

COMMUNITY GROUP WEEKLY DISCUSSION GUIDE
WEEK OF AUGUST 3, 2009

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Following Jesus in the Workplace

"Being salt is not nearly so much about having more pastors and missionaries as it is about having many more committed Christian lay people thinking strategically about and acting on ways to build the kingdom in such areas as public policy, advertising, media, higher education, entertainment, the arts, and sports. Keeping Christ bottled up in the churches is keeping salt in the shakers, and He does not go where we do not take Him."

–Bob Briner, *Roaring Lambs*

"You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet.

You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

Matthew 5:13-16

THIS WEEK'S TEXT

Ephesians 6:5-9

RELATED TEXTS TO EXPLORE

1 Pet 2:18; Gal 1:10; Ps 62:12; Gal 3:28, 6:7-9; Col 3:11; Lev 25:43; Job 31:13-15; John 13:13; Philemon

STUDY GUIDE

- What observations can be made about:
 - The main point of this passage
 - Paul's specific audience in this section
 - Motivations for right actions
 - The cyclical nature of good works
 - The use of the word "master"
 - The particular aspect of God's nature that corresponds with is being a "master"
 - Prescribed mental, emotional and spiritual postures of service
- What does each of these things mean? What did they mean for the church at Ephesus then, what do they mean for us now?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

Use any or as many of these questions as will be helpful for your discussion.

- What has God spoken to you about this week regarding the sermon or passage?
- What does this passage reveal to us about Jesus?
- How does this passage enhance our understanding of the Gospel?
- What does this text mean for us as a community? Individually? How does it free us to be the people God intends for us to be?
- How do we need to live out the meaning of this text in our city?
- How do we apply Paul's words to our positions in the workplace?
- What does it mean to live as a godly employee in respect to our boss, co-workers, janitorial staff, etc?
- How can we move together in that direction?

"When Christians criticize, carp, and complain but offer no alternatives, the world rolls its eyes, snickers, and moves on. It is really only when we offer a 'more excellent way' that we command or deserve much attention."

-Bob Briner

MEMORY VERSES

Last Week: Eph 5: 15-17

This Week: Eph 6: 5-8

PRAYER FOCUS

For the Vision and Direction of the church (August):

Apostles Church wants to be a people who serve and shape the emerging culture. We will seek to follow Jesus in our public lives and influence the domains in which God has placed us.

In Response to the Text:

- Praising God for his righteousness and justice in the way he deals with us
- Praising Jesus for his perfect obedience to the Father
- Confessing our apparent acts of faithfulness which have been motivated by people pleasing and reputation enhancing
- Confessing the ways we show favoritism – particularly towards those who can add value to us
- Thanking God for rewarding us based on what Christ has done
- Thanking God for always upholding his justice
- Asking for increased opportunities to worship in our work
- Asking for increased opportunities to put the gospel on display in our workplaces

FURTHER RESOURCES FOR STUDY AND PREPARATION

- *Confessions* – St. Augustine
- *The Pursuit of God* – A.W. Tozer
- *Roaring Lambs* – Bob Briner
- *Culture Making: Recovering our Creative Calling* – Andy Crouch
- *A Theology of Work: Work and the New Creation* – Darrell Cosden & Jurgen Moltmann
- *Work in the Spirit: Toward a Theology of Work* – Miroslav Volf

NEXT WEEK'S TEXT

Ephesians 1:1-14 (We will be reviewing from the beginning of Ephesians and enjoying an extended time of musical worship in our Sunday service)