



Storm Strong Families are Jesus/Gospel Centered

Why the Gospel is so central to a strong family

Let's get STARTED – The name for this teaching series was adapted from Russell Moore's "2018 Book of the Year" entitled *Storm Tossed Families*. In chapter 1 Moore writes, "Bound up in a storm is both a blessing and a curse...the blessing of rain and the peril of the storm. In a storm, we lose all of our illusions of control. Family is like that too: the source of life-giving blessing but also of excruciating terror, often all at the same time...families of ours can be filled with joy, but will always make us vulnerable to pain."

INITIAL DISCUSSION: Talk about the "blessings" of family...and also the "storms" that happen in family life. Make a list of both, and then send them to Pastor David after your group (i.e., He's eager for your input so that the series speaks to what we are facing).

Let's EXPLORE in the WORD This week's teaching (SSF #1) asserted that "the best family life begins when family members humbly embrace their in-Christ, gospel blessings: forgiveness by grace, freedom from sin's control, empowerment by the Holy Spirit" – assets which grow us in Christ-likeness. Let's explore further why those assets are key to a storm-strong family.

Blessing #1 Forgiveness by grace. When we are saved, our enmity with God and others ceases. We've been forgiven of offenses. Read together **Ephesians 4:31-32**. **DISCUSS:** How important is it for family members to understand and consistently extend/receive forgiveness? [think about examples] Who is our model in forgiving?

Blessing #2 Freedom from sin's control. Sometimes, we wrongly conclude "This is just the way I am; I can't change from what I've done before." Read together **Romans 6:8-14 and Ephesians 4:17-24**. **DISCUSS:** Do you think we talk enough in our families about being "dead to sin," free then to "live for God?" How about praying consistently Ephesians 5:18?

Blessing #3 Powered by the Holy Spirit. As young children, we quickly push the hand of an adult away. "I can do it myself," we insist. Yet learning to live like Jesus requires more than self-effort. Read together **Romans 8:1-6 and Ephesians 3:16**. **DISCUSS:** What have you learned about depending on the Holy Spirit and not yourself, in order to live like Jesus? How often have you talked with your kids about this? What gets in the way of making "dependence on Him" a habit? How important to this is a life of prayer?

Let's Prioritize APPLICATION - In recent years, the phrase "preach the gospel to yourself daily" has become a recognizable mantra. It emphasizes that we need Jesus and His gospel-work not just at the beginning when we are born again, but each day as we grow in Christ. Deepening in the habit of being forgiven and forgiving others, claiming our freedom from past sinful habits and actions, and depending on the Person who now lives inside of us for a growing Christlikeness.

In application, complete this sentence twice: I think BLESSING #1 (or #2, or #3) could make the following difference in our home

a) _____

b) _____