

SECRET CHURCH™

KNOW HIS WORD. KNOW HIS PERSECUTED.

The Cross and Everyday Life

Small Group Discussion Guide

secretchurch.org

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Small Group Discussion Guide

This Small Group Discussion Guide is designed to assist leaders in walking a small group through a Secret Church study in 6 sessions.

To utilize this Small Group Discussion Guide you will need:

Secret Church 14: The Cross and Everyday Life VIDEO

Each week you will watch a portion of the video from *Secret Church 14: The Cross and Everyday Life*. This video can be obtained in two ways:

ONLINE: The video of *The Cross and Everyday Life* can be found online for free download/viewing in the Resources section of the Radical website. To access the video go to Radical.net/SC14. The PDF can be found under the materials tab.

RADICAL STORE: The DVD of *The Cross and Everyday Life* can be ordered through our online store at Radical.net/Store in the Secret Church Resources section.

Secret Church 14: The Cross and Everyday Life STUDY GUIDES

Each member of your small group will need *The Cross and Everyday Life Study Guide* from Secret Church 14. Each week as you watch a video session from SC14, members will fill in a corresponding section of the study guide. Study guides can be obtained in two ways:

ONLINE: The PDF version of “The Cross and Everyday Life” study guide can be found online for free download in the Resources section of the Radical website. To access the PDF of the study guide go to Radical.net/SC14.

RADICAL STORE: Spiral bound, printed copies, of “The Cross and Everyday Life” Study Guide can be ordered through our online store at Radical.net/Store in the Secret Church Resources section.

If you have questions or need assistance concerning the Secret Church resources, go to Radical.net/Contact.

This Discussion Guide will provide the following helps as you work through the Secret Church 14 study:

Watch/Fill In

This Discussion Guide breaks the Secret Church 14 study into six sessions. The Watch/Fill In portion will tell you how much of the video to watch during each session and what portion of the study guide will be used during that session.

Week at a Glance

The Week at a Glance section will give you a general overview of the material you will be studying each week.

Key Takeaways and Verses

Every week, the Discussion Guide will provide a few key takeaways from the study as well as key verses to help you guide the discussion following the video portion of the study.

Explaining Terms and Concepts

This section of the Discussion Guide is a resource to unpack terms and concepts used during the Secret Church study.

Questions for Discussion and Reflection

Questions for discussion and reflection are provided to help your small group think through and apply the concepts studied each week.

For Further Study

Each week a list of resources is provided for the leader and participants for further study on the content covered in that session.

WEEK 1

Watch

SC14 Video: 43 mins

Online: Session 1 (0:00 – 43:06)

DVD: Disc 1 (0:00 – 43:06)

Fill In

SC14 Study Guide: Pages 5–29

Week at a Glance

Week 1 covers foundational truths for understanding how the cross should impact our everyday lives. These truths include the purpose of our everyday lives (to enjoy God's grace and exalt God's glory), the problem in our everyday lives (our sin and rebellion against God), and the question of how Christ's death two thousand years ago changed everything in history. The cross is God's remedy for sin, for Christ has provided the basis of our salvation by taking on himself the just penalty of sin—God's wrath. There, on the cross, God's love and justice were put on full display.

Key Takeaways

- The purpose of our everyday lives is to enjoy God's grace and to exalt God's glory.
- The problem in our everyday lives is that we have sinned against this holy and just God, so we deserve his wrath.
- The problem of sin was dealt with at the cross as God satisfied His holy and loving character by sacrificing His Son in the place of sinners.

Key Verses

The purpose of our everyday lives

Genesis 1:26-31; Psalm 67; Isaiah 48:9-11; Matthew 28:18-20; 1 Corinthians 10:31; Revelation 7:9-12

The problem in our everyday lives

Psalm 24:1-2; Isaiah 6:3; Ezekiel 36:22-23; Romans 3:23; Ephesians 2:1-4

How the death of Christ changed everything in history

Romans 3:23-26; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 2:17; John 1:1-4; Hebrews 4:15; Romans 5:6-8; 2 Corinthians 5:21

Explaining Terms and Concepts

exalt: to hold someone or something up as praiseworthy; to magnify. We exalt God by praising His character and His works.

