

# Take it Home

Applying the Preached Word



## Gospel Culture Part 1: I See Grace

Jared Mellinger  
Aug 24, 2014

**Text-** Acts 11:19-26

### **Main Point:**

Gospel doctrine creates gospel culture, and gospel culture must therefore be carefully nurtured and preserved. We are called to nurture and preserve a culture of grace.

### **Key Ideas:**

1. In a gospel culture, people are quick to see grace in others.
  - Barnabus came from Jerusalem, saw the grace of God, and was glad. This doesn't mean there weren't problems (we'll later learn there were), but Barnabus saw grace.
  - We have many tendencies that cause us to lose sight of grace in the church (offense, nostalgia, discernment of error/imperfections, perceived weaknesses in areas we're passionate about).
  - Commitment to gospel culture will lead us to intentionally look for things to commend in others.
2. In a gospel culture, people are marked by gladness in others.
  - When Barnabus saw the grace of God at work, it made him glad.
  - God has generously placed us in community, for our joy.
  - When I think I'm lacking joy because of what other people do, it's more often due to my own fallen, self-absorbed heart that finds fault in others rather than looking for grace and rejoicing in it.

# Take it Home

Applying the Preached Word



3. In a gospel culture, people are full of the Holy Spirit and faith
  - We must pray that we would be full of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit wages war on our critical spirits and produces love and joy as His fruits (Gal 5).
  - We must pray that we would be full of faith. Faith has the ability to look at others and get past the “messy” surface to see the unseen, and to be confident that the unseen future is marked by grace.

## **Fellowship Starters**

### ***Treasure: Application to stir our love for Christ***

1. How are gospel doctrine and gospel culture related? What is it that gospel doctrine must create gospel culture?
2. It was said of Barnabus that he saw the grace of God in the Antioch church and was glad. Take some time to reflect with gratitude and gladness on the grace of God you’ve seen at work in your brothers and sisters in the church.

### ***Grow: Application to stir our obedience to Christ***

3. Jared created four profiles of believers who have difficulty seeing grace (Offended Omar, Discerning Debbie, Nostalgic Ned, Single-passion Sally). Which of these do you relate to most, and how do your tendencies in that area hinder you from seeing grace? What are some practical ways you can cultivate the habit of intentionally looking for grace in others?

# Take it Home

Applying the Preached Word



4. Do you have faith for others, such that you're able to look beyond the sometimes "messy" surface with confidence that God's grace is at work in them? If not, what can you do to cultivate this faith for your brothers and sisters? If you have any sons/daughters of encouragement in your group, ask for their thoughts on how they are able to consistently see and rejoice in the grace of God in others.

***Proclaim: Application to stir our witness for Christ***

5. Verse 24 notes that a "great many people were added to the Lord." How can we pursue gospel culture with an outward focus, so that our growth in this area is not only enjoyed by us, but spills over so that others are added to our number?

Quotes

"Gospel culture is just as sacred as gospel doctrine, and it must be carefully nurtured and preserved in our churches."

~Ray Ortlund

"There is no surer mark of backsliding and falling off in grace than an increasing disposition to find fault, pick holes, and see weak points in others. Let us be more quick to see grace, and more slow to see imperfections."

~J. C. Ryle