

Growth Group Homework

For the week of February 8, 2015

QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

MY STORY

1. Chris mentioned that most people come to church expecting to get something. What expectations do you think people generally have when they come to church? At what level do you think their expectations are fair or not?

2. This week, we heard about the power of being part of God's family. We all have had different experiences in the family we've grown up in. How is your experience or view of being part of God's family similar or different from the family you grew up in?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. This week we learned that God's desire for those who follow Jesus is to experience the power of being part of his family. We saw this illustrated in how Paul worked hard at breaking down the wall of separation between the Gentile and Jewish believers. As you read Colossians 3:11-17, write down the attitudes or "family builders/wall busters" listed that can help build this kind of community.

Colossians 3:11-17

¹¹ Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

¹² Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³ Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

¹⁵ Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. [NIV]

Looking at the list above, if you had to grow in one area more than the others, which one would it be?

Is there one you've seen grow in your life or that's been more challenging than the others?

2. None of us like to be the source or part of an unfair division at work, home or in the church. What surprising division was happening in the church in James 2:1-9?

James 2:1-9

Favoritism Forbidden

¹ My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism. ² Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in. ³ If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, "Here's a good seat for you," but say to the poor man, "You stand there" or "Sit on the floor by my feet," ⁴ have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? ⁵ Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him? ⁶ But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? ⁷ Are they not the ones who are blaspheming the noble name of him to whom you belong? ⁸ If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing right. ⁹ But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. [NIV]

There are many kinds of divisions or walls that can hold us back from experiencing the type of community God wants to create. Some are obvious – like racial, economic, or political divisions. Can you think of any other more subtle actions or attitudes that can keep us apart?

How might moving from focusing on "what I get," to "what I can give" help combat these kinds of divisions?

Looking back at the passage from Digging Deeper #1, how could Colossians 3:11-17 help a person move from "taker" to "giver"?

3. One of the significant benefits of being part of God's family is that you can experience God's promises. Below are four of the many promises God gives us in his Word. Which one catches your attention the most and why?

1 Peter 5:6-7

⁶ Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. ⁷ Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. [NIV]

2 Corinthians 1:3-4

Praise to the God of All Comfort

³ Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, ⁴ who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. [NIV]

Isaiah 40:31

³¹ but those who hope in the Lord
will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint. *[NIV]*

Psalms 30:5

⁵ For his anger lasts only a moment,
but his favor lasts a lifetime;
weeping may stay for the night,
but rejoicing comes in the morning. *[NIV]*

TAKING IT HOME

Looking back over this week's sermon and homework, what's the most important thing for you to remember?

Prayer Requests:

⇒

⇒

⇒

⇒

⇒

⇒