faith: the means by which we receive God's grace; to trust in or believe someone or something. Scripture describes saving faith as a reliance on Christ's saving work, and it includes a surrender to his Lordship. To have faith in God is the opposite of working to earn his favor.

glory (glorify): often a reference to the outward manifestation of who God is—His character, His works, etc. We glorify God when we delight in Him and make known His greatness.

gospel: the message that the just and gracious God of the universe looked upon hopelessly sinful people and sent His Son, Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, to bear His wrath against sin on the cross and to show his power over sin in the resurrection so that all who have faith in Him will be reconciled to God forever.

grace: God's unmerited (or unearned) favor. God's grace is demonstrated when He blesses us instead of giving us the judgment we deserve.

heaven: the place where God dwells and the place where His people go to be with the Lord Jesus when they die. At the final judgment God will make a new heavens and a new earth in which His people will dwell forever.

hell: the place of eternal conscious punishment of the wicked¹. All those who die without repenting and believing in Christ (or those who fail to believe prior to his Second Coming) will go to hell forever.

holy: to be set apart; to be morally pure. When Scripture refers to God as holy, it is often highlighting His uniqueness and His sinless perfection.

¹ Grudem, *Bible Doctrine: Essential Teachings of the Christian Faith*, 459.

Explaining Terms and Concepts

justification (justify): God's act of declaring someone to be righteous, or in the right. God freely justifies sinners on the basis of Christ's life, death, and resurrection.

repent: to change or turn away from a certain way of thinking or acting in order to head in a new direction. Biblical repentance involves turning away from sin and self and turning toward Christ in faith.

salvation (saved): a reference to God's rescuing of sinners from the penalty and power of sin into a right standing with Him through Christ. God saves us at a point in time and then continues His saving work until His salvation is complete at Christ's Second Coming.

sovereign: a reference to God's authority and complete control over all things. God's sovereignty refers to his right and ability to do whatever He pleases.

substitutionary death: to die in the place of someone else. Christ's death was substitutionary, because on the cross, He took the punishment for sin that we deserve.

wrath: a reference to God's just anger toward and punishment of sin. At the final judgment, those who have not trusted in Christ will face God's eternal wrath.

Questions for Discussion and Reflection

1. How would you define the purpose of your life? Why is it so difficult to live with that purpose in mind in our everyday routines and responsibilities?
2. How might your non-Christian friends define their purpose in life? What's wrong with their perspective?
3. Why does being a Christian not mean that you have to give up on finding pleasure?
4. How does sin keep us from fulfilling God's purpose for our lives?
5. What are some ways we downplay the seriousness of our sin?
6. What makes sin so serious, and how does your view of God's holiness affect this?
7. What makes God's wrath different from human anger or cruelty?
8. What qualified Jesus to be the perfect sacrifice for our sins?
9. How did the cross display God's justice and his grace?
10. Give a clear and concise answer to the following question: "What is the gospel?"

For Further Study

- Greg Gilbert, *What is the Gospel?*
- C.J. Mahaney, *Living the Cross-Centered Life*
- J.D. Greear, *Gospel: Recovering the Power that Made Christianity Revolutionary*
- John Stott, *The Cross of Christ*
- David Platt, *Secret Church 10: Crucifixion, Salvation, and the Glory of God*, Radical.net/SC10
- David Platt, *Follow Me*
- Wayne Grudem, *Bible Doctrine: Essential Teachings of the Christian Faith*, 295-325.

WEEK 2

Watch

SC14 Video: 52 mins

Online: Session 1 (43:06–64:03);
and Session 2 (0:00–30:54)

DVD: Disc 1 (43:06–64:04);
and Disc 2 (0:00–30:54)

Fill In

SC14 Study Guide: Pages 29-57

Week at a Glance

Week 2 begins by answering the question of how the death of Christ changes everything in our lives today. (Note: In this session, a call to repent and trust in Christ is given).

The second part of this session deals with the spiritual discipline of prayer and the essential role prayer plays in loving God with all our heart and soul.

By turning from our sin and trusting in what Christ has accomplished in His death and resurrection, we are made right with God the Father. Salvation is God's work. He not only opens our hearts and enables us to believe, but He also empowers us to continue to walk by faith in this new life we've been given. We do good works, not in order to earn salvation, but because saving faith produces them. God unites us to Christ through the Holy Spirit so that we receive every blessing of salvation. As we wait for our eternal reward, the Spirit makes us more and more like Christ.

