

# Life Group Leader Guide

## *Experiencing Christ – Week #8*

(Suggested Format and Discussion Questions)

### Fellowship and Food (15 minutes)

#### Welcome (15 minutes)

- Prepare your Life Group for the Winter Season (starts Jan 28) by passing out the “Upcoming Winter Season – Jan 07.pdf” if you haven’t already. In the next two weeks the church will also send this information to all Life Group participants who have a valid e-mail in the church database.
- Begin making plans for the holiday Off-Season if you haven’t already. Most groups will want at least two touch points during the Off-Season with a pre-Christmas gathering to celebrate what the Lord has been doing in their lives and a post-New Years gathering before the start of the Winter Season on Jan 28. Please refer to the “Fall Season to Winter Season Transition.pdf” for more ideas.
- Please distribute to your group members the attached *McKinney Fellowship Top Ten Serves*. This is a great opportunity to shepherd your group members to love others through service. We know that 58% of Life Group members are not serving at the church. This discussion should take approximately five minutes of your group time.

#### Bible Study (45 minutes)

Read Col. 4:2-6, and then review the main points of the sermon outline.

1. **(Prayer - persistent)** Read Col. 4:2b. Share about your prayer life. How could you be more devoted to prayer?

LEADER NOTES: The idea here is to get people talking and thinking about prayer. Let’s define prayer as communication with God and not narrow the idea any further. The Bible has everything from chapter-long prayers to Peter’s urgent cry, “Lord, save me!” (Matt. 14:30).

2. **(Prayer – alert & thankful)** Read Col. 4:2 and Eph. 6:11-12. Many of us pray only about things we can obviously see. What should be our practice of prayer when it comes to unseen, spiritual danger? How can we become more alert in prayer? How can we be consistently thankful without setting up some sort of legalistic rule about it?

LEADER NOTES: The key here is that we lack awareness of spiritual dangers, because the only way one can perceive them is by believing what the Word says. In other words, the dangers are unseen, so they are often discounted.

3. **(Prayer - Opportunities)** Read Col. 4:3-4. Probably we should view these prayers for evangelistic opportunities as encompassing both individual opportunities and corporate opportunities. What role does inviting people to church or to Life Group (to encounter the corporate body) play in spreading the gospel? What role does one-on-one play in spreading the gospel? How does prayer affect either approach? Who do you know that you could invite to the Joshua study starting Jan 28, 2007?

4. **(Prayer/evangelism - Clarity)** Read Col. 4:4. A better translation of this verse would stress the necessity of proclaiming the message of Christ clearly. The leading lexicon says of the word used in this verse: "**one must, one has to**, denoting compulsion of any kind" (BDAG-3). What truth about Christ has impacted you through the Colossians study that you could share with a friend?

5. **(Evangelism by deed)** Read Col. 4:5. The "My Response" section of the *Experiencing Christ Study Guide*, page 104, says, "Write down the opportunities you have to walk with wisdom before those who have yet to set their affections on Jesus. Write down how you can make the most of these opportunities." What did you write?

6. **(Evangelism by word)** Read Col. 4:6. One commentator says of this verse that Christians should give "perceptive answers that have that delicate blend of pungency and graciousness suited to the varying needs of individuals." What do you find to be easy in this respect and what is difficult? Where or with whom could you find an opportunity to share?

## Prayer (20 minutes)

Notice this week the section is just "Prayer" not "Share and Prayer" because this week is a great time to place the emphasis on praying for the advancement of the gospel instead of personal prayer requests that are so important in a Life Group context. Take the time to pray around the following categories. Group members could each pray for a category or you could open it up for multiple people to pray for each category.

- Pray for personal growth in our prayer lives (Col 4:2).
- Pray for opportunities to share Christ (Col 4:3).
- Pray for McKinney Fellowship's effectiveness in proclaiming Christ in Collin County and around the world (Col 4:3).
- Pray for Bruce Miller in his role as Senior Pastor (Col 4:3).
- Pray for clarity in how we share Christ (Col 4:4).
- Pray for spiritual growth in the members of McKinney Fellowship that we may be wise in how we act and in how we speak. (Col 4:5, 6)

## Closing

Encourage group members not to miss the benefits of doing the last week of studies in the *Experiencing Christ Study Guide*. The last three daily studies in Week 9 provide opportunities to reflect back on our full study in Colossians. This effort will be central for each group member to find the personal key-truths and action-steps that come to the forefront in their lives from our study together. Ask each group member to be prepared to share what they have gained from the book of Colossians. This should be a great time of encouragement as we hear how God has been working!