

## The Gospel As Center

Can a justice system that doesn't protect the poor be considered truly just? We have all heard the phrase, "You have the right to an attorney." But did you know this is only true for those being accused of a crime in our country, not their victims? Without a legal advocate, innocent victims are left to fend for themselves. The church is called to do justice and love mercy. We are given the example of the Good Samaritan serving a victim in need, no matter the stigmas attached. But how are we to do this amidst the complexities of the current system? Bruce Strom left a successful legal career to start Administer Justice, a nonprofit organization providing free legal care to our most vulnerable neighbors. Gospel Justice calls churches across the nation to transform lives by serving both the spiritual and legal needs of the poor through participation in the Gospel Justice Initiative. It is not only a book for lawyers or pastors, though. Bruce Strom is calling each of us, the whole body of Christ, to join the cause of legal justice for the oppressed.

Lots of Christians talk about the gospel, but how many really understand and know how to apply it to their lives? In this life-changing training resource, Authors Robert H. Thune and Will Walker communicate both to the new Christian and the seasoned pastor the need for gospel renewal. By training people in the implications of the good news, The Gospel-Centered Life helps pastors, leaders, and Christians everywhere who long to see gospel transformation in themselves and in their churches. This Christ-focused material is simple and digestible for leaders to use while also cultivating thoughtful, rich discussion. The Gospel-Centered Life focuses on true heart change rather than behavioral modification, helping readers recognize relationship issues in practical ways. Featuring nine self-contained lessons with discussion questions, articles, practical exercises, and comprehensive leader's notes in the back, The Gospel-Centered Life helps participants understand how the gospel shapes every aspect of life. Readers will gain biblical insight on the temptation to pretend and perform, what heart idolatry and repentance looks like, dealing with conflict in relationships, and much more.

Many evangelical churches face the problem of the open "back door"--even as new people arrive, older members are leaving, looking for something else. Combined with this problem is the discipleship deficit, the difficult truth that most evangelicals are not reaching the unchurched at the rates they think they are. In fact, many of the metrics that we often "count" in the church to highlight success really don't tell us the full story of a church's spiritual state. Things like attendance, decisions, dollars, and experiences can tell us something about a church, but not everything. To cultivate a spiritually healthy church we need a shift in our metrics--a "grace-shift" that prioritizes the work of God in the lives of people over numbers and dollars. Are people growing in their esteem for Jesus? Is there a dogged devotion to the Bible as the ultimate authority for life? Is there a growing interest in theology and doctrine? A discernible spirit of repentance? And perhaps most importantly, is there evident love for God and for our neighbors in the congregation? Leading a church culture to shift from numerical success to the metrics of grace can be costly, but leaders who have conviction, courage, and commitment can lead while avoiding some of the landmines that often destroy churches. Wilson includes diagnostic questions that will help leaders measure--and lead team transparency in measuring as a group--the relative spiritual health of their church, as well as a practical prescriptive plan for implementing this metric-measuring strategy without becoming legalistic. Most attractional church models can lean heavily on making changes to the weekend worship gatherings. And while some of these changes can be good, thriving grace-focused churches are driven by a commitment to the gospel, allowing the gospel to inform and shape the worship service and the various ministries of the church.

Pastor Sandy Willson shows that Christ's redemption is central to the Christian message and offers hope to a lost world. A Gospel Coalition Booklet.

"Kwon and Thompson's eloquent reasoning will help Christians broaden their understanding of the contemporary conversation over reparations."--Publishers Weekly Christians are awakening to the legacy of racism in America like never before. While public conversations regarding the realities of racial division and inequalities have surged in recent years, so has the public outcry to work toward the long-awaited healing of these wounds. But American Christianity, with its tendency to view the ministry of reconciliation as its sole response to racial injustice, and its isolation from those who labor most diligently to address these things, is underequipped to offer solutions. Because of this, the church needs a new perspective on its responsibility for the deep racial brokenness at the heart of American culture and on what it can do to repair that brokenness. This book makes a compelling historical and theological case for the church's obligation to provide reparations for the oppression of African Americans. Duke Kwon and Gregory Thompson articulate the church's responsibility for its promotion and preservation of white supremacy throughout history, investigate the Bible's call to repair our racial brokenness, and offer a vision for the work of reparation at the local level. They lead readers toward a moral imagination that views reparations as a long-overdue and necessary step in our collective journey toward healing and wholeness.

