

COMMUNITY GROUP WEEKLY DISCUSSION GUIDE
WEEK OF MAY 11, 2009

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Praying for Vision

"There are different kinds of poverty. In India some people live and die in hunger.

But in the West you have another kind of poverty, spiritual poverty. This is far worse. People do not believe in God, do not pray. People do not care for each other. You have the poverty of people who are dissatisfied with what they have, who do not know how to suffer, who give in to despair. This poverty of heart is often more difficult to relieve and to defeat."

-Mother Theresa, *Everything Starts from Prayer*

"And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light."

Colossians 1:9-12

THIS WEEK'S TEXT

Ephesians 1:15-23

RELATED TEXTS TO EXPLORE

Colossians 1, Acts 2:24&33, Mark 16:19, 1 Pet 3:22, Heb 1:4, Psalm 8:6, 1 Cor 15:27, Psalm 110, Jer 23:24

STUDY GUIDE

- **What observations can be made about:**
 - The impetus of Paul's prayer
 - How these believers at Ephesus were identified as genuinely saved (v.15)
 - The types of things Paul prays for the church at Ephesus
 - The nature and position of the risen and ascended Christ
 - Our hope
 - Our inheritance
 - God's power
 - The "body" of Christ (v. 23)

- **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 is the main point of this 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?
- What specifically do you feel called for and called to (Eph 2:10)?
- How will you, with a greater vision of the ruling and reigning Christ, express the message and mercy of Christ to our hurting and broken world?

“Dreaming about a thing in order to do it properly is right; but dreaming about it when we should be doing it is wrong.” – Oswald Chambers

MEMORY VERSES

Last Week: Eph 1:13-14

This Week: Eph 1:17-19

PRAYER FOCUS

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

Apostles Church wants to be a people who intentionally connect others to Jesus. We will authentically, compassionately and intelligently dialogue with the culture about the Gospel of Jesus.

In Response to the Text:

- That we would indeed have faith in the Lord Jesus and love towards all the saints
- That we would pray without ceasing and be people who constantly give thanks
- For wisdom and revelation to know God in deeper and more intimate ways
- For the power of God to be clearly evidenced in our lives
- That we as a church would be filled with Christ Jesus to all fullness
- That we would have vision to see Jesus as preeminent above all things
- That we would be compelled to join God in the renewal of all things with both the message and mercy of Christ
- That we would have a sustained compassionate response to the needs around us

FURTHER RESOURCES FOR STUDY AND PREPARATION

- *The Valley of Vision* – Arthur G. Bennett
- *Desiring God* – John Piper
- *Religious Affections* – Jonathan Edwards
- *Terrify No More* – Gary Haugen
- *Not For Sale* – David Batstone
- *The SOLD Project Documentary*
- *Money, Possessions, and Eternity* – Randy Alcorn