Teaching - Part 1

Spiritual Maturity begins with the Gospel and is anchored to the Great Command

• The Gospel: A beautiful and true metanarrative that reveals the nature and character of God

The Great Command: Agape's invitation and evidence

And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself......They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?"

(Luke 24:27, 32)

"The more we understand the whole corpus of biblical doctrine, the more we will understand the gospel itself - and the more we understand the gospel, the more we will come to see that this is, in the end, what the Bible is really about."

(Timothy Keller, Center Church, pg. 32)

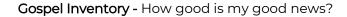
"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

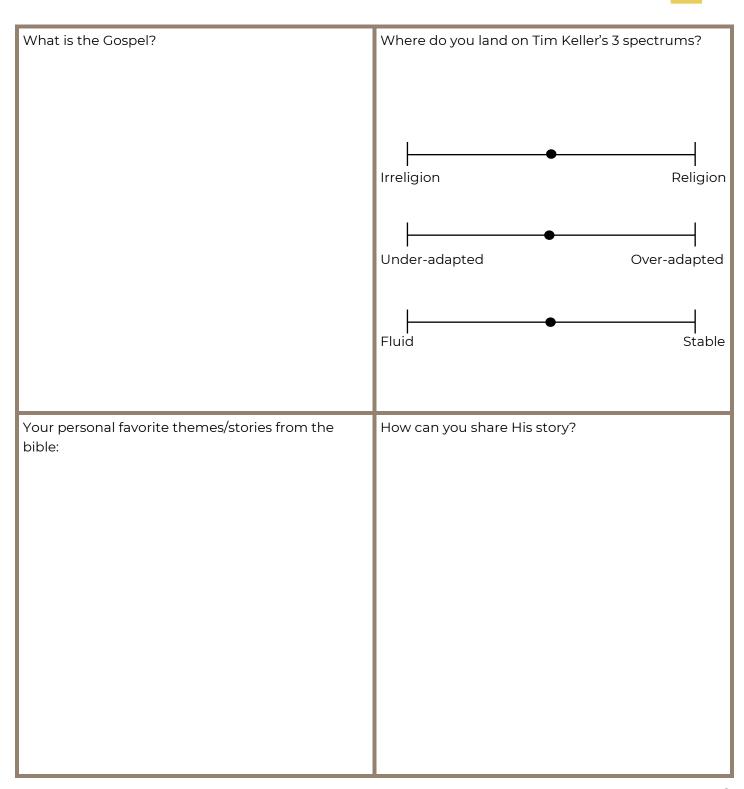
(Matthew 22:36-39)

"It is impossible to compete for God's love. God's love is a love that includes all people - each one in his or her uniqueness. It is only when we have claimed our place in God's love that we can experience this all-embracing, non -comparing love and feel safe, not only with God, but also with all our brothers and sisters."

(Henry Nouwen, Life of the Beloved, pg. 64-65)

Exercise 1





Teaching - Part 2

Spiritual Maturity is the goal of Spiritual Formation and it's achieved through Spiritual Discipline

• Spiritual Formation: Transformative power of Agape over a lifetime

• The cumulative effect of a comprehensive lifestyle

• Spiritual Disciplines: Channels of gracious transformation

And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

(2 Corinthians 3:18)

"God the Holy Spirit takes the initiative through various means in cooperation with our response to transform us into the likeness of Christ in service to others for the glory of God"

(J.K. Jones' definition of Spiritual Formation)

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

(Matthew 11:28-30)

"The disciplines are God's way of getting us into the ground; they put us where he can work within us and transform us. By themselves the spiritual disciplines can do nothing; they can only get us to the place where something can be done."

(Richard Foster, Celebration of Discipline, pg. 7)

Exercise 2



Agape Inventory - Loving with all my heart, mind, strength and soul

