



DISCUSSION GUIDE

Colossians - A new relationship to the old rules

GETTING STARTED

Why/how are marketing campaigns so effective at convincing us we need something, or are missing out on something that we really aren't? How is this similar to Paul's letter to the Colossians?

QUICK REACTIONS FROM THE MESSAGE

How would you summarize/paraphrase the message in your own words?

What point/idea resonated most with you? Why?

1. According to Paul we grow up in Christ by growing down? (2:6-7)
What does this mean for you?
In what ways does religion/tradition/human inventions teach us to do just the opposite?
2. In Christ, we have a new relationship to the old rules as we find completion in Christ, not someone or something else.
How does the world, religion, well meaning friends, empty philosophies, high-sounding nonsense attempt to convince us that we can find completion apart from Christ?
What would the apostle Paul tell us to do instead?

EXPLORE THE PASSAGE [Colossians 2:6-23]

(Yes, these questions can seem silly, however, good discussion and interpretation of the Bible begins with having a proper understanding of the basic facts; who, what, when, and where in the text.) Work through this quickly, the answers are fairly obvious.

- How did Paul tell the Colossians to continue in Christ? (2:6-7)
What false teaching was Paul concerned about? (2:8)
What did Paul affirm about Christ? How? (2:9-10)
What did God give the Colossian believers? (2:10)
Why do "Gentile" (non-Jewish) Christians have no need to conform to Jewish rules and regulations? (2:11-12)
How did the Cross cancel the written code? (2:13-14)
From what did Christ deliver us? How? (2:15-17)
How did Paul encourage the Colossians to practice their freedom in Christ? (2:16)
How did Christ fulfill what the Old Testament foreshadowed? (2:17)
Whom did Paul accuse of trying to rob believers of their spiritual rewards? (2:18)
What were the characteristics of the false teachers? (2:18-19)
How did Paul challenge the legalism that had infected the church? (2:20-21)
What are the failings of human commands and teachings? (2:20-23)

QUESTIONS THAT HELP US UNDERSTAND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TEXT

What "additions" to faith in Christ have you encountered from other Christians or non-Christians?
How are you affected by popular religious rules (or unexamined things Christians say to each other) floating around today?

What does "fullness in Christ" mean to you?

Paul's advice kept the Colossians growing in their faith:

- What keeps you grounded and rooted in your faith in Christ, and not just rules of faith

What, in Paul's message do you need to be challenged by, encouraged by, or to stop doing?

In what way is it easy to mistake fullness with emptiness? To mistake zeal, strong devotion with being "on fire" for Christ? How can we confuse rules not to handle, touch, taste, be associated with as a spiritual badge and has nothing to do with Jesus? Why? How can we keep ourselves in check?

APPLY THE PASSAGE

What do we learn about God and about ourselves in this passage?

What do you need to stop, start or do differently as a result of reading this passage?

How can we pray for each other?