**HOME GROUP GUIDE**

**February 2, 2020**

**Colossians 1:1-8**

**Sermon Title: Becoming A Ready Bride**

**About this guide:**

This guide is provided to assist your home group in discussion and application of the most recent sermon. This guide provides direction for application-based discussion within a small group as well as discussion material. **Please know that the guide is not designed with the intent that every question be answered systematically**. Feel free to pick and choose the questions that fit your group and structure your time together using the guide to maximize your group’s benefit.

Notice organization of the guide: looking back, looking up and looking forward. “Looking back” is the time for the group to consider how the last week or two has gone, to share about struggles and victories. Consider choosing one or two items from this section to answer.

“Looking Up and Looking Forward” is a time to discuss the sermon and how the group might further apply the truth of God’s word, making specific plans individually and as a group to walk by faith in the week to come. This is also a time to encourage each other, minister to each other and pray for each other. Try to choose a couple elements from each section.

The guide also contains a family discipleship section with a few ideas on how to intentionally engage in following the Lord as a family.

**Looking back:**

* Share how you have been doing since you last met:
	+ What biblical truths have been shaping your life and heart over the last week or so?
	+ What has dominated your prayer life this week?
	+ What was a “win” in your life this last week (something that happened that resulted in thankfulness, a moment of spiritual growth or victory, an answered prayer, etc.)?
	+ What was the biggest challenge in your life this last week? Is there anything that you need to share with your home group in the form of confession?
* With whom were you able to begin to build a gospel bridge of conversation since the last time we met? With whom were you able to share the gospel message?
* How can the group help you in your life this next week?

**Looking Up and Looking Forward (Specific, Realistic, Measurable, Personal): Read Colossians 1:1-8**

Recap: In the first few verses of Colossians we see thankfulness and encouragement as themes. We read how important expressing our thankfulness can be to those who are close to us, and how this can encourage them toward a closer walk with Jesus.

1. As your Home Group grows closer, our hope is that you will develop a deep love and respect for each member. Living on mission requires a strong home base and a source of encouragement. As you read the passage look for the themes of thankfulness and encouragement.
* Has anyone you deeply respect ever thanked you or provided you with encouragement? Share a story.
* How did this make you feel?
* What did you feel hearing other people’s stories of encouragement for the first time?
* When someone expresses gratitude toward you or provides you with affirmation and encouragement, does this spur you on to do the same to another?
* Are there other themes that you notice in the passage?
1. Paul is thankful for the spread of the gospel in the church at Colossae and in the world around them.
* How have you seen the gospel spreading in our church at FBG? In your home group?
* What would it be like to see an explosion of the gospel in our church and in our community (see verse 6)? How can we be a part of what God is doing in our church and community?
* Have you identified someone close to you who you can lead closer to Jesus? Share these names with your Home Group and take time to pray for each other as we seek to see the gospel spread among those close to us.
1. Paul tells us a meaningful story about the Colossians and Epaphras in these first few verses of Colossians. Our words of encouragement and thankfulness can tell powerful and meaningful stories to those we share them with.
* How are you investing in gospel centered stories with the way in which you live?
* How are you watching to see the gospel centered stories that others are involved in and encouraging them?

**Don’t forget:**

1. Pray for one another. Share one specific prayer request you need your group to pray each day until you meet again.
2. Pray for each of our campuses/venues: the Georgetown campus- Worship Center Sundays at 9:30 and 11:00 a.m., Gym Venue at 11:00 a.m. and Liberty Hill Campus at 11:00 a.m.
3. Give thanks for the blessings of a local church that provides us with a home base where we can find rest and strength to go live on mission.

**Family Discipleship Ideas (Deuteronomy 6:5-7):**

 **When you wake**: Each morning read the verse and use the conversation starters below.

**Read Colossians 1:1-8**

Monday | V. 1-2— Who is Paul?  To whom is he writing this letter? How does he describe them?

Tuesday | V. 3-5a — What has Paul heard about the Colossians?  In verse 3, who does Paul thank?

Wednesday | V. 5b-6— What does Paul say the gospel is doing among the Colossians?  When did it start growing?

Thursday | V. What did Epaphras tell Paul about the Colossians?  How would you describe the Colossians to a friend?

**Before you sleep**: As you tuck your children into bed at night (whether aged 2 or 22) remind them of one these simple truths each night:

* God is a
* father who wants to give good things to His children.
* God equips us to love other people, even when it seems hard.
* Jesus loved us so much that He *chose* to die for us.

**God’s children have offered blessings to their children since ancient times.  As you say goodnight, grab your child’s hand and pray this short blessing.  Don’t worry, you’ll have it memorized soon enough. But, in the meantime, there’s no shame in reading it from your phone or a printed copy.** **You’ll be surprised how much they love it, and how quickly they come to expect it.**   *“The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you, the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.”*[*Numbers 6:24-26*](http://www.biblestudytools.com/search/?t=niv&q=nu+6:24-26)

**When you sit down:**

 Read Colossians 1:1-8

* Pick two members of your family.  Have one of them tell a story about the other and something good that person did.
* What thoughts went through you mind?  How did that make you feel?  What did you tell yourself to do next?
* Why does a (seemingly) simple act of sharing gratefulness and thankfulness seem so powerful?  As a family, how can we use specific, intentional expressions of gratitude to potentially change someone’s life (through their feeling encouraged, affirmed, not feeling alone, etc.) this week?

**Along the way:**

As you drive to and from drop-offs and pick-ups, here are some conversation starters to engage your kids in.

* The words we choose to say to each other have a great effect on what happens next…our actions (both ours and theirs!).  Discuss how the words we choose when we share the gospel impact how someone else ‘receives’ the message.
* Think about what words can we use and in what ways can we share the good news about Jesus Christ today as we walk along the road this week!
* Pray specifically for one person that you can talk to today to share your gratefulness for them and ultimately show them through your words the love that Jesus Christ has for them!