Having believed the gospel, we can now begin to obey (though imperfectly) what Jesus called the greatest commandment—to love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30). One way to pursue this love of God is through the spiritual discipline of prayer. Here are a few aspects of prayer covered in Week 2: why we pray, the design of prayer, who we pray to, what we pray for, and practical suggestions for prayer.

Key Takeaways

- We are made right before God the Father through trusting (the means of our salvation) in Christ (the basis of our salvation).
- By God's grace we are gradually transformed into the image of Christ as God frees us from sin in order to live for His glory.
- Daily prayer is a vital part of how we are to obey the command to love God supremely. This spiritual discipline helps us to know God, to embrace his purposes, and to express our need for him.

Key Verses

How the death of Christ changes everything in our lives today

Romans 5:1; Ephesians 2:4-10; Romans 8:14-17; John 6:44; Acts 3:19; Acts 16:31; 1 John 5:13; Luke 9:23-24; Matthew 7:21;

Prayer

Mark 12:28-31; Matthew 6:5-15; Luke 11:5-13; Psalm 63:1-8; Hebrews 4:16; Exodus 33:7-11; Matthew 6:9-13; James 5:16-18; Psalm 51:3-4

Explaining Terms and Concepts

born again (new birth): God's work of giving an individual new spiritual life¹. This is the work of the Spirit and it is necessary in order to see and enter God's kingdom (John 3:3-8). Sometimes being born again is referred to as regeneration.

conformed to the image of Christ: the Spirit's work of making us look more and more like Jesus in terms of our love for and obedience to God. God does this work in the life of every believer (Romans 8:29).

in Christ (union with Christ): a reference to the believer's relationship to Christ whereby we receive the blessings of salvation. Our union with Christ means the following: we are in Christ, Christ is in us, we are like Christ, and we are with Christ². We are united to Christ by the Spirit when we become Christians.

intercede (intercession): praying to God on behalf of another person.

kingdom: God's rule or reign. The power of God's kingdom is effective now in the lives of God's people, but the kingdom will be manifested fully after Christ's return when believers are resurrected in a new heavens and a new earth.

¹ Grudem *Bible Doctrine*, 300

² Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 840-841.

mortification of the flesh: the ongoing work of the Spirit which enables us to put sin to death through repentance and self-denial. By faith we are actively engaged in this gradual work of transformation. This happens alongside vivification of the Spirit (see definition below).

petition: a kind of prayer that makes a request to God.

vivification of the Spirit: this is the Holy Spirit's ongoing work (after we are saved) of making us more like Jesus. By faith we are actively engaged in this Spirit-produced work of transformation. This happens alongside the mortification of the flesh (see definition above).

Questions for Discussion and Reflection

1. What's wrong with the idea that if we are sincere and try hard enough, then God will graciously allow us to enter heaven?
2. How do we receive God's salvation in Christ? What role does God play in our salvation?
3. What does it mean to be "in Christ"? List some blessings that come from being "in Christ" (pgs. 30-40, in the study guide)?
4. What is the difference between works that please God and works that are legalistic?
5. Why do you think something as simple as praying can be so difficult? What keeps you from regular prayer?
6. How is a refusal to pray evidence of pride?
7. List several motivations for prayer.
8. How should God's character shape the way we pray?
9. What encouragements does God's Word give us to pray?
10. What practical steps can you take to grow in the spiritual discipline of prayer?

For Further Study

- Donald Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*
- Jim Shaddix, *Why Pray? The Urgency of Mission-Critical Communion*, [Radical.net/Why Pray](http://Radical.net/WhyPray)
- Wayne Grudem, *Bible Doctrine: Essential Teachings of the Christian Faith*, 307-347

WEEK 3

Watch

SC14 Video: 38 mins

Online: Session 2 (30:54–68:21)

DVD: Disc 2 (30:54–68:21)

Fill In

SC14 Study Guide: Pages 57-79

Week at a Glance

Week 3 covers ways in which we love God with all our mind and strength. This kind of love includes filling your mind with God's Word (reading, studying, and memorizing the Bible), sharpening your mind with other truths in God's world (theology, science, art, economics, etc.), and taking care of your body as a temple of God's Spirit (fasting from food and fleeing sexual immorality).

