



Discipleship Study Questions

For use from 3/6/22-4/6/22



Colossians

How do we live for Jesus in the midst of a culture that seems completely opposed to him? This is the issue the Colossian church was struggling with, just like many Christians in the 21st Century. As we study Colossians, we will see that it is one of the most relevant books in the bible to the issues we face today.

Here are some tips on ways you can engage with each week's Scripture:

Read the Scripture:

Individual: Read the passage from two or three different translations.

Group: Have two different group members read the passage using different Bible translations.

Speak the Scripture:

Individual: Recite the story aloud from memory (as best you can), or tell it to a friend or family member. The goal here is to get the essence of the passage in your heart.

Group: Have someone volunteer to recite the passage aloud in their own words, as best they can.

Understand the Scripture:

Individual or Group: Use the Discovery Questions to help ensure you understand the passage.

Dig Deeper into the Scripture:

Individual: Work through the Digging Deeper questions and pray about what God reveals to you through His word. Discuss with a Christian friend or family member, if you choose.

Group: Work through the Digging Deeper questions as a group, celebrating the work God is already doing in each person's life, and encouraging each other to trust Him in the places that need growth.

Small Group Guidelines

This is a Safe Group

Confidentiality is key—what is said in the group stays in the group. Be aware how you are affecting the environment with your words, actions, and non-verbal communication. This needs to be a place where people feel comfortable opening up and sharing.

No Crosstalk

Be considerate of others as they are sharing. No side conversations, phone time, texting etc.

Listen

Let's value one another by listening to what is being shared. Allow a pause after someone shares to allow them to finish and others to consider what was said. Eye contact and body posture play key roles in creating a positive or negative group environment.

No Rescuing or Fixing

We are not here to fix each other; Jesus does that part. Avoid the tendency to rescue when someone is struggling to get the words out or shares a struggle or conviction.

Use "I" Statements

It's easy to talk about the issues of others, or respond with "we," "us," or "the church," but for us to grow as disciples and build relationships, we want to use "I" statements.

Don't Over-talk

We want to create time for all members of the group to participate in the discussion. Be careful not to always be the first responder or regularly give long responses.

Fight for Relationship

It's not if conflict or hurt feelings will happen, but when. We commit to fight for relationship with each other. Go to the person and share your struggle or seek wise advice if you are not sure how to handle the conflict.

Week 1:

Read: Colossians 1:3-14

Discovery Questions:

What do we learn about God in this passage?

What is Paul teaching the Colossian church?

What do you think God is teaching you personally through this passage?

What do you think the Holy Spirit may be leading you to do with what you've learned this week?

Digging Deeper:

Look at the different things Paul prays over the Colossian church- is there one of the things he mentions that you wish you could see more of in your own life?

In v.9-12, what characteristics does Paul use to describe a life worthy of the Lord?

We see in v.7 that the Colossian church was planted by Epaphras. Paul himself had only heard about them, yet he prays continually for them. Who could you serve by praying for them continually?

What result comes from the knowledge of God's will, gained through wisdom and understanding through the Holy Spirit? How does this compare to your personal goals for your life and faith?

Prayer:

Father, thank you for your word. Thank you that we can find your will through scripture, through prayer, and through the wisdom and understanding given through the Holy Spirit. Help us to live in a manner worthy of you, pleasing to you, and growing in you. May we be people of prayer, both for those around us and for those we haven't met, yet share an inheritance with, as your holy people. In the name of Jesus, amen.

Week 2:

Read: Colossians 1:15-23

Discovery Questions:

What do we learn about God in this passage?

What is Paul teaching the Colossian church?

What do you think God is teaching you personally through this passage?

What do you think the Holy Spirit may be leading you to do with what you've learned this week?

Digging Deeper:

What does it mean when Paul says that Jesus is the image of the invisible God, and that all of God's fullness dwells in Jesus?

How does this passage connect to John 1:1-4 and Genesis 1:26? What do these verses tell us about Jesus' authority? His involvement?

In v.17, we read that Jesus is before all things and holds all things together. What practical implications might this have?

Do you live your life and arrange your priorities in a way that reflects the truths above? What do you need to change in your life or priorities to better reflect Jesus' rightful place in your heart and in the world?

Prayer:

Father, thank you for your kindness and your mercy in sending Jesus to earth to restore us to a right relationship with you. Thank you for giving us a picture of who you are in your Son. Thank you for accepting us as holy and blameless in your sight, because of His sacrifice. Help us to keep Jesus as the center of our lives, the center of our relationships, the center of our thoughts, and the center of our actions, as He holds all things together.

