

Accentuating the message through a personal & thorough study of the supporting text(s).

Read through **Philippians 4:5**

- Slowly interrogate the passage trying to understand it, using the resource provided.
- How do the principles in this text align with the Sunday text?
- Are there any new applications/implications from this text?

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1. TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

KINDNESS

The word “*kindness*” is used to translate the Hebrew term “*khesed*” (Gen. 40:14) and the Greek words “*chrestotes*” (Col. 3:12) and “*philanthropia*” (Acts 28:2). Because of the richness of its meaning, *khesed* is difficult to capture in English. The word is translated in a variety of ways including “*kindness*”, “*loving-kindness*”, “*loyalty*”, “*steadfast love*”, “*mercy*”, “*commitment*”. God embodies kindness (Exodus 34:6; Psalm 103:8). Humans are also called to show or reflect this quality of kindness in their relationships with others (1 Sam. 20:8; Mic. 6:8; Zeph. 7:9). God is described as showing kindness toward humans even the selfish, ungrateful. He pours out kindness on humans in order to lead them to repentance (Rom. 2:4). Christians are to demonstrate kindness even when others are unkind to and vengeful (Prov. 25:21-22; Matt. 5:43-48). One discovers what practicing kindness looks like by observing the words associated with it in Scripture. Kindness involves putting away anger, bitterness, and slander; being tender-hearted and forgiving; and imitating God (Eph. 4:31-5:2); it finds its company with compassion, humility, meekness, and patience (Col. 3:12); it is associated with patience, holiness of spirit, and genuine love (2 Cor. 6:6).

HUMAN FORGIVENESS

Biblically speaking, forgiveness is less about changing emotions (feelings) and more about an actual restoration of a relationship. It is about making a wrong right, a process is at times painful and costly. The word “*pardon*” offers a better way of capturing the meaning of the word. The Biblical description of forgiveness is rooted in a theological understanding between divine and human forgiveness. Human relationship with God proves a pattern for their relationship to each other (Matt. 5:23-24; 6:12, 14-15). They forgive because they have been forgiven. If or when, their forgiveness of others remains absent, it questions, or even jeopardizes, their own relationships with God (Matt. 18:22-35). Since forgiveness is a theological matter, the one being wronged still has an obligation to work for the restoration of the relationship with the wrongdoer.

2. APPLICATION

- As you reflect on these passages, what principle or insight stands out as being particularly helpful, insightful, or difficult to grasp?
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WEEK 6

RECONCILIATION

Ephesians 2:11-22

INFORMATION:

Refreshing & Digesting the Sunday message.

Read through **Ephesians 2:11-22** which was preached in the sermon.

- What main points/ideas stood out for you? ¹
- What personal impact did the message have?
- Are there any practical applications/implications you're wrestling with?

ACTIVATION:

Accentuating the message through a personal & thorough study of the supporting text(s).

Read through **Ephesians 2:11-22**

- Slowly interrogate the passage trying to understand it, using the resource provided.
- How do the principles in this text align with the Sunday text?
- Are there any new applications/implications from this text?

IMPLEMENTATION:

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1. TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

RECONCILIATION

The restoration of a relationship from a state of hostility to one of peace. As such, the concept is far more common than the number of specific references might suggest. The Bible speaks of reconciliation on three levels:

1. God and humanity;
2. Human beings with one another; and
3. God and creation.

Reconciliation between God and humanity makes it possible for people truly to be reconciled to one another. Even the natural hostility between Jew and Gentile has been overcome by the work of Christ. Through the cross, Christ *'destroyed'* the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by setting aside in the flesh the law with its commands and regulations (Eph. 2:14-15). As a result, Jew and Gentile have been brought together in one body as fellow citizens of God's kingdom who stand on equal footing before God (Eph. 2:16-22).

As evidence of being reconciled to God, believers are called to pursue reconciliation with others: *"if possible as far as it depends on, live at peace with everyone"* (Rom. 12:18). Pursuing reconciliation is so important that Jesus warns his followers that failure to do so can cause a rift in their own fellowship with God. That is why in the Lord's prayer God's people are to pray, *"Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us"* (Luke 11:4). Since God has forgiven us for our rebellion against Him, we ought to forgive others who have wronged us (Col. 3:13). Believers are even instructed to seek reconciliation with others before entering the presence of God (Matt. 5:23-24).

2. APPLICATION

- As you reflect on these passages, what principle or insight stands out as being particularly helpful, insightful, or difficult to grasp?
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WEEK 7

HUMILITY & SERVANTHOOD

Philippians 2:1-11

INFORMATION:

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Read through **Ephesians 4:1-7** which was preached in the sermon.

