

LIFE
TOGETHER
DISCUSSION GUIDE

House Rules

1 Corinthians 5.1 - 13

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Share plans for future Community Group gatherings and the following happening in the life of the church:

- **MEN'S SUMMIT *this Friday, October 6th 6:30-7:30a*** | Gentlemen...join other guys from New City on Friday, October 6th from 6:30-7:30a @ the church building for a time of singing, teaching, discussion, and prayer. (And coffee and donuts.) *We are aiming to meet the first Friday of each month this year for these men's summits and in October we'll talk more about how you can get connected to a smaller group of guys for encouragement, support, camaraderie, and spurring one other toward love and good deeds.*
- **WOMEN'S RETREAT *October 20th & 21st*** | Ladies, join the women of New City for a weekend of fellowship, fun, prayer, and teaching at the annual New City Women's Retreat! Guest speaker Melissa Bush will be sharing about how we are woven together in Christ. The cost for the retreat is \$65, which includes a shared room and three meals (Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast and Saturday lunch). For those that need it, you also have the option of attending Saturday only. The Saturday only cost is \$30 and includes Saturday lunch. Please register online by October 7. Visit the City for more information and to register.
- **Members' Meeting *Monday, November 6th @ 7p*** | We'll be holding officer elections, talking about the ministry year, and spending time in worship and prayer.

Again this week, talk briefly about your group's format and schedule for the semester.

We believe that people experience and grow in their faith when they spend time reflecting on God's Word, and also hearing from other Christians. That's what we're hoping for tonight.

OPENING PRAYER

Open your group in prayer. Pray extemporaneously, or use this prayer:

Father, help us to seek what is good and true and beautiful. Give us love for each other and for our city. Give us eyes to see you and ears to hear you. Use our group tonight/today to make us more into the people you want us to be.

OPENER

Especially in these early weeks, taking time to introduce yourselves and getting to know each other is important. Open by asking folks to **introduce themselves**: *name, and other interesting tidbit if you'd like (i.e. hometown, where you live in Cincinnati, what you do during the day).*

Then ask, *What was a ridiculous house rule you've had in your life? OR What house rule did you have as a kid that you hated then but now appreciate?*

STUDY/DISCUSSION

Our series this fall is called "Life Together." We'll be working our way through the first 10 chapters of 1 Corinthians. This past Sunday Brian preached from 1 Corinthians 5.1-13.

1. Read 1 Corinthians 5.1-13

2. Healthy families have rules/core values that guide them. Did your family growing up have rules/core values? If so, did they produce health? If not, what has been the lingering impact of their absence?
3. What is the occasion of Paul writing this section (see v.1)? What is your immediate reaction to this sort of situation happening in the church? Are you shocked? Disgusted? Do you find it funny? Other?
4. Paul is shocked about something here in chapter 5 but it is NOT that this man is involved in sexual immorality. What *is* he shocked about? (see v.2) What do you think it means that the Corinthians are "arrogant"? And why is that a bad thing, in Paul's eyes?
5. How are people's views of God impacted by the actions of those who claim to be in the family of God?
6. What did Paul mean when said "a little bit of leaven leavens the whole lump"? (see v.6ff)
7. In chapter 4, 4.3-5, about how the gospel frees us from judging others AND judging ourselves; because GOD is the judge. And yet this week Paul talks about how we should be so involved in each other's lives that we should confront sin. How do we parse this out? How would you respond to someone how says, "Who are we to judge"?

8. In vv.7-8 Paul calls us to cleanse the leaven (sin) out of our lives because we ALREADY ARE unleavened. That is, we are already clean, so Paul is calling us to live like it. What would be different about our life together and our faith if we really understood and believed that in reality we are ALREADY clean/holy?
9. Why is the discipline of children, either ours or God's, a loving thing? (see Proverbs 13.24, Hebrews 12)
10. This will take some courage to share, but if you're willing to, share about a time when you lived in a season of rebellion, where you found that the way of the sinner is hard, and God allowed you to experience the repercussions of your decisions.
11. Paul said, flee from sin, not from sinners, so to speak. We are to be *distinctive* as a church community not a *ghetto*. Do you spend all your time with Christians? How might you change that?
12. What steps do you need to take, even this week, to develop such a life together in the church where this kind of challenge is a part of that life together? In what ways are you developing "thick community"?

PRAYER:

Spend some time together in prayer. In the early weeks, this can be a challenge for a group just getting to know one another. You may elect to just lead the group in a closing prayer, pray together as a large group, or break into smaller groups to pray. You can share requests, or simply pray about the things you discussed tonight.

HANDOUT

As former pagans, they brought to the Christian faith a Hellenistic worldview and attitude towards ethical behavior. Although they were the Christian church in Corinth, an inordinate amount of Corinth was still in them, emerging in a number of attitudes and behaviors that required radical surgery without killing the patient. That's what this letter tries to do. (Gordon Fee, commentary on 1 Corinthians)

Others are mirrors in which we are constrained to see ourselves, not as we would like to be, but as we are. Whenever we pull away, searching in one mirror after another for a more pleasing image, what we are really doing is avoiding the truth about ourselves. (Mike Mason, *The Mystery of Marriage*)

The fact that the church so rarely exercises this disciplinary function is a sign of its unfaithfulness. Our failure to do so is often justified in the name of the enlightened tolerance of differences, but in fact 'tolerance' can become a euphemism for indifference and lack of moral courage...insofar as the church has failed in the past to deal forthrightly with such matters [such as sexual abuse of women and children by church leaders and members], the church has been complicit in a conspiracy of silence. We ought rather to have mourned and removed from our midst those who have done such things. We may hope, as Paul did, that our disciplinary actions might have a transforming and healing effect for the offender, but it is certain that no healing is possible at all without clear public confrontation of the offense. (Richard Hays)

...suffer me to exclude none, O Lord, from my Charity, who are the objects of your mercy: but let me treat all my neighbors with that tender love, which is due your servants and to your children...Let me look upon the failings of my neighbor as if they were my own: that I may be grieved for them, that I may never reveal them but when charity requires, and then with tenderness and compassion. (John Wesley, *Forms of Prayer 1738*)

According to Tim Keller in marriage (and also in community) we: "look at another person and get a glimpse of what God is creating, and say, 'I see who God is making you, and it excites me! I want to be part of that. I want to partner with you and God in the journey you are taking to his throne. And when we get there, I will look at your magnificence and say, 'I always knew you could be like this. I got glimpses of it on earth, but now look at you!'" (Tim Keller, *The Meaning of Marriage*)