

**GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDELINES: Tips for great conversation...**

- We aren't here to teach/fix each other, but to share our experiences.
- Show respect by listening to one another, asking clarifying questions.
- If you're quick to share, allow space and time for others to speak up.
- If you're slow to speak, your experience is valuable so please share.

**INTRO**

*Invite everyone to introduce themselves and then read the Bible verses.*

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. What part of the message and Scripture is most encouraging, and which part is most challenging?
2. What did You notice about God, and what did you notice about yourself and other people?

**GOSPEL EXCHANGE (REDEMPTIVE WORK)**

*Jesus asks us to give Him our burdens (Matthew 11:28-29), whatever they may be (a lie we have believed about God or ourselves, our hurt or negative emotions, or even our concerns for loved ones), so He can carry them for us, giving us His peace (His completeness) in exchange.*

What do you want to exchange with Jesus today?

What is the burden? "Lord Jesus, I give you my..."

What's His gift? "Lord Jesus, I receive your..."

**ACTION QUESTIONS**

1. What is one step of obedience you can take this week, based on what you've discovered today? *(NOTE – Consider prayerfully asking God to answer this question for you, taking 30-45 seconds to listen in silence, writing what you heard. If nothing comes clear, keep praying this week.)*
2. During the coming week, who can you share what you learned today? *(NOTE – Consider repeating the same step with this question as in the previous one.)*

**Sermon Study - Conversation Guide**

February 11, 2024

“Jesus is Confident in You”

Ephesians 5:25-31

This guide is a discipleship tool for personal reflection, family conversations, for home groups, and for Table Talk on Sundays @10:40 am and 12:15 pm on the Lowell Patio

Coastal Community Church  
mycoastal.org

**NOTES: Jesus is Confident in You (Eph. 5:25-31) Pastor Andy Rock**

Todd Pierce is a world class bucking bronco champion. He takes wild horses and loves them back to life, so they go from survival mode to learning to submit, be healed, and fulfill their purpose. He writes about speaking to one wild horse in survival mode as it ran from his care.

“He was hitting his legs off the panels ...switching directions ...trying to get out of the pen, and I started speaking out loud to the horse, which I had never done before. *I was asking questions like, why are you running from me? Why are you so afraid? Why won't you trust me? If you would only trust me, I would show you so many things about yourself. Would you please just stop? Just look at me for a minute.*

As I spoke those words, I realized I had just got caught up in this encounter with God. These weren't my words. God spoke those words over me as His son and was waiting for me to stop running. Just as I could see something so beautiful and so powerful, with so much potential in this horse, Jesus could see the same in me which I had never seen in myself before, because my view of myself was so distorted.”

*Submitting feels like we're going to get hurt and so we run. What area of your life feels too scary to submit to God?*

**5:25 *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her 26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, 27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.***

God loves what He sees when He sees you. He isn't mad or disappointed in you. God sees what you've had to do to survive. God sees your wounds, and the beauty to be revealed as you are healed. God sees your talents and your heart, which He formed by His own hands. He's proud and confident in you. Jesus died on the cross so He could also kill the sin that was killing us in our running and hiding.

You're no longer a slave to your survival instincts or the identity you created in order to make it through the hell you endured. Jesus makes you holy now, bestowing upon you, as a free gift, the very inheritance of heaven—His Spirit stitched to yours, His power in You, His worth granted to you, His hope now yours, His home now your home. You're not a problem. You're not a mistake. You're washed clean. This is how God sees you.

*You can't see another person clearly until you see yourself the way God sees you. What part of the gospel, explained above, resonates with you right now? What part of how God sees you feels hollow, like you struggle to really believe that? What would happen to you if you did?*

**5:28 *In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— 30 for we are members of his body.***

You are now part of Christ's body, connected to Him by His Spirit. What you go through, He endures with you. Your burdens and struggles are His. Your joys are His and His joy is now yours. His passions are now Yours. His love is now yours. His authority is now yours. *If you want it.*

Here's the challenge for each of us. Who gets to speak identity into you? Who are you listening to? Is it your past story? Is it what other people say about you? Is it what was done to you? *Are you willing to let Jesus speak to you about who you are? Are you willing to then see and speak the truth to the ones you love? What is one thing you could do this week, consistently, to show the people closest to you that you love them?*

**5:31 *“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”***

We're all in this together. When you treat yourself with harshness, anger, and scorn in your mind and heart, it will come out. The opposite is also true. When you receive God's gentleness, you will be gentle with others. They will soften. Love will increase. You'll encourage your child three times as much as correcting them and they'll listen. Your whole goal will be to create a safe home, and your words and actions will show it.

*In a marriage, both of you have to say yes and finally stop performing, stop running and hiding, and start submitting to God and to one another. Men, as the head of your household, you're not called to dictate but to initiate. Your purpose isn't to initiate survival mode, it's to initiate prayer, trusting God in honesty and vulnerability and then initiate love and gentleness towards your family. Be the man, husband, and father who makes your wife and kids stop running and turn and trust you instead.*

Something mysterious happens when we submit ourselves to God and to one another. We speak words of love to each other like God is speaking to us. We sense the needs of those we love and move towards them. Romance will bloom. Friendships will grow. You won't see your kids as problems to solve or manage, but souls you just love. *Do you want this?*