

Growth Group Guide

Connect

Open your time together by discussing this question:

- In Colossians 1:7, Paul says the Colossians learned the gospel from Epaphras. From whom did you first learn the gospel? How?

Read

- Read aloud Colossians 1:1-14 a couple times in at least two translations if possible.
- As you read/listen, jot down a couple key observations that catch your attention.

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Engage

Discuss these questions:

- Paul suggests that three words characterize the Colossians (vv 4-5). What are these three words? What are the objects of these characteristics in the Colossian believers?
- Solely from this passage (vv 3-14), can you identify and describe the gospel? What is it?
- The idea of bearing fruit and growing indicates that the gospel is living and dynamic. What does it mean for the gospel to bear fruit and grow among a church community? What does that look like?
- List the things that Paul prays for/desires on behalf of the Colossians in vv 9-12. What does it indicate about Paul and/or the Colossians that Paul would pray these things for them?
- As a believer, describe your personal position and identity as indicated in vv 12-14. What has the Father and the Son each done to put you in that position/give you that identity?

Respond

Take a moment to reflect on and share about these questions:

- The Colossians were characterized by faith in Christ, love for each other, and hope in heaven. To what degree would you say that you and your community are also characterized by these?
- How would you say that the gospel is now bearing fruit and growing in you and among you? Where do you notice the fruit of the gospel to be abundant and where does it seem a bit sparse? In what situations and for whom might you begin to pray through Paul's list of prayer requests (vv 9-12)?

Growth Groups at CBC are a key pathway toward making disciples of Jesus Christ.

Growth Groups include...

Word: Studying, understanding, and applying the Bible.

Walk: Praying, caring, serving, and connecting with others.

Witness: Intentionally reaching out to the world around us.

Worship: Fostering growth in knowledge, faith, love, service, obedience, and maturity.

This guide incorporates these elements in conjunction with the current preaching series. Intended for use by Growth Groups that meet every two weeks, but can be easily modified for other uses.

- Share your reaction to the idea that, if you are in Christ, the things listed in vv 12-14 are true of you. These are part of your identity. What are your thoughts/reflections/emotions toward this? What does this make you want to do or say?

Dig

Over the next several days, take some time on your own to dig a little deeper:

- Read or listen to the entire letter of Colossians a several times (takes less than 15 minutes).
- At some point, take some time to evaluate your life and relationships in light of Paul's prayer requests for the Colossians listed in vv 9-12. Write down your prayers and reflections for yourself, your family, your group, your church, your sphere of influence, and your community.
- Meditate on and memorize Colossians 1:13-14. Talk with God about these verses.

Go

Let's put some of this into practice in our spheres of influence:

- As the Colossians learned the gospel from Epaphras and as you learned it from someone, consider this: Is there someone to whom you are or could be teaching the gospel? How will you go about teaching it? Talk and pray about next steps.
- Consider sharing the ideas in vv 13-14 with some of the people you encounter over the next few days—whether believers or otherwise.

Pray

Please take some time to pray together for each other:

- Pray for each other something out of Paul's list of prayer requests in vv 9-12.
- Pray for someone in your sphere of influence to whom you might be able to teach the gospel.
- Pray specifically for the opportunity to share something from vv 12-14 this week.
- Pray for each other's concerns and needs.

Care

- Is there a specific need among the group that you can help care for in the coming days? How can you help?
- Make a point to connect with and encourage one or more of your group members between now and the next meeting.

Plan

- Next group meeting will be at (place) _____
on (date/time) _____.
- Look back over this lesson. What assignments will you commit to doing between now and the next meeting?

