Sermon Discussion Guide

May 6, 2012

How to Use this Guide

1. Study the Text Beforehand - Come prepared with your own observations
   - How does the passage connect to the rest of the book? To the passage immediately before it?
   - In your own words, what is Paul's point?
   - What does this passage teach you about God? About yourself? About your need for Jesus?
   - What are a couple of things that shined out to you?
   - How does this passage challenge (or confirm) your understanding? What questions did it raise?
   - What personal applications did you uncover? How does this passage call on you to change the way you live?
2. Discuss the Sermon - Work through the sermon discussion guide together and discuss the content as well as specific places that you found for application. Don't feel pressure to get through all of the questions. This guide is meant to serve you by helping to facilitate discussion.
3. Pray for one another - Pray for one another that God would help you apply the truths and personal applications you have discovered. You could also use this time for accountability. To help with accountability, be sure to grab *X-Ray Questions* by David Powlison from the Connections Desk. These questions will help you become acquainted the lies that you believe when you give in to sin. This is not about morbid introspection - it is to help you fight for true joy and find satisfaction and hope in the promises of God the are ours because of the gospel.

Sermon Discussion

What stood out to you from the sermon? How have you been wrestling with and applying the text so far?

What questions did it raise? Where have you been struggling with the sermon?

Read 1 Corinthians 4:14-21 together

[14] I do not write these things to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. [15] For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. [16] I urge you, then, be imitators of me. [17] That is why I sent you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every church. [18] Some are arrogant, as though I were not coming to you. [19] But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I will find out not the talk of these arrogant people but their power. [20] For the kingdom of God does not consist in

talk but in power. [21] What do you wish? Shall I come to you with a rod, or with love in a spirit of gentleness?

In verse 19, Paul says he “will find out not the talk of these arrogant people but their power.” What is the danger of being all talk (i.e. using gospel language without living in light of it)? What are places in your life where you struggle to actually live what you say that you believe? What is your initial response to Paul’s statement? What would a response of “how dare you” show about how you perceive spiritual authority? If you welcomed Paul’s words, what would it show? Which of those two poles would you gravitate toward?

What is Paul asking them to do in verse 21? How are both forms of discipline that he presents considered loving? Have you ever had someone love you with corrective discipline? How did you respond and why? How would trusting in the promises of the gospel make a difference in your response? Why is corrective discipline more loving than just having people stay in their sin?

Kevin said, “Make no mistake, all of us serve a king.” Do you agree with that statement? Why or why not? How does your behavior and values show which king you are following? At Redeemer Fellowship we seek to be a community that is honest and helps one another struggle with doubts. If you wouldn’t call yourself a Christian (i.e. you resist the kingship of Jesus), where do you feel stuck or confused? What promises do you find more compelling than what he offers?

Kevin said that we attach ourselves to pseudo-kings in an attempt to make things right in our world. That is, we have things - even culturally acceptable and naturally good things - to which we look to for satisfaction and hope. Which “pseudo-kings” are most tempting for you (i.e. comfort, control, power, or approval)? Why?

Kevin said our hope is not in our ability to live up the standards of the kingdom but in his faithfulness, grace and mercy. He quoted 2 Corinthians 5:21 which says, “For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” Why is this verse good news? Why do we need to start with and cling to this truth as we seek to be obedient to the king?