

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, August 22, 2010

Passage: Colossians 2:11-15

Memory Passage: Col. 2:13

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) Take a moment to summarize the main truths of Colossians 2:8-10 from your study last week.
- (b) **Read Deut. 10:16, 30:6, Jer. 4:4 and Rom. 2:20.** What do you learn from these verses about circumcision? Is it physical or spiritual? Why do you think so? Who was to do the circumcising in the OT passages?
- (c) **Now read Col. 2:11.** Is this circumcision physical or spiritual? Who is to be circumcised? Who does the circumcising?
- (d) Paul is continuing his discussion of the sufficiency of Christ in the life of a believer. How do you think this idea of spiritual circumcision carries this idea forward? What encouragement does it bring to you as you contemplate walking humbly with Christ this week?
- (e) *Family:* **Read Ezekiel 36:26-27.** Begin with a discussion of what the differences are between stone and flesh. Guide this discussion by asking follow-up questions (“Can a stone beat,” “Is a stone usually hot or cold?”, “What is the purpose of the heart?” etc.). Then explain that these verses describe a work of God in us spiritually, and that spiritually our hearts are like cold, lifeless stones before God regenerates us (changes our hearts from stone to flesh; makes us alive in Christ) and causes us to live for Christ and not ourselves. Emphasize that God is the one who works by emphasizing the “I will”s of the text.

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Colossians 2:12 & 1 Cor. 15:3-4.** What two ideas are common to both of these passages of Scripture? How do you think these two ideas tie these two passages together
- (b) What does it mean to be “buried” with Christ in baptism? Is this baptism spiritual or physical? How is the idea of being buried with Christ tied to v. 11?
- (c) Col. 2:12 tells us that believers are “raised through faith.” What does this mean? What does the rest of this verse tell us about the object of this faith? What has the object of our faith accomplished?
- (d) This verse is a synopsis of the gospel, of Christ’s work on our behalf and its affects in our life. Think for a moment of why this is important to you as you seek to live a life of faithful, loving obedience to Christ. Write down at least 3 or 4 ways that these truths should empower you to live for Christ.
- (e) *Family:* Begin a discussion of the physical act of baptism. Hopefully your family was able to attend our baptism service last week and you have this as an object lesson, but if not, explain what happens in a baptism service (a person professes faith in Jesus, they are placed under the water for a moment and brought back out). Begin asking questions like, “What would happen if the person was never brought up out of the water?” and “How would they respond if they were held under for several minutes and then raised out of the water?” and “How grateful would they be to breathe?” Then **read Col. 2:12** and explain the symbolism of baptism presented in this verse.

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- Read Col. 2:9-15.** The concept of “in Christ” is an important theme in Colossians. We have already seen this concept in 1:14, 16, 19 & 22, and we find it 8 times in chapter 2. Read the 4 uses in chapter 1, find the 8 uses in chapter two, and write down what we learn from each use. Remember that the phrase might be worded differently at times (i.e. in Christ, in Him, in Whom, by Him, in His body, etc.).
- (a) Most of these “in Christ” passages show a direct tie between the work of Christ and you as a believer. Write a paragraph summing up the benefits you have received by being placed “in Christ” (i.e. “Because I am in Christ, I am now . . .”). Now write a paragraph stating how these benefits allow you to “walk in Christ” just as you have “received Christ” (Col. 2:6). Be specific and think through these benefits and their day-to-day implications for your walk.
- (b) *Family:* Be prepared with a dry sponge, a ziplock bag and a bucket/bowl of water. Hold up the sponge (hiding the ziplock bag) and ask, “If I place this sponge in this bowl, will it get wet?” When everyone says that it will, ask, “How do you know?” After they make their case, then place the sponge into the ziplock bag and place it in the water. Say, “I guess you were wrong!” and ask why the sponge stayed dry. Encourage the discussion to be full by asking more questions, so that the answers paint a picture of the sponge being safe inside the bag from the water that surrounds it. Read Col. 2:3-15 and have

everyone write down all the references to “In Christ” that they hear (you will probably need to help by pointing out all of these references as you read). Then discuss how each one of these helps them to rely on Christ each day that they live.

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

Read Colossians 2:11-15. What is the relationship between being “dead in your trespasses” and “dead in your uncircumcision of your flesh” in v. 13?

(a) What would you say was the main significance of the second half of v. 13 compared to the first half of v. 13 (If my question seems confusing, read Romans 5:8 for some more clarity).

(b) How did God make alive those who were dead? Since you are memorizing Col. 2:13 this week, in what ways might this verse be helpful as you witness to others about Christ this week? In what ways might this verse be helpful as you dialogue with Christian friends from other churches who do not have an understanding of the sovereign power of God in salvation?

(c) *Family:* Ask, “Have you ever killed a bug or a spider by squishing it with your foot?” (You can even bring in a bug, or have your devotions outside and actually kill a bug. This is what I would do ☺). After they answer, ask, “Once you killed the bug, is there any way that it could be brought back to life?” (No, it would take a miracle!) Then **read Eph. 2:1-9**. Using this passage, present the gospel of Jesus Christ to your family. Remind them that without Christ we are spiritually as dead as that bug, but God worked a miracle to “make us alive together with Christ,” and this is a “gift from God.”

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

Read Eph. 3:13-16 & Col. 2:14. In the first century the Greek word for “record of debt” was used for legal obligations written in the debtor’s own hand. To what was Paul referring when he uses this term in Col. 2:14?

(a) What are the “legal demands” of this “record of debt?” How did they “stand against us?”

(b) What is the difference between having our sins forgiven (v. 13) and having your “record of debt” “canceled” and “set aside”? Is one a furtherance of the other? Is one more significant than the other? Are they separate acts or the same act?

(c) Describe how the cross is involved in all of this forgiving, setting aside and canceling (“nailing it to the cross” in v. 14).

(d) *Family:* Have paper, pencils and a dollar bill for each person ready before you begin. Give each person a dollar. Then say, “I want you to repay this dollar, so write down ‘I owe dad \$1.00’ on your paper. Then collect each IOU. Then say, I forgive your debt! You don’t have to pay it back!” Then hand out the IOU’s and tell them to keep them in front of them, and as you converse, keep reminding them of the forgiven debt by pointing to the IOU’s. Try to get them to feel the weight of the IOU even though the debt is forgiven. Then take the IOUs, erase each sentence on each page, and throw the IOUs in the trash. Then **read Col. 2:13-14** and teach this passage using your IOUs as an object lesson.

DAY 6 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Col. 1:15-16 & 2:6-15.** In what ways are these verses related? What are some influences that are active in our society that these verses speak to? How will the truths of these verses help you minister to people who are caught up in these influences?

(b) In what way did Christ “disarm” the rulers and authorities and “put them to open shame?” How does this truth strengthen you in your daily walk with Christ? Remember that this is not just a theological truth that we can/must understand, but it is the final statement in Paul’s assault against false teachers at Colossae and his final word of encouragement to believers there who might be tempted by these “philosophies of empty deceit” to trust in the sufficiency of Christ. So how does it apply to you! Today! ☺

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