

The Gospel Centered Mess:
The Functional Centrality of
the Gospel.

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The truth of the Gospel is the principle article of all Christian doctrine. . . Most necessary is that we know this article well, teach it to others, and beat it into their heads continually.

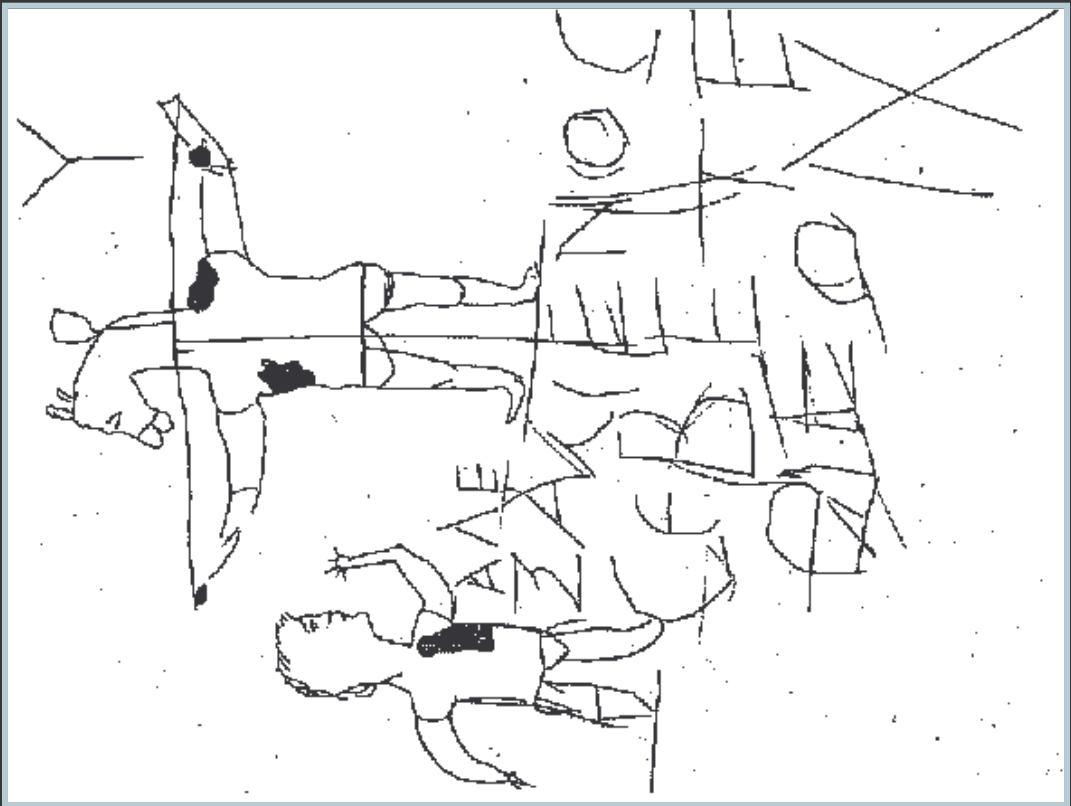
--Martin Luther, *Preface to Galatians*.

*You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life
(John 5:39-40).*

Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise you have believed in vain.

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance : that Christ died for our sins according tot he Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

*For I resolved to know nothing
while I was with you except Jesus
Christ and him crucified
(1 Corinthians 2:2).*



*We proclaim him, admonishing and
teaching everyone with all wisdom,
so that we may present everyone
perfect in Christ
(Colossians 1:27-28).*

His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires (2 Peter 1:3-4).

One of the ways the gospel must function is by specifically informing behavior and we should read our Bibles with a special eye to detecting the connections it sets forth between the Gospel and our behavior. -Mike Bullmore

Even within a broadly Christian heritage, many writers appeal to 'spiritual disciplines' that are utterly divorced from the Gospel and detached from the teaching of Scripture. -D.A. Carson

And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:17-19).

There has not only been an objective, public act of divine self-disclosure in the crucifixion of God's own Son, but there must be a private work of God by his Spirit, in the mind and heart of the individual. If we should express unqualified gratitude to God for the gift of his Son, we should express no less gratitude for the gift of the Spirit who enables us to grasp the gospel of his son . . . Unless the spirit enlightens us, God's thoughts will remain deeply alien to us. -D.A. Carson

After the sermon, discussion etc., do you leave with one more thing to do or with greater appreciation for what Christ has done?

Did the song, message or discussion, leave you with greater faith toward Jesus power to save?

What motivation was offered? Were you taken to rules and principles and a call to be "more committed" or were you pointed to the cross for inspiration?

If there was a conviction of sin, were you left in it? Were you encouraged to do something about it – or to look to what Christ has done for you?

Did the speaker, author, fellow believer display humility? Did he freely critique others? Was there harshness in tone?

Did you leave with a greater awareness of the Savior's glory, as you seek to work out your salvation in fear and trembling?

Gospel Driven Life Blog--Mark Lauterbach

Counterfeit Gospels

Nominalism "By Name Only Christianity"

Doctrinalism / Intellectualism

Antinomianism "A license to sin."

Passivism "Let go and let God."

Moralism "Just Try Harder."

Sensationalism

We must be committed to personally
apply the Gospel.

We must see and practice the vast implications of the gospel for ourselves by first applying it personally. Any appreciation for the gospel must be personal. Understanding this is the key to character development as a leader.

We must recognize that our hearts do not easily accept the gospel and this is a continual battle. Sin is a present reality not just an intellectual understanding. We are sinners in constant need of a Savior.

We must live in continual repentance and faith in the gospel not simply repenting and changing external behavior but changing the orientation and motivation of the heart.

Our biggest need of salvation is from idols of the heart; the sin behind the sin. This is what leads to external and internal sin.

Ministry is not void of idols especially the idol of reputation, control, pride, the approval of men, and obtaining self-worth out of ministry. This demands heart work which leads to transformation of character.

We must, for the sake of the Glory
of God radically repent of our
known sin and the corporate sin of
God's people and pray . . .

2 Corinthians 4:1-6