

the Gospel at home

BY RACHEL FORREST

Our homes are filled with opportunities to rejoice in the Gospel – yet, often the mundane of the everyday and the tyranny of the urgent, turn our eyes away from Jesus and the hope we have in Him. This five-day plan will help you to see your home with Gospel-centered eyes, and show you how to fix your mind on Jesus through the day-to-day life at home.



The Gospel in the Living Room

DAY ONE DEVOTION

Bible Text: Exodus 3:4-5, Hosea 6:1-3, Hebrews 10:19-25

Have you ever thought of your living room as holy ground? When I look around my living room, I confess that “holy” is not the word that comes to mind. Between the playdough-crusting carpet, the disheveled throw pillows and the dusty windowsills, it’s hard to see my living room as a sacred space. This is the room where my kids whine and quarrel. This is the room where I often speak out of frustration and anger. It’s the room where we fall exhausted and weary at the end of a day after my kids’ bedtime, and choose to unwind with Netflix or social media over the true rest of time with Jesus.

Yet, our living rooms are holy. Living rooms are where conversations happen. Living rooms are where people spend time together. Living rooms are where forgiveness is extended after a quarrel or harsh words are spoken in frustration. Living rooms are where we share our pain and joy, where we find comfort, where we laugh and cry together.

When God met with Moses at the burning bush, He told him to remove his sandals because he stood on holy ground. Throughout the Old Testament, the dwelling place of God with His people was a holy place. And even when God’s people were far

from Him during their time of exile (the consequence of their sin, rebellion and idolatry), God still promised to come to them - to make a new covenant with them, and to make their hearts the new holy place where His Spirit would dwell.

Through Jesus's death and resurrection, we are participants in the new covenant, and can confidently draw near to God "with a true heart in full assurance of faith" (Hebrews 10:22). Like the promise He made to Israel, He promises to come to us and meet with us "as sure as the dawn, as the spring rains that water the earth" (Hosea 6:3).

You see, our living rooms are holy because we meet God there. God is not afraid of playdough in our carpets or dust on our windowsills. God doesn't need steeples, pews, hymnals or baptistries to come to us. God meets us right where we are.

Invite God to your living room today. Welcome Him in to the place where conversations happen, where forgiveness is found, where you share your joy and pain, where you crash at the end of a long and exhausting day. He promises to come to you, to reveal Himself to you and to show you His glory through His Holy Spirit. Make your living room holy ground.



The Gospel in the Kitchen

DAY TWO DEVOTION

Bible Text: Matthew 4:1-4, Revelation 19:6-10, 1 Corinthians 8:8

During the first few months of my marriage, I excitedly planned to cook my husband's favorite meals for him. Cooking is one of my favorite activities, and I believe food is a love language. On this particular occasion, I wanted to bake his favorite dessert: pecan pie. Although I knew this to be a notoriously fickle dish, I plunged ahead with my plan.

With newlywed fervor, I got my grandmother's pie recipe, fetched all the necessary ingredients and got to work in the kitchen. As it baked, I watched from the other side of the oven door as the beautifully arranged pecans began to brown. When the timer rang, I withdrew the pie from the oven and inhaled its delicious scent. I couldn't wait to show it to my husband after dinner. It looked perfect!

Imagine my dismay when, upon the first slice of this deceptively perfect-looking pie, syrup and pecans began to ooze and run everywhere. The horror! I was mortified, but my gracious new husband ate the pie anyway and raved about its great taste.

It's a good thing a marriage isn't sustained by food, because I've cooked countless more meals and had many more kitchen

blunders since then. However, food is a part of our marriage story, and it's a part of the Gospel story too. God created mankind to live in a garden full of food. Sin entered the world with the bite of forbidden fruit. Christ's body broken for us on the cross is our redemption, which we remember when we take the Lord's Supper. Our final restoration comes with the promise of an eternal feast at Jesus's return.

It's unlikely that any of us are measuring our final standing before God by the food we eat, but sin is creepy and our enemy prowls around us, looking for ways to bring sin and shame into our lives. Food does not commend us to God, Jesus's finished work on the cross does. So let's teach our families that food makes us strong to serve God. Let's celebrate the provision and fellowship that comes from a meal. Let's direct more attention to our kids' eternal destination than their food's origin. And let's remember that Jesus said we do not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.



The Gospel in the Bedroom

DAY THREE DEVOTION

Bible Text: Genesis 2:1-2, Psalm 127:1-2, Matthew 11:28-30

After God made the world, His final gift of creation was the creation of rest. When God rested on the seventh day, it was not out of any weariness of His own, but He gave the Sabbath rest to His people as a blessing of His provision for their needs. It was a holy day in which they expressed their faithful dependence on Him. The Sabbath represented God's promised rest for His people - a promise that extended beyond the weekly cycle of six days of labor and one day of physical rest, but the promise of a spiritual rest in which sinners find peace with God and enjoy His presence.

