



# GOSPEL IN CULTURE

## Sermon Discussion Curriculum Week 1 — Technology Part 1 — January 5, 2020

Don't feel like you must use all of the questions in each section. Choose the ones from Know, Grow and Show that will best help your group discuss the passage and take their next steps of faith. We have prayed for you as you lead your D-Group today!

### KNOW:

- What do you think is the most important technology advancement in the last 100 years? 50 years? 10 years?
- In what ways have you seen technology make a difference in our society? Have these differences been good or bad?
- What effect has technology had on the family dynamic in our society? In your home? Has this effect been good or bad? Is technology a friend or foe of your family?
- What technology advancements did the people in the Bible times have to use? (think roads built by the romans, chariots, building advancements, etc.) Compare and contrast their advancements with ours today.
- What fears do you have about technology? What excites you about technological advancements?
- Describe the influence you have seen social media make on our society. How has the increased use of social media changed our family dynamics, friendships, and daily routines?



## GROW

- Read Psalm 20. How does Psalm 20 speak to technology?
- In Psalm 20:7 David writes about trust. How would you describe a person who puts their trust in technology? What does it look like to fully put our trust in God and not in people, technology, or social media?
- Why is it so tempting to put our trust in earthly, man-made things of this world?
- In Exodus 12 the Israelites were blessed by God to plunder the Egyptians for gold and silver. In chapter 32 they turned their gold into a golden calf. In what ways has the gift of technology become an idol in the life of a Christian?
- According to the scriptures, what happens to a person who continues to embrace the idols of this world? In what ways can a Christian prevent the abuse of a gift which becomes an idol?
- We know that God can use technology for his good. How have you seen this to be true in your life?
- Think beyond your phone, or digital technology. What other technological advancements are being used for the glory of God?
- What are dangers of technology? How can we be aware of the temptations and traps that come along with technology? In what ways can we set good boundaries for ourselves and our family?
- Scriptures such as 2 Timothy 2:22 and James 4:7 teach us to “flee temptation”. What are practical ways a Christ-follower can flee from the temptation of trusting in technology?



## SHOW:

- Trusting in the name of the Lord rather than things of this world is evident by more than just behavior modification. Describe the heart condition of a person who puts their trust in God? How is their language and rhythms of life different than a person who puts their trust in the things of this world, like technology?
- What is one change that your family needs to make in the way you use technology?
- How can you use technology to worship God? What’s one way that your family has been able to worship God while using technology as a tool/resource?
- Social media in its truest form is a collection of people interacting together. In what ways can you become a “social media missionary” to redeem technology to advance the kingdom of God?
- As a Christian, your use or development of technology should be used for the glory of God. What do you need to cut out of your life this week that does not bring glory to God (Phil. 4:8)?
- In what ways can technology be a tool and a resource to grow in your relationship with God? Share any specific apps or on-line resources you use that help you grow in your faith.



# GOSPEL IN CULTURE

## Sermon Discussion Curriculum Week 2 — Technology Part 2 — January 12, 2020

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### KNOW:

- What have been some of the top technology advances in the last 50 years? What do you think will be the top technology advances in the next 50 years?
- What are some favorite technological advances that you use frequently?
- Can you think of a time where you had too much of a good thing? Tell your group about your experience.
- How heavily do you feel like you use or depend on technology? (trick question – uses of electricity, transportation, sports, computers, smart homes, etc.)
- What motivates you to engage or not engage with social media? What do you hope to gain from it? What are you trying to avoid if you don't engage with it?
- What is the most recent technology advance that you have added to your home? (ex.: Roku, Echo Dot, smart lights, cell phone, thermostat, etc.) Why did you add it?

### GROW:

- Read Proverbs 25:27-28. In these verses Solomon warns against the dangers of overindulgence, self-focus and lack of self-control. How can these verses speak to wisdom when it comes to technology?
- Solomon says that a man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls. What issues might this city experience as a result of having no walls? How does this relate to our topic of technology?