D. A. Carson and Tim Keller outline their vision for the Gospel Coalition and the nature of gospel-centered ministry. A Gospel Coalition booklet.

"A powerful work of skillful research and personal insight."--Publishers Weekly Biblical womanhood--the belief that God designed women to be submissive wives, virtuous mothers, and joyful homemakers--pervades North American Christianity. From choices about careers to roles in local churches to relationship dynamics, this belief shapes the everyday lives of evangelical women. Yet biblical womanhood isn't biblical, says Baylor University historian Beth Allison Barr. It arose from a series of clearly definable historical moments. This book moves the conversation about biblical womanhood beyond Greek grammar and into the realm of church history--ancient, medieval, and modern--to show that this belief is not divinely ordained but a product of human civilization that continues to creep into the church. Barr's historical insights provide context for contemporary teachings about women's roles in the church and help move the conversation forward. Interweaving her story as a Baptist pastor's wife, Barr sheds light on the #ChurchToo movement and abuse scandals in Southern Baptist circles and the broader evangelical world, helping readers understand why biblical womanhood is more about human power structures than the message of Christ.

14 guided studies, crammed with practical application, on how Christians should view work

An overview of the doctrine of revelation. Phillip explains what the Bible teaches about the nature of truth and applies it to the Christian life. A Gospel Coalition booklet.

The Gospel of Luke: From the Outside In - Member Book offers rich spiritual content that is biblically rooted and gospel centered. It includes a small-group experience for 12 small-group sessions, individual study, applicable Scripture, and a group discussion guide written by Dave Morlan, Ph.D and edited by D.A. Carson. Luke brings the gospel of Jesus from the outside in. From start to finish he depicts Jesus as accessible to the unknowns, the outcast, the lost, and the hopeless. Luke shows the stunning embrace of the returned prodigal son and the embittered response of his "righteous" brother. Luke displays Jesus' invitation to Zacchaeus,

the hated tax collector eavesdropping on Jesus from the outside and shows the grumbling response of the crowd on the inside: "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." As Jesus' ministry continues, Luke points out that Jesus' desire was not just to call sinners but to call sinners to repentance (Luke 5:32). That is, through Him sinners could find reconciliation with God. As a result, this return to God by outsiders causes insiders to re-evaluate the biblical story and examine what the foundation of their relationship with God ought to be. Features: Rich spiritual content Personal study segments Leader material Benefits: Gain a greater awareness of God's work on "the fringes" Learn to recognize the tendency in believers toward insular Christianity Understand who Jesus is, why He died, and what His resurrection means Be assured of a trusted teacher in every group via the video teaching of D.A. Carson Gain personal spiritual growth through individual time with content Inspire your group members to greater evangelistic action Authors: Dave Morlan (PhD, University of Durham) is co-founder and teaching pastor of Fellowship Denver Church, located in downtown Denver. He is the author of *Conversion in Luke and Paul: An Exegetical and Theological Exploration*. He married Ren'e in 2000, and they have three boisterous sons: Will, Ian, and Beckett. D.A. Carson (PhD, University of Cambridge) is research professor of New Testament at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois. He is co-founder (with Tim Keller) and president of The Gospel Coalition. He and his wife, Joy, reside in Libertyville, Illinois. They have two children. It is easy to assume that if we understand the gospel and preach it faithfully, our ministry will necessarily be shaped by it—but this is not true. Many churches claim to be gospel-centered but do not have a ministry that is shaped by, centered on, and empowered through the gospel. The implications of the gospel have not yet worked their way into the fabric of how that church does ministry. Gospel-centered ministry is more theologically driven than program driven. To pursue it, we must spend time reflecting on the essence, the truths, and the very patterns of the gospel itself. The gospel is neither religion nor irreligion, but something else entirely—a third way of relating to God through grace. In *Shaped by the Gospel*, bestselling author and pastor Timothy Keller addresses several current discussion and conflicts about the nature of the gospel and shows how faithful preaching of the gospel leads to individual and corporate renewal. This new edition contains the first section of *Center Church* in an easy-to-read format with new reflections and additional essays from Timothy Keller and several other contributors. Reflecting on the practice of disciple making in young adult, college, graduate, and local church contexts, Jonathan Dodson has discerned some common pitfalls. For many, discipleship is reduced to a form of religious performance before God. For others, it devolves into spiritual license and a loose adherence to spiritual facts. Both approaches distort biblical motivations for Christian obedience and are in need of reform. By explaining various motivations for discipleship, Dodson charts a biblically faithful, grace-driven alternative. Additionally, he provides a practical model for creating gospel-centered discipleship groups—small, reproducible, missional, gender-specific groups of believers that fight for faith together. This book blends both theology and practice to inspire and equip Christians to effectively fight sin, keep Jesus central, and make gospel-centered discipleship a way of life. Both new and growing Christians will learn to trust the gospel in community as they fight together for holiness as well as how to start gospel-centered community groups in any local church.

