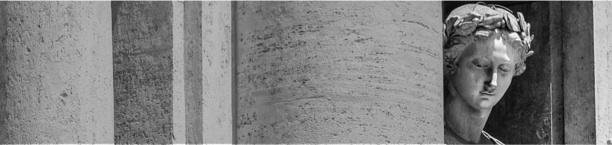
This week I began a series of interviews with our youngest daughter that traces our family history. Danielle is completing a family genogram going back 3 generations. A genogram examines how family members, family events, experiences, personal decisions, and outside influences (friends, relatives, external events) shape lives and subsequent generations within a family.  While every family should celebrate the diversity among family members, there are essential ingredients that dominate, distinguish, and define a family's identity-- for better or for worse.

The people of God-- the family and body of Christ--  is no different. We too are distinct and diverse. Yet, according to Scripture, the life, death, resurrection, and present reign of Jesus is the dominating, distinguishing, and defining event, experience, and relationship that ultimately (re)shapes every life that surrenders to Him. Our individual genograms may look very different before we surrendered our lives to Jesus Christ. However, in Christ, we all share the same blood that atones, the same grace that forgives, the same love that assures, the same hope that will triumph, and the same relationship, in Christ, that defines and unites us.



LifeGroup

Resource Guide

# for the week of 9 November: RUIN: The foundation for “family unity”

Paul is a "master pastor". He recognizes that any hope to mend this broken fellowship in Rome will not be established upon his pastoral counsel. Unity will come to a people who rediscover and rejoice in God's faithfulness personally expressed to all Roman believers through Jesus Christ. This "revival" is the foundation for Roman unity and for ours today.

LifeGroups provide us with a consistent opportunity to celebrate our common heritage, experience, and joy together as a family in Christ. As we share our lives we reinforce a reality that is both objective and personal because "for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist" (1 Corinthians 8.6). Therefore we will "with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 15.6) -- because that is what His family does!

Enjoy your LifeGroup! Mark

on love, grace, and fellowship…

*Justification by grace through faith is the theologians' learned phrase for the "furious love of God."*

– C. K. Chesterton

*Christian fellowship is our common relationship with Christ with skin on it.*

*– Unknown*

*No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love is brought to full expression in us.*

*– Apostle John (1 John 4.12)*

Getting to know one another better ...

If you could be invisible for a day, what would you do?!

# Reflecting on Romans 5.1-11…

Read Romans 5.1-11. As you read it this week what strikes you about these verses this week?

What do you think Paul is eager to communicate/express in these verses?

What does Paul mean when he says Jesus died "at the right time”?

What is the purpose of the example Paul gives in 5.7-8?

Romans 5.10 expresses a core conviction for Paul. What is he saying and why do you think it is so important to him?

What does Paul mean when he says, "we have now received reconciliation"?

# Reflecting together on Romans 5.1-11…

Paul expects "hope" to be an experience followers of Jesus share in common (see 5.2, 5). How do you experience “hope”? Note how it is similar or different to others who will share in your LifeGroup.

Do you think it is okay to place your hope in someone/something else? Why or why not?

How can you apply what this passage teaches us about  God's relationship with us to your own relationships with other people?

The benefits of our life in Christ are alluded to throughout these verses. Paul exclaims that in/through Christ

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * We have peace (5.1) * We have joy (5.3-5) * We have God's love (5.5) | * We have the Holy Spirit (5.5) * We are justified (5.1, 9) * We have reconciliation with God (5.10,11) |

Paul is not simply listing truths for us to recite but life-changing/life-giving experiences he trusts will embrace our lives. As you review this list, how have these benefits tangibly touched your life?

Christ's benefits are given to everyone who trusts in Him by faith. That means we are no longer victims of sin. How can your LifeGroup create an environment that promotes and encourages its members to know/experience the present and victorious benefits Christ gives?

# Praying for my group...

Sermon notes…

Christmas In A Shoebox: We at Homes of Special Projects have our list and we are checking it twice. This year will be the 6th Annual Christmas In A Shoebox Drive for the children of Casa de Oracion Torre Fuerte in Ensenada, Mexico. Stop by the table in the Courtyard Sundays, Nov 2-30. Stop by and learn how to participate, sponsor a specific child, get a list of items for the shoeboxes, or make a donation.

Children’s Musical Rehearsals- move to the Worship Center, Nov 16, 4-6 PM

# Highlighting...

Inspired Hands- Nov 15, 9am-2pm in the Children’s Center

Night Shift Class with Jim Foreman- Nov 16 8:30-9:45am in the Youth Center.

Welcome to Faith- Nov 16 after worship in the Children’s Center. Do you feel new to Faith? Sign up at the Welcome Table or online for this free lunch!

Third Sunday Prayer- Nov 16, 6:30-8:00 PM in the Worship Center

High School Retreat- Nov 21-23, Big Bear