

Jesus Leads His Church

Colossians 4

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Understanding Jesus

Reflect

Outline: Recap

Realize

Points to Ponder

Respond

Questions to draw out understanding.

REFLECT

You always know when someone smells either really good or really bad, right? What's funny (and cool) is, as Christians, we're supposed to carry the "fragrance" of Christ into the world. The idea is, wherever we go, we "smell like" Jesus—we make people think of God when they observe how we live! To do that in the best way possible means we have to let Jesus lead our lives, both individually and as a church family. When we do that, we'll give people a glimpse of Jesus, and we might just encounter a life more beautiful than we could have imagined along the way.

[LINK to SMALL GROUP VIDEO MATERIALS](#)

REALIZE

1. Be the fragrance of Christ

● Leader Notes

- There are two ways Paul focuses on here that believers are to be the fragrance of Jesus: in our prayer life and in our witness to others, and they go hand-in-hand. Prayer is a wartime walkie-talkie, where we learn who God is and who he's designed us to be. As we maximize our time with God, he shows us how to maximize our time with other people, walking in wisdom and demonstrating the light and love of Jesus.
 - God diffuses the magnificence of his character through his people who walk in step with him. So by maintaining our prayer lives, we are also building our ability to witness to others.
 - The more we immerse ourselves in the presence of God, the more our behavior is affected. It becomes harder and harder to be harsh or unkind to those around us when we have been in the presence of a God who loves us so completely.
- **What does prayer look like for you currently? Is there anything that keeps you from praying consistently? Look up some prayer practices, and try out some methods of prayer you haven't tried before.**

2. Be a fully engaged family member

● Leader Notes

- God is always fully engaged among his people. To be a fully engaged member of the family of God is to seek God for what he is doing, and get involved. The more we get to know God, the more we share his passions. We love the people he loves (which is everyone). When his heart breaks, our heart breaks. A deeper understanding of our God drives us to action.

- God wants us to be involved in something greater than ourselves. We frequently have one-off opportunities to do this. As we mature, we seek systematic ways to do this—to get involved with living beyond ourselves and partnering in God’s work as a way of life.
- As we see from all of Paul’s greetings in this letter, he considered himself part of a fully engaged family. So often, it’s easy to imagine that if anyone could go it alone, it was the apostle Paul. But Paul knew better. He knew that the work of God’s kingdom is a collective effort of God’s family.
- **Spend some time seeking the Lord for what he is doing in your life and in the life of your church. How do you personally need to respond and get involved?**

3. Be the church with a Big C

- **Leader Notes**
 - Especially in times of difficulty, it’s so easy to become self-focused, but that’s not what we see in the apostle Paul. As he was imprisoned, Paul was still others-focused and deeply concerned for the believers around the world. His own suffering made him more aware of the global Church.
 - In his letter to the Colossians, Paul attempts to move the vision of the Colossians beyond just their own church to recognize their involvement in a larger church—the body of Christ around the world!
 - We, too, are part of something bigger than just our local expression of church. When we truly realize this, we can reject the temptation to compete with other churches or believers. We are all citizens of God’s kingdom, striving for the same goal, to bring God’s kingdom to Earth.
- **When you think about the network of churches around you and around the world, what themes do you see? Do you notice unity or disunity? How can you be an agent for unity?**

Optional Follow-up Questions:

- What makes you say that?
- How do you feel about that?
- How would you explain your answer to a non-Christian friend or neighbor?
- Why did God design it to work that way? Why not just do (whatever else) instead?
- What would you say to someone who disagrees with that?
- Why do we really have to do it like that? Why can't we just go (some other route) instead?