In previous books respected New York pastor and bestselling author Timothy Keller has looked at such diverse and topical subjects as the existence of God, our need to do justice, the meaning of Jesus' life, and the human temptation to make idols - all through the twin lenses of a biblical framework and an engagement with contemporary culture. In this new book, co-authored with his wife, Kathy, he turns his attention to that most complex of matters: our need for love, and its expression in marriage. Beginning with the biblical narrative, and its pictures of marriage that span the original ideal to the broken to the redemptive, he looks at themes of friendship and commitment; the completion of men and women in each other; singleness, sex and divorce; and ministry and discipleship within the context of marriage. This is a profound and engaging work that will challenge and inspire people in all stages of life - single, newlywed and married.

"How can young mothers find peace? Sara provides practical tips and shows how to trust God in ten critical, and stressful, areas--from personal insecurities to our children's spiritual well-being"--

Today many pastors are struggling to adapt to a post-Christian culture without abandoning orthodox theology. How do we communicate the concepts of grace and substitutionary atonement in our globalized culture and context? In *Center Church*, Timothy Keller offers challenging insights and provocative questions based on over twenty years of ministry in New York City. This book outlines a theological vision for ministry - applying classic doctrines to our time and place - organized around three core commitments: • Gospel-centered: The gospel of grace in Jesus Christ changes everything, from our hearts to our community to the world. It completely reshapes the content, tone and strategy of all that we do. • City-centered: With a positive approach toward our culture, we learn to affirm that cities are wonderful, strategic and underserved places for gospel ministry. • Movement-centered: Instead of building our own tribe, we seek the prosperity and peace of our community as we are led by the Holy Spirit. "In this important book, Tim Keller unpacks the gospel and gently but firmly reminds us that it is nonnegotiable. At the same time, he enables us to think through how we can responsibly interact with the culture, how we can - indeed, must - appreciate good things within it, and how we can firmly and faithfully apply the gospel to it." - D.A. Carson, research professor of New Testament, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

This collection of essays offers timely and valuable core teachings of an evangelical movement dedicated to the gospel of Christ and a Scripture-based reformation of ministry practices.

With more than 300,000 copies in print, *When Helping Hurts* is a paradigm-forming contemporary classic on the subject of poverty alleviation. Poverty is much more than simply a lack of material resources, and it takes much more than donations and handouts to solve it. *When Helping Hurts* shows how some alleviation efforts, failing to consider the complexities of poverty, have actually (and unintentionally) done more harm than good. But it looks ahead. It encourages us to see the dignity in everyone, to empower the materially poor, and to know that we are all uniquely needy—and that God in the gospel is reconciling all things to himself. Focusing on both North American and Majority World contexts, *When Helping Hurts* provides proven strategies for effective poverty alleviation, catalyzing the idea that sustainable change comes not from the outside in, but from the inside out.

"It is easy to sound prophetic from the margins; what we urgently need is to be prophetic from the center." Despite its centrality to the Christian faith, it is easy to overlook the gospel and instead speak out on more peripheral issues. This is a far cry from the New Testament emphasis on the gospel as the foundation of everything we believe. In this passionate cry for gospel reform, D. A. Carson argues that if

secondary issues consume our passions, then we are in danger of sidelining the gospel. We may be able to make compelling arguments for how we should live, but if these are not rooted in the gospel then we aren't speaking God's truth. Carson shows us that if the gospel is centralized, prioritized, and pondered, it powerfully directs us on how to think about everything else. In fact, the best way to speak God's truth on secondary issues is to stand firm on the gospel.