Sometimes the holiest thing we can do is rest. When God called the Sabbath day "holy," He showed us that the rest He provides is a gracious expression of His concern for us. When we observe Sabbath rest, it's a joyful celebration of the greater spiritual rest we've received in the Gospel. Because of Jesus's finished work on the cross, we are able to have peace with God and experience joy in His presence. Because of the Gospel, we can trust Him to take care of our daily needs.

Before sin entered the world, rest was a natural part of human life. Now, in life after the fall, rest is unnatural for us. Rest is

contrary to our fallen human nature. We strive and toil daily, relying on the strength of our own labors to accomplish goals, finish tasks, and cross items off our to-do lists. In our unbelief, we forego rest, believing the false Gospel of achieving by our own efforts.

We have to learn rest from the One who is rest. When we heap the burdens of our days and weeks on our shoulders, He tells us: “learn from Me, because I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for yourselves.” We crush ourselves daily beneath the weight of our self-imposed burdens and responsibilities. He tells us to come to Him, learn from Him, and take His burden instead, which is easy and light.

Let’s give our burdens to the One who was meant to carry them. Let’s rest by laying our striving and anxious toil at the foot of the cross.



The Gospel at the Dinner Table

DAY FOUR DEVOTION

Bible Text: John 21:12-19, Psalm 36:5-9

When we moved into our current house, we inherited my grandmother's dining set: a black walnut, round table with six matching chairs. My grandmother bought it new in the 1960s. Now, nearly 60 years later, it's covered in scuffs and smudges from decades of use.

Though I've contemplated replacing it because it doesn't really fit my personal style, I've found that I can't bring myself to get rid of it. It's an icon of God's goodness and grace in my life. It's the table where my dad ate dinner as a boy. It's the table where my grandma taught me to cook, and where we celebrated Thanksgiving and Christmas each year. It's been the setting for countless family dinners. Stories were told at this table, laughter shared, tears comforted. We prayed at this table when I was a girl, and we pray at it now with my own children.

When you think about it, sharing a table is a uniquely human experience. No other creature dines at a table when it eats. Throughout the Bible, God has a way of showing up around tables. Both the Old and New Testaments feature a significant spiritual experience around the table: the Passover and the Lord's Supper.

After Jesus's resurrection, the disciples encounter Him on the banks of the Sea of Tiberias in John 21. They had just spent a long night fishing to no avail. Upon seeing Jesus, impulsive Peter jumps into the water fully clothed to get to Him. When he gets to Jesus, he finds a charcoal fire - the only other place a charcoal fire is mentioned in scripture is John 18, when Peter denied Jesus in front of the high priest. Jesus tells His friend, "come and have breakfast," inviting Him to a table of restoration. At this table, Jesus affirmed Peter's love for Him and commissioned Peter to the work of building His church.

In the fast-paced, tech-driven, attention-deficient, on-the-go world we live in, we need to recover the practice of table fellowship. The table is a place where broken sinners find connection and belonging. This makes the table a unique opportunity for sharing the Gospel. Dinner tables have the potential to be the most missional places in our home.

Perhaps before we invite our lost friends to church, we should invite them to dinner. Let's share our table with people who need restoration. Let's welcome the broken and needy and feed them with the abundance of our house so that they might see the light.



The Gospel and the Laundry

DAY FIVE DEVOTION

Bible Text: Isaiah 61:10-11, Matthew 6:25-34

At a recent leadership retreat I attended, we were asked to group ourselves based on which household chore we hate the most. Mine is laundry, hands down. As a mom of two young children, it seems like the laundry is never-ending. Even if I manage to wash and fold all of the clothes in the baskets, we are all wearing clothes so there is still dirty laundry to do. I'm convinced that of all the household chores, laundry is the most evil. When I look at piles of dirty laundry, all I see is sin. Why? Because laundry is directly related to the fall of man: we did not need clothes before sin entered the world!

All kidding aside, laundry can truly feel like a necessary evil of living in a fallen world. However, even our laundry can be used to help us focus on God's redemptive plan in the Gospel. While we are busy caring for the immediate, we can be mindful of the eternal.

For example, when we are folding laundry, we can pray truths from scripture over our lives. As we match socks, we can ask God to use us to carry the Gospel of peace (Ephesians 6:15). As we wash, dry and put away our clothes, we can thank God for clothing us with garments of salvation and wrapping us in

robes of righteousness through His Son, Jesus (Isaiah 61:10).

Ultimately, while we tend to the immediate need of doing our laundry, we can remember that our lives are made for more than this, and we are to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. By keeping this eternal perspective, we acknowledge that God is in control of all things, and that the everyday cares of this world are out of our hands. We affirm that our lives are more than clothing, and we entrust our cares to Him who is the Lord of all.

