

# CITYGROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

What Is the  
Gos·pel? (gōs'pəl)

citygroups  
COMMUNITY • GROWTH • MISSION

Summer Week 3 -(Ch. 3)  
Week of June 18, 2017

**#CityGroupsTally**

## REMINDERS for leaders:

Here's a few reminders before you get going:

-  **VIDEO:** Each week we will have a video for you to show at your group meeting.
- **Find an Apprentice or Co-Leader.** Be ready to: Replace Yourself & Multiply. My challenge for EVERY group leader is to find someone you can teach about leading a group. Ever since Jesus, the gospel has spread and churches have grown by individuals teaching others what they know. This will also free you up as you hand away responsibility.
- **Pray, Pray, Pray!**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. **Baptisms:** (June 25) Does anyone in your group need to be baptized? Sign up online at [www.citychurchtallahassee.com/baptism](http://www.citychurchtallahassee.com/baptism)
2. **MARK Online Devotionals:** Have everyone in your group pull out their phones and show them how to find the City Church Mark Devo's on our website; as a great resource for their personal growth. (Found under the "Grow" tab on our website or [www.citychurchtallahassee.com/mark](http://www.citychurchtallahassee.com/mark)

## BIG IDEA(s):

**Here comes the bad news of the Gospel...sin, death and hell. Our sin has messed everything up, leaving us as broken people living in a broken world. Until we comprehend the gravity of our sin before a holy God, we will never grasp the glory of the Gospel. Sin is no small thing...it is cosmic treason against the King of the Universe.**

**But...good news next week. 😊**

**PRAY:** Ask the Lord to lead your group meeting, speak through the Scriptures and guide conversations.

**READ: Genesis 3, Romans 3:23 & 6:23**

## HEAD (20 minutes)



### WATCH THIS WEEK'S VIDEO

**1) Pop Quiz:** (data from Lifewayresearch.com)

- **Guess what percentage of Americans believe hell is a real place?** (61%)
- **Guess how many Americans think people are mostly good & will go to heaven?** (67%)
- **How many Americans believe even small sins lead to God's judgment?** (18% or 1 in 5)

**2) What is sin? How much has sin affected our lives and the world around us?**

**3) Why is having a right understanding of sin necessary to truly understand the**

**Gospel? (See Eph. 2:1-3 & Romans 3:19)** (If we approach the gospel thinking sin is something less than it is, we will badly misunderstand the good news of Jesus. Sin is cosmic treason against the King of the Universe not a simple parking violation. Forgiveness, thus is costly, requiring nothing short of the death of God's Son.) **What are some common misunderstandings in our culture about sin?** (Its not a big deal, I 'messed up', God doesn't mind etc.)

**4) Why is it important for people to realize we are criminals deserving judgment not victims deserving God's help, when it comes to sin?**

**5) If hell is a real place where real people go, then should we talk about hell when sharing the Gospel with others? Why or why not? How?**

## HEART: (15 minutes)

**1) What are some personal struggles you face when talking to others about the reality of sin and hell?**

**2) Why might it actually be unloving to avoid the subject of hell? Or actually loving to talk about it? Explain.**

## HANDS (15 Minutes):

**1) What should Christians do if they sin?** (1 John 1:9 & Mark 9:43-47)

- **Are there any sins you have kept in the dark that you need to confess and repent of?**

**2) Has anything you've learned today changed the way you are going to approach sharing the gospel this month? How?**

**Pray:** Take a few moments to share prayer requests and pray for one another and your lost friends.

## **COMMENTARY: (For more insight into each verse & for hard questions)**

### **Romans 3:23**

3:23. Paul repeated the need for salvation. People of every race and gender need to be saved because all have sinned. God's righteousness is pure. Our sin renders us completely incapable of reaching Him. The task of righteousness, of accessing the glory of God, is completely beyond our ability. Glory is a difficult word to pin down but essentially means "the full weight" of God's attributes. Glory is God's splendor. It defines, in part, who God is. In Jewish thought Adam and Eve possessed God's glory before they sinned. Now, through Jesus Christ, God is restoring His glory in His people.

### **Romans 6:23**

6:20-23. In the last four verses of this chapter, Paul asks the believers in Rome to think about the quality and direction of their lives before coming to know Christ and their lives since. Never one to sugarcoat or beat around the proverbial bush, Paul asks them (and us) directly: What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? The "benefit" of being slaves to sin ... free from the control of righteousness, was death! Because "no one can serve two masters" (Matt. 6:24), when they were slaves to sin, they could not be controlled by righteousness—and sin results in death (v. 23).

Conversely, when they died to sin and became slaves to God, they would be free from the control of sin—and righteousness leads to eternal life. Because sin is deceptive, and because it is the "old self" (the former way of life; v. 6) that has died, not the "body of sin" (the capacity to sin; v. 6), the Christian has to be exhorted to remember to what he or she has died (sin) and to what he or she now lives (righteousness). We have earned death as our wages as Adam's children; we have received as a gift of God's grace the privilege of being rescued from solidarity with the first Adam to solidarity with the second Adam. He died; we died. He was raised; we were raised. He lives to God; we live to God. He will live forever; we will live forever with Him.

### **Mark 9:43-47**

9:43–48. Some early church fathers took verses such as these literally and maimed themselves in order to attain heaven. But this verse is a literary device known as hyperbole, which uses exaggeration to make a point. Jesus was saying that the judgment he had just spoken of was so serious that it would be better to sacrifice yourself than to sin. Do not cause others to sin and do what you have to do to keep from sinning yourself. Sin is so serious that it calls for drastic measures to remove it from our lives.

Is it the hand, foot, or eye that causes one to sin? If you were to cut off your hand, would this remove sin from your life? No. Sin is in our very nature. Only Christ's atoning blood can remove it and change our nature. We must never forget the high price his sacrifice demanded. The word life in verses 43 and 45 are parallel with the "kingdom of God" in verse 47. It is not merely human life that Jesus was speaking about here. He was referring instead to eternal life, the life we are granted because of our trust in him.

9:49–50. These verses are difficult because they do not seem to link with the previous verses, except by the word fire. Because salt is a preservative, verse 49 could refer to the eternity of punishment as does verse 48. This seems an unlikely link, however. It is possible that these were separate sayings unconnected to verse 48. In this case, verses 49–50 would have been placed here in order to help people remember them more easily because of the repetitive words. But my position is that these verses do connect with what has just transpired. The link is found in the last part of verse 50: "be at peace with each other." The disciples had been arguing about who was the greatest. Then they argued about whether this other man was a part of them or not. Jesus had just taught about divisiveness and remembering that anyone who does the work of Christ is a brother or sister. His reminder here acted as an injunction to help the disciples put away divisiveness.