

# GOSPEL FLUENCY CHEAT SHEET

## WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

The power of God for salvation for all who believe.

## WHAT IS GOSPEL FLUENCY?

Speaking the truths of Jesus into the everyday stuff of life so that all parts of our lives are eventually fully transformed by and submitted to Jesus Christ.

## A GOSPEL FLUENT COMMUNITY

- is growing in faith in the gospel, evidenced by people confessing their sins to one another regularly.
- is growing in confidence that Jesus fully atoned for our sins by extending grace and forgiveness to one another.

## FOUR QUESTIONS FOR SPEAKING TRUTH

1. Who is God?
2. What has God done (which reveals who God is)?
3. Who am I in light of God's work?
4. How should I live in light of who I am?

## FRUIT TO ROOT: FOUR QUESTIONS FOR HEARING UNBELIEF

1. What am I doing or experiencing right now? (What fruit am I seeing in my life?)
2. In light of what I am doing or experiencing, what do I believe about myself?
3. What do I believe God is doing or has done?
4. What do I believe God is like?

## OUR NEED FOR GOSPEL FLUENCY AND MAKING A PLAN

When we lead people to anything other than the gospel, we've already lost. Ironically, as leaders, we often forget the power, presence, and pervasive nature of the gospel to apply to all of life. This exercise begins the equipping process for leaders to become gospel fluent and lead communities to speak the truths of Jesus into the everyday stuff of life. It can be used in leader trainings, in coaching cohorts, or during a leader's retreat.

### READ EPHESIANS 4:11–16

In this passage we are instructed about the means by which the Church grows up into maturity. God gives certain people to the church to equip all believers for ministry (apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers). As every part is doing their job, they build up the body of Christ to maturity and the stature of the fullness of Christ. Paul goes on to describe what must take place for this growth to occur:

**1. Speaking the truth in love**—The truth is found in the person and work of Jesus. Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” Speaking the truth in love is another way of saying, “Speak the gospel to one another.”

**2. In ministry (and on mission)**—The way in which the body is built up is through each part ministering to the others (v. 16). It is in ministry and on mission that we become aware of where each of us is in need of being built up in the gospel. The areas of deficiency in our belief in the gospel show up when we are called to love others and make disciples.

Therefore, to grow up in Christ and help others do the same, we need to be “gospel fluent” and call people to live lives that both demand the power of the Gospel and reveal where we are not living in the truth of the gospel.

### PRACTICE

Get into groups of three or four and spend time working together on how you would speak the truths of the gospel into one or two of these situations in life. As you interact with these scenarios, what gaps in gospel-understanding are you seeing? How do you avoid judgement? How do you listen? What big story do you believe in? How does that compare to the story of God?

—Your son comes home from middle school crying because he has been bullied. How does the gospel apply to that situation?

—Your sister's fiancé broke off the engagement, and your sister is devastated. How does the gospel apply to that situation?

—You received the promotion you've been working so hard for, and you're over the moon. Your co-worker, while happy for you, is disappointed you got the promotion and she didn't. How does the gospel apply to that situation?

—In your DNA group, the same person continually confesses the same struggles week after week but doesn't seem to be owning his or her own responsibility in the situation. How does the gospel apply to that?

—Your friend, a single mom with a big heart, confesses that yet again she's overspent on groceries, household items, entertainment, and the kids, and she feels guilty and a vague sense of doom. It's not that she's overly extravagant or wasteful, but she does love to be generous. She hates the stress of trying to live paycheck-to-paycheck, but she can't seem to get ahead. How does the gospel apply to that?

## FOR DISCUSSION

### REFLECT ON YOUR COMMUNITY

What have you found to be most effective in equipping your missional community to speak the truth in love to one another and prepare them to share with those who don't yet believe?

## DISCOVERING OUR AREAS OF UNBELIEF

Walk through the following activity as a group. If your group is larger than six people, you might want to divide into groups of three or four to make sure everyone gets a chance to participate. Be real, honest, prayerful, and loving as you make these truths personal together.

First, have each person . . .

