

Gospel Fluency: Study #6



Getting Real Part 2

Consider...

Last time we discovered that nearly everyone has some sort of gospel they believe in and live by. It's just that these gospels aren't the *real* Gospel.

The big problem with these 'other' gospels is that they all *ultimately* let their followers down. As we saw right at the very beginning, we are made to share a perfect relationship with God. He is the only thing that will ultimately and completely satisfy us. What's more God is the only one who will *never* let us down.

Let us take the example we used last time, 'the Gospel according

to Weight Loss'.

As we'll see in a minute, there is much that Christians can affirm about this Gospel. However, if weight loss is seen to be the ultimate source of joy and happiness, it will ultimately disappoint. A person can be let down by any of the following...

- I just keep slipping up, eating the wrong things and not exercising
- My relationships aren't functioning well, because I've become obsessive and am at the Gym too much
- I have become bulimic, or anorexic
- I've injured myself, now I can't train the way I want and I feel depressed
- I'm getting older and no matter what I do my body isn't working anymore
- I've achieved all my goals but I still feel empty

Exercise

Take a look at some of the example gospels from last week (gospels according to: children, career, marriage / relationships, materialism). See if you can identify the ways in which these gospels will ultimately fail people.

Consider

The tragedy is that false gospels are constantly disappointing people and often the results can be devastating. As Christians, we can and must love people through this, but how? Here are some suggestions:

1. Pray for people and ask God to help you reach out to them.
2. Listen to people. Ask them about their interests.
3. Affirm what is good about their gospel. This is a great way to lead into a discussion about the real gospel. Most gospels are based on some aspect of God's good creation. For example with the 'Gospel according to Weight Loss' there is much that is good. We are made to be fit and healthy and when Jesus comes back, we will have perfect bodies. In addition, being fit and healthy is rewarding and increases our quality of life in the here and now. The problem comes when things get disordered and God's creation is placed above the creator.
4. Ask people how important things are to them
3. Think about the ways in which their gospels are / could let them down
5. Ask the question 'how's that working for you?' gently probe and help people think about the potential areas where their gospel might let them down.
6. Look for opportunities to show how the real gospel affirms what is good about their gospel, but brings so much more, and will never let them down.

Exercise

Pick a couple of common gospels and practise thinking through step 3.