In the name of Jesus, amen.

Week 3:

Read: Colossians 2:3-23

Discovery Questions:

What do we learn about God in this passage?

What is Paul teaching the Colossian church?

What do you think God is teaching you personally through this passage?

What do you think the Holy Spirit may be leading you to do with what you've learned this week?

Digging Deeper:

Verse 16 begins with 'therefore,' so how do v.13-15 inform and provide meaning to v16-17?

Paul is telling the Colossian believers not to look down upon others, or allow others to look down upon them, because of their personal convictions on a variety of topics.

What instances of personal conviction (not Biblical commands) do we see Christians judging each other over today?

Rewrite v.17 in your own words. Consult the NASB and NLT translations for further understanding.

With Christ as the head of both the church and our individual lives, how can we live out of gratitude for what He has done for us, specifically in the ways we interact with other believers who hold different convictions than ours?

Prayer:

Father, thank you for the forgiveness of sins and the new life that you provide us in Christ. Help us to live lives filled with your grace. Give us grace and humility towards fellow believers who hold different convictions than our own, and help us to remain firmly connected to Jesus, who is our head, and the provider of all growth, both in us and in our brothers and sisters around us. In the name of Jesus, amen.

Week 4:

Read: Colossians 3:1-14

Discovery Questions:

What do we learn about God in this passage?

What is Paul teaching the Colossian church?

What do you think God is teaching you personally through this passage?

What do you think the Holy Spirit may be leading you to do with what you've learned this week?

Digging Deeper:

If our salvation is not tied to our actions, but to our faith, the grace of God, and the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, then why is it still important to put to death all of the things Paul mentions in this passage?

What role does setting our hearts and minds on things above play in our ability to put to death the things of this world in our lives?

What in your life do you need to put to death in order to make room for the things you need to put on, the fruit God wants to grow in you?

Prayer:

Father, thank you for making a way for us to put our sin to death, through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. Help us to let die what needs to die so that you can daily raise us up to new life in you. Help us to gladly accept the new spiritual clothing you offer us, and the fruit you are cultivating within us, as we keep our focus on the things of you. In the name of Jesus, amen.

Week 5:

Read: Colossians 3:15-17

Discovery Questions:

What do we learn about God in this passage?

What is Paul teaching the Colossian church?

What do you think God is teaching you personally through this passage?

What do you think the Holy Spirit may be leading you to do with what you've learned this week?

Digging Deeper:

What might it look like for the word of Christ to dwell richly in someone?

What would you say most often characterizes your conversations with other believers? Complaints? Worries? Trivial things of this world? What God has been teaching you? Spiritual encouragement? Intentional conversation that centers around God?

What would it look like to live out v.17? Measure your life against this verse. How does it compare at this current stage, understanding that there is always room for growth?

What do you need to shift, or perhaps completely remove from your life, to make v.17 possible? How would it change you? How would it change your impact in your family? In the workplace? In the world?

Prayer:

Father, thank you for your word, and for Jesus. Lord, we pray that both would take up residence within us to change us from the inside out. May your word and your Spirit simmer inside of each of us, flavoring all of our personality traits, and all of our actions, so that eventually, we would do all things in the name of your Son, and praise you for all you've done.
In the name of Jesus, amen.

Week 6:

Read: Colossians 3:23-4:6

Discovery Questions:

What do we learn about God in this passage?

What is Paul teaching the Colossian church?

What do you think God is teaching you personally through this passage?

What do you think the Holy Spirit may be leading you to do with what you've learned this week?

Digging Deeper:

How might your work (whatever that work might be: paid employment, raising kids, volunteering, taking care of your home, etc.) change if you followed v23-24 more closely?

Do you currently devote yourself to prayer? What does that kind of devotion look like in a world filled with instant gratification, notifications, and distraction?

What might it look like to make the most of every opportunity with people who don't know the Lord: in conversation, in action, in kindness, and in opportunities to serve selflessly? Why is Godly wisdom important here?

Too much salt and a dish becomes distasteful, but just the right amount can bring a richness that was not there before. Salt can also be used as a preservative to prevent rot. With this in mind, how might your conversations be seasoned with salt? How can you bring richness and depth of flavor in your conversations with others, while preventing rot?

Prayer:

Father, thank you for teaching us how to relate to others and to you. Help us to maintain a constant connection to you in prayer, so that our connections with others overflow out of that. May we work, speak, and live in a way that honors you, and shows others a more flavorful, rich way to live and be in community. In the name of Jesus, amen.