

Small Group Material - Fruitfulness on the Frontline

Modelling Godly Character - Col 3. 12-17

Welcome (10 mins) When you think of ‘godly character’, who is the first person that you think of? Can you think of a time when they responded to a situation in a particularly godly way?

Worship (15 mins)

Give people a minute to quietly think back about last week. Ask the question, ‘*Were there moments of fruitfulness on your frontline or a new awareness of the potential for fruitfulness?*’ (You don’t need to share this but it may well ‘fuel’ the prayer after the song.)

Then sing together (or watch) ‘From the Inside Out’ by Joel Houston.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SZ-fghqc8Oo>

Turn to prayer and praise.

Word (40 mins)

On the video, Mark Greene refers to what we call ‘the fruit of the Spirit’, the list of qualities in Galatians 5.22 grown in a believer by the Holy Spirit. In Colossians 3.12-14, Paul describes very similar characteristics. As we are basing our sermon series on Colossians, we will look at that rather than the Galatians passage in our study - but Mark’s comments are still very applicable.

PLAY FILM to end - approx. 8 mins

Questions to discuss after the film (15 mins)

- In the story of the ogre-like boss, Louise wasn’t aware that she was being fruitful. She felt like a total failure, but in fact she had modelled outstanding godly character. How does her story make you feel about the way you might be modelling godly character on your frontline?
- Louise was in an uncomfortable place, yet she was able to be remarkably fruitful. Can you think of an instance when you grew in godly character during an ‘uncomfortable’ time on your frontline?

- Louise recognised her fruitfulness because her former colleagues pointed it out to her. Why can we sometimes find it hard to encourage one another when we see God at work in each other’s lives?

Read Colossians 3. 1-17 (but focussing on vs 12-17) (20 mins)

Paul describes characteristics which become ‘God’s chosen people’. These qualities of new life in Christ (v3) or our ‘new self’ (v10) stand in direct contrast to our ‘earthly nature’ (v5) or ‘old self’ (v9). Rather than being a list of qualities that we must strive to attain, they are outworkings of the Holy Spirit and spring from our identity in Christ.

- 1) What characteristics does Paul pick out in verses 12-17? Are there particular situations on your frontline where the rubber hits the road and these characteristics are tested?
- 2) In what ways does your identity ‘in Christ’ help you live like this? (Make links with verses in the passage)
- 3) Are there any ‘canaries’ in these verses which help you recognise when you are not living as befits God’s chosen people? (By ‘canaries’, I mean indicators you can recognise!)
- 4) These ‘fruit of the Spirit’ are characterised by inner assurance and selfless love. What can stop us from being ‘others-orientated’ on our frontlines?

Witness (10 mins - praying in pairs)

- Having reflected on some of the good things about our week at the beginning of this session, thank God for these things and ask him to show more of his love for others through you in the week ahead.
- Maybe you feel regretful about a time when you failed to model godly character? Ask for God’s forgiveness for these times and thank him that he promises to continue to be at work in us.
- Pray that God would shape your character on your frontline this coming week. You may like to ask for prayer for a particular situation coming up this week where you might find it more difficult to respond in a godly way.
- This passage was addressed to a whole church. Pray for our church that we will ‘model godly character’.