

w/b 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017

## **Hidden with Christ in God!** (Mike Gilson)

### **Introduction**

Do you wonder why life sometimes seems so ordinary and frustratingly un-supernatural? So full of challenge and pain, and lacking in glory?

Invite people to share insights and opinions about the ways of the world (wars etc) and the church's stance and witness re big issues of the day, and about our own lives - how things go up and down for us.

Seek clear eyed realism with encouragement mixed in!

### **Discovery**

Read Colossians 3:1-4 in a few different versions, including if you can the NIV, Message and Amplified bibles.

Discuss the ideas of seeking (or setting our hearts on) and setting our minds on 'things above' - verses 1 & 2. What might 'things above' be? (note for leader: 'Things above' could be the character and promises and purposes of God, and our relations with him.) Explore how wonderful these are.

And what does it mean to not set our minds on 'earthly things'? Offer the idea that 'things below' are not about the responsibilities we have to live life well so we honour Jesus in our work, families and church, but what idols we set up in his place - addictions, fascinations etc - things that get in the way of holy living and good relations with God.

Read through v9-17 and ask people to point out things along these lines that speak about all this. But don't spend too much time on this - the aim of the study is to encourage people.

Look at v3 - about being hidden with Jesus in God. What does it mean? Offer the idea of Jesus being now hidden from the world, and our spiritual lives - our 'real lives' being hidden as well - but not just hidden anywhere, but hidden with him! Discuss how this might explain how we don't often seem particularly glorious to others! ...

...Yet! Now look at the wonderfully reassuring v4 - what will be, by faith. Read 1 Corinthians 15 re our resurrected bodies if you like, to bolster faith and hope. People will be astonished when they see the glorious Lord when he returns, and our glory will astonish them too.

### **Application**

Pray that we'll get hold of what this chapter in Colossians says - especially verses 1-4. Pray it will encourage us and inspire us to love God as No1 in our lives this year. Maybe this could be our New Year's resolution.

I've attached a copy of a mind map I've made of Chapter 3, which you could print and use to help discussion. (If you want to talk through how mind maps work, give me a bell!)