

GOSPEL FLUENCY

COMMUNITY GROUP LEADER TRAINING

PRE-TRAINING

THE 4 G'S

In the week leading up to the training, we would like Community Group Leaders to have read the blog and watched the videos located here: www.gcmcollective.org/the-4-gs/

This blog talks about the 4 G's, and has videos showing how to apply these truths to your life and your story. Our hope is that this will begin shaping the way our people view gospel application and giving some language for gospel fluency.

TRAINING

[This portion of the Community Group Leader training will be roughly 30 minutes. The content below is to help you teach this topic to your people. Feel free to tweak or reorder the content as needed for your context and teaching style. There will be times throughout the teaching where a story or personal example would be helpful, and we highly encourage you to use your personal experience in those moments. Finally, most of this material is crafted from Jeff Vanderstelt on Gospel Fluency. Watching some of his videos may be helpful to you.]

WHAT IS GOSPEL FLUENCY?

GROWING BY THE GOSPEL

One of the core distinctives of Frontline is that we are Gospel-Centered. Everything that we do must come back to the gospel, the person and work of Jesus. The gospel is not just the entrance into the Christian life; it is the very essence of the Christian life. As believers, we don't move on from the gospel. It is by believing the gospel that we grow up in Christ and fight sin. Every sin flows from the root of unbelief in the gospel. As Jeff Vanderstelt says,

Every sin and issue that stands in the way of our faithfulness to Jesus' commands is ultimately a Gospel issue, since sin is the outcome of unbelief in Jesus.

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The gospel doesn't just look at external behavior and try to fix these external problems. It cuts us to the heart and root of these issues.

[This would be a great place for you to use some examples of why we don't need behavior modification, but we need the truth of the gospel. Contextualize for your congregation. Some examples might include marriage, parenting, anxiety, suffering, or sexual sin. Here is an example of what you could say:

“When there are problems in your marriage, first and foremost, you don't need a book with 10 steps to fix your marriage. You need Jesus and the power of the gospel. You need to address the roots of unbelief that are causing these problems in your marriage. When you get a glimpse how your marriage is a picture of Christ and the Church, and how Christ laid down his life to love and serve his Church, then the gospel empowers you to deal with issues at a root level.”]

SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE

In gospel community, we are called to help one another in this fight against sin by reminding each other of the gospel. Paul puts it this way,

*And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, **to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God... Speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.** — Ephesians 4:11-16*

God gave leaders to the church in order to equip the saints for the work of ministry. In your community group, you are to lead and equip your people to build each other up, so that we all would grow up in Christ. And the way this passage tells us to do that is by “speaking the truth in love.”

What does this mean? This isn't meaning that we just communicate facts to each other in a loving way. In this passage, “the truth” is the truth of the gospel, the truth of the person and work of Jesus. We need to equip our people to speak the truth of the gospel in love to one another. And it is in this gospel community that speaks to gospel to one another that we grow up into maturity.

GOSPEL FLUENCY

In order to do this gospel-centered work, we should strive to be fluent in the gospel. What does this mean? When you are fluent in any language, it doesn't mean that you translate it in your head to your original language. To be fluent means that you begin thinking and dreaming in that language. You talk to yourself in that language. It flows naturally from you without you having to think about it.

So to be fluent in the gospel means that we begin thinking and dreaming and speaking in gospel language. We start seeing things through gospel lenses. We start hearing things through gospel ears. We start speaking things with gospel language. Our goal is that we would naturally think on and communicate the gospel to one another.

MOVING TOWARDS GOSPEL FLUENCY

In order to equip your community group to be gospel fluent, you will need to create a culture where you are speaking the gospel to each other regularly. In order to create this culture, you need to equip your people to *know* the gospel and *apply* the gospel.

KNOW THE GOSPEL

In order to be gospel fluent, we need to know what the gospel is. You can't be fluent in Spanish and not know a word of Spanish. Likewise, we need to know the gospel in order to be fluent in the gospel. By knowing the gospel and thinking on it, we will be equipped to actually apply the gospel to every day life.

So what is the gospel? The gospel is the person and work of Jesus. It is the good news of the Cradle, Cross, and Crown of Jesus. It is the beautiful story of the Incarnation, Life, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus. He did this for us, not because we were worthy, but because of his own love and grace towards us.

