

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, June 20th, 2010

Passage: Colossians 1:3-8

Memory Passage: Hebrews 11:1

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. 1:1-8.** In v. 3 Paul connects thanksgiving with prayer in his own life. How do you think they are connected? How does one act affect the other? How much of your prayer life includes thanksgiving?

(b) How does giving thanks impact the focus of your prayer life? Do you think spending more time giving thanks would benefit your prayer life? If so, ask the Lord right now to bring this desire to your memory every time you pray.

(c) Giving thanks is a great way to keep focused on God rather than yourself. This week, every time you are tempted to complain, feel sorry for yourself, be grumpy, or any other self-centered action, begin thanking God for every blessing that you can think of. Your thinking will be turned away from yourself & toward God, and you will forget about what distressed you!

(d) *Family:* Discuss what it means to be thankful (remember to discuss the state of our hearts, not just the words of our lips!). Help each other understand how we can be more active in giving thanks to God. Then, state why they are thankful for the family member sitting on their left.

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Colossians chapter 1:3-8 & Hebrews 11:1.** The Colossians' faith was "in Jesus Christ." This phrase refers to the sphere in which their faith is exercised. In other words, the Colossian Christians lived and acted out their faith under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Think of your own life for a moment. Are there areas of your life that you live as if they were outside of the sphere (the Lordship) of Christ? Name these areas. Meditate for a moment on Hebrews 11:1 and then write down a couple of specific ways that you can begin thinking of these areas as in the sphere of (under the Lordship of) Christ.

(b) In v. 4 Paul says he "heard" of the Colossians faith in Christ Jesus. This text gives several tangible ways he might have heard of this faith. What are they?

(c) If someone were to "hear" of the faith of the Bible Church of Cabot, for what types of things would they give thanks to God when they prayed? What tangible, visible evidence would there be of our faith?

(d) *Family:* **Read Hebrews 11:1.** Name several things that we believe exist even though we can't see them. Is it difficult to have faith that these things exist and have a purpose? Is it difficult to have faith in Christ and His promises even though we can't see him? Why/why not?

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read 1 John 3:10-16.** According to this passage, what is our spiritual state if we do not love brothers & sisters in Christ? If you were in charge of writing a dictionary entry for "loving the brethren," what would your definition be?

(b) Read v. 12. Did Cain become evil when he murdered Abel, or did he murder Abel because he was evil? What does this tell us about ourselves and our ability to love each other?

(c) Write down 3 recent instances that your love for other believers was evident. Did these acts bring you joy as you were given assurance of your own salvation? Should they have been considered assurance of your salvation? Why/why not?

(d) *Family:* **Read 1 John 3:10-16.** As a family, choose another family of believers with whom you currently have little interaction. Make a list of ways you can begin to exercise love toward them (all ages should be involved in this!). Pray as a family for strength, courage, and opportunity to love this family in these ways.

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Colossians 1:3-8.** Why is it important that our hope is laid up for us in heaven? How can this fact help us exercise our faith every day?

(b) How did the Colossians first hear about this hope (v. 5)? How did they receive this hope (v. 6)?

(c) **As you read Romans 5:2; Galatians 5:5; 1 Corinthians 15:52-55; 1 Thessalonians 5:8 & Titus 1:2; 3:7,** make notes concerning what you learn about the content of hope.

(d) **Read Hebrews 11:1.** What is the relationship between faith & hope?

(e) *Family*: **Read 11 Thessalonians 1:2-3**. This is another passage in which the characteristics of faith, hope and love are used. Discuss what a family's life would look like if they were known by their "work of faith," "labor of love," and "steadfastness of hope." How can you be more involved in exercising faith, hope, and love as a family?

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Colossians Chapter 1** Focusing on vs. 5-7, write down everything you learn about the gospel at work in the Colossians.

(b) What did the Colossians have to do in order to have the gospel produce visible faith, hope & love in their midst?

(c) Several weeks ago you heard a sermon on fruit-bearing from John 15 in which there were many applications. As one who has heard & understood the gospel, list several ways that the gospel is "bearing fruit" and "increasing" (v. 6) in your life.

(d) *Family*: Truth is an important concept in this passage (read vs. 5-6). What is truth? How can we know what truth is? Can something be true today but not be true tomorrow? Are there things that are "absolutely" true (true for all people, in all times, in all places)? What should our response be to absolute truth?

DAY 6 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) What does Paul mean when he calls Epaphras a "bond-servant" in v. 7 (ESV "servant")? Is this a negative or a positive characterization?

(b) Conduct a word search on the word "bond-servant" or "bond-slave" and make notes on what you find.

(c) Think of someone in your life who has been influential in your spiritual growth, a mentor or discipler perhaps. In what ways did they exhibit the heart of a bond-servant? How did their life affect you (or how does it now as you contemplate their life)? How can you begin to model this type of service to others in the hope that God will glorify Himself through you in strengthening and encouraging others?

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A Visible Faith