

THE THREE THINGS

DEPRAVITY, DELIVERANCE & THANKFULNESS

Introduction

After the summer break LCPC will focus on the third of the three purposes of the church: mission. During that time we will do some in depth training that will equip us to reach out to the many lost people in London. The purpose with this series however is to remind us once again of the three main points we will need to pass when leading someone to salvation.

First unbelievers need to see their own sin, their total depravity. Then, through God's grace they need to see God's deliverance through Jesus Christ. Then, as believers in their Lord and Saviour they need to be disciplined in order to live lives that pleases God, and shows their thankfulness.

At the end of each study we will be looking at a question that helps us to apply the Gospel in a conversation with unbelievers. Please take time to talk about the answers while helping each other to prepare for conversations we might have at work, our homes or on the street.

Hopefully this brief bird's eye view of the main points of the Gospel will serve as a strong foundation for the year ahead.

Kruger

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Study 1 - Man's Depravity

Part 1 - Read Romans 1:18-32

Paul's opening statement in verse 18 tells us what this passage is all about. It is about God's wrath being revealed. God's wrath against Adam and Eve's first is revealed if one looks back through Paul's teaching. Take a moment and read the passage again, placing this teaching in and after the Garden of Eden.

Discovering the text

1. Against who is God's wrath directed? (v18)
2. Why? (v18 & 21)
3. What is the truth they try to suppress? (v19 - 20)
4. How did God respond? (v 24)
5. What was the result of God's response? (v 29-32)
6. What is God's punishment for sin? (v 32)

Think it through

- Q1. How do people normally think God views our sin? How does this passage correct that?
- Q2. How would you respond to this statement?
'The main problem with sin is that it messes up our lives.'

Mission Focus

Their total depravity is the very first point someone needs to grasp in order to need the Gospel. What is the one question that you can ask your friend, colleague or housemate to help him or her to see how desperately he or she needs the Gospel?

Part 2 - Read Rom 1:16-18

We see two things being revealed in Romans 1. God's wrath in the first passage we read, and now righteousness from God.

- Q4. We know this righteousness (v17) is from our Lord Jesus, but how can we prove that He is the one Paul has in mind here? (Rom 3:21-25a)

Mission Focus

Many people would consider our total depravity as a very depressing doctrine that will lead people into having a poor self image. Why is understanding this truth a positive thing?

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Study 2 - Man's Deliverance

Right at the heart of man's deliverance is the teaching that man is only justified through faith in Jesus Christ. But, we recently finished a series on Galatians where we kept on coming back to that very fact. In this study we would therefore like to focus not on the doctrine of justification by faith, but in the very object of our faith: Jesus Christ.

Read Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12

This was the passage the Ethiopian court official read when the Spirit brought Phillip to him to explain the good news about Jesus (Look at Acts 8:32-38). In order for this to be good news to any person, it needs to counter some seriously bad news. What was the bad news in the previous study? (Rom 1:32).

- Q1. How does this passage describe our condition? Make a list.
- Q2. What did it cost Jesus to go to the cross, what did He endure for us? Make another list.
- Q3. What did his dying achieve for us? Make another list.
- Q4. All of this was good news to the Ethiopian court official. Why? What does his response teach us? (Rom 6:3,4)

Mission Focus

Someone that you are witnessing to asks the following question. How would you answer him or her? (Say it).

'I might agree that I have my faults and that I am unable to fix them, but how does Jesus' death solve my problem?'

Some extra info

This is the doctrine of the penal substitution of Christ. Jesus Christ was the substitute that received God's wrath for sin, the penalty we should have carried and died in our place. Now in recent years some theologians have come out and said that this doctrine is unacceptable: it is a kind of cosmic child abuse. Against that we believe that this substitutionary act of Christ was *God reconciling the world to himself in Christ*. (2 Cor 5v19). It was not the Father over against his victim Son but the Triune God reconciling the world to himself in Christ. It was Father, Son and Spirit acting in total harmony in their eternal saving plan. It was the self substitution of God on the cross for our salvation. Read the following texts to see each person of the Trinities part in our salvation. John 3:16, Galatians 2:20, Heb 9:14

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Study 3 - Thankful Holiness

In the previous studies we have seen man's depravity and how God delivers us from it. In the last study we heard how the Ethiopian court official responded to this message of deliverance by asking to be baptized into the death and resurrection of Christ (Acts 8:32 & Rom 6:3). That was a one-of response to the Gospel. With this study we would like to talk about our daily response to the Gospel.

Read 1 Thessalonians 1:9 & 4:1-12.

- Q1. Why is holiness not optional for a believer? (v 3 & 7)
- Q2. Why can we say that the pursuit for holiness is also relational? (v 1)
- Q3. Why is holiness also spiritual? (v 8)
- Q4. Abraham Kuyper said: "There is not an inch of any sphere of life of which Jesus Christ the Lord does not say 'mine'." Our holiness should be total because we belong to God in totality. Why is verse 3 and 4 such a challenge to us? (Keeping Matt 5:27,28 in mind).
- Q5. What are the greatest obstacles for believers 'living to please God?'

Mission Focus

How would you go about explaining the Gospel to your non-Christian friend without ignoring his promiscuous lifestyle? How will you use it?