We need to grow in our desire for God's Word, for the Word is essential to our maturity in the Christian life. In this session we are introduced to a dependable approach to daily Bible reading, which includes reading, examining, applying, and praying about the text (REAP). This kind of approach should help us to understand the Word accurately and should lead us to grow in our love for God. We're also encouraged to be lifelong learners in all facets of God's truth, including books about Scripture and theology, as well as other aspects of life where we can influence our culture (music, finance, etc.)

Finally, we turn to consider how our bodies play a role in loving God. Since our bodies are temples of God's Spirit, we are to honor Him with what we wear, what we eat, and how we exercise. We must also control our bodies through fasting regularly and through fleeing sexual immorality. God has redeemed our physical bodies, and they belong to Him.

Key Takeaways

- Read, study, and memorize the Bible daily because God's Word is essential for growth and maturity in the Christian life.
- A dependable approach to daily Bible reading will include reading, examining, applying, and praying about the text.
- Grow in your understanding of truth in God's world by reading books about the Bible as well as learning more about other subjects.
- Take care of your body as a temple of God's Holy Spirit and control your body through regular fasting and through fleeing sexual immorality.

Key Verses

Fill your mind daily with God's Word

Joshua 1:8; 2 Timothy 3:16; Psalm 19:7-11; Deuteronomy 6:4-9;
2 Timothy 2:15

Sharpen your mind daily with truth from God's word

2 Corinthians 10:3-5; 1 John 4:1-3; Proverbs 10:17; Romans 12:1-2

Take care of your body

1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 1 Corinthians 10:31; 1 Peter 3:3-4;
Romans 14:1-4

Keep control of your body

Matthew 6:16-18; Matthew 4:4; Matthew 9:14-15;
1 Thessalonians 4:3-8; Matthew 5:27-30; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10

Explaining Terms and Concepts

body as a temple of the Holy Spirit: in the Old Testament, God often manifested Himself to His people in the temple in Jerusalem. Now, instead of the temple building, God indwells His people by his Spirit. This is a gift of the new covenant (Ezekiel 36:25-27). Both individuals (1 Corinthians 6:19) and the church collectively (1 Corinthians 3:17) are referred to as a temple since we are connected to Jesus, who is also called the temple (John 2:18-22).

inspiration of Scripture: a reference to the fact that Scripture comes from God or, more literally, is breathed out by Him. This is how Paul speaks of the text of Scripture in 2 Timothy 3:16, highlighting its authority and transforming power.

sexual immorality: any sexual activity outside of marriage is considered sinful according to Scripture. This includes impure thoughts, desires, words, and actions.

wisdom: the God-given ability to see and live in the world in accord with the way that God has designed it. Proverbs 9:10 says that the fear of the Lord is “the beginning of wisdom.”

Questions for Discussion and Reflection

1. What are the biggest barriers (real or perceived) in your life to the daily intake of God's Word? What practical steps could you take to overcome these barriers?
2. List some ways Scripture motivates us to fill our minds with God's Word.
3. If the Spirit's work is necessary for us to grasp the truths of Scripture, what role do diligence and discipline play on our part?
4. Explain why asking "What does this passage mean to me?" can be a misleading question in our Bible reading. What questions should we ask of a Scripture passages?
5. Respond to this statement: The Bible is God's Word, so I don't need to listen to anyone else or any other books.
6. What are the unhelpful extremes in terms of a biblical view of eating and exercising?
7. Name some biblical motivations for fasting.

(We recommend dividing into men only, women only groups to answer the following questions.)

8. If two unmarried people are lovingly committed to one another, why should sexual activity be off limits?
9. What are the biggest areas of temptation for you in terms of sexual immorality? What are some practical steps you could take to avoid these temptations?
10. How can you use God's Word on a daily basis to fight sinful sexual desires?

