

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, May 2, 2010

Passage: Colossians 1:9-14

Memory Passage: Colossians 1:13-14

TODAY: From your study this past week, what is one thing that impressed you that can be of help in your life?

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Colossians 1:7; 2:1; 4:12-13 & Acts 19:9-10.** Colossae was a town in Asia Minor located very near Laodicea & Hierapolis and app. 100 miles east of Ephesus. Considering the verses you just read from Colossians and Acts, do you think that Paul planted the church at Colossae? Why or why not?

(b) If not Paul, then who was the founder of the church at Colossae? What did you learn about him from these verses?

(c) Considering Acts 19:9-10, when & where might Epaphras have heard & believed the gospel?

(d) Paul describes Epaphras as a “bond-servant,” a “faithful servant of Christ,” a “bond-slave of Jesus Christ,” one who “labors earnestly” in prayer and has “a deep concern” for the saints. These are terms that partly describe the transformed life of every believer. Do they describe you? Would those who know you describe you in this way? Write 3 specific actions you will take this week in order to better submit to the Lord’s will in these areas (remember that these are marks of a believer’s life, not actions that make us believers).

(e) *Family:* Read Colossians 1:1-7. In v. 7 we are told that the Colossians learned “it” from Epaphras. What is “it”? If you were given 30 seconds to explain the gospel to someone, what would you say?

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read all 4 chapters of Colossians straight through.** Realizing that there are several key themes in this letter, what would you say is the letter’s overarching, predominant theme?

(b) Using your own words, write in a sentence or two a summary of the book of Colossians and why you think it was written. (This will be different from the predominant theme you identified in the first question.)

(c) Which section brought you the most joy as you read? Which section brought you the most conviction as you read? Give reasons for each.

(d) *Family:* Pretend that you are in the church at Colossae when this letter is read for the first time. Read the entire letter aloud, taking turns reading section by section. As it is being read, write down things that especially catch your attention or things about which you have questions. What would your response to the letter be? What questions do you have (see if others in the family can answer them)? What emotions did you feel as the letter was read? What emotions do you think the Colossians felt as the letter was read?

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Colossians 1:9-14.** In v. 9 what specifically is Paul and Timothy’s prayer for the Colossians? What are they asking the Colossians to actually “do”? Who will be “doing” the work when their prayer is answered?

(b) Read Romans 12:2. How are we to prove or discern God’s will? Write down specific ways that you are regularly pursuing this mind renewal. Can you think of other ways you might pursue this renewal? Write them down now and commit to putting at least one of them into practice tomorrow.

(c) What do Paul & Timothy mean when they write “in all spiritual wisdom and understanding”? Are there different types of wisdom and understanding? How do you know when you are filled with the knowledge of God’s will in the correct type of wisdom and understanding?

(d) You make many decisions in the course of your week. Think for a moment of the process by which you make them. Is your decision-making process saturated with your desire “to be filled with the knowledge of His will” as you “discern what the will of God is”? Given what you’ve learned today, how might you be more God-centered in your decision-making?

(e) *Family:* Read Proverbs 1:1-7. What is wisdom? Is it different from knowledge? Why should we care about wisdom? From whom do we learn wisdom? How do we grow in wisdom?

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT**READ THE PASSAGE**

(a) In the Scriptures the word “walk” can mean an actual physical movement of putting one foot in front of the other, or it can be used metaphorically to mean a person’s life. As you read the following passages, write down everything you learn about a believer’s walk: Romans 6:4-7; 8:3-4; Galatians 5:16-17, 25; Ephesians 2:10; 4:1-3; 5:1-2, 15-17; Colossians 2:6.

(b) From your observations in #1, develop and write down principles that will equip you and serve as encouragement as you live daily (“walk”) in the power of the Holy Spirit. You should write down several, and they should be practical. As you go through the next weeks, begin to apply these Scriptural principles to your walk.

(c) In v. 9, Paul and Timothy pray that the Colossians would “be filled with the knowledge of His will” and in v. 10 they write that one result of this filling would be the Colossians “increasing in the knowledge of God.” Both “be filled” and “increasing” are passive, meaning that the actions are done to the Colossians rather than the Colossians accomplishing them on their own. How does being filled with the knowledge of God’s will result in our increasing in the knowledge of God?

(d) *Family:* Read Ephesians 4:1-3. Have each family member demonstrate a different kind of walk (i.e. one might walk with a limp, another on their hands, another very slowly, etc.). What might each one’s walk tell us about the one walking (the one with a limp might have a handicap or injury, the one on their hands might be acrobatic, etc.). Remember that the Bible sometimes uses the word “walk” to refer metaphorically to our lives. In the same way our physical walks reveal certain truths about our physical lives, so our spiritual walks reveal certain truths about our spiritual lives. What would the “walk” look like of a person who is demonstrating the characteristics mentioned in Ephesians 4:2-3?

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT**READ THE PASSAGE**

(a) **Read Ephesians 1:15-23.** What did you learn about the strength of God’s might in vs. 20 & 22? Toward whom is this power directed (v. 19)?

(b) Another result of “being filled with the knowledge of His will” (v. 9) is that we will be “strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might.” This is the same power which you just learned God used to raise Jesus from the dead and exalt Him to His own right hand! According to v. 11 (Col. 1:11), for what purpose are we strengthened? What areas of your life require patient endurance? Be specific! In what ways will you apply today the truths you have learned about God’s power directed toward you? Again, be specific!

(c) In Colossians 1:12-14, for what reasons are the Colossians (and us!) to give thanks to the Father? Write a psalm of thanksgiving to God for these benefits, which are provided to you through the finished work of Christ on the cross.

(d) *Family:* Read Colossians 1:9-14. Name feats or accomplishments that require a maximum amount of physical power. Now name feats or accomplishments that require spiritual power. According to v. 11, with how much power do Paul & Timothy ask that we would be strengthened? And this power is according to whose might? Consider the list you made of spiritual accomplishments. What is the difference between accomplishing these in your own power and in God’s power?

DAY 6 – ASK FOR INSIGHT**READ THE PASSAGE**

Read Ephesians 3:14-21. This week you have read 3 of Paul’s prayers (Ephesians 1:15-23; 3:14-21; Colossians 1:9-14). Consider the frequency (“do not cease” in Ephesians 1:16; “always,” “have not ceased” in Colossians 1:3, 9) and content of these prayers. How does your prayer life compare to Paul’s? Considering what you have learned this week, write down at least 3 practical ways in which you might strengthen the content of your prayers as you pray for other believers. Begin praying right now with these three applications in mind.

DATE: May 2, 2010

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A Walk That Pleases God