CORNERSTONE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Life Group Study Guide

Gospel-Shaped Eyes – A Messy Christianity

This Sunday we looked at how the fallen, sinful state of the world we live in has taken a toll on our community, and how we, as a local church, respond to this "Messiness". We discussed how our gospel-shaped eyes help us realistically see problems in our community in light of God's powerful, life-changing grace, and also to see how we as individuals are called to be part of the solution.

As Christians, we do not shy away from those who are lost, hurting, and in [so many different forms of] need. In fact, our love compels us to welcome them, and get involved in their lives to bring hope and healing through the grace and kindness of our God. As a result, we live a "messy" Christianity – walking the journey of healing and salvation with those around us - through the ups, downs, challenges, and triumphs to see the full freedom and restoration realised in the lives of those around us.

Starting Questions:

- How would you describe the spiritual and emotional health of our community?
- When we look at the various problems that those around us face, or that the wider society face, do they seem overwhelming, or do we genuinely see the potential solution through God's grace? Why?

Read Titus 3:3-7 and 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

- Can you think of examples of how God turned around situations that seemed hopeless, or people that you know who seemed beyond help?
- How did that transformation take place? (Instant / miraculously? Over a period of time? What happened?)

We spoke about how Gospel-Shaped Eyes see our part in bringing God's solution to the problems that those around us face.

Offering God what is in our hands – our time, talents, abilities, money, resources to use for His purpose.

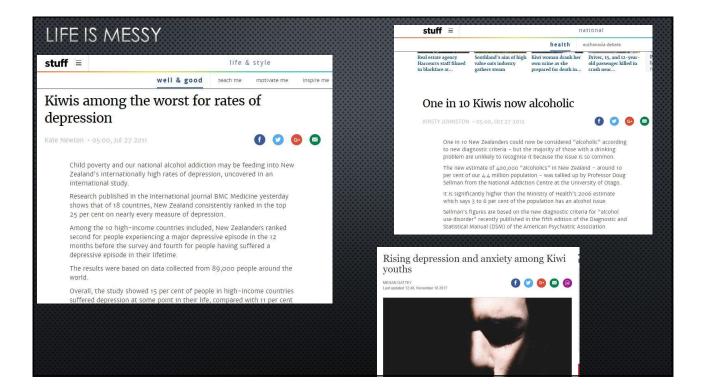
- How can God use what you have to offer? How might he "supercharge it" with His Spirit to bring a positive change?
- What does "being Jesus with skin on" mean to you?
- How can being present be a powerful ministry to those around us? What does this look like?
- When you were early in your faith, who came along side you and was willing to walk the journey with you? How did that help?

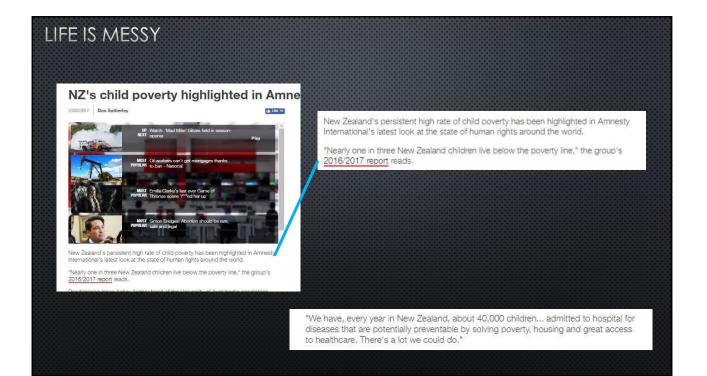
The Bible demonstrates being moved with compassion, led by the Spirit, and informed by wisdom.

• Why are all three of these important? Do you have examples of these being well balanced in ministry? Do you have examples of these being out of balance, and the results?

GOSPEL-SHAPED EYES

A MESSY CHRISTIANITY





LIFE IS MESSY

The Economic explans Why New Zealand has so many gang members



FOR a quiet country, New Zealand has a peculiar problem with gangs. It is reckoned to have one of the highest membership rates in the world. In a population of 4.7m, police count over 5,300 mobsters or "prospects" who are angling to join. Cumulatively, that makes the groups larger than the army. Bikers like the Hells Angels and posses from Australia are among its

Children and young people

14% of young people report being hit or physically harmed on purpose by an adult at home in the last 12 months. (7)

20% of girls and 9% of boys in New Zealand report unwanted sexual touching or being forced to do sexual things. (8)

Partner abuse

50% of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) deaths occurred at the time of actual or intended separation. (9)

1 in 3 women experience physical and/or sexual violence from a partner in their lifetime. (10)

76% of recorded assaults against females are committed by an offender that is identified as family. (11)

KEY POINTS:

• On average, police attend a family violence incident every five and a half minutes - that's 279 calls each day. • At least 80 per cent of family violence incidents are not reported to the police. • Last year, police attended about 105,000 domestic violence incidents. • If all incidents were reported, they would have attended at least 525,000 calls for help. •



GOSPEL-SHAPED EYES - SEE BEYOND THE PROBLEM TO THE POTENTIAL

Problem

3-7 Titus 3:

9-1

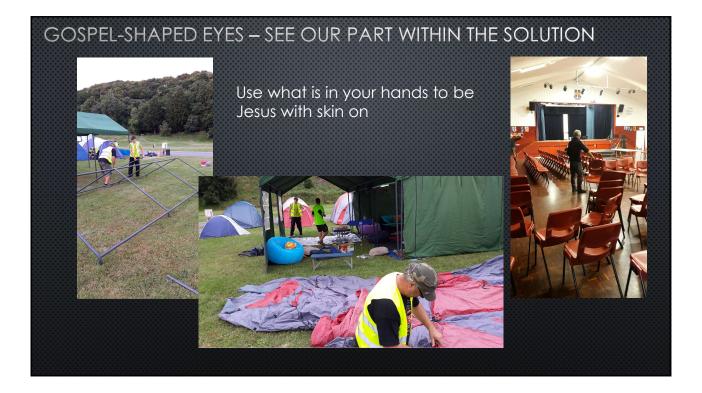
At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another.

Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor 🐱 idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men nor thieves nor the greedy nor Cor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

Potential In Christ

But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.



GOSPEL-SHAPED EYES - SEES OUR PART WITHIN THE SOLUTION



GOSPEL-SHAPED EYES - SEE OUR PART WITHIN THE SOLUTION

Willing to walk the journey with you...





2 Cor 1: 3-4 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.

1 Thes 5:11-14 Therefore encourage one another and build each other

up...acknowledge those who work hard among you...And we urge you, brothers and sisters, **warn** those who are idle and disruptive, **encourage** the disheartened, **help** the weak, **be patient** with everyone.

GOSPEL-SHAPED EYES – BALANCE THE HEAD, HEART, SPIRIT

Moved with compassion	Matt 14:14 When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick.
	Matt 20:34 Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed him.
	Mark 1:41 - Had compassion on the Leper - reached out and touched him - be clean!
Led by the Holy Spirit	Matt 4:1 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert
	Acts 20:22 And now compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there. I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me. However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus Christ has given me – the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace
Informed by Wisdom	Acts 6:1-4the Hellenistic Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to praver and the ministry of the word."

GOSPEL-SHAPED EYES

SEE BEYOND THE PROBLEM TO THE POTENTIAL

SEE OUR PART IN THE SOLUTION

BALANCE HEAD HEART AND SPIRIT

LET'S GET MESSY!

But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.