

Appendix 1

LOVE JESUS

Everything in our lives will flow out of this foundational core – our love for the triune God in and through Jesus. If we aren't loving Jesus everything else will be off. Our doing flows out of our being – our new Gospel identity in Jesus.

Prov. 4:23; 23:19; Rev. 2:4; Luke 10:27; 1 Cor. 16:22

Love is fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23). Thus, the Christian life is not us doing things FOR God, but Jesus continuing his mission on the earth THROUGH us by his Spirit (Acts 1:1ff).

We have three enemies opposing any movement to loving and treasuring Jesus - the flesh (Gal. 5:16-17), the world (Rom. 12:2), and the devil (Gen. 3:1-5) – all attacking our faith. That's why we are in this together – in fellowship (a partnership on a common mission – think “Fellowship of the Ring,” not tea & crumpets in the church basement (Phil. 1:4-5; 27)). May we be continually commending Jesus and preaching the Gospel to one another.

(i) Daily Spirit-dependent prayer

If a disciple is not abiding in Jesus, no amount of preparation or equipping can sustain them in the way. In order to live the Gospel, we are completely dependent upon the Spirit of God – apart from whom we can do nothing. The model for our reliance upon the Spirit and our experience of his indwelling and empowering presence is the Lord Jesus Christ himself who was filled with the Spirit and entirely dependent upon his power for the performance of miracles, the preaching of the kingdom of God, and all other dimensions of his earthly ministry. We need to continually pray in dependence on the Spirit to be filled that we might both receive what God wants us to impart to us through others and that we might be enabled and empowered to love and encourage others.

[13] If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!” (Luke 11:13 ESV)

[4] Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. [5] I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ... [16] You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. [17] These things I command you, so that you will love one another. (ESV) (John 15:4-5, 16-17 ESV)

[16] But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ... [22] But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, [23] gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. [24] And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. [25] If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. (Galatians 5:16, 22-25 ESV)

[18] And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, (Eph. 5:18 ESV)

[18] praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, (Eph. 6:18 ESV)

[17] pray without ceasing, (1 Thessalonians 5:17 ESV)

[8] But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” (Acts 1:8 ESV)

[7] But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. (2 Corinthians 4:7 ESV)

[27] To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. (Colossians 1:27 ESV)

(ii) Daily communion with God in prayerful meditation in the Scriptures

We meet and commune with the true and living God in and through the Scriptures. We do not want to simply read the Bible, but commune with God, prayerfully responding to the God who reveals himself in and through Jesus – the theme of the whole Bible.

[1] Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; [2] but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates [Hagah] - day and night. (Psalm 1:1-2 ESV)

[17] Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. (John 17:17 ESV)

[14] But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it [15] and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. [16] All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, [17] that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:14-17 ESV)

(iii) Gathering on Sunday with the Church

God has designed it so the body of Christ together spurs us on to love and good works. The Spirit working through gifted members builds up the body in our love of Jesus. Coming together on a regular basis as a covenant family to break bread, sing one to another, and be taught from the Scriptures is a means of maintaining and growing in our love of God.

[42] And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. (Acts 2:42 ESV)

[7] On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to [literally, for the purpose of] break bread ... (Acts 20:7a ESV)

[23] Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. [24] And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, [25] not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. (Hebrews 10:23-25 ESV)

[11] And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, [12] to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, [13] until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, [14] so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. [15]

Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, [16] 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. (Eph. 4:11-16 ESV)

[18] And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, [19] addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, [20] giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, [21] submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. (Ephesians 5:18-21 ESV)

[10] As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: [11] whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. (1 Peter 4:10-11 ESV)

LOVE PEOPLE

As disciples of Jesus we are called to love people as Jesus has loved us.

[34] A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. [35] By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:34-35 ESV)

[7] Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. [8] Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. [9] In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. [10] In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. [11] Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. [12] No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us. (1 John 4:7-12 ESV)

(i) Praying weekly for everyone in your group

We are called to pray for one another in this adventure; Phil. 1:27-29 – shields overlapping. We are called to take responsibility for others. That is what it is to “love people.” We want to especially pray for our brothers and sisters to grow in their love of Jesus.

[2] Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. (Galatians 6:2 ESV)

[11] You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many. (2 Corinthians 1:11 ESV)

[16] Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. (James 5:16 ESV)

[18] praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, [19] and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, [20] for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak. (Ephesians 6:18-20 ESV)

[9] And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, [10] so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the

knowledge of God; [11] being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; (Colossians 1:9-11 ESV)

[9] And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, [10] so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, [11] filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God. (Philippians 1:9-11 ESV)

[30] I appeal to you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf, (Romans 15:30 ESV)

(ii) Weekly communication and encouragement with those in your group

Unlike Cain, who rejected his responsibility, we are “brother’s keeper” (and sister’s too!). Every is to take responsibility to care for, encourage, bear one another’s burdens etc.

[2] Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. (Galatians 6:2 ESV)

[13] But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. (Hebrews 3:13 ESV)

[11] Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing. (1 Thessalonians 5:11 ESV)

[24] Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor. (1 Corinthians 10:24 ESV)

(iii) Gathering weekly with your Gospel Community

The early church were devoted to one another and gathered in both large and small groups (Acts 2:42-46).