A refreshing truth-over-technique call to small group leaders and Sunday school teachers to stay focused on continually reintroducing people to Jesus whose life and death changes everything.

Acts is the sequel to Luke's gospel and tells the story of Jesus's followers during the 30 years after his death. It describes how the 12 apostles, formerly Jesus's disciples, spread the message of Christianity throughout the Mediterranean against a background of persecution. With an introduction by P.D. James

Christianity is declining in the West. Churches in the United States, Canada, Australia, and Europe are closing their doors at an accelerating rate. How will the church respond? In this short but sweeping manifesto, New York Times bestselling author and pastor Timothy Keller argues that this decline should prompt us to rethink evangelism from the ground up. Using the early church as our guide, churches and individual Christians must examine ourselves, our culture, and Scripture to work toward a new missionary encounter with Western culture that will make the gospel both attractive and credible to a new generation.

Something or someone will always try to define you. Maybe others call you the "techie," the "jock," the "class clown," or the "smart kid." It's easy to think that those labels sum up who you really are, express what really matters in your life, and define the things you should pursue. But your identity goes far deeper than the positive or even the negative labels people use to define you. There is something at the core of a satisfying and meaningful life that can't be summed up by any label. The Gospel-Centered Life for Teens offers you the chance to center your life on the only thing in the universe that actually has the power to define you, give your life meaning, and shape how you live each day. This 9-lesson Bible study, adapted from The Gospel-Centered Life by Bob Thune and Will Walker, gives teens and young adults a road map for living a life centered on God and the gospel. Each lesson is self-contained, featuring clear teaching from Scripture, and requires no extra work outside the group setting. The self-explanatory Leader's Guide helps small group leaders with discussion questions and background material that clearly explain and apply the gospel truths from each lesson. Nine-lesson small group study defining and applying the gospel in a teen-friendly way Adapted from Thune and Walker's best-selling The Gospel-Centered Life Appropriate for believers and non-believers alike, with self-contained lessons and clear teaching from Scripture Easy-to-use, requiring no homework Brings teens together, making community the context for gospel change Self-explanatory Leader's Guide available with discussion questions and background material for each lesson

The earliest of the four Gospels, the book portrays Jesus as an enigmatic figure, struggling with enemies, his inner and external demons, and with his devoted but disconcerted disciples. Unlike other gospels, his parables are obscure, to be explained secretly to his followers. With an introduction by Nick Cave

A pastor outlines the relationship between the gospel and all of Scripture and suggests helpful strategies for reading and

interpreting the Bible correctly. A Gospel Coalition Booklet.

Fruitful ministry in the century must embrace the unavoidable reality of the city. A Center Church theological vision affirms that center cities are wonderful, strategic, and underserved places for gospel ministry and recognizes that virtually all ministry contexts are increasingly shared by urban and global forces. Regardless of your particular cultural or geographical context, you will need to consider the city when forming a theological vision that engages the people you are trying to reach. This eBook contains the fifth part of Center Church, "Cultural Engagement." In it, Keller discusses four models for engaging urban culture, acknowledging that each model has strengths and weaknesses—ways in which it reflects a particular biblical emphasis and other ways in which it reflects an unbiblical imbalance or idol. The Center church model for cultural engagement blends the key insights of each model in a way that we believe is more biblically faithful and also fruitful for reaching urban culture.

Christianity is based on the foundation of the good news of the gospel. Yet how many Christians truly find their identity there? How many are thriving in a community clinging to the gospel? How many forget about the wondrous glory of Jesus? J. A. Medders is on a mission to help Christians remember that the power that raised Jesus from the dead is also the power for our everyday life in Christ. Yet living a gospel-centered life does not always come easily. The biblical meditations in Gospel Formed help to kindle, or rekindle, the passion to live a grace-addicted, truth-filled, Jesus-exalting life by constantly driving the reader back to the power of the cross and the empty tomb. Funny, punchy, and theologically accessible, readers will be encouraged, challenged, and ultimately reoriented to the true North of Christianity—Christ Himself.

The gospel is the glorious truth about Christ, and it enfolds us in the global purpose of God by renewing hearts, empowering lives, and transforming the world. A Gospel Coalition booklet.

