

To KNOW Christ and one another more deeply,
To CARE for one another in truth and in love,
To GROW as followers of Jesus,
To SERVE those God has placed in our path.
- CG Mission Statement

Worship: Colossians 1:15-20

(Here is a psalm/song to help your group as you worship)

Ready through Colossians 1:15-20 as a group.

Icebreaker

As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

Text for Discussion: Genesis 1:26-28, 3:15; Zechariah 9:9-14; Acts 1:8

Turn in your Bibles and read this passage aloud together.

Aid for Discussion: Sermon Summary

Repentance is Jesus' word for the Good News coming into our lives. The more the Gospel becomes part of who we are, the more it will change (maybe not what we do but) how we see what we do. So as we begin to take Jesus seriously, we must consider what the Good News of the Kingdom means for our work and career. How does the mission of God – which unfolds over the arc of the biblical narrative – change how we see our life and calling in Los Angeles? Asking this doesn't mean leaving what we currently do for so-called "Christian work." God works through and values our non-church work, meaning we're already in Christian ministry. The question is whether we see what we do as participating in God's Mission.

The Mission of God is revealed throughout the Bible with Jesus as its fulfillment and climax; all things were made through Him and for Him. This grand story can be distilled down to four beats: creation, fall, redemption and restoration. God created people in His image to cultivate, rule, and steward creation. Our desire to rule ourselves fractured our relationship with our Father. Sin and death entered the world. But God made a promise to bless the world, reverse the curse, and recover the hope of Genesis 1 & 2. But how can the Kingdom of God – where God's will is done in God's way – be established when His people remain faithless?

The Old Testament closes promising that "The Lord will be king over all the earth." Which is why the New Testament opens declaring that Jesus is the embodiment and fulfillment of God's promises. God reconciled all things to Himself, making peace with creation by the blood of the cross (Rev 1:5-6). Through Jesus, redemption has been accomplished. What was lost through one man is restored through another. Eden is renewed as a heaven-on-earth garden city where the glorious Lamb of God reigns.

When we begin to see our lives as part of God's story, we realize that the mission field is *everywhere*. Just as the disciples saw themselves as God's chosen witnesses, we must see this as **the** thing Jesus calls us to. We are participants in God's mission, sent to proclaim by word and deed the Good News of the Kingdom. God's promises never fail, and He invites us to invite others to join Him in this beautiful new life.

What does this look like in our daily lives? We are called and sent as God's witnesses, meaning we're always "on". But that doesn't mean we fear letting our coworkers see just how needy we are. Integral to our witness is that we are frail, broken people in need of forgiveness and grace. Christians ought to be the best and most reliable employees, resisting the ever-present temptation to use our work as a source of self-worth or acceptance. We do our work well because our boss is not our boss. We work for Christ our King, reclaiming our work space for Him. While our job may not present a direct connection to the service to others, it can still be an offering to God as we reflect His nature for His glory.

The world is a big place, and we aren't called to take it all on ourselves. Loving the world is God's job. Instead, filled with His Spirit, we learn to love the person next to us. We focus our ministry on the people we already work alongside. We begin to see our work as God's work, letting it be an offering to Him for His glory, doing our best, and leaving the rest to God.

Guiding Question of the Week

(This question is intended as a target for the whole conversation. Do not ask for responses now. It will be repeated later in the study.)

What impacts you about God's amazing story of Creation, Fall, Redemption, Restoration? Since the story is still going on, what is your part in the story?

Questions for Discussion

(Remember it is better to wrestle deeply with two good questions than gloss over many. Sub-bullets are intended for potential follow-up.)

- How does Genesis 1:26-28 help answer the question, "What is the meaning of life and why am I here?"
 - How does the "human job description" of Genesis 1:26-28 tell us our true identity and help define our life's work?
- What impacts you about God's amazing story of Creation, Fall, Redemption, Restoration? Since the story is still going on, what is your part in the story?
 - How do we join with God in the restoration of all things?
- The Kingdom of God has Christ as King and is present wherever what God wants done is done in God's way. Compare and contrast the Kingdom of God with the old way of the kingdom of self.
 - Can you identify any priorities to re-order that might help you walk intentionally in the Kingdom of God?
 - What does it mean that the Bible calls us a Kingdom of Priests? See Exodus 19:6, Isaiah 61:6, Romans 15:16, 1 Peter 2:9.
- The following words are synonyms for the word mission - assignment, delegation, task, charge, duty, errand, quest, work, purpose, goal, aim. Pick a word from the list that might help you or others understand God's mission for His people. Explain your choice.
 - Comment on the missional statement, "We are invited to invite." How does this help us see how our story and work fits into God's mission?
 - What promise from Acts 1:8 do we have as we carry out the mission?
 - How does understanding and living our mission from God affect our family? workplace (can you believe you get paid to be a full time missionary)? neighborhood? city? Give examples.
- What is the church? What is the mission of the church?
 - How does your heart respond when you think of God's mission and your role in His story?
 - What is your prayer about your heart response?

Prayer

"Thy Kingdom Come, Thy will be done." Use this statement from our Lord's Prayer to pray over your prayer requests this week.

Experiment of the Month

(A suggestion for engagement in following the way of Jesus this week)

Spiritual Formation Experiment – Commit to memorizing Colossians 1:15-20. Meditate on the verses daily.

Missional Experiment - What would you include if you were to tell a brief, concise, yet complete version of God's story to an unbelieving friend or neighbor if asked? Write the story and practice sharing it with your community group for feedback. Feedback questions to ask - Did this story make sense to you? What sticks out to you? What did you learn about God? What do you wonder about? Ask a friend if you can practice telling the story to them as you learn to share it from memory. Have the community group pray that God would give you the opportunity to share it with an unbelieving friend, neighbor, or loved one.