## GROW (cont.):

- It's been asked, "Are you using technology or is technology using you?" What is the purpose of this question? What kind of limits on technology do you have to keep technology from "using you"?
- Psalm 63:3 says, "Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you." How have you seen this verse to be true? We can be tempted to pursue the latest and greatest causing us to forget about God's steadfast love. What has been a danger in your life of getting between you and God?
- There can be a temptation to use tech has to find fulfillment and satisfaction. In John 14:6, Jesus says, "I am the way the truth and the LIFE." How do you think we look to things like social media and online interaction in our search for life?
- Read Deuteronomy 30:18-20. How can you use the technology you have available to help you choose life by loving God, listening to His voice, and holding fast to Him?
- What is the purpose of technology? What are you seeking from technology? (These answers might range from saving time and energy to escaping from the pressure of life or finding companionship)
- Our culture today is addicted to distraction. In fact, a 2015 study showed that our attention span is now 8 seconds – shorter than that of a goldfish! How do you think that this distractibility affects our relationships with ourselves, God, and others?



## SHOW:

- How would you rate the health of your relationship with technology, with 1 being extremely unhealthy and 10 being perfectly healthy? What could you do to better balance this aspect of your life?
- Take a minute to pull up your screen time on your phone (iPhone: Settings, Screen Time, See All Activity) Do you notice any areas where you might want to put some better boundaries in place with your time?
- What one step can you take to engage with technology in a healthier and more God honoring way?
- After thinking intentionally about technology, what kind of boundaries do you need to establish for yourself? Do you need to confess and pray with someone in your group? If you are married take 5-10 minutes to discuss with your spouse what kind of boundaries need to be put in place for your family?
- Eph 6:12 says, "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." As you seek a healthy relationship with technology, especially the phone in your pocket, ask God to help you remember that this is a spiritual battle. Pray with your group and ask God to give you HIS power to keep technology in its proper place in your life.
- How can technology be helpful in making disciples in your home? In your sphere of influence? Across the world?



# GOSPEL IN CULTURE

## Sermon Discussion Curriculum

### Week 3 — Immigration/Refugees — January 19, 2020

Don't feel like you must use all of the questions in each section. Choose the ones from Know, Grow and Show that will best help your group discuss the passage and take their next steps of faith. We have prayed for you as you lead your D-Group today!

#### KNOW:

- Share a time when you first visited another country or culture where you were different? What were your hopes, fears, and emotions? What are some places in your life where you have an opportunity to be around people who are different than you?
- Immigration and refugees seem to be consistently in our news cycle. When it comes to the national conversation about the people involved, what are your initial thoughts and emotions? What are you hopeful of? What are you discouraged by? Does anything around the conversation cause you fear? Why?
- How comfortable are you with other people from other races and cultures? What do you think has contributed to your feelings? In what ways do you think that spending time with a diverse mix of people is beneficial or detrimental?
- When you look at the people in your life, who would you say is the person that is the most opposite—personality, culturally, life-stage, social class—that you have ever had a relationship with? What was the nature of your relationship? How did you build common ground? What has been difficult about that relationship? What was easy?

#### GROW:

- In Leviticus 19:34, we see that God has a heart for those who are outside His covenant relationship with Israel? Why do you think he includes this in the Law? What can we learn about his character?
- Read Leviticus 19:34 and Ephesians 2: 17-19. How do these passages guide us on what our heart attitude should be and how we treat those who are culturally different than we are?



## GROW (cont.):

- In Matthew 25:40, Jesus says that how we treat the “least of these,” which Jesus refers to as “a stranger”, is how we treat Jesus. What does it look like for us to treat the strangers who are in our land like Jesus? What should our heart and actions be towards them?
- How much does fear play a role in keeping you from stepping outside your comfort zone with other people? What are some of those fears and what does God say to you about your fears? (Read Psalm 118:6 and Joshua 1:9)
- Immigration is an area where sincere Christ followers can have conflicting views on how the church and our civil authorities should respond. How can we work through these differences in ways that pursue authentic unity and brings glory to God?
- The conversation around immigration is one of both justice and compassion. How do we as Christians balance justice and compassion when it comes to immigrants in our country? What does it practically look like for me, an ordinary citizen, to love people and show them compassion, while also honoring the Romans 13 mandate to submit to the governing authorities?
- As Christians, we are a part of a kingdom that is unseen—one that is already, but not yet—in the kingdom of God. What does it look like for us to prioritize our citizenship in the kingdom of God ahead of our earthly citizenships? How can we love and respect our country, while seeing and admitting its flaws and working to fix them?