In particular, there are four big truths about God that we see in the gospel that helps us deal with the root idols in our heart. These are called the 4 G's.

God is Great, so I don't have to be in control - *Control Idol*

God is Glorious, so I don't need others' approval - *Power Idol*

God is Gracious, so I don't need to prove myself - *Approval Idol*

God is Good, so I don't have to look elsewhere - *Comfort Idol*

Knowing the gospel is an ongoing process. When we stop thinking on the gospel and using our gospel language, we begin to forget. As we apply the gospel to every day life, we begin learning more and more about the gospel and the good news it is for us.

APPLY THE GOSPEL

Now we need to take these truths of the gospel and apply them to every day life. How do we take our knowledge of the gospel and interpret life and sin in light of it? How do we apply the gospel to our daily lives as believers?

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As we mentioned earlier, the gospel goes past our behavior and looks at the heart. In other words, the gospel goes to the root of our problem. Our problem is not that we need to change our behavior. Our problem is that our behavior shows where we are not believing the gospel rightly.

Just like a tree, you can trace the fruit down to the roots of the tree. It is the roots of the tree that lead to the fruit of the tree. When we see the fruit of sin and other issues in our life, we can trace that from the fruit to the root. We can trace those things back and ask the question: What is the root that is producing this fruit? How have I not been believing the gospel? Which of the 4 G's am I not believing?

FRUIT TO ROOT

There are four questions we can ask that can help us get to the root and apply the gospel to all of life:

Who Is God? — What Has He Done? — Who Am I? — What Do I Do?

[At this point, it would be good to use a solid example of taking some behavior and trace it down to the root problem. Then take that root problem and apply gospel truth to it. It would be powerful to do an example in your own life or someone close to you, or you can use this example here. It would also be good to trace this out on a white board for everyone (if possible). Feel free to do more than one example if needed.]

Here is an example of what you could say:

Let's say someone is struggling with Anxiety. Just like with the tree, anxiety is the fruit of something deeper going on that goes back to unbelief in the gospel.

So let's start with the question "What Do I Do?" Answer: I'm anxious.

Now let's go deeper. Question: "Who Am I?" In other words, what do you believe about yourself that is driving your anxiety? Answer: I should be in control of my life and circumstances, and I'm not.

Now let's ask this question: "What Has He Done?" In other words, what do you believe God has done to make you believe that you should be in control? Answer: God has lost control. God doesn't love me.

Finally, let's ask: "Who Is God?" In other words, if this is what God has done, what are you believing about who God is? Answer: God is impotent and unloving. In other words, God is not great and God is not gracious.

Now, this is the root of where this anxiety is coming from. We could have stopped with the first question and just said, "Stop being anxious!" But it would not have addressed the root of unbelief. I would then try to use my willpower to stop being anxious, when really I should believe the gospel. So

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then, how do we take this root and apply the gospel? Let's start with the first question and work our way back.

Question: "Who Is God?" Answer: God is great and God is gracious.

Question: "What Has He Done?" In other words, how do we know this? Answer: Jesus died for me (showing his ultimate love) and Jesus rose again (showing his ultimate power and control).

Question: "Who Am I?" Answer: I am loved. I am a child of the King. I am in God's good hands and under his care.

Question: "What Do I Do?" Answer: Now, I have peace and patience and joy (the fruit of the Spirit).]

DISCUSSION

CHECKING IN

Spend some time checking in with each other and what has been going on in your Community Groups.

APPLICATION

Spend time with putting gospel fluency to practice. Focus on some real issue, problem, or sin in your group. Ask these questions:

What Do I Do? — Who Am I? — What Has He Done? — Who Is God?

Finally, work the other way (starting with Who Is God?) and figure out how the gospel speaks to this situation.

POST-TRAINING

LEAD YOUR GROUP INTO GOSPEL FLUENCY

Following the training, we would like Community Group Leaders to read the blog located here: www.gcmcollective.org/article/gospel-fluency This will give seven practical ways to lead their community group into gospel fluency. We recommend that they work with their Hub Leader and lead their group through 2 or 3 of them.