For Further Reading

Donald Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*

David Platt, *Secret Church 3: How to Study the Bible*, [Radical.net/SC3](https://www.radical.net/SC3)

Jerry Bridges, *The Pursuit of Holiness*

Jerry Bridges, *The Discipline of Grace*

Kevin DeYoung, *The Hole in our Holiness*

John Piper, *When I Don't Desire God*

John Piper, *A Hunger for God*

J.P. Moreland, *Love God with All Your Mind*

Wayne Grudem, *Bible Doctrine: Essential Teachings of the Christian Faith*, 33-66, 187-228.

WEEK 4

Watch

SC14 Video: 49 mins

Online: Session 3 (0:00-49:02)

DVD: Disc 3 (0:00-49:02)

Fill In

SC14 Study Guide: Pages 79-111

Week at a Glance

Week 4 covers various aspects of what it means to love your neighbor as yourself on a daily basis. We'll consider the following relationships: a husband's approach to his wife, a wife's approach to her husband, a parent's daily interaction with children, a single's daily approach to others, a Christian's daily approach to other Christians, and a Christian's approach to non-Christians (only the first part of this latter section). Scripture instructs us about how to approach these relationships, and the Holy Spirit enables us to carry this out. Humility, selfless love, a desire to honor God, and a desire to see the spread of the gospel are traits that ought to characterize these relationships.

Key Takeaways

- Be aware that God is already at work in the lives of those around you, and join Him where He gives you an opportunity.
- A husband's love for his wife should reflect Christ's love for the church. This kind of love involves leading, providing, protecting, and sacrificially serving her.
- Out of reverence for Christ, a wife should submit to her husband's leadership and seek to help him on a daily basis.
- Parents should daily instruct their children so they know the Word and daily train their children so they obey the Word.
- Children should honor their parents with their attitude and obey their parents with their actions.
- Singles should maximize their place in life by devoting themselves to Christ and His mission and by guarding against desires that are selfish and sexual.
- Christians should approach other Christians based on Scripture's commands to love and serve one another.
- Christians should relinquish their rights and rearrange their schedules in order to make the gospel known to non-Christians.

Key Verses

Remembering the work of the Father, Son, and Spirit

John 5:17-21; John 16:5-8

Husband to wife

Ephesians 5:25-33; 1 Peter 3:7

Wife to husband

Ephesians 5:22-24; 1 Peter 3:1-6

Parents to children

Deuteronomy 6:1-9; Ephesians 6:4

Children to parents

Ephesians 6:1-3; Proverbs 1:8-9

Singles

Isaiah 54:5; 1 Corinthians 7:25-35

Christian to Christian

Romans 12:9-13; John 13:34-35; Ephesians 4:32; 1 Corinthians 12:15-26;
James 2:14-17

Christian to non-Christian

Colossians 4:2-6; 1 Corinthians 9; Romans 1:14-16

Explaining Terms and Concepts

church discipline: the church body's responsibility of holding its members accountable to live in accord with the gospel. This involves addressing the sin of its members so as to bring about repentance, forgiveness, and restoration. In the case that someone is unwilling to repent, the result is excommunication, or removal, from the church. This process is laid out in Matthew 18:15-20.

contextualizing the gospel: communicating the gospel in a way that is understandable to persons in a different setting than your own. We must not in any way change the content of the gospel when we bring it into a new context.

family worship: a reference to regular times of gathering within the home for the worship of God and for instruction in the faith. This kind of gathering will often include reading and explaining Scripture, praying together, and singing together.

submission: the wife's role in the husband-wife relationship of gladly yielding to her husband's leadership.

Questions for Discussion and Reflection

1. Why do you need the gospel in order to properly obey Jesus' command to love your neighbor as yourself?
2. How would you describe the way most husbands you know lead their wives? Too passive? Too domineering?
3. How did Christ love the church? How should that translate to the husband-wife relationship?
4. What's wrong with this statement: The submission of a Christian wife means that she puts her dreams on hold?
5. Give some examples of how parents might instruct their children in the Word in planned, routine ways? What about unplanned, spontaneous ways? Why should we have both?
6. What does a child's response to his/her parents tell us about the child's relationship with God?
7. How does our culture's view of singleness contrast with a biblical vision for the lives of singles?
8. Sum up in one or two sentences how we should think about and treat other Christians.
9. In your own context, what sacrifices might be necessary in order to share the gospel with your neighbors?
10. Make a list of people you regularly engage with who are non-Christians. Pray for opportunities to share the gospel with them and plan to be intentional about starting meaningful conversations with them. Consider asking other Christians for support and accountability in this area.

