

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, June 27, 2010

Passage: Colossians 1:15-17

Memory Passage: Colossians 1:15 (both adults and children)

TODAY: From your study this past week, what is one thing that impressed you that can be of help in your life?

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Col. 1:15-17, Heb. 1:1-3a & John 1:14.** What is the definition of the word “image”? (The Greek word is the word from which we get the English word icon.) Use a dictionary if it is helpful to get a full understanding of this word.
- (b) Col. 1:15 says that Jesus is “the image of the invisible God.” Consider the paradox of something invisible having an image. Using the truth found in Heb. 1:3a, explain the ways in which you can see Jesus as the “image” of the invisible God.
- (c) Meditate on the list you made in questions #2. Write down several ways that these revelations of God’s attributes, as seen in the person & work of Christ, should affect your life today and cause your faith to grow.
- (d) *Family:* Pass a hand mirror around the room and have each person look into the mirror and describe what they see (each person will see an image of themselves). Now send one person with the mirror into a completely dark room & instruct them to look into the mirror and report back to everyone what they saw. Explain that invisible beings don’t usually have an image to reflect, but this is not true with God! **Read Col. 1:15 & Heb. 1:3a.** Since Jesus is the exact representation of God the Father’s nature, what things do we learn about the invisible God when we look at the person & work of Jesus as revealed in Scripture?

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read John 1:14, 18.** According to these verses, what were 2 of the purposes of Jesus’ coming to earth as God incarnate?
- (b) **Read John 14:1-9.** Why did Philip make his statement in v. 8? Do you think he remembered or forgot the truths you learned in 1:14, 18 (question #1)? Why or why not?
- (c) What was Jesus’ response in v. 9? Given what you have learned yesterday & today about Jesus being the image of the invisible God, why is it important for Philip (& you!) to understand this response?
- (d) *Family:* **John 1:14 & Ex. 34:5-7.** In Ex. 33:18 Moses asks God: “Show me Your glory!” In Ex. 34:5-7 God grants Moses’ request. Discuss the relationship between Jesus’ work on earth of revealing the Father’s glory (John 1:14), and the Father’s glory that was revealed to Moses (Ex. 34:5-7). (Hint: Focus on grace, truth, compassion & the forgiveness of sin).

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Col. 1:15.** What does Paul mean when he calls Jesus “the firstborn of all creation”?
- (b) **Read Ps. 89:20-29.** What is meant by the term “firstborn” in v. 27 as it refers to King David?
- (c) In Hebrew thought, the firstborn son was the preeminent son, the son who would receive his father’s inheritance and greatest blessing (see Gen. 27:1-41 & Gen 49:1-28). What bearing do you think this idea of preeminence of the firstborn has on Paul’s use of the term in Col. 1:15?
- (d) Write down how the term firstborn is used in the following passages: Rom. 8:29, Col. 1:18, Heb. 1:6, 12:23, Rev. 1:5 (these are 5 of the 7 NT usages of the Greek word translated “firstborn,” the other 3 being Col. 1:15, Luke. 2:7, Heb. 11:28).
- (e) After studying these uses of “firstborn,” write down what you think Paul means when he says that Jesus is “the firstborn of all creation.” Is your answer different from what you wrote in question #1? How is it different?
- (f) *Family:* If you have enough people in your family, prior to your worship time assign 4 people to read and act out the story of Jacob & Esau in Gen. 27:1-40 (if you don’t have enough, or your children are too young, then you tell the story from memory in an engaging and interesting way!). Ask: Why was this blessing so important? Who received the blessing, the older (firstborn) or the younger? What was the difference between the two sons? Was one more important than the other? Then explain this idea of preeminence with regard to Paul’s use of “firstborn” in Col. 1:15.

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Col. 1:16 & John 1:1-3.** Write down all the ways Paul & John tell us the extent of creation being “through” & “in” Christ.
- (b) Now write down everything you can think of that was *not* created through Christ, in Christ, or for Christ. ☺

(c) What aspects of the Colossian heresy do you think Paul is addressing with these truths? (Listen to the audio of my sermon on Col. 1:9-13 from 5/9/10 if you need reminded of what the Colossian heresy is). What false teachings exist today which these truths might help expose, and how would you use these truths to combat them?

(d) *Family:* **Read Gen. 1:1-2, Job 33:4, John 1:3 & Col: 1:15.** Lead a discussion of the roles of the Father, Son & Holy Spirit in creation. As a family, write a psalm of praise to God for the work of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in creation. You might make the verse fit the melody of a familiar hymn of song so you can all sing it together!

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Col. 1:16, Heb. 11:3 & 2 Pet. 3:7.** What do these verses teach about Christ's role in sustaining His creation?

(b) What would happen if He took away His sustaining power? (Be more descriptive than "it would cease to be sustained"!)

(c) How does knowing & believing in Christ's sustaining providence help you to live a more grateful, thanksgiving-filled life than an unbeliever lives? (Think of things like breathing, the change of seasons, night turning into day, etc.)

(d) *Family:* Gather some Lego blocks and have one member of the family stand with their elbows at their side, hands out and palms up. Tell others to quickly build an arch-like creation with foundations on each hand. Ask: What role do their hands play in this creation? What would happen if their hands were dropped and ceased to sustain our creation? Read Col. 1:16 & Heb. 11:3. Why is it important to understand Christ's sustaining role in creation? How is our faith strengthened by this truth?

DAY 6 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) Review your answers from the week. We have covered much ground in these few verses, and reviewing your answers will help to solidify the knowledge you gained, as well as remind you of the application you were asked to consider. Don't let the application questions just slip by and become an intellectual exercise! Remember, God's word will change us into the image and likeness of Christ when we apply it through the power of the Holy Spirit!

If you are leading a Sunday morning class with these discussion questions, some questions lend themselves to discussion more than others. So consider using these questions to spur discussion: Day 1—b & c; Day 2—d; Day 3—c & e; Day 4—c; Day 5—c.

DATE: June 27, 2010

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*The Supremacy of Christ Part I:
Christ is the Supreme Creator*