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**MARCH 2010**

## **LIFE FOCUS PARENT NEWSLETTER**

### **THIS MONTH IN BIBLE STUDY: FAMILY THERAPY**

#### **SESSION 1: IT'S ALL ABOUT DYSFUNCTION**

Why don't church members always get along?

#### **SESSION 2: IT'S ALL ABOUT IMMORALITY**

Does it matter if I'm sexually active?

#### **SESSION 3: IT'S ALL ABOUT ME**

If I'm free in Christ, what am I free to do?

#### **SESSION 4: IT'S ALL ABOUT HIM**

How can my worship be meaningful?

The current generation of teenagers has an interest in spiritual things, and many of them have a positive interest in Jesus Christ and the Christian faith. The church, however, seems irrelevant to them. That opinion is only fueled when they see church members at odds with each other or focused more on themselves than on Christ. This study is important for teenagers because, first, it acknowledges that the local church is not perfect; in fact, it is often flawed. But this study of a flawed church, the church in Corinth, not only identifies those flaws but it also considers God's prescription for healing. As we correct those flaws under God's leadership and lordship, the relevance of the church as a community of believers who love and follow Jesus will become obvious...and inviting.

#### **What parents can do:**

- Use the suggestions on the other side of this newsletter to engage your teenager in a discussion about what he or she has learned each week.
- Obtain a copy of your church covenant and constitution. Help your teens understand the importance of working together as a unified church body.
- Listen to [www.lifeway.com/StudentBSFL](http://www.lifeway.com/StudentBSFL) for insights into this month's study.

### **MUSIC REVIEW: BARLOWGIRL**

BarlowGirl is known as a Christian rock band. Their style includes three-part harmony mixed with rock guitars. The award-winning all girl band is made up of three sisters: Rebecca, Alyssa, and Lauren Barlow. For two years they traveled around the country and were the back up band for their dad. During one concert, Lauren, who was the keyboard player at the time, caught sight of a drum set, fell in love... and so a drummer was born. Soon after that the girls began experimenting with song writing. During that time they decided to start their own band. They released their first studio album in 2004. That album included the longest running number one song in 2004 and was named Song of the Year by R&R's CHR and CRW's Rock charts. Their second album was re-released in 2006, and a third studio album "How Can We Be Silent" was released in 2007. It debuted at #1 on Billboard's Christian Chart. It was the first album by an all-female rock band to reach the top 40 on Billboard 200 since 1989. BarlowGirl has gained a following with their message from Romans 12:2 and their message of waiting on God's timing concerning romantic relationships. They were the youth ambassadors for the National Day of Prayer in 2007. BarlowGirl hard-hitting lyrics such as "5 Minutes of Fame" will keep them at the top of song charts as they share the Truth with their listeners.

Check out Barlowgirl on their Web site at [www.barlowgirl.com](http://www.barlowgirl.com).

## FAMILY BIBLE TIME

Sunday School affirms the home as the center of biblical guidance. Family Bible Time is a strategy for you, as a parent, to discuss with your teenager—and the whole family—the biblical truths and principles discovered in their small group Bible study.

The class your teenager participates in uses a Bible study curriculum called *Life Focus*. You may participate in an adult Bible study that uses one of the adult counterparts in Bible Studies for Life (*Life Truths, Life Values, Life Ventures, Life Lessons, or Life Words*). Because you are studying the same passage, you and your teenager can both contribute to a family conversation about how God's Word applies to your lives as individuals and as a family.

### MARCH 7: 1 CORINTHIANS 1:10-12,26-29; 2:11-13,16; 3:1-4

This study will help you and your family understand and examine the problems that the Corinthian church experienced and how Paul addressed those problems. This week, the challenge is to follow God's will for church unity by:

- acknowledging that the church is God's church, not that of any one person or group;
- renouncing pride and choosing to walk in unity; and
- seeking God's wisdom.

Paul urged unity in the Corinthian congregation. Paul chided the Corinthians for their spiritual immaturity, which manifested itself in envy and strife. When you talk to your teens about this subject of church unity, don't use specific names of people or circumstances in your church. Discuss how human pride, misplaced loyalties, and worldly wisdom can divide a church. Focus on the reasons people disagree at church and how people could or could not respond to those disagreements. Ask: **What can a person do to help resolve a conflict?** Discuss the effect adults fighting could have on the congregation's teens, children, and visitors. Use this discussion to remind teens to work together harmoniously by agreeing on what really matters—loyalty to Jesus Christ as Lord.

### MARCH 14: 1 CORINTHIANS 5:1-2,9-13; 6:15-20

Pray that your family upholds God's standards for morality. The bottom line for students and parents is that in order to protect the moral integrity and reputation of the church, individual members must uphold personal moral integrity and reputation. Lead a family discussion about immorality and how it is sin. Ask: **Do you think some sins are worse than others? Do you think that is how God sees them?** Write 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 on a poster and post in a prominent place at home. Encourage memorization of this passage. Lead your family to talk about the "price" God paid. Ask: **Why is sexual immorality not acceptable or to be condoned by believers?** As a family, compile a list of ways sexual immorality can be avoided and God can be honored.

### MARCH 21: 1 CORINTHIANS 8:1-4,7-13; 10:31-33

Paul addressed the problem about whether it was right for the Corinthian Christians to eat meat that had been sacrificed to idols. Paul admonished the Corinthian believers to avoid actions that had the potential to harm other believers. Paul instructed the Corinthians to do everything for God's glory. Ask: **What are some stumbling blocks in your life?** Allow family members to ask questions about the passage and why eating the meat was a stumbling block to some of the other, newer believers. Discuss issues in our generation and society that would correspond to eating meat offered to idols. Ask: **Do tattoos, music, alcohol, specific places, attitudes, old traditions, or unfamiliar ways of worship, have the potential to be stumbling blocks? Why or why not?** Ask: **Do you know anyone who knows a lot of Scripture, but is still a difficult person? How is that possible? Could that person be a stumbling block?** Discuss how freedom in Christ doesn't mean a person has the freedom to do anything he or she wants, but rather wants what would not cause another person to stumble. Challenge your teens to glorify God through their freedom in Christ by identifying obstacles and issues that could harm the walk of fellow Christians; by acting in love toward others; and by doing everything for God's glory.

### MARCH 28: 1 CORINTHIANS 11:27-28

Lead your family to discuss the last time they participated in the Lord's Supper at your church. Explain that the Corinthians' practice of observing the Lord's Supper magnified the divisions in their congregation. The central focus of the Lord's Supper is Jesus' death. Paul explained the manner in which one is to partake of the Lord's Supper and called for self-examination prior to its observance. Ask: **Why is a right attitude essential for the Lord's Supper observance and all worship experiences?** Lead a discussion of what your family members should do to prepare themselves to observe the Lord's Supper. Explain that things like unity within the family and congregation and dealing with any division with another person should be addressed. Also, keeping the spotlight on Jesus and what He has done for all believers should be a priority. And finally, examining themselves for unconfessed sins and confessing those sins to God. Explain that when worship honors God, it will be meaningful.