For Further Study

David Platt, *Attachment: The Gospel and our Families*, Radical.net/
Attachment

David Platt, *The Cross and Christian Manhood*, Radical.net/Manhood

Donald Whitney, *Family Worship: In the Bible, in History, and in Your Home*

Dorothy Patterson, "The High Calling of Wife and Mother in Biblical Perspective" (<https://bible.org/seriespage/high-calling-wife-and-mother-biblical-perspective>)

Jim Shaddix, *The Cross and Christian Singleness*, Radical.net/
Singleness

Mark Dever, *The Church: The Gospel Made Visible*

John Piper and Wayne Grudem, *50 Crucial Questions about Manhood and Womanhood*

Andreas Kostenberger and David W. Jones, *God, Marriage, and Family: Rebuilding the Biblical Foundations*

Mark Dever, *The Gospel and Personal Evangelism*

WEEK 5

Watch

SC14 Video: 57 mins

Online: Session 3 (49:02-76:44)
Session 4 (0:00-28:13)

DVD: Disc 3 (49:02-76:44)
Disc 4 (0:00-28:13)

Fill In

SC14 Study Guide: Pages 111-142

Week at a Glance

Week 5 continues on the topic of the Christian's daily approach to non-Christians. In this session we cover the five "threads" of the gospel: 1) the character of God, 2) the sinfulness of man, 3) the sufficiency of Christ, 4) the necessity of faith, and 5) the urgency of eternity. These threads are foundational aspects of the gospel we ought to weave into our everyday conversations.

Next, we look at how the cross impacts the way we begin our day and how we know and obey God's will on a daily basis. Thankfully, the Bible gives us guidance in these decisions, and it's much different from the numerous contemporary methods for finding God's will. God isn't hiding anything—He actually wants us to know His will.

Finally, we close this session by considering how the cross should shape our work, which is the way most of us spend the majority of our time. It's all too easy to overvalue our work and make it an idol. Or, on the other hand, we might undervalue our work, becoming lazy and unproductive. Both approaches leave God out of the equation. The gospel, however, frees us from these sinful perspectives and enables us to work for the glory of God and for the good of our neighbor.

Key Takeaways

- Be intentional about weaving the foundational aspects of the gospel—the gospel “threads”—into your everyday conversations. These threads include: 1) the character of God, 2) the sinfulness of man, 3) the sufficiency of Christ, 4) the necessity of faith, and 5) the urgency of eternity.
- God wants us to know His will, and His will includes living every day for His glory.
- The biblical method for discovering God's will primarily involves knowing God's Word and growing in our relationship with Him.
- Rather than making an idol of our work or being idle in our work¹, the gospel frees us to work for God's glory and for the good of our neighbor.

Key Verses

The gospel threads

The character of God: Isaiah 43:15; Proverbs 17:15; Titus 2:11

The sinfulness of man: Romans 3:12, 23; Romans 6:23

The sufficiency of Christ: 1 John 3:5; 1 Peter 2:24; Revelation 1:18

The necessity of faith: Mark 1:15; Romans 10:9

The urgency of eternity: 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9; Philippians 3:20; John 3:16

The cross and waking / finding God's will

Psalm 5:3; Ephesians 5:17; Galatians 2:20; Psalm 40:8; James 1:5-8

The cross and working

Colossians 3:22-24; Genesis 1:26-30; Genesis 2:15-17;

Ephesians 6:5-8; Genesis 3:16-19; Proverbs 23:4; Proverbs 6:6-11;

Ephesians 4:28; 1 Timothy 5:8

Explaining Terms and Concepts

¹ The twin dangers of idolatry and idleness come from the excellent book by Greg Gilbert and Sebastian Traeger titled *The Gospel at Work*.

depravity: a reference to the fact that man is born dead in sins, unable to obey God. Our depravity comes as a result of Adam's sin in Genesis 3 (the Fall), though as a result we willfully participate in sinful thoughts and actions.

God's revealed will: the aspect of God's will that he declares in His Word. We read God's revealed will in Scripture.