- What main points/ideas stood out for you? ¹
- What personal impact did the message have?
- Are there any practical applications/implications you're wrestling with?

ACTIVATION:

Accentuating the message through a personal & thorough study of the supporting text(s).

Read through **Philippians 2:1-11 & Isaiah 57:15**

- Slowly interrogate the passage trying to understand it, using the resource provided.
- How do the principles in this text align with the Sunday text?
- Are there any new applications/implications from this text?

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1.TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

HUMILITY

In its subjective quality, humility involves submission to one in authority, usually to God (Ex. 10:3; Deut. 8:2-3, 16; Ps. 119:67, 71, 75). On some occasions humility is related to the act of repentance before God (Prov. 15:31-33; 22:4). When paired with *“fear of the Lord”*, humility implies a person who lives in a posture of pious submission before God (Prov. 15:31-33; 22:4). Such is the case with Moses, whom the writer of Numbers describes in the following way: *“Now Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth”* (Nm. 12:3). Moses’ humility in this situation is displayed in his intimate relationship with, and by his submissive attitude toward, the sovereign God (12:4-9).

In the New Testament, Christians take Christ as their model of humility (Matt. 11:29; Phil. 2:6-11). The NT writers also call on the Christians to humble themselves before God (James 4:10; 1 Peter 5:5-6) as well as others, including their enemies (Rom. 12:14; Phil. 2:3).

SERVANTHOOD

Jesus’ teaching on servanthood and suffering was not intended merely to inspire good behaviour. Jesus wanted to impart the spirit of servanthood, the sense of personal commitment and identity that He expressed when He said, *“I am among you as one who serves.”* Mere acts of service could be performed with motives far from spiritual. In Isaiah 42, we read about the attitudes and inner motives that the coming Messiah would demonstrate as the ideal servant of the Lord. Where Israel failed to live up to this ideal, the Messiah would succeed. And the principles of His life would be a pattern for ours. *“Here is my servant, whom I uphold”* (Isaiah 42:1). This verse speaks of the coming Messiah. Jesus fulfilled the prophecy by emptying Himself of divine prerogative (*“made himself nothing,”* Philippians 2:7). He surrendered the privileges of His God-

nature and became dependent on His Heavenly Father. He became in all ways like a human being. What a staggering paradox. As we become *“empty”* of self and dependent on God, the Holy Spirit will use us.

2. APPLICATION

- As you reflect on these passages, what principle or insight stands out as being particularly helpful, insightful, or difficult to grasp?
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WEEK 8

PERSEVERANCE IN TRIALS

2 Corinthians 4:8 10

Hebrews 12:1 2

INFORMATION:

Refreshing & Digesting the Sunday message.

Read through **2 Corinthians 4:8 10 & Hebrews 12:1 2** which was preached in the sermon.

- What main points/ideas stood out for you? ¹
- What personal impact did the message have?
- Are there any practical applications/implications you're wrestling with?

ACTIVATION:

Accentuating the message through a personal & thorough study of the supporting text(s).

Read through **Romans 5:1 5 & Romans 8:31 39.**

Slowly interrogate the passage trying to understand it, using the resource provided.

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1.TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

SUFFERING

As Christians, we are told in no uncertain terms that we will suffer – it is through many tribulations that we enter the kingdom of God (Acts 14:22) – and we should not be surprised by fiery trials, for it is no strange thing for a Christian to undergo them (1 Pet. 4:12). What might be more difficult to see, however, is that the Bible portrays our sufferings as Christians as taking different forms; our afflictions as God's children are not uniform. Nor are God's expectations for us always the same.

Every kind of hardship should, of course, be met with steady and hopeful faith in God, looking to God's promise to bring good out of everything (Rom. 8:28) and fully to redeem his broken creation (Rev. 21:1-3). Nevertheless, the Bible's portrayal of the Christian's suffering reveals that God has different expectations for us in different kinds of trials and makes promises distinct to each. This means that part of suffering well as a Christian involves discernment about the particular kind of trial we are undergoing and responding appropriately.

(Taken from 'Suffering Wisely and Well: The Grief of Job and the Grace of God' by Eric Ortlund).

PERSEVERANCE

Perseverance can be defined as the state of remaining faithful to God in light of the revelation given to persons at their particular stage of redemptive history. Perseverance has always a continued trust in God, obedience to his commands, and reliance upon his merciful provision. In the Old Testament, perseverance is related to the covenantal relationship that God had with his people. Abraham was the quintessential model of perseverance, as he was faithful in waiting for God to provide him with the heir that had been promised him. Israel had to persevere by remaining faithful to its covenant with God, which meant being obedient to his commandments and decrees. In the subsequent history of Israel, however, the nation lacked

perseverance and fidelity and often turned away from God to worship gods of other nations. Indeed, the sweep of Israel's history, according to prophets, was that Israel had failed miserably at persevering in the covenantal promises and thus had incurred God's judgment (e.g. Neh. 9:6-37; Ezek. 20:1-39; Dan. 9:4-19). In the New Testament, Jesus is the ultimate example of the faithful Israelite and also provides many exhortations about perseverance in light of the dawning kingdom of God. Jesus perseveres in the wilderness when tempted by Satan (Matt. 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13). The parables of growth warn about those who don't persevere in the reception of the word (Luke 8:15).

