

Gospel Fluency

The Express Route

Meet 1: Chapters 1 and 2

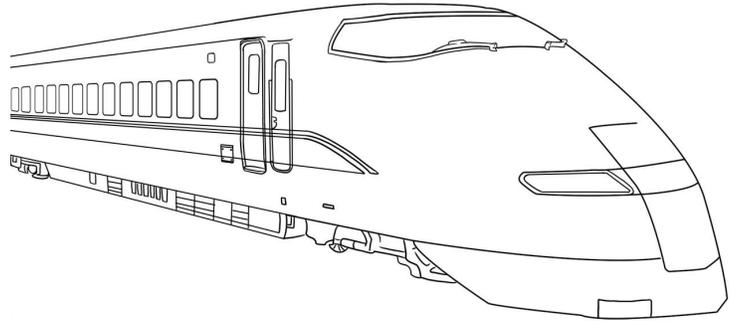
Meet 2: Chapter 6

Meet 3: Chapters 7 & 9

Meet 4: Chapter 10, 11, or 12

Meet 5: Chapter 13

Meet 6: Chapter 14-Conclusion



Meet 1: Chapters 1 and 2 (Ephesians 4:11-15)

Summary

Because everyone is an unbeliever, the good news of Jesus is good news for everyone.

- People who haven't been born again can trust Jesus for the first time and receive new life.
- People who have been born again can constantly re-apply the good news to areas of unbelief in their life.

Here's the problem: We too easily try to address situations in people's lives with advice instead of helping them see how they can trust Jesus in those specific situations.

Gospel Fluency is being able to apply the good news of Jesus to specific situations in peoples' lives. As we learn to see God's big salvation story as the defining story of our lives, we can learn to speak in a way that consistently points people to Jesus.

Potential Discussion Questions

Chapter 1

- What does the author mean when he says, "I'm an unbeliever, so are you"?
- How have you seen unbelief show up in you as a Christian? (see examples on 20 & 22) How do you think Jesus is good news for you in that unbelief?

Chapter 2

- Why did Jeff Vanderstelt use the example of Alisa and her ex-husband? What was he trying to convey?
- What is the significance of the passage Jeff quotes (Eph 4:11-15)?
- Re-read the second paragraph of page 33 (“The reason we wait to have sex...”) to the top of page 34. How is “giving them Jesus” different from more generic biblical advice?
- Leader: If you’re up for it, consider sharing an everyday sin-struggle in your life (no need to reveal juicy information—just a basic example will do) and ask your group to practice “giving you Jesus.” Let people that this is an early-on practice opportunity and that they need not feel pressure to do this perfectly.

Meet 2: Chapter 6 (John 6:28-29, Eph 2:8-9, James 2:17, John 14:1,12)

Summary

The only work that God calls us to do is to stop trying to make ourselves right with God and trust in Jesus—in His work on our behalf. Too often, though, we try to address sin problems with behavior-fixing solutions. This doesn’t work because “All sin is a result of unbelief in God—particularly unbelief in Jesus and his work.” (79)

Repentance is not primarily about stopping a behavior. Rather, it is about turning away from “wrong belief and turning to God in belief—belief in the gospel. It is by grace you have been saved *through faith*.” (p. 81)

“The gospel is the power of God to save us, not only because our sin of unbelief is forgiven through Jesus’s death on the cross, but also because in the gospel we come to know and believe the liberating truths of God revealed in Jesus Christ. And through believing those truths, the lies we’ve believed are dispelled and the truth sets us free to really live.” (p. 89)

Potential Discussion Questions

- How is unbelief at the root of sin, guilt, and shame?
- The author lists three types of unbelief on pages 85-88. Which do you veer toward? How? Why?

Meet 3: Chapters 7 and 9 (Galatians 5:19-23)

Summary

Chapter 7 shows how we talk about what we love, we love what we talk about, and we talk about what works. It gives a lot of examples, and it calls us to enter into the cycle of loving Jesus, talking about Jesus, and recognizing the work that Jesus has done for us.

Chapter 9 keeps addressing the idea of helping others see the sin beneath the sin by tracing fruit to root. In the case of the main example, Jeff shows how a conversation with his wife helped them see that her anxiety, fear, desire for control, and worry were the bad fruit that sprang from a functional mistrust in God's love and God's Presence.

Potential Discussion Questions

Chapter 7

- How does what we love shape what we talk about, and how does what we say shape what we love [give examples]?
- How has Jesus changed your life? (Spend time sharing and having people ask followup questions).

