



Week 5: Colossians - Relationships that Reward

FACILITATOR'S NOTE:

- ✓ Start your group discussion with the "Check-in" question to help your members reflect back on their week and follow up on last week's application challenge.
- ✓ Review the "Big Idea" to help you gain clarity around the heart of this week's message and focus your group's discussion towards a clear direction.
- ✓ Read this week's scripture passages together and guide your group through the "Discuss" questions to initiate meaningful dialogue around key concepts or insights from this week's message.
- ✓ Move your group discussion to a deeper level by leading them through questions in "Apply". Use discernment to customize these application questions to meet the needs & dynamics of your group.
NOTE: You do not have to cover all the questions provided in "Apply".
- ✓ Connect with God together as a group through this week's "prayer practice", which can be in the form of a prayer exercise or some guidance on what to pray for in relation to the message or application.

CHECK-IN	Last week we were challenged to examine some habits from your "old self" that you might rid yourself of. Were you able to identify any and have you made any adjustments?
BIG IDEA	<p>God has created us as relational beings designed to empower, encourage and enhance the other. Very often we struggle in our key relationships that result in painful emotional turmoil. In Colossians 3, Paul addresses three key relationships that we all are involved in some point in our lives. We can find ourselves in at least one of the three: marriage, parenting, employment.</p> <p>Paul proposes a solution as to how to create and maintain healthy relationships. He presents Christ as our model, Communication as our method and Charity as our means and motive.</p>

DISCUSS

Read Colossians 3:18-25 together.

We will be adopting some questions from a *How to Study the Bible* online resource to help us to interpret the passage. Supplementary questions follow each of the “big questions” in order to connect them to the sermon message. The beauty of using a set of “big questions” like these is that we can apply them to any Scripture passage. Choose at least one question from each question type.

1. **What does this teach me about God?** When Paul addresses the three key relationships he references God as the model and love for him as the motive for maintaining healthy relationships. Are there any stories or interactions from the life of Jesus that could inform us to be better spouses, parents and employees?
2. **What does this reveal about my sin (or the human condition)?** Paul addresses these key relationships because there is a breakdown due to our selfishness and unhealthy expectations. How have unrealistic expectations affected your relationships in a negative way?
3. **How does this point to Christ's redemption?** Paul writes how Jesus has dealt with our sin and renewed our humanity so we can live as better humans. How does the assurance of the forgiveness of our sins change our perspective in forgiving others and having patience with the sins and failures of others?
4. **What is the one truth that I need to apply to my life this week?** Pastor Samuel talked about how expectations can affect our relationships. What is one expectation you might have with your spouse, child, parent, co-worker or boss that you might need to modify or eliminate to make your relationship better?

APPLY

How do we respond to God's teaching in meaningful ways? What might God ask of us in mind, spirit, or actions?

1. Are there any unspoken expectations or unconscious roles that have you possibly gained from your childhood that have been placed on your current relationships? How have those roles or expectations affected your relationships?
2. We looked at three types of dependent relationships: enmeshed, disengaged and interdependent relationships. Would you be able to identify your key relationship within this framework? If necessary, what steps can you take to make all your key relationships interdependent?
3. We briefly looked at four stages of parenting: discipline, training, coaching and friendship years. What are the challenges and joys of each stage that you can share to encourage other group members? We were challenged to parent our children by their first name and not their last name. What does

	<p>that mean to you?</p> <p>4. Our professions are to honour God, impact others and provide for ourselves and family. How does functioning with the perspective that we are primarily working for Christ impact how you work at your job?</p>
PRAYER PRACTICE	<p>Take time for each member in the group to pray for their spouses, children, parents and work.</p> <p>Would you consider writing down the names of the key relationships in your life and be willing to pray for them by name everyday for at least a month?</p>