



## Sermon-Based Discussion Guide

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# Series: Connecting the Dots “Group: More than a Program”

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### SCRIPTURE

#### Colossians 4:7-14

**7** As to all my affairs, Tychicus, *our* beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow bond-servant in the Lord, will bring you information. **8** *For* I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts; **9** and with him Onesimus, *our* faithful and beloved brother, who is one of your *number*. They will inform you about the whole situation here.

**10** Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends you his greetings; and *also* Barnabas's cousin Mark (about whom you received instructions; if he comes to you, welcome him); **11** and *also* Jesus who is called Justus; these are the only fellow workers for the kingdom of God who are from the circumcision, and they have proved to be an encouragement to me. **12** Epaphras, who is one of your number, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings, always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God. **13** *For* I testify for him that he has a deep concern for you and for those who are in Laodicea and Hierapolis. **14** Luke, the beloved physician, sends you his greetings, and *also* Demas.

### ENGAGE

What does being in a group mean to you?

### DISCUSS

1. Read the passage above out of Colossians. Point out words or phrases that indicate special friendships.
2. Are those words and phrases descriptive of our group?
3. Are you a person who needs other people outside of your family or one who is content to live with few friends? What are the dangers of isolation?
4. Do you agree with the statement that God intends for us to do life with some special friends. Read Hebrews 10:24-25. Why do you think we need encouragement and spurring? How do we spur one another on?

5. One part of the relationship of Christians should be the ability honestly confront one another. Do you feel like we can do that in our group? If so, would it be received well?
6. Looking at the characteristics of special friends below, where is our group good and where do we need improvement?
  - a. People who have our back
  - b. People who won't betray a trust
  - c. People who will honestly confront us.
  - d. People who are selfless.
  - e. People who offer forgiveness.
  - f. People who can restore us.

## YOUR NEXT STEP

What can you do to be a better Christian friend, both to people in group and to people outside of our group?

## CHILDREN'S TIME

1. Read Hebrews 10:24-25. What does it mean to encourage?
2. Do you have friends who are encouraging? Did you know that God calls us to be encouragers?
3. What can you do to encourage your Christian friends? What type things do we need to encourage them to do?

## OTHER PASSAGES SITED

Prov. 17:17 a brother is born for adversity

Eccl. 4:12 a cord of three strands is not quickly torn apart

Prov. 16:28 a gossip separates close friends

Gal. 6:2 confrontation

Prov. 28:23 rebuking a brother

1 Cor. 13:5 Love remembers no wrongs (forgiveness)