

JOURNEY GROUPS

NOVEMBER 1 LEADER GUIDE

LEADERS NOTES

A few notes for you as a leader as you meet again this week:

- As you think about your group this week, consider that God is in community with us. Many people in your groups will try to make it “all about them” because of their sinful nature. However, as leaders, you get to frame your gathering as “all about God,” who has accepted us in Christ. And together we become more like Him as we “welcome [accept] one another, just as Christ has welcomed [accepted] you” (Rom 15:7).
- As you look at your group, who do you think might someday lead a group? Start praying specifically for that right now, and let Pastor Ryan know so he can pray too.
- Prayer request: Consider those who are feeling alienated for whatever reason, that they find stability in Christ’s community in your group.

CARE MINISTRY NOTE

- MEXICALI DONATIONS — Our annual missions trip to Mexicali, Mexico on Nov 11-15 is only a few weeks away! We need clothing/shoes (adults and children) and hygiene items for our street ministry! Please consider making this your group outreach/service project, and bring new or gently used items to the church office during business hours, or email care@journeykingman.com with questions. Let's send the team to Mexico with lots of tangible blessings from Journey Church!

SHARE - ICE BREAKERS

- What is your most controversial opinion about movies, music, or food?
- What is your favorite way to spend time with friends?

STUDY

Digging Deeper into **Colossians 1:21–23**:

1. On Sunday, Matt began by recounting Adam and Eve's temptation and the Fall that followed. Have several people **read Genesis 3:1–19**.
2. Why did Adam and Eve do it? What lured them away from the safety and glory of their life with God? *[Adam and Eve were tempted by the possibility of becoming something more than what God had created them to be. Satan tempted them to distrust God's goodness, question His Word, and pursue independence from Him. Ultimately, they wanted the benefits of God's wisdom without submitting to God Himself.]*
3. What were the long-term effects of their choice? *[The tragedy of the Fall is that humanity exchanged joyful dependence upon God for the illusion of independence. We wanted life on our own terms, but apart from God we discovered spiritual separation, death, shame, guilt, and brokenness.]*
4. Have someone **read Colossians 1:21-23**, then circle back and **re-read verse 21** so we can start there. On Sunday, Matt went to great lengths to define the word 'alienate.' What does it mean to be alienated from God? *[The word alienated communicates estrangement, exclusion, and separation from someone with whom there should be a relationship. Alienation involves a broken relationship that produces hostility, grief, and relational pain.]*
5. Paul said that we were enemies of God in our minds because of our sinful behavior. How do sinful actions prove that a mind is hostile to God? *[Notice the relationship between the mind and behavior. Our sinful behavior is not merely a collection of isolated mistakes. It reveals something about our underlying disposition toward God. See **Rom 8:7** for further help with this. Sin is not simply doing something God told us not to do. It is an expression of a heart that does not want God to be our God.]*
6. Have someone **re-read verse 21–22**. What does the word 'reconcile' mean? *[Reconciliation means restoring a broken relationship by removing the hostility and establishing peace between two parties who were previously estranged.]*

7. Who did ALL the work of reconciliation, and how did He do it? *[Jesus Christ accomplished the work of reconciliation. We rebelled, but God pursued reconciliation. This work originates with God (**Rom 5:8**). He accomplished it through Jesus Christ's physical death (**Isa 53:5–6**). It is applied to our lives through Christ's finished work (**2 Cor 5:18–19**). We could not repair the relationship, so God provided His Son to accomplish what we could never accomplish ourselves.]*
8. What does our baptism symbolize, and how does it relate to this discussion? *[Baptism pictures several realities: 1) Death: Our old life under the dominion of sin has been crucified with Christ. 2) Burial: We identify with Christ's death and burial and our "burial" of that old way of life. 3) Resurrection: We have been raised with Christ to new life. 4) Union: We belong to Christ and continue to participate in the benefits of His death and resurrection. In the sense of our Colossians passage, baptism reminds us that we are no longer defined by our former alienation but by our relationship with Christ; we have a new identity.]*
9. **Re-read verse 22.** How can we stand holy before the Lord, without blemish and free from accusation? *[The simple answer is "Jesus!" We are declared "holy, without blemish and free from accusation" by Christ's righteous work (**Rom 5:1**). We are being made holy by the progressive transformation into the full image of Christ (**2 Cor 3:18**). And one day we will be completely perfected in Christ (**Phil 1:6**). Because of this, we pursue holiness in Christ. We do not pursue holiness to be accepted by God; we pursue holiness because, through Christ, we have already been accepted by God.]*
10. Have someone **re-read verse 23**. What is the big "IF"? What is Paul trying to help the Colossians see? *[Paul wants the Colossians to understand that genuine reconciliation with God produces perseverance in the faith. The word "if" does not imply that Christ's work is insufficient or that believers must supplement His work to maintain their salvation. Rather, perseverance is the evidence of genuine faith.]*

11. Given that we are meant to persevere, what does perseverance in Christ look like? Look again at **verse 23** and notice the description of a person who continues “in faith.” *[Paul uses three descriptions. They are stable, or firmly “established,” in the truth of the gospel. They are steadfast, again “firm,” and not easily moved away from Christ. And their lives are characterized by not shifting – they “do not move from hope.” That is, they refuse to abandon the hope of the gospel for competing promises.]*
12. How does the hope of being presented “holy and without blemish” before God one day influence how we approach suffering, temptation, and discouragement? *[Our future standing before God gives us a perspective that extends beyond present circumstances. Suffering does not mean God has abandoned us. Temptation does not mean we must surrender to sin. Discouragement does not mean our spiritual growth is meaningless.]*
13. Let's pause for a minute and talk about something amazing. Jesus brought peace between God and us. How can we live in a way that enjoys this hard-won peace? *[There is a difference between having peace with God and experiencing and enjoying the peace of God. The difference comes down to trust, which we exercise by abiding in Christ Jesus and depending on Him in all things. It also means that we seek to extend that peace to others as reconciled people become reconciling people – whether that is through forgiving others or showing the truth of God’s forgiveness in Christ Jesus.]*
14. What supplements are we tempted to add to our lives? If we sometimes struggle and turn to Jesus "plus" something else, what is that something else? *[Answers will vary.]*

PRAYER

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