**HOME GROUP GUIDE**

**March 15, 2020**

**Colossians 2:8-15**

**Sermon Title: Becoming A Ready Bride**

**Special Note:** For those of you who are looking at this guide for the first time, we hope it provides opportunity for conversation and encouragement among your family, small group or neighbors. This is a great way to create intentional dialogue with others around you whether it be by meeting together in your home or through technology. You might take two or three of the questions from this guide and discuss them or you might walk through the whole thing. It is intended to simply be a resource for you to have at your fingertips to create dialogue. The last section is the family discipleship section. This is a great resource to help your family focus on learning and growing in the truths you have learned together through the Scripture this week.

We are praying for you and look forward to hearing how the Lord is using you to lead someone close to you closer to Jesus this week!

**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 2:1-7**

**Recap:**  In this passage, Paul again warns the Colossians about being careful to follow Jesus, and only Jesus.  The fullness of God’s nature being in Him and the completeness of His work requires nothing else. There are a number of ways we can be deceived, but our true focus is not primarily on all the ways we can be deceived, but on being careful to remain in Christ.

1. “Be careful” is a key phrase in this passage. It is a warning that comes from wanting what is best for the reader, not simply to avoid something that is harmful. Paul wants the readers to move so close to Christ so they might live in the benefit of walking with Him.
   * Where have you seen philosophy and empty deceit lead people away from Christ? When has it led you astray?
   * How have you seen a close walking with Christ protect you from something that could have taken you captive and led you away from Christ?
2. Discuss the phrase “takes you captive” in verse 8.
   * What are some things that take you captive?
   * What does it look like to be taken captive by Christ? How is this different than being taken captive by things of this world?
   * In verse 10, we read that we have been filled by Him, the head over every ruler and authority. How does being filled by Him protect us from being taken captive by something else?
   * How can your group encourage you and help you move toward Christ and away from other things that want to take you captive?
3. Read verses 11-14.
   * What do we learn about Christ? What was accomplished for us by Christ?
   * Knowing that Christ has done these things for you, discuss how your life is changed by the reality that the certificate of debt against you has been erased.
   * How can you help each other live in this freedom and not in captivity to something else?
4. What kind of word picture do you see Paul painting in verse 15?
   * How have you seen the power of the Lord at work in your life?
   * How does believing Christ has done all these things change the way we live in the midst of uncertainty?

**Additional Discussion Questions for This Season:**

* + Where are you experiencing fear and uncertainty?
  + How can your group/family encourage and support one another in this season?
  + What can your group/family do to help lead others closer to Jesus in the midst of all the fear and uncertainty?
  + Who from the FBG family do you need to reach out to and maintain contact with during this season to help them feel connected to the body and prevent isolation?

**Don’t forget:**

1. Pray for each other. Pray specifically for the situation in front of us and ask the Lord for healing and a quick dissipation of the virus. Pray for endurance and courage to carry the hope of Christ to those around you in this time.
2. Pray for your neighbors and others who are close to you. Ask the Lord to show you how to love them and carry the gospel to them.
3. Pray for each of our campuses/venues: Pray that we would be able to gather together again soon. Pray for the protection of the church during this time. Pray for online technology to work well and not create any disruptions. Pray for our staff to have creativity and wisdom in how to help our church continue to grow toward Christ, lean into community, and serve those around us.

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

**When you wake**:

Read the verse that corresponds with the day of the week and lead your family in answering the questions. 

Monday | v.8 — What does Paul say the empty deceit is based on? Why is that important?

Tuesday | v.9-10 — Who is the "in him" at the beginning of verse 9? What fills "him"? What fills you? Who is the head of ALL rule and authority? What or who comes to mind when you read "rule and authority"?

Wednesday | v. 11-12 — Circumcision was the outward sign of God's promise to the Israelites, and it was also part of the law. Read Matthew 5:17. How did Christ fulfill the law of circumcision? (Parent tip: Circumcision without hands represents a circumcision of the heart, a heart-change. Also, v. 11 is talking about Christ's work on the cross for us.)

Thursday | v. 13 - 14 — Have you ever heard someone talk about "the Gospel"? Verse 13-14 is the gospel in two sentences. Today, take turns going around your family and reading or saying verse 14. What does that verse mean?

Friday | v. 15 — The "He" at the beginning of verse 15 is God. God disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame by triumphing over them in Him. Who is the "in Him" referring to at the end of verse 15? How did God triumph over them?

**Before you sleep**:

Whether your kids are 2 or 22, each night remind them of these simple truths:

* Jesus is the ruler of every single part of the world. He rules over the things we can see and the things we can't see. And He loves you!
* The main reason we are on this earth is to know God and glorify Him.
* When we read God's word every day, He grows us to look more and more like Jesus.
* God loves you exactly as you are right now. There is nothing to change.

**When you sit down:**

Read Colossians 2:8-15. Discuss the following questions with your family.

Grab a coin and pick a family member to play heads or tails.

* Who was the winner? Did they partially win, or sort of win? There is no partial victory. In verse 15, God tells us He "triumphant over the rulers and authorities." He didn't win in part or partly win. He triumphed! That means He won over all rulers and authorities, seen and unseen. Verse 15 is essential to verses 8-14 because the young Colossian church is being tempted to willingly submit to the forces which God has already defeated through the cross.
* What is a captive?
* Some translations read verse 8 as "see to it" that no one takes you captive. Paul lends urgency and alert with that phrase. What does this tell you about how dangerous the empty philosophy is?
* How can you focus on moving toward Christ more than focusing on the things of the world that want to pull you away from Christ?
* Name some things that people in our modern-day culture think that could take them captive. What are some ways that our family has let in empty philosophies that could take us captive?
* Why is it important that God defeated all the rulers and authorities (evil powers)? How can we experience freedom because of this?

**Along the way:**

As you go about life this week bring up these discussion points with your family:

* Ask your family to imagine what the "rulers and authorities" might have thought at the moments when Jesus died, rose, and ascended to heaven. Did they know they were defeated? Were they mad? What do you think God was doing the moment His Son conquered the grave?
* Talk about some tricky philosophies that you've heard lately. Our passage this week talks about "erasing a certificate of debt." Explain debt to your kids in the simple terms of an I owe you. Then explain the "amount" we owe God is our death, but Jesus paid the debt for us. Talk about how much that shows God’s love for us. Ask how we can respond to that kind of love.