Two leading biblical scholars and bestselling authors offer a fresh approach to the question of the unity of the whole Bible. This book shows that God's desire to be with his people is a thread running from Genesis through Revelation. Duvall and Hays make the case that God's relational presence is central to the Bible's grand narrative. It is the cohesive center that drives the whole biblical story and ties together other important biblical themes, such as covenant, kingdom, glory, and salvation history.

A workbook exploring what a true gospel ministry might look like.

Social justice and mission are hot topics today: there's a wonderful resurgence of motivated Christians passionate about spreading the gospel and caring for the needs of others. But in our zeal to get sharing and serving, many are unclear on gospel and mission. Yes, we are called to spend ourselves for the sake of others, but what is the church's unique priority as it engages the world? DeYoung and Gilbert write to help Christians "articulate and live out their views on the mission of the church in ways that are theologically faithful, exegetically careful, and personally sustainable." Looking at the Bible's teaching on evangelism, social justice, and shalom, they explore the what, why, and how of the church's mission. From defining "mission", to examining key passages on social justice and their application, to setting our efforts

in the context of God's rule, DeYoung and Gilbert bring a wise, studied perspective to the missional conversation. Readers in all spheres of ministry will grow in their understanding of the mission of the church and gain a renewed sense of urgency for Jesus' call to preach the Word and make disciples.

The sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper have played an important role in the church since its earliest days. There has also been much disagreement within the church about how to understand them. Pastors Thabiti Anyabwile and J. Ligon Duncan have teamed up to outline the Bible's basic teaching about baptism and the Lord's Supper. Speaking from different traditions, they bring perspective to the discussion while both observing that baptism and the Lord's Supper should be fundamentally understood as pointing to something greater. This new booklet from the Gospel Coalition will bring clarity for those wanting to understand the importance of baptism and the Lord's Supper. The authors offer a thoughtful explanation for point 12 of the Gospel Coalition's Confessional Statement. The coalition is an evangelical renewal movement dedicated to a Scripture-based reformation of ministry practices.

Our children are precious to us, so naturally we want to protect them and guarantee their safety and happiness. We want to get it right, so our children will be all right. But we live in a broken world where things don't always (or ever?) go as planned. Children make mistakes, and, if they are honest, parents know they make mistakes too. So it's easy for parents to live in fear, regret, confusion, and sometimes hopelessness about parenting and the children they love. Is there a better way? Can you learn to live by faith, to trust the God who made you and your children with their past, present, and future? How can parents live by faith as they parent their children? These are questions that are best answered in community. This ten-session small group resource will help parents apply the gospel of Jesus Christ to their families. Each lesson looks at parenting through the lens of God's grace for sinners (parents and children) and gives parents a gospel center to their parenting. Parents will learn how to live out the biblical principles of faith, repentance, and faithfulness to their calling as parents with their children. Each lesson is self-contained, featuring clear teaching from Scripture, and requires no extra work outside of the group setting. The self-explanatory Leader's Guide at the back of the book helps small group leaders with discussion questions and background material that clearly explain and apply the gospel truths from each lesson.

"Theologian Owen Strachan makes clear, wokeness is not true justice, nor is it true Christianity. While wokeness employs biblical vocabulary and concepts, it is an alternative religion, far from Christianity in both its methods and its fruit. A potent blend of racism, paganism, and grievance, wokeness encourages 'partiality' and undermines the unifying work of the Holy Spirit. It is not simply not the Gospel; it is anti-Gospel"--

Youth ministry is an essential part of most evangelical churches. And yet, there is a surprising lack of resources written

specifically for youth workers focused on viewing all aspects of youth ministry through a gospel-focused lens. Featuring contributions from a host of experienced youth workers from a wide variety of churches, this how-to manual offers guidance related to every facet of youth ministry, from planning short-term mission trips to working with parents. Theologically rooted yet eminently practical, this handbook will equip youth leaders to effectively shepherd the young people under their care—training them to live faithfully in their homes, churches, and schools. Popular writer and teacher Jeannine Brown shows how a narrative approach illuminates each of the Gospels, helping readers see the overarching stories. This book offers a corrective to tendencies to read the Gospels piecemeal, one story at a time. It is filled with numerous examples and visual aids that show how narrative criticism brings the text to life, making it an ideal supplementary textbook for courses on the Gospels. Readers will gain hands-on tools and perspectives to interpret the Gospels as whole stories.

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