

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, Nov. 21, 2010

Passage: Col. 3:20-21

Memory Passage: Col. 3:20-21

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) Write down the 10 Commandments from memory (don't cheat by looking them up!).
- (b) **Read Ex. 20:1-17** and check your list. Now Read Deut. 5:16 and compare this verse with Ex. 20:12. What differences do you see in these 2 accounts of the 5th commandment? What do the promises “that your days may be long and that it may go well with you” mean? (in other words, if children honor their parents, what will be their future?)
- (c) These 2 promises are echoes of promises to the nation of Israel as a whole (for “long days” see Deut. 4:40; 5:43; 6:2; 11:9; 12:15; 30:18 & for “go well” see 4:40; 5:29, 33; 6:3, 18 et. al.), so every believer has the same promises made to them. On what are these promises based? What is required of us to have these promises applied to us? In what ways have these promises been applied to you? How would you use these acts of God in your life to instruct your children in their responsibilities of honoring parents?
- (d) *Family:* If your children have memorized the 10 Commandments, have them recite them now. If you have not, spend time memorizing them together, teaching them what each of them mean (you can find them in Ex. 20:1-17 & Deut. 5:1-20). Ask you family, “What does it mean to ‘honor’ your father & mother?” Lead them in discussion as you teach them that to honor someone means to regard a person with great respect, and that when they differ to that person or obey their wishes they are demonstrating their honor to them. Close by reciting the 10 Commandments from memory.

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Eph. 6:1-4.** How does Paul explain “honoring” for children in these verses? How would you explain what it means to “honor your father & mother?” How are “obeying” & “honoring” connected?
- (b) As you read the following verses, write down all the ways we are commanded to “honor.” **Rom. 2:10; 13:7; Phil. 2:29; 1 Tim. 5:17; 6:1; Heb. 13:4; 1 Pet. 2:17; 3:7, 15.** How are you doing with all of these commands to “honor” others in your life? How might you use instances of being obedient to these commands to instruct your children/grandchildren/church family children to honor their parents? What kind of witness are you modeling for them in your own response to these commands?
- (c) *Family: Read Ephesians 6:1-4.* Lead your family in a discussion about what you learned together last night about honoring our father & mother. Have your white board ready and ask someone to come forward and record the list that you will make as a family of all the ways that a child might honor their parents. Think through this before your time of worship and write down as many ways you can think of. Be creative and practical. Honoring can be as simple as stepping back when guests come into the house so that dad/mom can greet them first, and you should be able to come up with dozens of ways to help your kids gain practical knowledge of how to obey this command.

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Eph. 5:25-33 & Col. 3:20-21.** How are we to interpret the phrase “live long in the land” that is found in Eph. 5:3? Are we to ignore this passage, or say that it does not affect us because we are not the nation of Israel entering into the Promised Land? Since the answer to this questions is “Of course not!” then how do we explain it and apply it today?
- (b) What is the reason that children should obey their parents as found in each of these passages? How do these facts (children are to obey because it is “right” and it “pleases the Lord”) help us teach our children about obedience? How do they help us discipline our children when they disobey us? How do we appeal to Biblical motives as we demand obedience?
- (c) Children are commanded to obey their parents “in everything.” How consistent are you in the discipline of your children/grandchildren? Since complete obedience is required, is there ever room for allowing disobedience? If so, when should disobedience be allowed? Does God allow you to be disobedient? Where & how do we exercise grace in our parenting and what does it look like?
- (d) *Family:* Think of specific instances in which your children should be obedient. Try to come up with at least 2 situations that are very real for each of your kids. **Read Col. 3:20** and emphasize the “in everything” part of the command. Ask simple questions like, “Is there any situation in which you do not have to obey your parents?” to get them to realize the scope of “everything.” Then one by one, present the situation in which there is a correct choice of action for obedience and ask the group each time to tell what that correct course would be in order to be obedient. Then ask, “How would being obedient cause things to “go well with you” (Eph. 6:3)? Lead them in a discussion about God’s blessings to us when we obey Him.

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

- (a) **Read Eph. 6:4 & Col. 3:21.** The text specifically mentions father with regard to provoking their children. Does this mean that mothers are exempt from this command? Why or why not? What does the word “provoke” mean? Why do you think fathers are specifically addressed with regard to provoking?
- (b) To what specific end does Paul tell us in Eph. 6:4 provoking fathers can lead their children? Why would Paul be concerned about this? (hint: what does the Bible say about anger?) To what specific end does Paul tell us in Col. 3:21 fathers can lead their children? What dangers to children arise if they are discouraged? How does this affect their ability to honor?
- (c) Name several ways that fathers can provoke their children. How would you counsel a dad who is struggling in these ways? If you are a father, name several ways that you are tempted to provoke your children. Write down several practical ways that you can overcome these sins (think back to our recent discussion on killing our sin for some help here).
- (d) *Family:* Discuss with your family the meaning of the word “provoke.” Be prepared with a definition(s) that will bring the meaning to life for each age of children you have. Be prepared with examples they would completely understand (like provoking a dog or other animal to bite them by poking it with a stick, provoking their siblings, etc). Read Col. 3:21 and explain this command. Take a few minutes to confess and repent of times that you might have provoked your kids to anger or discouragement, ask for their forgiveness, and tell them of your desire to be a great dad who never provokes them. Pray together for your strength in this area. Have your kids pray for you if they will.

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

- (a) **Read Eph. 6:4.** Paul does not only tell fathers what they should not do, but what they should do. What is the difference between “discipline” and “instruction” in this verse? What does the modifying phrase “of the Lord” tell us about these acts?
- (b) Can you think of examples in Scripture of men who failed to do this? What about men who succeeded? What were the consequences for the children in both cases?
- (c) Write down as many ways as you can think of for a father to bring up his children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. If you are married, speak with your spouse and compare lists, and then commit to helping each other carry out this very important task. If you are not yet married or don’t yet have children, write down several resolutions (i.e. “I resolve to . . .”) in which you promise yourself that you will accomplish these activities in the future. Keep this list in your Bible in Eph. 6.
- (d) *Family: Read Eph. 6:4.* Take some time to explain to your family what Paul means by “bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” Give enough specifics so that all of your kids understand. Then ask, “How many ways can you come up with that daddy can accomplish this task in our family?” Be ready to “prime their pumps” with some suggestions of your own to get the conversation going. Help them be creative. Then enjoy making plans to carry these activities out in the future and remind them of their role as children to honor their parents by obeying them.

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

- (a) By now you might be completely overwhelmed by your task as a husband, wife, parent or child as you have learned it in Col. 3:18-21. Spend some time meditating on verses like Phil. 4:13, Eph. 3:20 & Gal. 2: 20 and ask God to strengthen you in your desire and ability to obey Him in these tasks. Memorize one or more of these verses and return to them every day next week to remind you of the strength you have in Christ to bring glory to Him through your obedience to His word.

DATE: November 21, 2010

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Christ-centered Families Part III: Children & Fathers