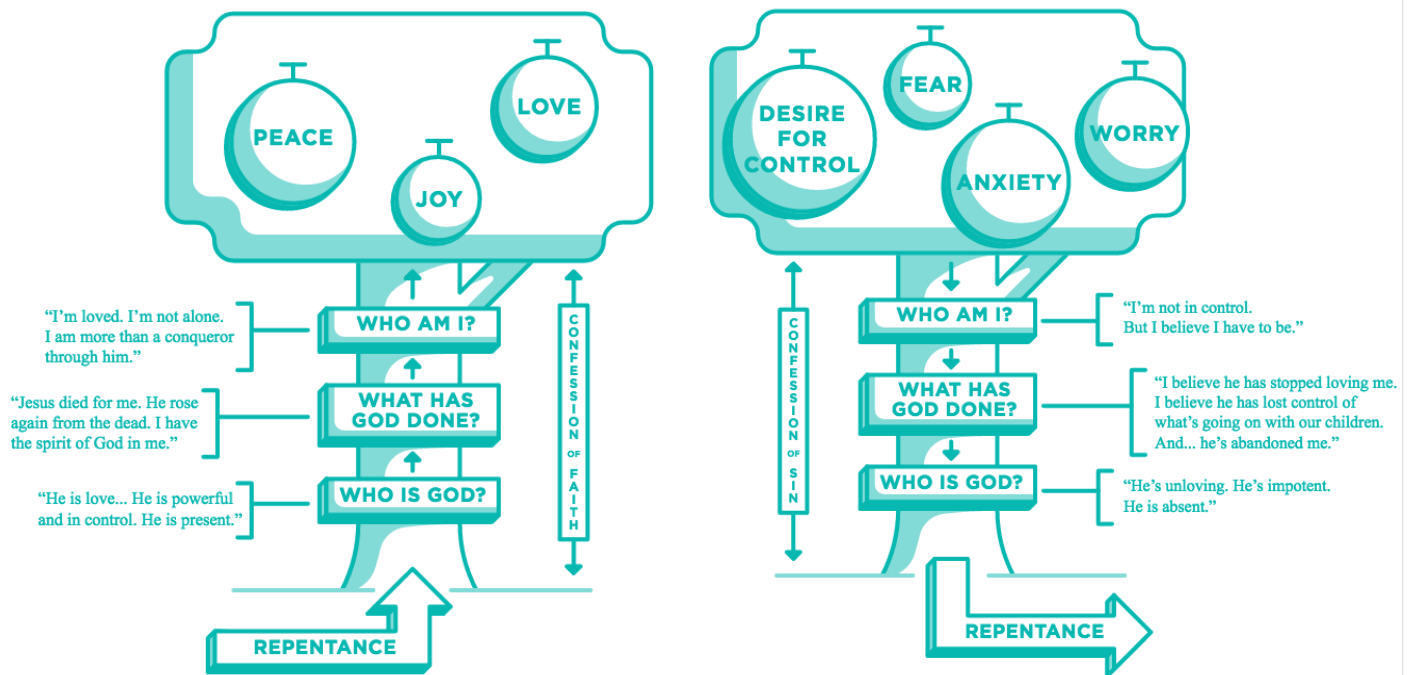
- Share one area of unbelief—an area of your life where you do not believe or trust the gospel to be true. Take sufficient time to explain the situation, tell the story, and list struggles and battles, lies and accusations, and temptations or words from the past that pull you away from belief in God and His gospel.
- Either explain ways you applied truth to that area—How do you see God provide answers and truth, specifically through the person and work of Jesus? If you have a hard time knowing how the gospel provides answers or truth, ask for help.

After each person shares, have others in the group . . .

- Celebrate specific ways God is working in that person's life, sanctifying him or her by bringing His truth to the situation he or she explained. Considering how you shared stories (see "Introduction"), mention themes you noticed of God's work and specific ways you see Him drawing each person into deeper belief, relationship, and rest in Him through the gospel.
- For everyone, especially if they ask for help, dig in; ask questions and speak truth in love to one another. What did you notice as they shared? What gospel themes or ways in which God is working did you pick up on that might encourage or exhort the person who shared?

### PRAY

Spend time praying together for your group and for each specific person. Pray that God would help you each believe more and more in Him and in His gospel work, that He will help apply that truth to your everyday thoughts, words, and actions, and that He will grow you into existing as a community that models and speaks the gospel to each other and to others.