God's secret will: the aspect of God's will related to what He decrees in the world. Since God is sovereign and nothing happens apart from His will, we must say that He ordains certain things to happen which violate his moral commands (see for example Joseph's reaction to the sin of his brothers in Genesis 50:20).

identification (Jesus' identification with us): a way of speaking of the fact that Christ has become fully man and so experienced everything we experience—temptation, trials, suffering, and all aspects of life (except personal sin.)

image of God: a reference to the worth, privilege, and responsibility of all those whom God creates to be like Him and to represent Him in certain ways². Since all persons are created in the image of God, we are commanded to respect, love, and share the gospel with them.

nominal (Christian): someone who claims to be a Christian, but who doesn't actually belong to God. This kind of person may participate in religious activities and yet still be in need of God's salvation.

pluralist: in terms of religion, someone who believes that various religious perspectives can be true or valid and thus lead to God, even if their fundamental claims are contradictory. Pluralism is often connected with postmodernism and relativism.

2 _____
Grudem, *Bible Doctrine*, 189.

privatized faith: a kind of faith that has little to no effect on your interaction with others and the way you live and speak in the world. This kind of faith is incompatible with biblical Christianity.

regenerating power (regeneration): a reference to God's ability to give us new spiritual life. By nature we are dead in our sins, but God's Spirit raises us to walk in newness of life in Jesus Christ (Romans 6:4).

steward: one who is given the responsibility by God to protect, care for, and wisely use certain gifts and responsibilities. As individuals and as the church, we are stewards of God's creation, his provisions, and his truth, which includes all the resources and opportunities he provides.

Questions for Discussion and Reflection

1. What are the biggest obstacles for you in terms of starting conversations about the gospel?
2. What advice would you give to someone who's tempted to downplay God's holy character or the sinfulness of man so as not to offend a non-Christian?
3. How can you urge someone to put their faith in Christ without manipulating them?
4. What factors go into your decision-making on a daily basis?
5. What's wrong with waiting for a particular feeling or sign in order to figure out God's will? Is this biblical?
6. Explain the idea that discovering God's will is often more simple for believers than we think.
7. How would you apply the principles in this section to the decision about whether or not to take a certain job?
8. What are some signs that you are finding your identity in your work?
9. How does the gospel free us to work hard?
10. In what ways should a follower of Christ stand out in his/her workplace?

For Further Study

Mark Dever, *The Gospel and Personal Evangelism*

J.I. Packer, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*

David Platt, *Threads*, Radical.net/Threads

Greg Gilbert and Sebastian Traeger, *The Gospel at Work*

Tim Keller, *Every Good Endeavor: Connecting Your Work to God's Work*

Kevin DeYoung, *Just Do Something: A Liberating Approach to Finding God's Will*

J.I. Packer, *Knowing God*

WEEK 6

Watch

SC14 Video: 39 mins

Online: Session 4 (28:13-67:23)

DVD: Disc 4 (28:13-67:22)

Fill In

SC14 Study Guide: Pages 143-178

Week at a Glance

Week 6 applies the truth of the gospel to a whole range of activities that we don't often associate with our faith. First, we'll consider how the cross impacts our playing, or our hobbies. Then we'll take a look at a number of activities related to entertainment and social media: listening, watching, reading, texting, blogging, emailing, instagramming, tweeting, and all sorts of othering. Ten "commandments" are given to caution us and instruct us in these areas. We close by thinking about how the cross shapes the way we rest.

All these activities, and many more, may seem disconnected from the gospel and our relationship to God. But Scripture paints a different picture: All things are to be done for God's glory (1 Corinthians 10:31). Our words, our actions, our communication with others—all these things matter. And all these things should be shaped by what God says in His Word. The cross ought to transform every detail of our life.

Key Takeaways

- Hobbies are good gifts from a gracious God given to us for His glory.
- Sin takes good gifts, like hobbies, and turns them into gods. The result is that they disappoint and destroy us. Therefore, we need to examine ourselves in this area.
- God's Word should shape our entertainment choices and our engagement in social media. We must flee sin and glorify God in the way we think, speak, communicate, and act.
- God commands us to rest so that we will cease from self-sufficiency and trust in divine grace.
- Christ now invites us to experience the Sabbath rest He has provided in the gospel.
- God's gift of physical rest is essential, though it should not be excessive and lead to laziness. Physical rest ought to remind us of the spiritual rest we can enjoy because of God's care and provision.

