



Session 1: Beholding and Becoming

Introduction

- Why this class?
- What do you think a mature Christian looks like?

1. God's Goal for Growth: Christlikeness

- a. Romans 8:28-29
- b. Creation: Man was created in the image of God
 - i. Genesis 1:26-28: Image
 - ii. Isaiah 43:6-7: Glory
- c. What does it mean to be created in the image of God?
 - i. Reflect
 - ii. Relate
 - iii. Reign
- d. The fall: shattered mirrors
- e. Salvation: rebuilding the ruins

2. The Process: Beholding and Becoming

- a. Beholding Christ and Salvation: 2 Cor 4:3-6
- b. Beholding Christ and Transformation: 2 Cor 3:16-18
- c. Holiness = Christlikeness
- d. Spiritual formation
 - i. Key: Am I becoming more like Jesus?



3. The Centrality of the Gospel

- a. Legalism and License
 - i. Legalism: Truth without Grace
 - ii. License: Grace without Truth
 - iii. Jesus: Full of Grace AND Truth
- b. Centrality of the Gospel

Keller: “Paul is showing that in our Christian life we never “get beyond the gospel” to something more advanced. The gospel is not the first step in a stairway of truths; rather, it is more like the hub in a wheel of truth. The gospel is not just the ABCs but the A to Z of Christianity. The gospel is not the minimum required doctrine necessary to enter the kingdom but the way we make all progress in the kingdom. We are not justified by the gospel and then sanctified by obedience; rather the gospel is the way we grow (Gal. 3:1–3) and are renewed (Col. 1:6). It is the solution to each problem, the key to each closed door, the power to take us through every barrier (Rom. 1:16–17).

“It is very common in the church to think as follows: “The gospel is for non-Christians. One needs it to be saved. But once saved, you grow through hard work and obedience.” But Colossians 1:6 shows that this is a mistake. Both confession and “hard work” that is not arising from and in line with the gospel will not sanctify you—they will strangle you. All our problems come from a failure to apply the gospel. Thus when Paul left the Ephesians he committed them “to the word of his grace, which can build you up” (Acts 20:32).”

Luther: “[The truth of the Gospel] is also the principal article of all Christian doctrine... Most necessary is it therefore, that we should know this article well, teach it unto others, and beat it into their heads continually.”

- c. Gospel implications
 - i. Personal
 - ii. Relationships
 - iii. Suffering
 - iv. Finances

4. Paul’s Prayer: Ephesians 3:14-21



Date	Topic
1/14	Introduction: Beholding and Becoming Scripture: 2 Cor 3:18; 1 John 3:2; Ephesians 3:14-21
1/21	Idolatry: Desires Scripture: James 4
1/28	Gospel: Justification, Adoption, and Transformation Scripture: Romans 6
2/4	Tree Diagram: Heat and Thorns Scripture: Luke 6:43-45
2/11	Tree Diagram: Cross and Fruit Scripture: Luke 6:43-45
2/18	Decision Making: Sowing and Reaping Scripture: Galatians 6:7-9; 2 Cor 5:9
2/25	Spiritual Disciplines: Meditating on and Praying Scripture Scripture: 1 Peter 2:2-3; Psalm 1
3/3	Suffering: Refiner's Fire Scripture: James 1
3/10	Community: The Context and Means of Growth Scripture: 1 John 4:20

