

LIFE GROUP LESSON

What Happened to Civility • Week of October 7

How often we see another individual and cast judgment! Think about it, we see people every day. Without knowing the young woman—her background, the shoes she walks in or the hardship she faces—we make an unfair assessment of her ‘worth’ in society. Without knowing the young man, his struggles at home and feelings of defeat—we give him a ‘rank’ in society—and never stop to remember that his life matters to God. Lord, forgive us. How can we stop this immediate unfair assessment that causes us to dismiss people? Unless we begin looking at others through heaven’s eyes, we will begin to miss out on priceless friendships.

Are you aware of your tendency to pre-judge others? Would you be willing to listen to the Holy Spirit and with His leading, choose instead to take the time to get to know others? Choosing to live into civility—being kind, attentive, and understanding of others—will produce rich results for the Kingdom of Christ. Jesus said: Give, and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full—pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, running over, and poured into your lap. The amount you give will determine the amount you get back” (LUKE 6:38).

1. Have you ever felt pre-judged or condemned by someone who didn’t even know you?

Recall a time when perhaps you made an unfair assessment of another individual. How did you handle it when you realized what you had done? Did you address it or dismiss it? Hopefully you dealt with it, and if so, describe the freedom you felt.

Read the Plain Truth together:

“God convicts us of sin, so grace can convince us of our freedom.”

Read Colossians 2:8-19

2. “You have died with Christ and He has set you free from the spiritual powers of this world” (Colossians 2:20a). How would you describe to a non-believing friend how Christ has set you free from the unfair grid of this world – the notion that we have to fit a certain mold in order to be accepted and extend acceptance.

Christ paid a price we could never pay, so we have no place (or right) to sit as judge. For “He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross. In this way, He disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by His victory over them on the cross (Colossians 2:14-15).

3. How does the church (the Body of Christ) emulate the Savior in offering forgiveness and civility and fairness toward others?

Read Luke 6:37-45

4. While we are not to condemn others, we are to be ‘fruit-inspectors’ (see Luke 6:43-45). How can we be wise (prudent, discerning) in our dealings with others while at the same time, not being unfair or accusatory?

There may be times when God calls us to speak truth to another person – perhaps even someone in your own family – and that word (after prayerful thought) may very well keep them from heading down a destructive path. We all have blind sides, and none of us are sinless. But taking the time to exhort another individual is not only an act of love, but it may save a life.

5. Exhortation and judgment are two different things. The former is an act of love, while the latter is rooted in pride. How can we check our pride-at-the-door before addressing a valid concern with another person? How can this act of love produce 'good fruit'?

What in your heart needs to change? Be still. Take some time with the Lord, and ask Him to reveal your true fruit, is it evil or is it good? Ask Him to restore your soul (Psalm 23:3) and cleanse your heart (1 John 1:9) so that the words that flow from your mouth will overflow from 'the treasury of a good heart.'



Text: Colossians 2:8-19

How can we be civil toward those with whom we stand in disagreement?

1) Practice _____.

2) Practice _____ cautiously.

3) Practice Freedom

PLAIN TRUTH:

**God _____ us of sin so grace can
_____ us of our _____.**

One Year Bible Reading

Oct. 7: Jeremiah 8:8-9:26, Colossians 3:1-17, Psalm 78:32-55, Proverbs 24:27
Oct. 8: Jeremiah 10:1-11:23, Colossians 3:18-4:18, Psalm 78:56-72, Prov. 24:28-29
Oct. 9: Jeremiah 12:1-14:10, 1 Thessalonians 1:1-2:8, Ps. 79:1-13, Prov. 24:30-34
Oct. 10: Jeremiah 14:11-16:15, 1 Thessalonians 2:9-3:13, Ps. 80:1-19, Prov. 25:1-5
Oct. 11: Jeremiah 16:16-18:23, 1 Thessalonians 4:1-5:3, Ps. 81:1-16, Prov. 25:6-8
Oct. 12: Jeremiah 19:1-21:14, 1 Thessalonians 5:4-28, Psalm 82:1-8, Prov. 25:9-10
Oct. 13: Jeremiah 22:1-23:20, 2 Thessalonians 1:1-12, Ps. 83:1-18, Prov. 25:11-14