



Where does the gospel lead? What does the gospel create? What develops as a result of the gospel? Can you imagine an advertisement to be “free from weight loss” where the before and after picture looked the same? In the New Testament, the gospel that frees, the gospel that saves, the gospel that redeems leads to freed, saved, redeemed people living free, saved, redeemed lives. It means recognizing not just what we were saved *from*, but also what we were saved *for*.

These questions are intended to deepen your experience of the message. Use them for your personal or family study time, or with an open Bible as you share the good news with your neighbor.

Group Introduction:

Read the story of the Prodigal Son. What makes the Prodigal (who did wrong) a good example for us? What makes the older brother (who did everything right) a bad example for us?

WHERE DOES THE GOSPEL START?

Read Eph 2:1-9 & Titus 3:3-7. Paul is very clear that when we ask “how were we saved?” the answer is a person...and that person is not me! Jesus Christ is who saved us. His righteousness is what identifies us. Discuss why this is important. If this is true, why is “I can save myself” such a dangerous viewpoint? When someone asks about God’s plan for salvation, do you start by talking about God, or talking about our actions? Why does it matter?

WHERE DOES THE GOSPEL LEAD? Read

Ephesians 2:10 & Titus 3:8. In the same passages that emphasize salvation and hope come from God in Christ—not from our works—we are told that Christians are intended to live lives full of good works. This is because we weren’t just saved *from* something (sin, guilt, death), but we were saved *for* something (changed lives, a kingdom of holy people).

HARD QUESTIONS. How can we be saved by faith (not works), but judgment will take works into account (**Matt 16:27; Rev 2:23**)?

KINGDOM LIVING. Read 1 Thess 2:12.

Dallas Willard says “The gospel is less about how to get into the Kingdom of Heaven after you die, and more about how to live in the Kingdom of Heaven before you die.” The point is that the gospel is meant to change lives and make a difference now. Discuss this.

TWO IMPROPER MOTIVATIONS. Read 1

John 2:16 & 2 Tim 1:7. Tim Keller says fear and pride can “restrain” the heart, but they cannot “change” the heart. The gospel is different. Can you identify areas where you are led by fear (performance-based) or pride (self-centered desires)? **Follow up: Read Titus 2:11-14.** Why doesn’t Paul appeal to fear or pride for saying “no” to worldly things? (**See Titus 3:4-7**).

MELTING INTO CHRIST. Read Eph 5:25-

33; 1 Pet 3:1. These passages speak of winning over our spouses by a beautiful life. Picture trying to bend a fork. Keller’s example is of “gospel heat” that doesn’t force us or bend us but “melts” us into conformity with Christ. Discuss this idea.