

RESOLVE

SMALL GROUPS WEEK 1

LEADER'S GUIDE

1 SESSION OVERVIEW

WEEK 1	Colossians 1 - A Mature Faith
WEEK 2	Colossians 2 - Christian Discernment
WEEK 3	Colossians 3 - Walking with Christ
WEEK 4	Colossians 4 - Always witnessing

Tonight, we are going to look at Colossians chapter 1 and finish what we started this past Sunday. As you read the chapter with your group, they may find different passages they want to discuss, and that's great! We want the discussion to flow how it flows in reading this passage, but whatever you talk about, try and hit on these three main points from the passage and Sunday's talk:

- (1)** We should never grow content with where we are with God, we always have room for growth.
- (2)** The truth of God is a great comfort, but is also abrasive to sin.
- (3)** Christ has standards for living that we should strive to live under.

2 PREPARATION

Your conversation with your group will go a lot better if you're able to read the passage before hand and underline or highlight any verses that stick out to you or that you can see questions arising from.

If you have one, it's a great idea to take a Study Bible to group for quick help/deeper notes. *If you don't have a study bible, we'd love to find you a great one!*

Crossway is giving away the ESV Study Bible notes for free this month, this is a great resource to enhance your Bible study, and I wanted to share it with you! We've been using the ESV in the Student Ministry and Childrens Ministry this year, and you this tool will help as you read these passages. Just visit this page,

<http://www.crossway.org/group/75th> , and follow the instructions.

You can find the videos on the youtube channel
<http://www.youtube.com/user/TrinityStudentsNR>

3 OPENING DISCUSSION

Start your group time off by welcoming everyone and opening in prayer. Ask your group the following questions:

1. This past Sunday, we talked about setting goals instead of Resolutions for the new years. Did anyone come up with any goals they have for this year that they want to share?
2. Pastor Ben talked about how one of his goals for 2014 is to see our small groups grow. Has your experience with small groups been one that you think your friends would enjoy or benefit from?
3. Talking about setting goals, improving, what are ways we can improve our small group this semester? Are there any goals we should set? (like trying to get together outside of church and small group once a month, seeing each others performances/games, etc.)

4 INTRO/CONTEXT

Briefly say something like:

“Tonight we are starting a study of the book of Colossians as part of our Sunday Morning series: Resolve. Here are some brief notes of background on the book of colossians:

Colossians was written by Paul in 62 A.D. to the church that had started in Colossae, and its main purpose was for Paul to encourage the believers there who were still infants in the Faith. They needed to continue maturing in their understanding of the Gospel, and not just because they needed a greater knowledge, but because of a dangerous teaching.

There were a few in the city that were like predators, they saw this new group of believers, and were able to convince them that they had a special relationship with the Gods and could help them mature in their “faith,” but the things they taught were not the

Gospel of Jesus Christ, and were thus leading these young Christians away.

We're studying this book because we could all use greater knowledge of Jesus Christ and his Gospel, but also because similar to the church at Colossae, there are a lot of teachings that sound good and God honoring, but lead us astray from the one true Gospel.

5 THE PASSAGE

Briefly say something like:

“As we read, if there is any verse that stands out to you, put a note next to it in your bible and we can discuss it afterwards. Also, if you have a question understanding what is being read, don't hesitate to ask us to stop so we can all stay together and understand the passage. Lets take turns reading, who wants to go first?”

READ COLOSSIANS chapter 1

6 THE STORY IN MY LIFE

Discuss these questions with your students

1. In verses 1-14, Paul is calling the Colossian Christians to remember *who they are* and *what they have* because of Christ. Scan over these verses again so we can find what the Bible says we have because of Christ, and who it says we are because of Christ.
2. Verse 10 says “That we may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.” What does it mean to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord?
3. These first 14 verses communicate an idea that, put plainly, we don't ever graduate from the Gospel of grace, we don't ever stop needing grace. That as we continue to grow in knowledge of Christ, we will continue to see how truly sinful we are, and how amazingly gracious our God is. Would you

say your definition of Sin has changed over time? How would you define sin?

4. We talked on Sunday about our Youth Ministries purpose statement, to Make Christ known and see lives changed that change lives. How has your life changed because of the Gospel of Grace?

How is your life continuing to change because of who God is?

5. We also talked on Sunday about how we should be walking in Christian Community in a way that our co-laborers in Christ can help us see our weak spots, that there may be times we need to talk to one another about potential sin in each others lives. How hard or easy would it be to talk to one of your friends about sin in their life?

(Give some examples. Maybe they saw a picture online of their friend drinking, or they hear them cussing at school, or they start dating someone who is going to take them away from God. Ask your group if they think these things are sin, firstly, and secondly how they might talk to their friend about it.)

6. If we're going to confront each other on sin, that means we have to be open to being confronted. The opposite side of the last question is how hard would it be to be confronted. We can probably all think of something in our lives, our thinking, that we hope no one else in this room knows about. How would you react if someone approached you about your darkest sin?

Something Pastor Ben said this past Sunday is that discipleship and discipline are very similar, and that while our sin being exposed might hurt for the short term, the long term benefits of living without that bondage to sin far outweighs any pain or shame. Why do you think its so hard to confront our sin?

Does anyone have any thing they want to open up about and pray about with the group, any sin they are tired of hanging onto themselves? (its ok if students aren't willing to, but let them know they have the opportunity in a safe place).

7. Verses. 15-21 go over the preeminence of Christ. It's amazing that the idea here is that the same hands that placed the stars in the sky now have nail holes in their hands that pay the price for our sin. That Jesus Christ has sacrificed himself so that we could be presented blameless and faultless before the throne of God. There is one passage, however, that says

“if we continue stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that we heard that is proclaimed in all creation under heaven.”

In what ways is it possible to shift from the Gospel of Christ? What is shifting, and where is it shifting to?

What causes us to lose sight of the Gospel? What are possible distractions in your life that keep you from growing in the knowledge of Christ?

8. Colossians 1 ends with Paul stating his purpose for his ministry, to be able to present everyone as mature in Christ. What does it mean to be mature in Christ? (one aspect to focus on is the understanding that we will always have sin in our life, but because of our understanding of the gospel, we aren't afraid to deal with it).
9. Our discussion and reading tonight has focused on Maturing in Faith, maturing in Christ. What is something you can do this month, a goal you can set, that will help you grow closer to God?
10. How can our small group help each other in our journey of discipleship?

7 CLOSING

(There is a great video online called God's Chisel by the skit guys, it might be a great idea, if you're able to, to watch this as a closing before prayer.)

God Loves you, God has plans and purposes for you. He wants to continue to change your life, and he wants to continue to grow you. Being shaped by Christ into his image can hurt, dealing with sin hurts, but it's for our benefit.

Lets pray. (prayer requests)