[10] As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: [11] whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. (1 Peter 4:10-11 ESV)

[7] To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. (1 Corinthians 12:7 ESV)

[24] And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, [25] not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. (Hebrews 10:24-25 ESV)

Help People Love Jesus

I Peter 2:9 tells us that God has made us into “a people for his own possession, that [we] may proclaim the excellencies of him who called [us] out of darkness into his marvelous light.” First, we must realize that our lives are not our own, we are a “people for his own possession.” We exist to be a people for God, in order to do the work that God has called us to do. The Bible tells us that God has called us to himself, so that we, as a new formed community, might proclaim to the world the excellencies of his character.

Mission is not merely something we do, but it is part of our identity. We are witnesses and as such we witness to others the beauty of Jesus displayed in the Gospel (Acts 1:8). We are a “sent” people (Jn. 20:21), “ambassadors” who have been entrusted with the message of reconciliation (II Cor. 5:19-20). This

type of broad and comprehensive understanding of mission is essential to our lives as Christians. Our mission cannot be limited to cross-cultural work or to evangelistic encounters. Mission is not merely something we do one night a week. **Our mission is to be so transformed by the Gospel so that we become the aroma of Christ wherever we go.** Because our mission is part of our identity, it is to permeate every sphere of our lives.

The nature of the mission reveals our weakness and drives us to die to ourselves and depend completely upon the Spirit and the grace of God. In dependence, we find God's grace is sufficient and his power is made known in our weakness. One of the whole points of having a mission that is too big for us is that it would drive us to dependence upon God (II Cor. 1:10). This type of radical dependence upon God is central to what it means to be a Christian. Faith is the letting go of our own abilities, dying to ourselves, and casting ourselves solely upon Christ as our only hope.

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age. (Matthew 28:19-20 ESV)

*Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As **the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.**" (John 20:21 ESV)*

*And he said to them, "**The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.**" (Luke 10:2 ESV)*

*All this is from God, who through **Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.** (2 Corinthians 5:18-20 ESV)*

(i) Praying weekly for your "5+" who don't yet know Jesus

*Brothers, my heart's desire and **prayer to God for them is that they may be saved.** (Romans 10:1 ESV)*

(ii) Growing your relationships with those who don't yet know Jesus (advance at least one to the right on the "Help Others Love Jesus" sheet)

*To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have **become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some.** I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings. (1 Corinthians 9:22-23 ESV)*

(iii) Sharing the Gospel or inviting someone to a Sunday gathering

Go and tell – [7] and there they continued to preach the gospel. (Acts 14:7 ESV)

Come and See - [46] Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." (John 1:46 ESV)

[29] "Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?" (John 4:29 ESV)

Appendix 2 - Service Project

We desire that every Gospel Community express our Gospel identity as servants in a service project that ministers to the community at large at least once each session.

Because God has sent his Son as a sacrificial servant, taking our place on the cross and thereby healing and forgiving us in his substitutionary death, we then are freed from our self-love and self-reliance and empowered by him to serve those around us. Therefore, we model our lives after the Servant-King, increasingly being freed by Him from slavery to self and so empowered to serve others. (Matthew 20:25-28; 25:31-46; John 13:1-17; 1 Peter 2:16).

- What needs are we aware of where we could come together to help (i.e. someone in the neighbourhood; shovel snow or help someone move, or repair something etc.)
- Bless a new business in the city – market it on social media, and everyone goes there on a particular day and spends at least \$1.
- Bless a group within the city with an appreciation event. (I.e. one group had a chili, bun, salad supper and inviting SPS members to drop in between 4-8 pm. They gave them cards of thanks – for all they do serving our city. The met and greeted each one personally, thanking them verbally in addition to the card. An email version of the card of thanks was sent out as well so that even those who could not make the meal could be touched as well.)
- Serve along a group in the city. (i.e. one group provided and served a meal at Ronald McDonald House).
- Babysit for families to give parents time together as a couple or single parents time to recharge.
- The possibilities are many as we seek to find a way to bless our city beyond our church family.

Appendix 3 – Three Minute Rule

It is great to see our friends and family at our church gatherings on Sunday. We can't wait to see them after the service and find out if they have lunch plans or to hold their baby or just catch up. It is a special part of the gathering. But is it what we should be doing?

Visitors may feel left out by your camaraderie with one another. What if a church family invested the first three minutes after a service to connecting with guests only? Most guests are looking for the door at the close of a service. In fact, some may leave after the sermon to avoid any awkward socialization. Ed Stetzer described it this way:

"The three-minute rule begins when the final prayer is said or song is sung. This is not the time to talk to your best friends. During those first three minutes, two things are going to happen: people who are familiar are going to talk to each other and people who don't know anyone are going to leave quickly. This is where it's crucial. If you take the time in those first three minutes to talk to the people who aren't connected, you will have time afterward to talk to your friends who are more likely to stick around. You need to see those first three minutes after a church gathering as a time-sensitive corporate fishing pool for [assimilation]. You have three critical minutes to look immediately around for people who are not connected to the body. Be friendly to them, ask them if they are in a community group, and invite them if they are not connected to one."