Chapter 9

- Have people take time to quietly think through fruit in their life that points toward unbelief.
- If a brave soul is willing to share his/her fruit, use that as an opportunity for your group to practice the tree exercise, using the questions and diagrams on 122-123.

Meet 4: Chapter 10, 11, or 12 (you pick!)

Summary

Chapter 10 focuses on using meals as ways to remember the Gospel. The author's attempt to live this out: Mission Monday (where they focus on the family's mission), Teaching Tuesday, With-family Wednesday (missional community shared meal), Thanksgiving Thursday, Fun Friday, Serving Saturday.

This chapter also talks about using small group meals and Communion as a context for speaking Good News into each other's lives in a take-turns, watch-and-learn kind of way.

Potential Discussion Questions

- What role do meals play in helping us remember Jesus?

- What does your typical meal-routine look like over the course of a week (alone? with other people? what do you like? what do you wish could be different?) How might you incorporate a routine of remembering Jesus into your daily meals?
 - Consider sharing a meal together even as you have this discussion.
 - For next week: As you go through your week, look for either good or difficult moments that God could use to show you something about Him and Yourself. Keep a mental (or real-life) list.
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Chapter 11 emphasizes Jesus as “The Better.” It uses an example from a small group conversation with a woman struggling with her boss and shows how the concept of Jesus as the Better Boss was good news for her in her specific struggle.

- Re-read “The True and Better” on pp. 153-155. Which of these Bible characters or stories have connected with you in the past? Does this “better” concept help you see those stories differently? If so, how?
- Review the questions on the bottom of page 144. Ask for someone to share their good or difficult moments from last week with the goal of having the group use these questions.
- For next week: See if someone, or a few people, from your group could volunteer to share their story next week—using chapter 12 as a guide.

Chapter 12 shows how part of being gospel fluent is helping each other tell their stories with Jesus as the hero. This gives a great model for sharing our stories in small groups.

- Spend time listening to 1-3 people’s stories (whatever you have time for). After each story, give time for people to ask questions with the goal of knowing and loving the story-teller. Then, spend time thanking God for His work in that persons life while asking Him to continue His work.
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A Note about Discussion

It will be best for each small group leader to decide how they want to get at their chosen chapter. Each of these chapters lends itself well to practice, as opposed to just discussion. It could work well to have people read the chapter with the expectation that they will be practicing what they read the upcoming small group time.

Meet 5: Chapter 13 (John 4:1-42)

Summary

Chapter 13 is a great primer on listening to people, asking good questions, and loving people. This chapter urges us to be better lovers of people by being better learners of people. It is full of examples and geared toward speaking with people who haven’t yet come to know Jesus as Savior and

Lord. I think this chapter will help us think of evangelism in much more everyday—yet not less urgent—terms.

A Note about Discussion

Consider exploring examples of question-asking opportunities people in the group may have had (either with Christians or non-Christians). Talk about people you hope to have question-asking conversations with. Pray for those people.

Meet 6: Chapters 14-Conclusion (Eph 1:22-23, 1 Pet 2:9, 1 Pet 3:14-15)

Summary

Chapter 14 helps us think of our lives as “gospel metaphors.” The idea of a “gospel metaphor” hinges on the logic of Eph 1:22-23, 1 Pet 2:9, and 1 Pet 3:14-15. These passages point out that we are saved *from* sin, Satan, and death *FOR* God’s purposes here and now. What are these purposes? To show the world what God is like in our actions and our words. We must be a displaying people *and* a declaring people.

A Note about Discussion

Consider beginning with: “What have you enjoyed about our time in *Gospel Fluency*?” And possibly: “In light of our time in this book, what is one way that you’d like to see God help you grow in the weeks ahead?” [Follow up on people’s answers to that second question]

Consider using the author’s idea in the “Display” section on pp 187-190. He has his group think through what we know of God through Jesus’ work and compiles a list of titles, attributes, and activities of God that we see in Jesus. Then, he picks one of those and has the group reflect on the question: “how might we show how God brings restoration through Jesus in our neighborhood or community?”

Consider talking through the 5 hesitations to speak about Jesus with others. What resonates? How can we help each other and pray for each other?

1. The enemy tries to keep us from speaking about Jesus
2. Many of us love what people think of us more than we love people
3. Most Christians have never tried to share their gospel hope and haven’t experienced the Spirit giving them words and boldness
4. Many Christians just don’t know the gospel very well and, if they do, don’t practice sharing it with other believers very often
5. Most Christians don’t really believe in the reality of Hell and that—apart from faith in Jesus, people will miss out on enjoying life with God forever