

Radiant Church, July 12, 2015  
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Gospel Rhythms  
#1 Story-Formed

1 Peter 2:9-10 *But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.*

The gospel of Jesus forms our identity

We are chosen, we are royal, we are holy, God possesses us.

We have been called out of dark blindness to see and live in His light  
of his presence, power and pleasure

Why? So God could display and extend his mercy  
So we could proclaim his "excellencies"

How do we display the mercy God has given us?  
How do we proclaim his "excellencies"?

1 Peter 2:11-12 *Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.*

More on our identity: we are sojourners (travelers in a foreign land)  
we are exiles (away from our homeland)

2 Corinthians 5:20 says we are ambassadors (representing a foreign Kingdom)  
Therefore, the church, each local church is an embassy - in one  
land but representing another Kingdom

How do we function, then, as chosen, royal, holy possessions of God?

See ourselves as sojourners, as exiles, as ambassadors

Abstain from the passions of the flesh - power/control/comfort/affirmation

Know that we are the pawn/prize of a battle over our souls

Keep our conduct honorable around "Gentiles" (unbelievers)

When they speak of our beliefs as "evil" (out of rebellion against God)

They will not be able to dispute our deeds (lives) as good

What does that mean?

Are we "attractational" (drawing people to us) or are we "missional" (going out to them)?

We're both!

It's not that we're against attractional, or being attractive. It's more a question of the source and means of our being attractive.

Who or what are we attracting people with and to?  
Is our attraction an event, or a people?

The people of God have always been called to be a people on display for God's glory, and a sent people to the nations. They were supposed to be a display people for the nations in the everyday stuff of life, so that the world we see and experience the goodness and glory of God and be drawn to him.

Tim Chester has said, "church is not an event; it's a community. Mission is not an event; it's a lifestyle. We are called to live ordinary life with Gospel Intentionality."

If God's people, the Church are revolving around church activities and events, this leads to the de-sacredization of the majority of our lives.

In other words, if it's not happening at church, then it isn't holy

How would you define "full-time ministry"?

Every believer is called to full-time ministry - God just chooses to route our paychecks through different sources.

We don't GO to church; we ARE the church - this, I think we all believe

1 Corinthians 10:31 *So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever do, do all to the glory of God.*

Colossians 3:17 *And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.*

To walk in line with the gospel means that the truth of the gospel gets worked out in everyday life - through everyday activities...with Gospel intentionality on Gospel Mission because of our Gospel Identity.

How do we know if/when we are living this way?

Look at our rhythms

Every culture in the world, throughout history has daily, weekly,  
seasonal and yearly rhythms

So do we!

So to walk in line with the gospel, our rhythms need to be lived out with gospel intentionality, on gospel mission, out of our gospel identity

We are chosen, royal, holy possessions of God  
We are sojourners, exiles, ambassadors

Romans 1:17 *for in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, 'The Righteous shall live by faith.'*

Galatians 3:11 *now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for the righteous shall live by faith.*

We believe we are saved by faith in Jesus, not by what we do  
Our identity can be summed up in one sentence:

“Who God is and what He’s done determines who I am and how I live”

So how then do we live?

We live out our rhythms by faith

Galatians 2:20 *I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

Where do we start to know how and then to do this?

We start by knowing the Story of God

Because our stories (even our rhythms) fit into the grand narrative, the Story of God

Like every culture in the world, ours is a story-formed culture

Each of us has a story

Our immediate culture (Juneau) and our bigger culture (North America) have stories

All people, regardless of culture will live in what they believe to be the dominate story line

But as sojourners, exiles and ambassadors we know we are also a part of the Grand Story, the story of God

God has been unfolding His story since before time began

We believe we are participants in the story of God, and our only hope for redemption and restoration from our fear and prideful rebellion is when we by faith submit our lives to the overarching, dominate story of God.

Therefore, one of our rhythms, the primary rhythm is that we regularly reacquaint ourselves with and submit ourselves to the Story of God

**We are Story-Formed. We know and submit ourselves to the story of God while also becoming familiar with each others’ stories and the stories of our culture**

What, in a nutshell is the Story of God?

God has existed before time, he has always been God  
God created the world with a universe around it  
He created everything in the world, and said it was good  
He created man in His own image, and gave him authority over creation  
Man chose instead to believe the lie Satan told them about God  
Man rebelled in the garden, and was banished from the garden  
Thus estranged from God. Relationship broken

But God had a plan. It's always been his plan  
He provided a means for his grace to be seen and experienced  
He created for Himself a people, Israel, who could display the grace  
and glory of God in their daily rhythms  
And they failed. They put their faith in the rhythms instead in God  
So God's people were estranged from God. Relationship broken

But God's plan continued unhindered

God provided a Savior, Jesus, to die so we could live  
To be estranged from God so we could be reconciled  
To be killed so we could be restored  
To rise in victory over death so we could have hope

And God provided a people for himself, the church, to follow Jesus and  
live out gospel-motivated rhythms of life so the nations could see  
the grace and glory of God

And one day, God will gather his Church to himself around its Savior,  
Jesus, and we will be in God's presence to enjoy redemption and  
the full restoration of creation as his Kingdom

We have to know and remember God's overarching story

*Deuteronomy 6:6-9 and these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*

We have to know our own story, we can tell it as it fits into the story of God

I need to continue to grow in the gospel of grace and truth. I need to be self-aware and let the Spirit and the Word show me where my life past and present are not in line with the gospel story, God's story

We have to know each others' stories, so we can be reminded of God's grace and ongoing sanctification in each of us

We need to know each others' stories so we can hear where we are not

believing the gospel or basing our identity on some lesser narrative

And we have to know the story of our culture, so see the idols, and how our culture has chosen to believe lies instead of truth, and settle for lesser things that are broken and do not work.

So we can see open opportunities for the gospel to be demonstrated and declared

So we can tell and show through our daily rhythms how the story of God corrects the lies, fills the gaps and successfully completes the story of creation

*Philippians 2:15 ...that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world...*