**HOME GROUP GUIDE**

**February 23, 2020**

**Colossians 1:21-23**

**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 1:21-23**

Recap: It is mind boggling to think that the God of the universe, the one who created all things, could communicate who he is and what he desires for us through language; something as simple as grammar. It transcends all things and allows us to see who God is and what he has done.

1. As you read this passage, what phrases stand out?

* Paul tells the Colossians that “Once you were alienated...”. This gives a 1000 foot view of what their life was like before. Share with your home group what your life was like before Christ. What are some adjectives you would use to describe your relationship to God before Christ?
* The phrase “But now…” puts us right in the middle of the action of this passage as the action is unfolding. The Colossians have been reconciled. What does this mean? How did it happen? Did they do anything? Where have you seen reconciliation occur?
* Verse 23 begins with a warning. What does it look like to remain grounded and steadfast in the faith?

1. In verse 21, Paul tells the Colossians that they were alienated and hostile in mind toward God because of their evil actions.

* What does it mean to be hostile in mind? Would you consider yourself to be evil? How do you compare yourselves to others? Does this make you any more or less evil in God’s sight? Discuss with your home group how you can talk about this with people that don’t know Jesus.
* Imagine that you are standing in the presence of God. What would you say about the sin that is in your life? Is there any way in which you could take care of that sin, or explain it away?
* Spend some time praying together for people who are “alienated and hostile” toward the Lord that they would be reconciled to Him.

1. In verse 22, we learn that we are presented to God as holy, faultless, and blameless because of Christ's work on the cross.

* What does it mean to be considered holy, faultless and blameless before the Lord?
* Last week, we spoke about being in awe of who Jesus is. This week, we can be consumed with thanksgiving for what he has done. Read vs 13-14 and then read 21-22. Discuss what it would mean to stand before God in our evil actions versus being presented before God holy, faultless, and blameless.

1. While driving, have you ever seen a sharp turn sign? We know when we see this sign, we better slow down, pay attention, and turn. We have already discussed other places in Scripture where there are warnings.

* How good are we at seeing these warning signs in our own lives? How good are we at obeying these warnings? Share a time you either saw a warning sign and changed course or went right through a warning sign and reaped the consequences.
* How have you experienced the Lord’s compassion and mercy by His warnings throughout Scripture?

1. Paul tells us in verse 23 that we are reconciled “if we remain grounded and steadfast in the faith and are not shifted away from the gospel…”.

* How do we have the assurance that we are reconciled? Read verses 10-12. Paul has already told us what remaining steadfast looks like. If we are steadfast and grounded in the gospel, our lives should be bearing fruit, growing in the knowledge of God, be strengthened according to his might, and giving thanks to the Father. Are these things reflected in your life?
* Talk about how you can encourage each other to remain grounded and steadfast in the faith.

**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. Continue to pray and fast for someone close to you who you want to lead closer to Jesus.

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

**When you wake**:

This week we will be exploring the will of God. Each day read a verse and discuss.

Monday - Read Colossians 1: 21. What do you think it takes for a person to be evil? Read Romans 3:10. How does this change your thoughts on the word “evil”?

Tuesday-Read Eph 2:1-2. How does this describe a person before their faith in Jesus?

Wednesday - Read Eph 2:13. Can you describe what the verse might mean by someone who is “far”? How would someone be brought near by the blood of Christ?

Thursday - Read Colossians 1:21 and Romans 8:7. What do these verses say about the inclination of our minds/hearts without the Holy Spirit?

Friday - Read Colossians 1:21 and Jude 24. If the verse in Colossians says “if you continue in the faith”, what assurance does the verse in Jude give you.

**Before you sleep**:

As you tuck your kids in bed this week be intentional about bringing up these truths:

* When we trust in Christ, what is true of Him is true of us. God sees us as righteous because of Jesus.
* Trusting in Jesus means that we believe there is nothing we can do that will gain us more favor with God, because Jesus already did everything.
* Remind your children of all ages: there is nothing you could ever do to make me love you less. Nor is there anything you can do to make me love you more! (This is true of God too!)

**When you sit down:**

Carve out 10 - 15 minutes this week to discuss this passage in Colossians. We will focus on our natural sinful condition and Christ’s work in reconciling us to make us holy.

Read 1:21 - 23

What do you think it takes to be perfect in your parent’s eyes? (Let your kids list off what it might look like for the parent, grandparent or guardian to see them as perfect. Walk them through how difficult that would be, and how much effort that would take.)

What do you think it would take to be perfect in God’s eyes?

Read verse 22, what does this verse say happened?

The word reconcile here means the act of restoring a relationship to harmony. Can you think of a relationship that has been reconciled? Or, maybe one that needs to be reconciled?

Have you ever set something aside to save it for later? Or, cherished something so much that you wanted to put it away for safe-keeping? Read verse 22. The word holy here describes belonging to or being set apart for God. Paul told that Colossians that it was Christ’s work on the cross that made it possible for them to be holy - or set apart - by God. What do you think it means for a believer to be set apart?

**Along the way:**

Take the time driving to ask your family these questions to spark conversation:

* Have you ever had someone give something to you that cost them but benefitted you? How did that feel?
* Talk about the reality that God sees us as spotless (when we believe) because of Christ’s work on the cross.
* What do you think evil is? Do you think we are evil?