

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, August 15, 2010

Passage: Colossians 2:8-10

Memory Passage: Col. 2:8

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 Col. 2:8-10, Mark 13:9, Phil. 3:2 & 2 John 8.** Paul begins with this section of Colossians with the words, “see to it.” The Greek word behind this phrase has the meaning of “beware” or “be on your guard.” According to these other uses of the words you just read, what things are we to be on our guard for?

(b) The Greek word behind “takes you captive” was used of plundering a ship’s cargo, or carrying off any type of booty or spoil. What are some dangers that you would feel strongly enough about to use this type of language in warning other believers (don’t be bound by this text as you answer this. Think about dangers weak or unsuspecting believers face today).

(c) Now reread Col. 1:8 (to put yourself back into the context of this verse). What dangers loom for the Colossians that Paul is warning of?

(d) *Family:* Plan beforehand to have your wife or oldest child miss the beginning of devotions, hiding in an adjacent room. Have everyone open their Bibles and begin to read together Col. 1:8-10. After a few seconds of reading, have your wife or oldest child run into the room (no smiling or talking) and grab one of the children and take them from the room. Ask, “What just happened?” After answers have been given, have the captor and captive return to the room and lead in a discussion of what it means to be carried into captivity. Then read Col. 1:8-10 and discuss how trusting in Christ can protect us from being taken spiritually captive by false teaching.

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Colossians 2:8-10.** The first thing Paul warns about being taken captive by is “philosophy.” Is Paul talking about all philosophy? How do we know? If not all philosophy, then which philosophy?

(b) Paul continues to describe this philosophy as one of “empty deceit.” **Read Mark 4:19, Eph. 4:22; 2 Thess. 2:10 & Heb. 3:13.** What other things are we warned about with regard to their deceitfulness in these verses.

(c) As you consider these other areas of deceitfulness, are there any areas of your life that need your attention? Are there activities or thoughts in your life that reveal that you are being held captive to these areas of deceitfulness from which you need to repent? Spend some time in prayer repenting of these areas, and asking God to guide you into righteousness through the Holy Spirit, and to overcome your sinful desires in these areas with Christ and His sufficiency.

(d) *Family:* Using your white board (or equivalent) make two columns under the heading: “Guarding Against Deceitfulness.” **Read Col. 2:8**, and explain what “deceit” means. Then have a different person read each of the following passages, (Mark 4:19, Eph. 4:22; 2 Thess. 2:10 & Heb. 3:13) and after each one is read, discuss what the verse says can be deceitful (have someone write this in the first column with the Scripture reference), and discuss ways in which we can guard ourselves from being taken captive from these possible deceptions (and have someone write this in the second column).

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Col. 1:1-2:10.** According to 2:8, what how does Paul explain the origins of this philosophy and empty deceit?

(b) What does Paul mean when he says that these are “according to the traditions of men” (See Mark 7:1-13)? Are all traditions bad (see 1 Cor. 11:2; 2 Thess. 3:6, 2:15)? How do you tell the difference between a good tradition, a bad tradition, and a neutral tradition?

(c) According to Col. 1:8, what should guide our philosophy? How would those who taught “philosophy and empty deceit according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world” change their philosophy to be “according to Christ?” I realize that Paul is not asking them to change, but since they are teaching in a way that Paul is concerned about, how do you think they might change in order to not receive Paul’s criticism

(d) *Family:* Start a discussion about traditions in your family. Help your family remember all of the traditions, big and small, that you have. **Read Mark 7:1-13 and Col. 2:8** together, then teach the difference between “human traditions” and traditions that are “according to Christ.” Then review your list of family traditions, finding Christ in all of them, and see if you can discuss other possibilities for other traditions that are “according to Christ.”

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

(a) **Read Colossians 2:8-10.** To what is Paul referring in v. 8 when he writes “according to the elemental spirits of the world”?

(b) Considering all you have learned so far this week, what types of philosophies are people in danger of being taken captive by today? Make a list of a least three (although you could easily list many more, so go ahead if you like!).

(c) Now look at your list and choose 2 or 3 of these philosophies and consider how you could counter their teachings with a philosophy that is “according to Christ.”

(d) *Family:* Spend some time thinking of a news story from the last few weeks that has a rather sensational storyline. Then, make up a storyline that is a little sensational, but still has a ring of truth to it. Tell both stories to your family, and have them decide which story is true and which is false. You may want to type each story out and hand out copies if you have readers in your home. After they choose which they think is true, and give their reasons why, ask them how they would tell the difference between sound biblical teaching and teaching from the Bible that sounds true but is not. Your family’s answers will give you insight into how to teach them the difference.

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

(a) **Read Colossians 2:8-10 & Col. 1:19.** Try to remember what you learned a few weeks ago about the fullness of God dwelling in Christ when you studied Col. 1:19. Write down what you remember.

(b) Paul uses the word “for” to begin Col. 2:9. What does this tell us? (In other words, how does what Paul says in v. 9 relate to what has come before?)

(c) How does the fullness of deity dwell in Christ? Paul is describing the incarnation of Christ when he uses this phrase. Take a moment to write down all of the passages of Scripture that come to your mind when you think of Christ’s incarnation (Hint: you can begin in John 1 and use your margin references or study bible notes or concordance to remind yourself of these passages).

Family: **Read Col. 2:9-10, Phil. 2:4-8 & John 1:14-18.** C.S. Lewis once described the incarnation by asking if a person would give up their life to become a dog if it meant that all dogs everywhere would have the chance to become like men. Ask this question (use another animal if it will cause your family to relate to the illustration more) and start a discussion of the sacrifice it would be to leave their life and become this animal. Then teach about the incarnation of Christ from John 1 & Philippians 2 and Col. 2.

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

(a) Consider the quote by Albert Camus: “Truth, like light, blinds. Falsehood, on the contrary, is a beautiful twilight that enhances every object” (Albert Camus, *The Fall*, 120, quoted in David E. Garland, *Colossians/Philemon, The NIV Application Commentary*, 166). This quote illustrates what makes deception so dangerous, especially when what is in error is very close to the truth. Think of one of the philosophies you wrote about on DAY 4 (b) & (c), and consider how each matches this comment (in other words, what ways does this deceptive philosophy seem alluring to people, and in what ways does the truth in opposition to the falsehood seem to be overwhelmingly blinding?)

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The Sufficiency of Christ