Key Verses

The cross and playing

1 Corinthians 10:31; Genesis 1:31; James 1:17; Ezekiel 14:3-8; Colossians 4:5; James 4:6

The cross and entertainment / social media

Proverbs 1:7; Proverbs 15:3; Mark 9:43-48; 1 Peter 1:13-19; Proverbs 4:23; Romans 14:21; Ephesians 5:3-12; Proverbs 15:28; Proverbs 12:11; 1 Corinthians 15:33; Romans 12:2

The cross and resting

Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 20:8-11; 1 Kings 8:56; Matthew 11:25-30; Hebrews 4:1-11; Mark 2:27-28; Colossians 2:16-17; Proverbs 6:9-11; Philippians 4:6-7; Mark 6:30-32; Psalm 4:8

Explaining Terms and Concepts

adorn the gospel: to live in such a way that the good news of Jesus Christ becomes more compelling and believable to others.

godliness: that which reflects God's character and is consistent with his Word. Scripture says we are to train ourselves for godliness (1 Timothy 4:7), which includes both right beliefs and right living.

idol (idolatry): anything or anyone other than God to which we give our worship and affection. An idol may be a so-called god of another religion, or it may be some object (money) or activity (academic achievement) to which we give too much attention.

new covenant: the covenant (solemn oath) that was inaugurated and sealed by Christ's death, thus bringing the old covenant to its appointed end (see below for definition of old covenant). In contrast to the old covenant, where God's blessing was dependent on the people's obedience, God himself promises in the new covenant to forgive his people's sins, to give them his Spirit (and thus the desire and ability to obey), and to provide them with eternal blessing. All those who put their trust in Christ become members of the new covenant. The realities of the new covenant are the subject of the New Testament, though they were prophesied in the Old Testament (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:22-32; Luke 22:20; 1 Corinthians 11:25; Hebrews 8:6-13, 10:1-18).

old covenant: the covenant (solemn oath) God made with Israel in the Old Testament in which He graciously revealed to them a body of laws and commandments at Mt. Sinai. God promised to bless them if they obeyed and to curse them for disobedience (See Exodus 19-24). Though Israel agreed to the covenant, the people's unfaithfulness was a constant reminder that the written law was not sufficient to change sinful hearts. The old covenant is sometimes referred to as the Law, and since it was given through Moses, it is also referred to as the Mosaic Covenant.

redeeming the time: to make the best use of your time.

Scripture calls us to make wise use of our time because our lives are short in relation to eternity and because of the profound need in the world (Ephesians 5:15-16).

Sabbath: usually a reference to the seventh day of the week, which God designated as a day of rest for His people in the Old Testament. In the New Testament, Jesus provides the Sabbath rest for His people.

sanctification: when referring to the Christian life, a reference to the process of becoming more like Christ. The Holy Spirit works in us so that we actively turn from sin and increasingly grow in righteousness after we have trusted in Christ for salvation. (See also the explanation in Week 2 of a related concept: conformed to the image of Christ).

sustenance: a source of strength, provision, and/or nourishment. For Christians, sustenance ultimately comes from God.

Questions for Discussion and Reflection

1. What are your hobbies? How much of your time and attention do they take up?
2. What are some signs that someone's hobby has become an idol?
3. Name some practical ways you can bring glory to God in your hobbies and interests.
4. What forms of entertainment and social media are you most drawn to? Which of these present the biggest temptation to sin?
5. Name some subtle (or not-so-subtle) ways sexual temptation presents itself in social media? What does fleeing that temptation look like in your life?
6. What are some qualities that ought to characterize our communication on social media if we want to glorify God?
7. Even if our choices in entertainment and social media aren't sinful, what's the danger of constantly feeling like we need them?
8. What does God's rest after creation teach us about the sinfulness of our own self-reliance?
9. How does the salvation rest that Jesus provides put an end to our attempts to work our way into God's favor?
10. Explain how physical rest, or sleep, can become sinful. How can it also express trust in God?

For Further Study

C.J. Mahaney, *Don't Waste Your Sports*

Kevin DeYoung, *Crazy Busy*

Secret Church 14: The Cross and Everyday Life Small Group Discussion Guide
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