

CITY CHURCH DNA DEVOTIONAL – WEEK 8

DNA Day 43 - The gospel and our church part 1

The gospel is power from heaven. What does this mean for our church?

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.” **Romans 1:16–17.**

The gospel carries the miracle-working power of God. Believing in the gospel supernaturally transforms someone from death to life, from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light. It is completely unique in its ability to do this. Therefore, as a church, we hold the gospel and its importance in high esteem. It is sacred, and we have a sacred mandate to proclaim it to everyone, everywhere.

We believe in miracles, and in the gospel is the most supreme of all miracles—salvation.

This reality will shape our prayer lives, our programs and church culture—in all of it, we must ensure that the gospel remains clear and central to our lives together.

Pray

Father God, thank you for the good news about Jesus. May we never ‘get over’ the love You have shown us. Help us to celebrate and proclaim the gospel.

DNA Day 44 - The gospel and our church part 2

The gospel is power from heaven. What does this mean for our purpose as City Church ?

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith." **Romans 1:16–17.***

For some Christianity is a set of ideas and rules. The Bible tells us that, first and foremost, the gospel is power from God.

The calling of God on the church is to proclaim the gospel; and by proclaiming it, to help people connect with the power of God.

We often say we want people to meet Jesus. This doesn't only apply to salvation. We believe that God will heal, provide financially, mend relationships and deliver from evil. We believe that God will speak to us through His Word and prophetically by the Holy Spirit

This is why we prioritise making space for all this to happen: on Sunday mornings and whenever we meet.

Pray

Father God, we believe in Your power. We ask for ever-increasing evidence of Your power and presence in City Church.

DNA Day 45 - The gospel and our city part 1

What does the gospel mean for Bristol?

*By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures. **1 Corinthians 15:2–4.***

The gospel is God's answer for the city of Bristol. It is His rescue plan—and a dramatic one at that!

God doesn't look at the city like a politician trying to organise resources to better get a set of objectives completed. Instead, He gives Himself: 'Christ died for your sins'.

He diagnoses the problem—the problem behind all the problems—as a separation from God caused by a sinful nature. The solution requires spiritual power from God to break sin's power. Jesus' death and resurrection is this power at work.

This is how much God loves our city. He gave Himself up for Bristol.

Pray

Lord God, help me to see the city and those around me with the compassion and love You have. Help me believe that Your saving power, motivated by Your love, will transform lives and communities.

DNA Day 46 - The gospel and our city part 2

What is God's purpose for Bristol?

*You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. **Romans 5:6.***

Have you ever wondered why a place exists?

I remember geography teachers explaining the historic and topographic reasons for the development of human settlements. A river crossing or a passage between hills; maybe a natural port protected from the wind and waves.

My geography teacher wasn't a theologian and so never considered spiritual factors for the existence of communities, towns and cities.

'At just the right time': this tells us that God both determines time and place.

Bristol exists, from a theological perspective—with its density of population, diversity and creativity—to bring glory to God through the gospel of Jesus.

What is everyone doing here, except waiting powerlessly for the gospel to bring them life?

Just as God has purposed this time and this place for the city of Bristol, so He has also placed us here, as His people, to preach the good news: to help Bristol believe.

Pray

Father God, help us to believe that You have power to transform and save this city, and that this city exists to bring glory to You. Send us out to proclaim Your gospel.

DNA Day 47 - The gospel and the world part 1

How does faith in the gospel shape our identity in the world?

*And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. **Ephesians 3:17–19.***

Paul has high ambitions for the churches he is writing to. He wants them to *know* the riches of Christ through the gospel.

God also makes provision for us to achieve this by filling us with the Holy Spirit. This means that understanding the truth of who we are and what He has done is not dependant on our education or intellect, but on God's power.

We can face each day bold and confident God's love and power, and that He will protect and direct our lives.

Pray

Father God, fill me with *the measure of the fullness of God* and help me face today with the confidence that comes from being a loved child of God.

DNA Day 48 - The gospel and the world part 2

How does the gospel affect our sense of purpose in the world?

*For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! **Romans 5:15.***

The world is lost without Jesus. Jesus looked at the great city of Jerusalem and declared that they were like sheep without a shepherd—lost and in danger.

When we become Christians, God adopts us into his family. We are secure and safe. We have hope and a future, a family and an inheritance. Our relationship with God can never be broken or stolen from us.

Jesus instructed his disciples to go into all the world and tell all this to everyone, everywhere.

Living a gospel-shaped life involves both enjoying all the glorious benefits of belonging to God, and sharing that with those around us.

Pray

Father God, help me to understand and enjoy all the benefits of belonging to you. Help me to willingly share this with those around me, so that the gift of God's grace through Jesus Christ will overflow to the many.