



COLOSSIANS – The Kingdom Life vs. Quarantined Life

WEEK 2: Community

Bible: Colossians 1:24 - 2:7

*All Scripture quoted is New Living Translation unless otherwise noted. Introduction notes in the teaching section include quotes from the Life Application Study Bible.

Bottom Line: The importance of being rooted in the Bible and tightly connected to the local church will be studied and emphasized as students examine the challenge and encouragement Paul wrote to the people of the church in Colossae.

PARENTS: It's best to read through the message for you and your kids first 😊.

TEACH WITH YOUR KIDS

If you haven't already, you'll at several points in your life and most likely during this quarantine 😊, be around people (your family right?) who drive you crazy or at least have some conflict with you.

The easy way to deal with that is to walk away and leave those friends and find new ones. But you can't with family, especially not during a lockdown with mom, dad, brother & sister for two months!

However, the healthy solution is to work through your problems so you can stay friends and have a deeper friendship. So you can have healthy family relationships.

In life most often the easy solution is for everyone to let go and just walk away from a difficult situation, or conversation, or friendship, or, or, or (parents, take time to share an example with your family about a personal experience you took by taking the easier way out and walking away from something difficult).

When you leave a difficult situation, you may have left the situation, but if you stayed to work it out, you wouldn't have the joy of sharing the success of overcoming a challenge.

Those who stay connected and figure out how to work through a difficult situation with a family member or a friend, are able to grow, not just as an individual but as a group because you chose to work together and overcome this challenge as a family, as a community.

Let's see how this connects with what Paul wrote in the book of Colossians.

Read Colossians 1:24 - 2:7.

I am glad when I suffer for you in my body, for I am participating in the sufferings of Christ that continue for his body, the church. God has given me the responsibility of serving His church by proclaiming His entire message to you.

This message was kept secret for centuries and generations past, but now it has been revealed to God's people. For God wanted them to know that the riches and glory of Christ are for you Gentiles, too. And this is the secret: Christ lives in you. This gives you assurance of sharing his glory.

So we tell others about Christ, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all the wisdom God has given us. We want to present them to God, perfect in their relationship to Christ. That's why I work and struggle so hard, depending on Christ's mighty power that works within me.

I want you to know how much I have agonized for you and for the church at Laodicea, and for many other believers who have never met me personally. I want them to be encouraged and knit together by strong ties of love. I want them to have complete confidence that they understand God's mysterious plan, which is Christ himself. In Him lie hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. I am telling you this so no one will deceive you with well-crafted arguments.

For though I am far away from you, my heart is with you. And I rejoice that you are living as you should and that your faith in Christ is strong. And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow Him. Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on Him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.

1. Jesus gives us His power. (Colossians 1:26-29)

Paul talks about his specific ministry (life) in these verses, but he does it because his ministry is as an example of what our ministry (life) is supposed to be.

Paul truly sees all believers as sharing in this ministry together.

We're a team, a community, a family.

In verse twenty-six, Paul refers to "God's people."
Some translations use "saints" or "holy ones."

He is talking about all those who follow Jesus. There is no distinction that he or anyone else is higher or more holy than any other believers.

One has to be called and equipped by God," (that's where Paul's language about Christ's power in him comes from in verse twenty-nine).

"But one also has to be accompanied by others who've answered the call."

It's about all of us working together with Christ's power within us.

That's the way we share the good news about Jesus with those around us.

None of us individually can do as much as we all can do working together.

2. Continue to follow Jesus. (Colossians 2:6)

What is better is someone who continues following Jesus after the exciting decision is gone!

Think about it. How many kids do you see whose lives are looking more and more like Jesus every day? It's not easy. It's hard work. But that's what Paul is calling us to do - together.

We should be excited when someone follows Jesus.

But we should also be committed to working together to help each other live more and more like Jesus every day.

How do we do that? Paul gives us some tips in the next verse.

3. Grow more deeply connected to Jesus. (Colossians 2:7)

Paul says "Let your roots grow down into Him..."

That's weird. Good old Paul is using creative language again.

Always with the metaphors! So, if we think about plants, especially trees, their roots grow deeper and deeper into the soil.

Those roots help hold the tree up and provide a way for the tree to get water and minerals, food for growth.

For us, we need to be digging into the Bible.

The more we read the Bible, the more we'll know God's instructions to know how to make wise choices and hear His encouragement to stand firm when life is hard. Jesus never promised His followers an easy life.

He did promise to always be with them.

In that verse, he goes on to say, "Let your lives be built on Him."

I wonder if he was thinking about when Jesus told the story of the two builders (i.e. building your house on the sand or the rock ☺).

Read Luke 6:46-49.

"I will show you what it's like when someone comes to Me, listens to my teaching, and then follows it. It is like a person building a house who digs deep and lays the foundation on solid rock. When the floodwaters rise and break against that house, it stands firm because it is well built. But anyone who hears and doesn't obey is like a person who builds a house right on the ground, without a foundation. When the floods sweep down against that house, it will collapse into a heap of ruins."

Following Jesus involves more than just listening to His teachings. It means doing what He has commanded us to do!

That's the way you live a life that is strong, like a house built on a solid foundation. Storms still come, but they don't destroy the house. Problems still face us as we follow Jesus, but they don't destroy us.

4. Become stronger and thankful. (Colossians 2:7)

Paul ends this verse by saying *"Your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness."*

When you rely on Jesus' power in the midst of the family of believers and continue following Jesus by reading and obeying the Bible, the result is that you will have a faith that gets stronger and a heart that grows in thankfulness towards God for all that He has done and is doing.

The "success" of the church is not based on personal talents and abilities.

Instead, it is based on God's power working through imperfect people in a dysfunctional family we call the church.

When we realize it is all about Jesus and not about us, we can't help but trust Him more and grow thankful that He's given us the opportunity to be a part of this amazing work He is doing!

And all this happens within the context of community.

We each need all the others in the church.

He's telling us all, "You know these truths. Now live like it!"

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Re-read Colossians 1:24 - 2:7.

Then, guide a discussion with the following prompts:

1. Movies, books, comic books and video games about people with superpowers - both good and evil - are very popular right now.

How does it feel to know that the God who created the world and keeps it all together gives you His Spirit to live inside you when you follow Jesus?

How does that compare with superheroes/villains?

2. What's one of the best parties/celebrations you have ever participated in?

What made it so awesome?

3. How can we help each other be committed to following Jesus, even when the initial excitement of giving our lives to Jesus is gone?

4. Healthy trees have roots that go down deep into the soil to support the tree.

How is this a good metaphor for the church?

How is this different from someone trying to be a Christian without a church family?

5. Jesus taught that having a solid foundation meant going from listening to His teachings to obeying them.

What has been the easiest teaching of Jesus for you to follow?

What has been the most difficult to obey? Why?

How can I (mom, dad) help you go from hearing to obeying this teaching?

6. What are some of the things God has done or is doing for which you are most thankful? Why?

Close in prayer.