

FOLLOWING JESUS: SUBVERTING THE

EMPIRE

STUDY GUIDE

The Better Story

Colossians 1.15-23

Since this is the first week for your community group, make sure there is plenty of time for folks to get to know each other. At the same time, don't leave it too unstructured, as this may make folks who don't anyone feel more out of place. Welcome everyone in, make them feel comfortable, and then transition into some introductions and explanation of what the group will be about.

WELCOME & SHARING

Share any announcements...

- New City Guys BarbeKubb @ Eli's, Sunday, October 2nd. BBQ & the viking game Kubb (pronounced Koob).
- Great Cincinnati Bus Tour Saturday, October 15th 8am-1p. Purchase tickets online.
- New City Women's Retreat, October 21st-22nd, register online BEFORE 9/25.

Introductions: Have everyone go around and introduce themselves, share where they live, what they spend their time doing during the day (work, school, kids, etc), and why they came to check out this group.

If you could take 2 books with you on a desert island, what would they be?

What is the most interesting or unusual job you have ever had?

COMMUNITY GROUP OVERVIEW

Talk to everyone about community groups are all about.

What is a Community Group?

Community Groups are smaller Christian communities within our larger church community. Christian discipleship and evangelism best happen in a community context: Community Groups provide that context. They are meant to be places where kingdom values are taught, demonstrated and cherished. They are a venue for relationships to deepen, and a catalyst for people "doing life together." They provide an opportunity for intimacy, mutual support, practical love and service, learning about

the Christian faith, prayer, and sharing of what we see God doing in our midst. Community groups are led by trained leaders from the congregation who are given on-going support.

What is the purpose of Community Groups?

- 1. A place to meet with and experience Jesus Christ in our midst.*
- 2. A place for fellowship and friendship*
- 3. A place to continue the conversation*
- 4. A place where gifts are exercised*
- 5. A place to discover Christianity*

What do we do?

We're going to be meeting together regularly from now through December. We'll take a break in January for New City's Theology Labs (which perhaps we can attend together), and then again from February through the end of May.

Explain your group's particular meeting schedule.

When we meet for discussion, we'll have time to share, discuss the Bible, and pray.

If you're using Sunday's Scripture passage as the jumping off point for discussion, explain that.

Explain that folks are welcome to check out several New City groups, but somewhere in the middle of the fall, it helps us build community if you'd try to settle into a specific group.

STUDY/DISCUSSION

New City is walking through the letter to the Colossians in September and October. This week we're studying Colossians 1:15-23.

Read: Colossians 1.15-23

1. What immediately jumps out at you from this passage?
2. What do we learn about Jesus in verses 15-19?
3. This letter was written to a small church plant in a Roman city. How would Paul's claims about Jesus be a challenge to the claims of the Roman empire?

4. If you really believed that “*all things were created through Jesus and FOR Jesus,*” what would change in your life? Are there areas of in your life where you are living as if this is NOT true?
5. One of the contentions of postmodernism is that truth claims tend to be power plays (used to coerce and oppress). Looking at verse 20, how is the gospel story different?
6. What do we learn about ourselves from verses 21-23?
7. In what ways can we help each other “continue in the faith” (v.23)? How can this community group be a part of that this year?

NEIGHBORING EXPERIMENT OF THE MONTH: Try to meet one neighbor you don't know yet and learn something about them.

PRAYER

For the first week, it's probably good to keep the prayer time a little lighter as everyone is just getting to know each other. You can close in prayer, ask a few folks to pray, or break into smaller groups.

What should we pray about? The most natural thing is to ask for personal requests, though in this first week, people may be reluctant to share. Instead, you can pray in response to the passage, or simply focus your prayers on the growth and development of your community group.