



Group Leader Guide

“Flatirons 7-Day Challenge” - Image of the Invisible

January 24, 2020

Group Creed

We come together as a Group with the goal of Spiritual Formation; encouraging one another to become the same kind of person that Jesus is, so that we can live out every part of our lives inside of His Kingdom.

// Message Summary

This week, Lead Pastor **Jim Burgen** challenges us with a very practical discipline to begin practicing Spiritual Formation. While Jesus promises to do everything in us and with us, He doesn't promise to do certain things **INSTEAD** of us. This challenge helps us get into the game of actively changing our lives with the help of Christ.

// Word Study

Colossians 3:5: “Put to death” - Greek: nekroo: to put to death. This word literally means to put something to death. The interesting part of it is why Paul uses this instead of saying “stop doing these things.” The word following “nekroo” is “oun” which means “therefore.” This is a follow-up statement to what Paul has just said in verses 3-4. Paul says that we (Christians) are “dead,” meaning our old lives and ways of doing things. Our lives are “hidden in Christ” and He is now our life. So, just as we have died to our old lives through Christ, we are now to continue that by killing the things in our lives that are reminiscent of our old lives. God is giving us the responsibility to continue the work that Christ has started! Furthermore, this word (nekroo) was used for killing weeds, vermin, and enemies who were set against you. It is a call to action to clear the obstacles in your life that prevent you from living the life that Christ has set up for you.

Colossians 3:12: “compassion” - Greek:

splágchnon oiktirmós: literally “bowels of mercy.” This is an interesting phrase that is usually translated as “compassion” or “compassionate heart.” “Splágchnon” refers to a person's intestines, liver, lungs, and heart. Basically, it is your “gut.” It is also possible to read this as not just bowels of mercy, but bowels of everything in the list that follows as well (kindness, humility, meekness, and patience). Therefore, the call to action to put these on (as stated at the beginning of the verse) is balanced by the fact that these are attributes that should come from inside of you. They should genuinely be a part of your character, not just a facade you put on. The bowels were also thought to be the seat of the softer emotions such as compassion, love, and kindness, hence the phrase “bowels of mercy.”

// Biblical Context

Colossians 3:5: This verse may seem contradictory to Paul's apparent condemnation of asceticism in Colossians 2:23. However, in that verse, Paul is condemning the physical negligence of the body for feigned spiritual purposes. Here he is saying to figuratively put these behaviors to death. He goes on to say to take off the old self, and put on the preferable qualities of compassion, kindness, etc. It isn't just deprivation, as asceticism recommends, but supplementation.



// References

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The Holy Bible: English Standard Version: the ESV Study Bible. Crossway Bibles, 2008.

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Zodhiates, Spiros. *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*. AMG Publishers, 1994.



Group Discussion Questions

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// Bible References

Colossians 1:15-17, 27; 2:2; 3:1-2, 5, 12-14, 16-17; 1 Corinthians 13

// Message Screenshots

- As long as you believe the right information about Jesus in your heart, does it really matter that much how you live your life?
- “I am going to do this” or “I am not going to do this.”
- Jesus Christ is the highest, most important, most powerful, most capable, preeminent (above and before anything) being and force in existence.
- Your only hope of glory, becoming the person and living the life that you were created to live “with God” is only made possible when the highest, most powerful, preeminent person in existence (Christ) comes and lives in you.
- Why isn’t every person who claims to have Christ in them being the person and living the life with God that this says is possible?
- “‘Christ in me’ is not sufficient or powerful enough to change my life” (i.e., there is something wrong with God) OR
- “There is something in me that is blocking or keeping me from what ‘Christ in me’ could be possible” (i.e., there is something wrong with me).
- “Spiritual Formation is the Spirit-driven (Christ in you) process of forming the inner world of the human self in such a way that it becomes like the inner being of Christ Himself.” (Dallas Willard, Renovation of the Heart)
- Christ being formed in you is God’s highest priority (will) for your life.
- Behavior modification: by effort or by trying hard, we try to act different or “better” on the outside as opposed to focusing on inward transformation.
- Spiritual change and formation come from God’s Spirit and is by God’s Spirit.
- We must cooperate and place ourselves in the best position to receive the powerful, working, changing grace of God.
- Grace is not magic.
- “It’s God’s fault or shortcoming that explains why my life isn’t changing.”
- While Jesus promises to do everything in us and with us, He doesn’t promise to do certain things **INSTEAD** of us.
- The person desiring that area of life to change decided to put themselves in a position to be available, receptive, willing, and obedient to do what Jesus wanted him or her to do.
- “I’ll be in you to give you the wisdom.”



