

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 was most encouraging, and which part is most challenging?
2. What did You notice about God, and what did you notice about yourself as well as 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 the previous question.)*

**Sermon Study - Conversation Guide**

March 10, 2024

"It's Time for Joy"

Colossians 1:1-10

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

Today we start the book of Colossians. The apostle Paul wrote this letter to the people of Colossae, a church he didn't start, while he was in prison in Rome. Paul had been planting churches, preaching, and writing for nearly 30 years at this point. Thus, this is one of the most beautiful, powerful declarations of the Gospel and glory of Jesus in all of Scripture.

1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, 2 To God's holy people in Colossae, the faithful brothers and sisters in Christ: Grace and peace to you from God our Father.

Paul's greeting is standard in his letters. But it's not to be skipped over. Sitting in prison, with a middle-aged Timothy by his side, writing down his every word, making sure the apostle got food, Paul spoke words of encouraging love, sending the church grace and peace to remind us that God is the One who loves us, who forgives us, who adores us, who has chosen us, who sustains us. It's all grace, all an undeserved gift.

God's grace toward you never wavers or lessens, nor is His unmerited favor tied to your behavior or performance. God always loves you, is always pouring out gifts and blessings you could never earn. So, peace be with you. God is at peace with you. Let that sink in for a moment. You're safe. You're loved. God's posture towards you is joyful, relaxed. He is thrilled you're with Him. Grace and peace from Father God to you.

1:3 We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, 4 because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all God's people—

Our faith isn't a feeling. Our love isn't an emotion. Our faith is us, together, standing in the face of all our darkness, armed with prayer, worship, and trust in our Risen Savior. For us, like this ancient church, love is a verb. Love is us paying so others benefit. Love is our forgiveness, our commitment, our generosity to those around us.

1:5 the faith and love that spring from the hope stored up for you in heaven and about which you have already heard in the true message of the gospel 6 that has come to you.

The church in Colossae heard the truth of the Gospel: Broken by this world, rebellious in our hearts, Jesus finds us, forgives us, and reminds us that no matter how far we've run, we've never not been loved. Jesus pays our debt with His very life and conquers the evil that conquered us.

Jesus washes us clean by taking our stains. He ended our condemnation by being condemned as our substitute on the cross. Every moment we think we're unloved or unworthy of His love, the Gospel reminds us that God has and will always love us. Every moment we try to earn His love, to be worthy of it, God reminds us that Jesus has done all the earning.

It's time for joy. It's time for the hope that one day all these temporary struggles and pains will pass forever. For eternity we'll be filled with joy, peace, and love in our Savior's presence. Heaven is real. Heaven is being in God's presence now. The truths of the Gospel are experienced in real time. There's true hope and strength in Jesus' presence right now.

1:6 In the same way, the gospel is bearing fruit and growing throughout the whole world—just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and truly understood God's grace. 7 You learned it from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf, 8 and who also told us of your love in the Spirit.

The church is designed to be heaven on earth, a family where every need is met, every tear is wiped away, every hurt is healed by compassion. Do you realize your importance? Your prayers matter. Your giving matters. Your participation matters. It's time to get excited! It's time to stand and pray! It's time to take our joy and our hope back, and lean into what Jesus is doing in us, and what Jesus is doing through us!

1:9 For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives,

This is my prayer for you: "Please, Jesus, help my friends see Your will for their life. Help them see this life You have for them, a life of joyful talking with and listening to You; a life of significance and rest; a life where we gladly sacrifice for each other; a life where You are the greatest treasure; a life of adventure and love."

1:10 so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,

How do you live a life worthy of the Lord and bear fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God? It's not complicated, but it's not easy. You listen to God's voice and only His voice. Jesus adores you. It's time for joy now. It's time to get excited about what's next. Jesus is about to ROCK YOUR WORLD!