



Small Group Guide: Living in the Power of the Gospel

Based on Colossians 1:9-14

Opening Prayer & Icebreaker

Icebreaker Question: Share about a time when you tried to accomplish something in your own strength and ended up exhausted. What did you learn from that experience?

Key Scripture

"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; being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy."
— Colossians 1:9-11

Key Takeaways

1. **Paul's Priority Prayer:** Paul's first prayer for believers was that they would deeply know God and understand His will—not for safety, success, or comfort.
2. **Knowledge Through Two Avenues:** Deep knowledge of God comes through dedicated study of Scripture and aligning our hearts with God through prayer.

3. **Walking Worthy:** When we know God deeply, we gain the ability to walk in a manner worthy of Him and fully pleasing to Him.
4. **Eternal Fruit:** When we live out of the power of the gospel, our everyday actions have the ability to produce eternal fruit and value.
5. **It's All Jesus:** Our qualification, deliverance, and righteousness are entirely the work of Christ—not our own effort.

Discussion Questions

Section 1: The Power of Prayer (Colossians 1:9)

1. What strikes you most about Paul's prayer for the Colossians? How is it different from prayers you typically pray for yourself or others?
2. The pastor mentioned that Paul prayed for knowledge and understanding ahead of safety, security, and comfort. Why do you think this was his priority? How might your life change if this became your primary prayer?
3. What does "deep knowledge" (epi-knowledge) of God look like practically? How is it different from just knowing facts about God?

Section 2: The Two Avenues to Knowing God

4. The sermon mentioned two primary ways God reveals Himself: through Scripture study and through prayer. Which of these comes more naturally to you? Which one do you need to develop more?
5. Have you ever experienced "peace that passes understanding" during a difficult time? Share that story with the group. What did that teach you about God?
6. Read James 4:8 and Matthew 6:33. What promises do these verses contain? How have you seen these promises fulfilled in your life?

Section 3: Walking Worthy and Bearing Fruit (Colossians 1:10)

7. What does it mean to "walk in a manner worthy of the Lord"? How does knowing God deeply enable us to do this?
8. The pastor said: "When we're living out of the power of the gospel, our actions have the ability to produce eternal fruit and value." How does this truth change the way you view your daily, mundane tasks?

9. **Think about the statement: "When the gospel found you, it was on its way to someone else." How does this perspective shift your understanding of your purpose?**

Section 4: Strengthened by His Power (Colossians 1:11-14)

10. **Read verses 12-14 and highlight all the third-person pronouns (He, His, etc.). Why is it significant that all the work is done by God and not by us?**
11. **The story of Joshua in Zechariah 3 shows Satan accusing Joshua while God defends and re-clothes him. How does this picture help you understand your standing before God?**
12. **Jesus said, "Come to me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." Are you currently trying to live the Christian life in your own strength? What would it look like to "come to Jesus" with that exhaustion?**

Personal Reflection Questions

Take 3-5 minutes of silence for personal reflection:

- **In what areas of my life am I trying to operate in my own power rather than God's?**
- **What would it look like for me to pray Paul's prayer for myself this week—that I would be filled with the knowledge of God's will?**
- **Am I tired, worn out, or burnt out trying to live the Christian life on my own? What is one step I can take to rest in Christ's finished work?**

Practical Applications

Choose 1-2 of these to commit to this week:

Individual Practices:

1. **Pray Paul's Prayer Daily:** Each morning this week, pray Colossians 1:9-14 for yourself, inserting your own name. Ask God to fill you with the knowledge of His will.
2. **Study with Purpose:** Set aside 15-20 minutes daily to read Scripture with this question in mind: "God, what are you revealing about yourself to me in this passage?"
3. **Listen in Prayer:** Spend 10 minutes in prayer where you do more listening than talking. Ask God, "How would you have me think/feel/act in this situation?" and wait for His leading.
4. **Memorize the Passage:** Work on memorizing Colossians 1:9-14 this week. Let these truths sink deep into your heart.

Group Practices:

5. **Pray for Each Other:** Exchange names and commit to praying Paul's prayer (Col 1:9-14) for that person throughout the week.
6. **Accountability Check-In:** Text or call your accountability partner mid-week and ask: "Are you trying to do things in your own strength this week, or are you resting in Christ's power?"
7. **Share Eternal Fruit:** Discuss with the group one way you can invest in eternal fruit this week (sharing the gospel, serving someone, encouraging a believer, etc.).

Closing Prayer

Pray together:

"Lord, thank you that you have qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints. Thank you that you have delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us into your kingdom. Help us this week to live not in our own power, but in yours. Fill us with the knowledge of your will. Help us to walk worthy of you, bearing fruit that lasts into eternity. We confess that we are tired of trying to live this life on our own. Come to us, reveal yourself to us, and change us. In Jesus' name, Amen."