- “I’ll give you the power to keep going and to not quit.”
- “I’ll be with you so you don’t have to do it alone.”
- It will be won or lost in the mind by how we THINK about it and then, what we are willing to DO about it.
- “Set your hearts (will power) on things above.”
- “Set your minds (thoughts/imagination) on things above, not on earthly things.”
- “Put to death whatever...”
- “Put to death” means zero tolerance, no compromise.
- Sacrifice is not giving up something you DON’T really like or love because it’s a good or bad thing if you do.
- Sacrifice is giving up something that you love for something that you love more.
- Bitter, raging anger, malice, slander and filthy language, lying
- stereotyping and reducing people to categories such as race, culture, social status, or background.
- Contempt: defining people differently than what God says is true about them.
- “Put to death” is an “it’s time to go to war” declaration.
- Compassion: feel it in your gut (bowels) kind of love
- Kindness: whatever is useful or helpful
- Humility: the opposite of arrogant
- Gentleness: strength under control, believing God is at work in everything
- Patience: slow to pay back what is due
- Bear with each other: to hold up or keep a person from falling
- Forgiving one another: don’t always give people what they deserve. Instead, give them some grace (like Jesus did for you).
- The presence and formation of the character of “Christ in you” is your one hope of becoming the person and living the “with God” kind of life.
- Spiritual Formation of Christ in a person is from God’s Spirit and by God’s Spirit.
- We do have the responsibility (choice) to create the best position to allow the work of Christ to work to completion.
- Christ in you is the goal. External behaviors and a changed life are the results.
- Commitment: consistent, unwavering execution.
- Very few people do anything great in their lives or succeed at their goals.
- Successful people determine their “why”; WHY they want to achieve their goal.
- They make a plan and they work it EVERY DAY!
- Fanatic: they are more committed to something than the critic is or feels is reasonable.
- “Don’t take financial advice from poor people” - Dave Ramsey
- “Don’t listen to advice from people who haven’t accomplished anything or who are trying to justify their own failures by giving you advice or permission to not try or to fail” - Jim
- They have zero room for compromise.
- Every day lasts for 24 hours and we get to choose how we leverage it.
- You are committing to consistent, unwavering execution of 5 things every day for the next 7 days
- See the 7-Day challenge below



// Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever asked God to fix or heal something about your character? If so, explain.
2. Have you ever blamed God for something that you feel is wrong with your character, desires, or how you were made? Explain.
3. "While Jesus promises to do everything in us and with us, He doesn't promise to do certain things **INSTEAD** of us." How does that statement make you feel?
4. Would you describe yourself as a disciplined person?
5. What is something that needs to be "put to death" in your life?
6. Have you ever witnessed someone genuinely sacrifice something in their life for the betterment of themselves or someone else? If so, explain.
7. Have you ever genuinely sacrificed something in your life that you liked and got something from (be it sinful or not) for the betterment of your life or someone else's? If so, explain.
8. Read **Colossians 3:12-14**. Which of these attributes do you do well?
9. Which of them do you feel you need to work on?
10. Are you committed to doing the Flatirons 7-Day Challenge? Why or why not?

// Flatirons 7-Day Challenge

Do each of these every day for 7 days:

1. **Give** one message or text per day of encouragement, plus "I love you."
2. **Give Up** one normal important daily thing to remind you of him/her.
3. **Read 1 Corinthians 13**. Ask God to form that kind of love in you.
4. **Work Out**: do one thing for them as an act of loving service.
5. **Progress Picture**: a selfie with both of you together.