

FOLLOWING JESUS: SUBVERTING THE

EMPIRE

STUDY GUIDE

Prayer and Mission

Colossians 4.2-18

WELCOME & SHARING

Share any announcements...

- **Give & Take FREE Sale** - Saturday Nov 5, 9-11am. Declutter and GIVE away outgrown women and children's clothes, toys, shoes, accessories, etc and BLESS others in the community. Please donate the above items before 11/4 outside the boiler room in the lower level, labeled according to size. All are invited (and invite friends), whether you have given or not. Everything is FREE.
- **Member's Meeting** - Monday Nov 7, 6:30-7:30pm. Come out to hear to sing and give thanks, hear our annual report from last year, get a look ahead, and elect new officers. Make sure and sign up online for childcare.
- **Family Serve Day** | Saturday, November 12th 9-11a. Come join us for our first-ever New City Family Serve Day. In conjunction with the Great American Cleanup, we're teaming up with Sharpsburg Elementary (our backyard neighbor), and other Norwood neighbors, to live out our mission to "Celebrate Christ and Serve Cincinnati." Please visit the City to RSVP and to learn more about the project.

OPENER QUESTIONS

Go around the room and have folks pick a # between 1-10 and ask them the following: Would you rather...?

- 1.) be captain of the Starship Enterprise, or pilot the Millennium Falcon?
- 2.) take a European sight-seeing vacation, or a relaxing Caribbean cruise?
- 3.) never be allowed to eat chocolate again, or be forced to change your last name to Hitler?
- 4.) go 60 days without the internet, or 60 days without TV?
- 5.) go back in time to meet your ancestors, or forward in time to meet your great great grandchildren?
- 6.) be able to fly, or be able to read minds?
- 7.) surf the ocean, or surf the internet?
- 8.) be famous, or be the best friend of someone who is?
- 9.) win a Nobel prize, or a Super Bowl?
- 10.) endure the zombie apocalypse, or a Chernobyl style nuclear disaster?

STUDY/DISCUSSION

We've been studying the book of Colossians this fall. Next week we'll jump into a short series called "Kingdom Stories" from Matthew 13. But today we look at the closing words of Colossians.

Read: Colossians 4.2-18

1. Do you ever write personal notes? Why or why not?
2. What stands out to you about the personal nature of this section of Paul's letter?
3. Verses 2-4 are a call to prayer. In what ways does Paul ask us to pray?
4. Have you had much success in your personal prayer life? If you're willing to share, tell us how you go about prayer? When do you do it, what do you pray about, etc?
5. Verses 5-6 are about our life outside the church. What do you think it looks like to "walk in wisdom toward outsiders"?
6. Are your words "gracious and seasoned with salt?" How can we grow in that?
7. Verses 7-18 give us a little glimpse of the community around Paul. What steps can you take to build into our community life together?
8. What's one thing you want to apply to your life from this passage or our discussion?

NEIGHBORING EXPERIMENT OF THE MONTH: Try to meet one neighbor you don't know yet and learn something about them. (If you've met and talked about this, give a report...have you met a neighbor you didn't know before?)

PRAYER

As you get to know each other as a group, it's good to keep the prayer time a little lighter and help set the tone of how you'd like the prayer time to be 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. Try using "conversational prayer" where folks pray briefly in a sentence or two (not "prayer speeches"), with normal words (no thees and thous), and can pray more than once (no "one and done" rule). Basically, pray to God like you're talking with one another.

What should we pray about? The most natural thing is to ask for personal requests if folks are willing to share, though in these first few weeks, people may be somewhat hesitant. Instead, you can pray in response to the passage, or simply focus your prayers on the growth and development of your community group.

LEADER'S NOTES

In this final section of the letter, Paul encourages believers with several points that follow from his insistence that, since Christ is Lord and Savior of all, they have every spiritual blessing in their union with Christ. Here we see that the gospel fuels the Christian life in three ways: in prayer, partnership, and purpose.

First, we must cultivate a life of persistent prayer (4:2; cf. Mark 1:35; 14:32–39). As those who have been adopted into God's very family, we have full and free access to the Father and should seek him for his gracious blessing upon our lives, which he delights to give. We are liberated to come to him not tepidly or reluctantly but "with thanksgiving" (Col. 4:2).

Second, we must humbly partner with others for the sake of gospel ministry (vv. 3–4, 7–17; cf. Mark 3:13–19). Not all of us are preachers, but we are all invited into the adventure of spreading the preached gospel by praying for preachers in our community to have "a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ" (Col. 4:3).

Third, our lives must be purposeful, so that through the testimony of our conduct (words and deeds), Christ may be seen (vv. 5–6; cf. Eph. 4:29). We treat others in a "gracious" (Col. 4:6) way, as God in Christ has treated us.

The letter ends on a note that sums up the message of Paul's ministry to the Colossians: "Grace be with you" (v. 18).