

GOSPEL FRAMEWORK CHURCH RESOURCE

Why a Gospel Framework?

A framework is not meant to provide us with easy answers. Neither is it meant to be exhaustive. But rather it gives us multiple points of reference to understand the whole.

Because the framework is a unified whole, each part of the framework can be an access point to the gospel; we don't have to always enter in at the first point. We do, however, need to have a robust understanding of the whole framework, because all of the parts work together. For example, a gospel of forgiveness of sins without an understanding of the Holy Spirit or of the Kingdom of God is not the gospel that Jesus and the disciples proclaimed. It's a partial gospel. Or a gospel that does not have an understanding of God's authority as Creator does not produce a life of trusting submission to His will. Deepening in our understanding that *God made everything* should increase our worship of Him and our submission to Him as the authority in our lives, helps us enjoy His Kingdom (*God restores everything*), and grows in humility to admit our need of Him (*Sin breaks and Jesus rescues*). We need that part of the gospel to grow as mature disciples.

GOD MADE EVERYTHING

Genesis 1:1, Genesis 2:1, Genesis 1:26-27, Psalm 24:1-2, Romans 1:20

Why it matters: God is God and we are not. He has created all things, and us, for Himself. He gives us our purpose.

How we live it out: We live with reverence for God in humble dependence on Him and His authority for how life is meant to be lived.

Connecting to the Lost: Creation gives us easy points of connection, as many, many people see creation and acknowledge that there is something bigger than us at work in the universe. If there is a God who made everything, doesn't it stand to reason that He should be able to say how His creation works best? (Psalm 19:1-2, Romans 1:20)

SIN BREAKS EVERYTHING

Genesis 3:7-24, Romans 1:18-25

Why it matters: When we decide we are the authority of how life works best and are led only by our desires, it breaks us and everything around us. Sin is a rejection of God's authority, which separates us from God both now and into eternity.

How we live it out: We admit the ways we are broken and have broken others, acknowledging God's ways as right, rather than blaming others or seeking to justify ourselves.

Connecting to the Lost: We must be vulnerable and open about our own sin and struggles, and we need to communicate how sin blocks us from the life that God intends for us, a life of communion with Him. Also, it seems pretty clear that our world is broken, so that is a point of agreement, even if they don't agree that sin is the cause. We also might find agreement on how we have desires that can seem good in the moment but ultimately end up being destructive.

JESUS RESCUES EVERYTHING

John 3:16-17, Luke 19:10, Rom. 5:6-11, Col. 1:19-23, Eph. 2:8-10

Why it matters: We cannot heal ourselves or fix what we have broken, and we cannot save ourselves; we need someone to save us. Through Jesus' death and resurrection, we have been saved from the *penalty* of sin, which is death and separation from God; we are being saved from the *power* of sin, which means we do not have to obey temptations; and we will one day be saved from the *presence* of sin, which means we will no longer suffer from temptation and brokenness. And Jesus came not only to forgive us, but to reconcile us to God and to each other.

How we live this out: We trust Jesus's work on the cross and humbly ask for forgiveness from God and from others; we seek reconciliation; and we trust His ongoing rescue as sin is revealed in our lives. (Romans 10:9)

Connecting to the Lost: There is great news that we can be forgiven and reconciled to God and to others, which brings healing and freedom and life. That's how much God loves us! We can invite them to receive that gift and follow Jesus.

THE SPIRIT EMPOWERS US

John 14:15-17, 14:26-27, Acts 1:8, Rom. 8:15-17, Rom. 8:26-27, GaL. 3:5, Gal. 5:16

Why it matters: The forgiveness of Jesus paves the way for God to give us His Holy Spirit, empowering us to live new lives. Coming to know Jesus is not just a sin cleanup, it's a restoration to our created purpose of living in dependence and communion with God.

How We Live This Out: We receive the Holy Spirit at salvation, and then we are to ask for an ongoing, fresh filling of the Spirit each day, remembering our need for God's help and power (Ephesians 5:18). We also are called to eagerly seek the gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor 14:1), and we are called to listen for His voice in the midst our day-to-day life (Psalm 95:6-8, Hebrews 3:7-9). As we obey His leadings, our capacity to operate in His power tends to grow.

Connecting to the Lost: It's easy to feel trapped and unable to change, but there is power for a new life. There is power to love the way we long to love others, power to say no to the things that break us, power to know God's heart and His will. We are not invited to a static religious system but to a dynamic life with God.

GOD RESTORES EVERYTHING

Mark 1:15, Matt. 5:3-10, Rev. 21:1-8, Rev. 22:1-5

Why it matters: We have a future hope that has already begun. The Kingdom of God is here, and we have good and meaningful work to do in the Kingdom as we wait in hope for the King's return and the full restoration of all things.

How We Live This Out: Pay attention to what God is doing, seeking His Kingdom (Matthew 6:33), and align our lives with the values of God's Kingdom rather than the cultural kingdoms of today. (We find these values most clearly revealed in Matthew's gospel in the Beatitudes, but they are found throughout the Scriptures). Invest our time, talent, and treasure into Kingdom-oriented endeavors, which include generosity, justice, and mercy.

Connecting to the Lost: Looking at the world, it is clear that we need better leaders, a better King. We also long for meaningful work in our lives, work that echoes into eternity, which is Kingdom work. And we also need a better hope for the future in a world filled with uncertainty.