In the course of his letters, Paul, had a lot to say about persevering in the faith in Christ. Paul considers perseverance / endurance (*hypomone*) to be among the cardinal qualities of a believer (Rom. 5:3-4; 1 Thess. 1:3; 2 Thess. 1:4; 8:25; 1 Tim. 6:11; Titus 2:2). James also had much to say about perseverance – he commends the believers toward this virtue that to maturity (1:3-4) and urges his audience to endure like Job endured sufferings (5:11).

The biblical teaching on perseverance attempts to balance divine sovereignty and human responsibility.

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- As you reflect on these passages, what principle or insight stands out as being particularly helpful, insightful, or difficult to grasp?
- What's one thing from last weekend's sermon that you hope we talk about as a group?



WEEK 9

GENEROSITY

2 Corinthians 8:1-9

INFORMATION:

Refreshing & Digesting the Sunday message.

Read through **2 Corinthians 8:1-9** which was preached in the sermon.

- What main points/ideas stood out for you? ¹
- What personal impact did the message have?
- Are there any practical applications/implications you're wrestling with?

ACTIVATION:

Accentuating the message through a personal & thorough study of the supporting text(s).

Read through **2 Corinthians 9:6-15**.

Slowly interrogate the passage trying to understand it, using the resource provided.

- How do the principles in this text align with the Sunday text?
- Are there any new applications/implications from this text?

IMPLEMENTATION:

Ensuring principles learned in previous weeks are applied and integrated into life.

- Were there any personal decisions/intentions made the previous week?
- If so, how has it gone in the week with integrating this principle in daily life?
- How have you progressed with the other Gospel Culture principles to date?

PRAYER:

Honest, personal, vulnerable prayers for individual transformation.

- It's likely that times of confession would be appropriate through this series, be willing to be vulnerable as a group.
- This should be followed by prayers of affirmation and receiving God's grace
- This in turn should be followed by prayers declaring trust in the Holy Spirit who empowers our transformation.

1.TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

GENEROSITY

The Macedonians were poor but gave extravagantly. In the Greco-Roman world giving was done primarily by wealthy people giving to elites of the culture but also, at times, for social good. Normally, leaders were wealthy people. In the Jewish world everyone was supposed to give to the poor as an act of piety. So the members of the church in Macedonia, many of whom were from gentile backgrounds, expressed Jewish values in their giving. But more importantly, they gave as devout Christ-followers (8:5).

AN APPEAL FOR FULL RESPONSE TO THE COLLECTION (8:1-9:15)

Having expressed renewed confidence in the Corinthian church, Paul now proceeds to a further appeal concerning *“service to the Lord’s people”* (8:4). The service the apostle has in mind involves the collection of an offering intended to supply the *“needs of God’s people”* and to be a manifest *“expression of thanks to God”* (9:12). There seems no doubt that this is the same gift for Jerusalem that was first mentioned in 1 Corinthians 16:3 (see also Rom. 15:26-27). Paul holds up the generosity of the Macedonians Christians as he urges the Corinthians to renew their involvement in this endeavour. The Macedonians’ generous giving (8:1-5), however, has not sprung from human nature. It is a tangible expression of the grace of God at work in the lives of those who have given themselves to the Lord. It has originated without effort by Paul, continued despite the “most severe trial” and extreme poverty (8:2), and produced joy among all those who have contributed *“as much as they were able”* (8:3; cf. Mark 12:41-44).

It is such giving, inspired by grace, that Paul seeks from the church in Corinth (8:6-15), and with good reason. Titus has already been able to report that a new beginning was made during his visit. However, in order that the church might be given full opportunity to excel in *“this grace of giving”* (8:7), Paul has urged Titus to return to Corinth and *“bring also to completion this act of grace”* (8:6).

Accordingly, Paul urges the Corinthians to imitate Christ, who though he was rich yet agreed to willingly to become poor *“so that you through poverty might become rich”* (8:9; cf. Phil. 2:5-11).

2. APPLICATION

- As you reflect on these passages, what principle or insight stands out as being particularly helpful, insightful, or difficult to grasp?
- What’s one thing from last weekend’s sermon that you hope we talk about as a group?