

## **Connect Group notes 24.3.25**

Chris continued our series '*Thrive*' on Sunday.

*'Jesus at the centre of our lives'*

Read Colossians 2:1-15

One of the themes we have been hearing about is '*contending*' in prayer. This word is the same root word that we get our word *agonise* from. Paul is engaging in intercession and spiritual warfare for the Colossae church, even though he doesn't know them. This is characteristic of a thriving life in Christ.

This encourages us to consider what our prayer lives look like, and perhaps even who and what we pray for.

Paul encourages the Colossae church to live a disciplined life and to be rooted and built up in Christ.

Paul also wants us to be a thankful people – thanksgiving leads to joy, which leads to strength in Jesus.

### **Discussion points**

1. - Why do we think that contending for someone or something in prayer is characteristic of growing as a disciple of Jesus?
  - What kind of things can/do we contend in prayer for?
  - Chris encouraged us to consider if we need to 'step up' our contending in prayer for someone/thing... what stops us from doing this? What encouragement might we need to engage in this more?
  - Why is patience so important as we contend in prayer?
  
2. In the letter to Colossians Paul is encouraged by this church's discipline;
  - Why is discipline important to a thriving Christian life?

- Discuss daily rhythms that support this – share as a group those things we do - or want to do more of (silence and solitude, fasting, Bible reading prayer, service etc) and how they help us. (discuss the whole bucket ‘drain’ and ‘fill’ analogy that Chris used)
  - Chris commented that “we sink to the level of our training (or spiritual rhythms)”. What does this say to us about the necessity of building these rhythms into our lives?
3. Colossian 2:7 encourages us to let our roots go down in to Jesus and to let our lives be built on him.. essentially ***to be with Jesus and to do what he says***
- Jesus wants *relationship not ritual*.  
How can we either start, or revitalise, our rhythms and practices so they bring us closer to Jesus, allowing him to transform us?
  - Being with Jesus looks different for everyone.  
Share as group ways that we intentionally make time to be with Jesus?  
What are some struggles around this for us? (time, knowing how to do this when we can’t ‘see’ or ‘feel’ him, trust, desire to do so)
  - Read John 15:4-5. Jesus tells us to remain in him. What does remaining in him look like?  
How do we do this in the absence of feelings?

### **Pray and Apply**

- Ask the Lord to show us a new practice/rhythm in order to be with him and grow in him.
- Share this with someone who can encourage us and pray for us as we implement this.
- Give consideration to a person or group/event that God places on our hearts and commit to contending in prayer for them.