## SHOW:

- Is there a fear that has hindered you from trusting God in this area? (Ex. Fear of being taken over by people from another country, a fear of standing up for what is right because of what others may think, a fear of following our laws even if they don't seem right and trusting God to work).
- Who is someone in your life that you know has immigrated to our country, yet you haven't worked to build a relationship with them yet? What steps can you take towards getting to know them better? Towards loving them as Christ has loved us? Ask God to forgive you for that and if possible, seek restoration with that person.
- Sometimes when we take a biblical look at issues like this, the Bible serves as a mirror to our own lives. If you're like me, the Bible will remind us of times that we have been less than loving, or even sinful, towards others. Has this conversation exposed any thoughts, attitudes or actions towards others that you know Christ needs to transform in you? If you are comfortable sharing them, let's pray for each other that we would grow in these areas and show love that comes from trusting Christ.
- Have you ever attended a worship service where you were in the minority culture? One that was in a different country or language? Would you be willing to give that a try? Talk as a group about taking a Sunday to visit the Fellowship Español worship service, or another church in town where you could connect with Christians from a different background.
- Our Nation's Immigration Laws have a powerful effect on the well-being of immigrants and refugees, are there specific actions you could take to pray, to get educated, or to influence lawmakers to enact needed reform in our immigration system?



## GOSPEL IN CULTURE

### Sermon Discussion Curriculum Week 4 — Gender Identity — January 26, 2020

Don't feel like you must use all of the questions in each section. Choose the ones from Know, Grow and Show that will best help your group discuss the passage and take their next steps of faith. We have prayed for you as you lead your D-Group today!

***A special note to D-Group Leaders and Members:** Even as Christians, discussion involving the LGBTQ+ community can quickly lead to judgement and a lack of compassion. We want to encourage you to remember, as Paul said in 1 Cor. 6:11, "such were some of you". Meaning that we all have a rebellious heart and only have an ability to recognize and repent of our sin because of God's grace and mercy. As you discuss these sermon discussion questions, remember that Jesus looked out over the crowds and was filled with compassion.*

#### KNOW:

- When you were a kid, did you ever play "dress up" or "costumes"? What kind of characters would you dress up as? If you have kids now, what kind of characters do they dress as? What is so fascinating to children about taking on one of these new identities?
- What are some things that we look to for our identity? What makes us feel important or known?
- There have been many movements throughout history. What are some of the cultural movements you've seen in your lifetime? How about your parents?
- Do you shy away or move toward difficult conversations about gender identity?
- It is easy to make judgments without considering the reasons, experiences, or motivations of another person. Most people have never contemplated changing their gender identity. Why do you think it might be appealing for someone to change from one gender to another? (strive to be kind, compassionate, and empathetic – try to imagine what it may be like for someone with a different understanding than you)
- Gender Identity is a very sensitive subject in our world today. How have you experienced gender identity? Do you know someone who considers themselves transgender?





## GROW:

- According to Genesis 1:26-28, God created man in his own image. Specifically, He created them male and female. How does the movement to blur the lines of gender identity contradict God's design?
- How does Genesis 1:27 speak to the way God uniquely designed our identity? What does God's Word say about our identity? According to God's Word, when and how does God design us?
- In Genesis 3, we read the first story of man's sin and rebellion against God's design. Why do Adam and Eve rebel against God? What do they hope to gain?
- Read through Fellowship's Position Paper on Gender Identity (maybe read it as a group). What truth stands out to you in this paper? What challenges you? (<http://www.fellowshiponline.com/gender-identity-the-gospel/>)
- Consider Gal. 2:20 and 2 Cor. 5:17, Paul talks about his new identity in Christ. How does your identity reflect your relationship with Christ?
- How does our view of our own sin and Christ's forgiveness affect the way we view those who are trapped in sexual sin? Consider Rom. 1 and 1 Cor. 6:11. What is the hope they need to hear?
- What are some of the consequences of the gender identity movement as it relates to families and individuals? How has this movement affected you or your family?



