

CROSSROADS BIBLE CHURCH
GROWTH GROUP CURRICULUM
June 2, 2019
"CITY OF GOD" - Week 4

For more information or to join a Growth Group, please visit our Growth Group page online at cbclife.org/groups or call the church office at 408.288.4115.

For those who weren't there or even those who didn't understand it very well it will help them to get acquainted with the text and topic. These questions are also designed to be "softball" questions in order to get people to engage and participate.

1. Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

This is an opportunity to clarify the teaching for those who may not have understood it. This can also be a jumping off point for great discussion. Sometimes groups don't get past this question and that's ok! Remember, you want to "scratch where it itches" so don't feel the need to rush past this.

2. What is one thing from Sunday's message you are likely to remember two weeks from now?

MY STORY

1. Paul says that in Christ's body, "each member belongs to all the others" (Romans 12:5). This goes deeper than the modern concept of being a "member" of a club, because the Greek word he uses, *melos*, was the common word for a part of the body. When have you felt most connected to the "body" of Christ in your faith journey?

From Strongs Concordance: μέλος – properly, a member (part) belonging to the whole; (figuratively) any function of human personality, such as "sanctified imagination" (Ro 6:13; Col 3:5; Js 4:1). 3196 (μέλος) also specifically refers to believers as part (members) of Christ's mystical body (Eph 5:30).

[3196 (μέλος) was used in antiquity of instruments of war and implements ("working parts") of a ship. Paul used it in relation to the various functions of human personality.]

DIGGING DEEPER

Read aloud Philippians 2:1-11 and then work through the questions below.

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, 2 then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. 3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others

above yourselves, 4 not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

5 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

6

Who, being in very nature God,

did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

7

rather, he made himself nothing

by taking the very nature of a servant,

being made in human likeness.

8

And being found in appearance as a man,

he humbled himself

by becoming obedient to death—

even death on a cross!

9

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place

and gave him the name that is above every name,

10

that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,

in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

11

and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,

to the glory of God the Father.

1. Looking at verses 2-4, what can we infer is the problem that Paul is addressing in the Philippian church?

It appears that the problem Paul was addressing has to do with division (vv. 2), and selfishness (vv. 3, 4).

2. What are the four grounds for unity and humility that Paul lists in verse 1? How do these grounds lead to unity and humility?

The goal of this question is to help those in your group understand Paul's rationale. He is asserting that we should be encouraged, compassionate and tender through our unity with Christ, through the work of the Holy Spirit.

3. Verse 5 says, "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus." What do we learn about Jesus' attitude from verses 6-11?

Humility is the chief attribute assigned to Jesus in this text. The Greek word used here is means "a. to level, reduce to a plain, passive, (Luke 3:5 from Isaiah 40:4)

b. metaphorically, to bring into it humble condition, reduce to meaner circumstances". (Thayer's Greek Lexicon).

4. In his book, Love in Hard Places, Don Carson writes, "The church is... made up of natural enemies. What binds us together is not common education, common race, common income levels, common politics, common nationality, common accents, common jobs, or anything

else of the sort. Christians come together... because they have all been saved by Jesus Christ and owe him a common allegiance... They are a band of natural enemies who love one another for Jesus' sake."

Do you agree with his assessment? Why or why not? Share examples.

It may be challenging for some in your group to come to grips with the statement that the church is to be "a band of natural enemies who love one another for Jesus' sake." Often, in traditionally homogenous churches, people come from the same race and class. In San Jose, we have people from every corner of the world as well as rich and poor. If we are to truly live out the Gospel, our community should be an even representation of our larger community.

5. Read Romans 12:9-16 and the ways in which we are supposed to love one another and how we love. In which areas do you, as a group, tend to be weakest, and why? What practical steps could you take to improve?

Romans 12:9-16 (NIV)

9 Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. 10 Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. 11 Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. 12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. 13 Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. 16 Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position.[a] Do not be conceited.

***There are two sets of edicts here. The first is a set of attitudes which precede action. Paul lists sincerity, goodness, devotion, honor, zeal, joy, patience, and faithfulness (vv. 9-12). The outcomes of these attitudes and affections are, according to Paul, generosity, hospitality, grace, and humility (vv. 13-16).

TAKING IT HOME

1. Have you ever taken a spiritual gifts assessment or looked at the way your gifts, passions, abilities, and past have shaped you to be a contributing member of the body of Christ? Consider that this week and seek opportunities to plug into the church at Crossroads.
2. Much of the ways in which we grow out of our idolatry is to immerse ourselves in the cause of Christ. Loving your neighbor as you love yourself becomes the biggest, practical way to rid ourselves of idolatry. Shift your focus this week to expand your view of love.
3. Who are those people who are hard to like that you can focus on showing the love of Christ this week?

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Don't forget to remind your group about the Luau on June 9th.
- Make sure you have your fellowship event planned for the end of the Growth Group Semester!

