

STUDY GUIDE

DUTCHTOWN BAPTIST CHURCH

LIFE ON MISSION

GOD'S DESIGN

JOHN 13:35, GALATIANS 5:22-23, COLOSSIANS 3:12-14

01/08/2017

MAIN POINT

God designed for us to be connected to Him in a relationship with Jesus Christ.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

What has been the greatest experience of your life or what's the most beautiful place you've ever been?

What made that experience or place so amazing?

We love experiences that help us see and savor beauty in the world. We all have moments when things feel right and good. We love these moments because they are different from our daily experience. Something inside us recognizes that there's more to life than our ordinary experience. In God's original design, all of life was a moving and beautiful experience. In today's session we'll discuss God's original design and intention for our lives.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

WATCH SESSION 2 OF LIFE ON MISSION.

Begin this session by reviewing the Three Circles diagram available on the Life On Mission App which you can download for free on the Apple AppStore or Google Play.

Have two people read Genesis 1:31 and Psalm 19:1. Based on these verses, how would you describe God's designed for all of creation?

God designed the world to reflect His glory. The Bible surveys all that God had made and proclaims it as "very good." All we see in the world is meant to lead us realize who God is and what He designed the world to be but because the world is also fallen and marred by sin we do not yet see the world as God originally designed it to be.

HAVE A FEW PEOPLE READ JOHN 13:35; COLOSSIANS 3:12-14; AND GALATIANS 5:22-23.

What is God's design for us?

In the video Ellis said, "God's design is birthed out of relationship," and we "represent a family." What does that

mean?

How would you briefly explain the meaning of the first circle representing God's design?

How would you introduce a discussion about God's design in a conversation? What could you point to in nature or in daily life to direct the conversation toward God and His design?

If God's design was perfect, what happened? Why isn't perfection our daily experience?

Conversations often start with brokenness—hardship, pain, and suffering. Our relationships with people who are far from God earn us the right to speak to them about who God is and what His design for the world and for our lives is. In the next session we will learn how to make the transition from relating to someone's experience of brokenness to share the hope of God's perfect design.

How would you contrast the beauty of God's design with the current brokenness of the fallen world?

In what ways do you see people longing for God's design but not necessarily recognizing their hunger?

In the video, Ellis emphasized the need to share our experiences. How did you come to understand God's design for your life?

How can the church—all God's people—experience more of God by fully embracing His design for life on mission?

All people have stories and experiences to share. Christians are no different. There was a time in your life where you were lost and without Christ, but are now found. Sharing how God brought you into His design with an unbelieving friend is a great way to start a conversation about God's design.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

Wrap up the session with any final questions and observations. What stuck out to you the most?

Who are you developing relationships with for the purpose of sharing God's design in the gospel?

What type of relationships did God design us to have with each other? How do relationships with other brothers and sisters in Christ reflect God's design?

If your lost friends and family saw what went on in your life, what impressions would they have about God?

PRAY

Close in prayer thanking God for His glorious design. Ask God's Spirit who, when, and how to begin

talking to people who need to know God's perfect plan for them.

COMMENTARY

JOHN 13:35

Love must be the distinguishing mark of Jesus' disciples. Jesus' new command closely resembled the Mosaic commands to love the Lord (Dt 6:5) and one's neighbor as oneself (Lv 19:18; cp. Mk 12:28-33). Elsewhere Jesus said we must love even our enemies (Mt 5:43-48). While the command to love God and one's neighbor was thus not new, Jesus' example (as I have loved you) was unparalleled, as was His insistence that we should love our enemies.

COLOSSIANS 3:12-14

3:12 After commanding believers to "put away" worldly behaviors, Paul offered a series of positive commands to put on or to "clothe yourselves" (Rm 13:14) with behavior fitted for God's people. The adjectives chosen (Isa 43:20; 65:9; Rm 8:33; 2Tim 2:10; Titus 1:1; 1Pe 1:1; 2:4,6,9), holy (Mk 1:24; Lk 4:34; Jn 6:69; 1Pe 2:9), and loved (Mt 3:17; Eph 1:6; 1Th 1:4; 2Th 2:13) were all applied to Israel, Jesus, and the church. The five virtues are just the opposite of the vices listed in verses 5 and 8.

3:13 The words accepting (cp. Rm 15:7; Eph 4:2) and forgiving (cp. Eph 4:32) express the habitual manner in which believers exhibit the stated virtues. Both verbs pertain to interpersonal relationships in the body of Christ. Just as the Lord has forgiven echoes Jesus' injunction to forgive because believers are forgiven (Mt 6:12,14-15; 18:23-35; Lk 7:42).

3:14 The imagery here suggests that the final and most important new article of clothing for God's people is love, the perfect bond of unity, that binds believers together in complete oneness (Eph 4:3).

GALATIANS 5:22-23

The fruit illustration calls to mind the vine and the branches which produce fruit (Jn 15:1-5). The mention of love first in the list looks back to Gal 5:6,13-14. Such loving behavior comes through the power of the Holy Spirit by faith. Self-control (Gk egkrateia; "holding in passions and appetites") is placed last in the list for emphasis, because all the works of the flesh reflect lack of self-control. There is no need for prohibitive law when people's lives exhibit love and self-control.