## SHOW:

- Those who consider themselves transgender, identify in the greater community called LGBTQ+. Although distorted, in what ways does this desire for community reflect the gospel? What is the importance of having a community? How could Christians demonstrate the same loving, acceptance, and kindness that the LGBTQ seek in their community?
- What fears do you have as we talk about stepping towards the LGBTQ community in love and truth? How do we practically demonstrate love and compassion to those around us who present as a gender different from their sexual origin without compromising truth?
- When a person from the LGBTQ community walks in the doors at Fellowship, how are they treated by our body? Do you think they feel valued and loved? Do we engage truth in a loving way? What is our responsibility towards this community?
- Have you ever experienced feelings of transgenderism? Consider the opportunity to share with your D-Group about it. What are some of the struggles? How can your D-Group come beside you in love and compassion?
- Ephesians 6:12 says that "our battle is not against flesh and blood." How would our homes, D-Group, and church look different if we did not view the LGBTQ community as our enemy, but rather a group of people who are made in Christ's image and worthy to receive his love and grace?
- Do you have neighbors or co-workers who identify as transgender? How do you engage them in conversation? How can we invite members of the LGBTQ community into conversations about who God is?
- Ask the Holy Spirit to search your heart. Is there anyone that you need to go to and apologize? Is there anything that you need to confess? Have you acted out of fear rather than grace? Pray as a group, that God would use you as a light in the darkness demonstrating the love and truth of God.





# GOSPEL IN CULTURE

## Sermon Discussion Curriculum Week 5 — Panel Discussion — February 2, 2020

Don't feel like you must use all of the questions in each section. Choose the ones from Know, Grow and Show that will best help your group discuss the passage and take their next steps of faith. We have prayed for you as you lead your D-Group today!

### KNOW:

- We all have moments where we unintentionally put our foot in our mouths. Share with the group about a time when you accidentally embarrassed yourself in front of others.
- Tell your group about something that you can laugh about now but when it happened it was no laughing matter.
- What in our culture most excites you about the future, what in culture most concerns you about the future?
- Cultural issues have a way of changing or reshaping over time. What do you think is going to be a cultural issue in 100 years that Christians will have to consider and process?
- What questions do you have around this gospel in culture series that weren't specifically addressed? Discuss as a group. *Check out the new videos from our teaching team: [Gospel in Culture](#)*
- What is your most culturally pressing question? Discuss that topic as a group for a few minutes.

### GROW:

- Read through Acts 17:16-25. Paul is an outsider who is interacting with a people who are generally very reason driven. What observations do you make about how Paul interacted with these people? What were some of his thoughts before he even said anything at all? Given the context, what is the importance of Paul being in the marketplace every day? How were his words sensitive to the culture yet focused on the good news of Jesus?



## GROW (Cont'd):

- Think of specific examples of Jesus' interactions with others (woman at the well, Zacchaeus, the prostitute who washed his feet, etc.). How did he do a great job of demonstrating love without affirming their sin. Maybe read through some of these passages making observations about Jesus' actions in comparison with those around him. How did Jesus balance love and truth in these situations?
- Consider the passages of the New Testament where Jesus looked out over the crowds and was filled with compassion (Matt. 9, Mark 6). Why was he filled with compassion? What did he see as he looked out over these people? Where would you place yourself in this story? How are you different from or the same as those who are in the crowd?
- It is great and necessary for Christians to have discussions about cultural issues so we can learn from others. But it is also important for us to root our beliefs and convictions in what God says in Scripture. Share about a time that you needed to readjust your views on a topic because it wasn't lining up with what God said in the Bible.
- As you think about the cultural topics that were addressed in this series (technology, immigration, gender identity), which topic has been most challenging to you? Share with the group why? How would Jesus encourage you to be both wise and winsome with this topic?



## SHOW:

- Consider Psalm 37:4. What does this verse say about your desires? How does this verse fit in the context of our Gospel in Culture series?
- During this series, how have you noticed your preferences or desires collide with what the gospel teaches.
- Share about a time when you had to say no to your desire/preference because Christ was calling you to something different.
- What aspects of this Gospel in Culture series have been most beneficial for you? Most challenging?
- Why is it important to view the culture that we are engaged with through the lens of the gospel? Are there specific situations that you have had to do this in the last month?
- Sometimes when we interact with those who believe something different from us, it can illuminate sin within our own heart (even if we weren't aware of it at first). What is something that God has exposed in your heart through these cultural conversations? Is there anyone that you need to go to in order apologize for your wrong actions or judgment?
- Think about your "most culturally pressing question" from the start of our discussion. Examine your heart. Ask the Holy Spirit to speak to your question. Considering our discussion, have your motives for this question changed at all? Is there another perspective to consider around this topic?
- Is there an issue in your work or family that you are struggling to see how the gospel should impact your thoughts and actions? Share this with the group. Ask for wisdom. Pray as a group that God would guide you.