## FRUIT TO ROOT EXERCISE

While the war of the mind is a personal war for everyone, it doesn't have to be an individual war. It's helpful to know that the ultimate Helper—God the Spirit—and those in your close community are in the foxholes with you, fighting on the front lines for your holiness. In chapter eight of *Gospel Fluency*, Jeff writes:

*When I am teaching people how to fight with gospel truths, I introduce some cues to help them discover the aspect of the gospel they may need to press into. For instance, if someone is struggling with guilt or shame for what he been done, I encourage him to go to the cross where Jesus died and remember his words: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). We need the reminder that Jesus's death paid for all our sin, past, present, and future. He atoned for our sin, removed our guilt, and covered our shame.*

*If someone is struggling to overcome sin, I might encourage her to remember and believe in the resurrection, where Jesus condemned sin's power. He gives us the same power to overcome by the Spirit who raised him from the dead.*

*Some are dealing with feelings of inadequacy in their behavior and lean toward performance-based acceptance. If so, I direct them to remember Jesus's life, perfectly lived in their place, and the Father's words spoken over Jesus (words that are now ours in Jesus): "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:17).*

*Whatever the struggle, the life, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus gives life, hope, and power. And by faith in Christ, every attribute, characteristic, and blessing that belongs to Jesus is available to us because of our unity with him.*

*In essence, fighting with gospel truths is trusting in and putting on ourselves all that is true of Jesus, and therefore also true of us in Jesus.*

This week's group exercise puts that into practice as you consider going from "fruit to root" to "root to fruit" together. If your group is larger than six people, you might want to divide into groups of three or four to make sure everyone gets a chance to participate. We'll encourage you to "let your group in"—especially if you're having a hard time reconstructing right belief in some areas. It can feel shameful, but by God's design you need each other in those areas especially!

First, looking at the Tree Diagrams and considering the four questions of unbelief, have each person . . .

- Share one or two areas of unbelief he or she has, along with specific ways God used that process to establish greater belief in his or her heart and mind.
- Share at least one area you need help deconstructing disbelief based on the "fruit to root" process and reconstructing right belief based on the "root to fruit" process.

After each person shares, together as a group . . .

- Celebrate God's work in each person as He worked through His Spirit to establish new areas of belief in former unbelief.
- Lovingly serve one another as you help deconstruct unbelief and reconstruct right belief in areas others need help.
- Consider if there are any commitments you need to make to help one another live consistently in light of newfound belief.

#### FOUR QUESTIONS FOR HEARING UNBELIEF:

- (1) What am I doing or experiencing right now? (What fruit am I seeing in my life?)
- (2) In light of what I am doing or experiencing, what do I believe about myself?
- (3) What do I believe God is doing or has done?
- (4) What do I believe God is like?

#### NOTE:

Next week's group exercise is sharing a meal together, and we'll encourage you to go a little "above and beyond" for that meal. Before you end tonight's group meeting, make a plan. What will you eat? Who will bring what? Will you prepare food beforehand, or will you make it together? Plan well today to get the full experience of next week's exercise!

**PRAY:**

Spend some time praying together for your group and for each specific person. Pray that God would produce increasing fruit of the Spirit in each of you, that He would give you the strength—and namely His own power—as you fight the battle for your mind, and that He would grow each person's ability and ease in deconstructing disbelief and reconstructing right belief.

## THE “MEAL” EXERCISE

This week's exercise is a little different than previous weeks; you're simply going to celebrate a meal together and worship God by declaring truths about Him that you experience as you eat. You don't have to follow this outline exactly, but here are some suggested conversations your group might have during the meal:

- Everyone might share a sensory experience they've never considered before about the meal.
- Everyone might share one way their food and drink reminds them of God's goodness.
- Everyone might thank God for a specific element of the meal, the people eating with you, etc.
- Everyone might tell a story about an especially meaningful meal in their lives.
- Everyone might share a way they've seen this week that Jesus is “the better” and offer a toast to celebrate Him.

After the meal, we'll encourage the followers of Jesus among you to participate in *the meal*: to take the Lord's Supper together with bread and wine (or juice if you prefer). As you do, you might do some of the following:

- Have someone read 1 Corinthians 11:23–25.
- Some of you might declare how Jesus' death and resurrection is good news to specific areas of your own life.
- Some of you might declare how Jesus' death and resurrection is good news to specific areas of others' lives that you heard them mention during the meal or throughout previous weeks together.
- You might explain to children or not-yet-believers the significance of the Lord's Supper in your own words.

### PRAY

Spend some time praying together for your group and for each specific person. Pray that God would help you increasingly see all of life—even simple meals—as opportunities to worship Him in all you do, that the reality of Jesus' death and resurrection would be more and more real, and that both the Lord's Supper and the words of others would be used by God the Spirit to remind you that Jesus is truly “the better” (and add specifics as necessary).