

Small Group Guide

WHY SHOULD WE PURSUE BIBLICAL TRAINING?

The Church at Brook Hills, Dr. Bart Box

August 2, 2009

Colossians 1:24—2:5

This guide is designed to help you facilitate discussion with your Small Group. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering and owning the truths of God's Word. There may be questions you do not want to use, and there may be instances when you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on their relationship with God. Your role is to facilitate this experience, not complete the discussion guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool rather than a rigid teaching task list.

Connect . . .

Use one or both of the following options to introduce the discussion time to follow.

Option 1

Keeping the mood lighthearted, ask your group to respond to the following question based on the categories below: ***What's in it for me?***

- Watching TV
- Getting dressed in the morning
- [Insert a favorite hobby of several in your group.]
- Brushing your teeth
- Eating dessert
- Getting a dog/cat
- Going to work
- Reading your Bible

Feel free to make up your own, but be sure to end with "Reading your Bible." Explain that today's message will look at the "Why?" behind studying God's Word.

Option 2

Invite learners to share something in their lives that requires discipline. Examples include training for a race, studying for a particular test at work or school, sticking to a budget when shopping, or going on a diet. Ask each person, after he or she shares:

- Why does that particular thing require discipline for you?
- What makes the end worth the discipline you put yourself through?

Tell learners that the message today will look at why Biblical training is such an important part of a believer's life.

Review the Message . . .

When Paul wrote his letter to the church at Colosse, he had never even visited that group of people, but he heard that false doctrine had crept into the church, and he wanted to correct their wrong thinking. Teachers in the church weren't necessarily denying Christ, but they were denying his sufficiency and supremacy by telling people to avoid certain foods and drinks, to observe certain days and festivals, and to exalt angels and deny the body.

Ask for a volunteer to read Colossians 1:24—2:5.

A Definition . . .

Biblical training is the _____ equipping _____ of God's people through God's Word.

We should pursue Biblical training . . .

- For the sake of _____ our souls _____.
 - The treasure for our souls is found in _____ Christ alone _____.

“There is a great danger in the Christian life of seeing Christ and our being in Christ as sufficient for some but not all of our heavenly treasures. But if we seek innocence, it will be found in His virgin conception; if we seek mortification of the flesh, it will be found in His tomb; if we seek power for living, it will be found in His resurrection; and if we seek the gifts of the Spirit, they will be found in His anointing.” –John Calvin

- The revelation of Christ is found in _____ His Word _____.

Discussion Questions

- The false teachers in today's passage were guilty of trying to add to Christ's supremacy for salvation. Though we might not be as blatant as that, what rules or regulations does today's church subtly place on people?
- Are there things you thought you had to do beyond trusting in Christ to receive salvation when you were younger?
- Paul refuted the false teacher's errors by exalting Christ, instead of a point-by-point refutation of their errors. Ask two volunteers to read Colossians 2:9-15: one to read the main parts, and one to speak up every time "in Him" or any other preposition plus "Him" or "Christ" is used. How does this way of thought—a keen awareness of who Christ is and all we have in Him—refute false teaching and change our daily life?
- Read the quote by John Calvin. How does this quote show that ultimately, Jesus is all we have—and He's enough?
- Why is it impossible to pursue Christ apart from His Word?

Application . . .

- What does the human soul treasure on its own (apart from Christ)? Why are all of these things ultimately false treasures?
- If we seek Christ and find Him only in His Word, how should that affect the way we seek Him?

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- What things attempt to steal your time and affection from God's Word? How can you intentionally refuse to allow them to?
- What excuses do people offer for not pursuing spending time in God's Word or in Biblical training?
 - For the sake of His Church.
 - Christ died in order to present us as holy before Him.
 - Our presentation as holy before Him is accomplished through His Word.

Discussion Questions

- Read Colossians 1:28. Who does the presenting? (*We do!*) Who is presented? (*Everyone!*) What does this imply about the interdependence of the Church?
- Read Colossians 1:21-22. What is one of the chief purposes of the cross?
- Read Revelation 19:6-8. What is the future destination of the Church? (*a radiant bride for Christ*) How do we as a body of believers help each other become mature in Christ?
- Enlist volunteers to read Galatians 6:2, 1 Thessalonians 5:14, and Ephesians 4:25. How do these verses challenge our view of church membership?

Application . . .

- What does society tell us to prepare ourselves and our children for? What's wrong with making these things our main focus?
- How does the truth that we are preparing each other to meet God change the way you view your responsibility to each other?
- How does that change the way you view your family or raising your children?
- How should that concept affect the way the Word is valued in your home?
- Read John 17:17 and Ephesians 5:25-37. How do we properly use God's Word to warn each other and teach each other? Why are people reluctant to do this?
 - For the sake of God's glory.
 - God intends for His people to behold His glory.
 - True thoughts of God lead to true worship of God.
 - Worship-fueling thoughts about God come from His Word.

Discussion Questions

- In what specific ways have you seen God's glory revealed through His Word?
- The Colossian error was that they had devised all sorts of doctrines and ideas around days and angels and festivals and foods; the heretics attempted to glorify

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other things besides Christ. How are we tempted to glorify other things besides Christ even within the Church?

- If true thoughts of God lead to true worship of God, what kind of worship do false or cloudy thoughts of God lead to?
- How is your worship fueled by spending time in God's Word?
- Articulating what God's glory is can be difficult. How can Biblical training help you do so with greater ease?

Application . . .

- Read Psalm 19:7-11. How do these verses encourage you to give yourself more fully to the study of God's Word?
- How do these words fuel your passion for God's glory?
- When you consider the place God's Word currently has in your life, do you feel you are glorifying God? Why or why not?
- How will the Church benefit from its members receiving greater Biblical training?
- How can we, as a small group, encourage each other in our study of God's Word?

Bottom Line . . .

When the Word is central, our souls are fully satisfied, Christ's church is truly sanctified, and God's glory is clearly seen. Why not give ourselves to the study of this Word?