

What's Wrong with the World?

Jan. 27, 2019

To KNOW Christ and one another more deeply,
To CARE for one another in truth and in love,
To GROW as followers of Jesus.
- CG Mission Statement

Worship: Psalm 19:7-11

(Here is a psalm/song to help your group as you worship.)

Meditate on Psalm 19:7-11 as a group.

Icebreaker

Tell about a pet you had growing up or one you have now.

Text for Discussion: Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-24

Turn in your Bibles and read this passage aloud together.

Aid for Discussion: Sermon Summary

What's Wrong With the World? Any look at human history reveals that things are not how they're supposed to be. Looking at the pain, uncertainty, illness and loneliness that affect our lives and the lives of those we love, we can neither deny nor avoid the brokenness of our world. And all of this finds its origin in Genesis 3.

Sin. It is any thought, word, deed or attitude that fails to bring glory to God. Sin is everywhere, and it is fatal (Rom 5:12). It does no good to be unrealistic or to deny our diagnosis. Our victory over sin and death relies on the redemption offered in Jesus Christ as well as an admission of our helplessness. Because of this, the story of "The Fall" is fundamental to our interpretations of ourselves, our neighbors and our world.

The Tree – God created us to live in full relationship with each other and with Him. In Eden, God dwelt alongside His creation. Into that world full of life and flourishing, God placed a tree. Its fruit was the one thing God asked Adam and Eve to avoid. Why? In His desire for people to live in freedom and dignity, God gave them a choice. The tree represents the question we face every day of our lives (just as Adam and Eve did). Are we willing to trust God? Are we willing to live under His lordship? Who are we building our life around?

The Hiding of Adam and Eve – Why did Adam and Eve cover themselves after they fell to temptation and ate the fruit? In their shame, they hid parts of themselves from one another and hid themselves entirely from their loving Creator. We carry this same wound, which Paul describes as the internal struggle we face of knowing what is right but cannot put into practice (Rom 7:15-20). Pain and confusion descend as we cannot understand our own decisions. Seeing The Fall as the origin of this can be very orienting. This story instills in us a profound, inescapable awareness of God's glory, His love for all of creation, and our own helplessness in returning to Him.

The Arrival of a Rescuer and The Rescue – "Where are you?" (Gen 3:9). This is a summation of the entire Bible. We are indeed lost, but we are relentlessly loved and relentlessly pursued by our Father. It doesn't matter how lost or disoriented we are. He has never stopped loving and pursuing us. We are not left alone in this battle; God has provided the way out. Genesis 3:15 is the beginning of the Gospel, the first crumb on the trail that would lead to the cross of Jesus. It is a faint but clear promise of a wounded victor (Rom 5:15-21) who would conquer sin once and for all.

The heart of our redeeming, restoring God is filled to overflowing with love for His creatures. We were not meant to be store-houses of shame, anger, control and compulsiveness. We were not meant to live in fear nor in anxious hiding from God. We were meant to be alive with hope and trust and wholeness. And so we are called to respond wholeheartedly to our brokenness, bringing ourselves under the lordship of Christ, our

wounded healer and our source of grace. As we worship and surrender to Him, we will find Jesus to be perfectly trustworthy and perfectly true.

Guiding Question of the Week

(This question is intended as a target for the whole conversation. Do not ask for responses now. It will be repeated later in the study.)

How does the passage help us to better understand ourselves and our world?

Questions for Discussion

(Remember it is better to wrestle deeply with two good questions than gloss over many. Sub-bullets are intended for potential follow-up.)

- Discuss how we see God's grace (undeserved love) toward Adam and Eve in Genesis 2:15-17.
 - What did God give to Adam? What did He ask of Adam?
 - What was God establishing and what was He offering them?
- Comment on how the sad event of Genesis 3:6-7 changed everything for mankind? (See Romans 5:12, 15)
 - Where was Adam? What free gift did Adam and Eve exercise? What did they lose?
 - When was there a time that you doubted the Lord God? What did you lose?
- Again we see God's grace in Genesis 3:8-13. Who initiated this conversation?
 - Was the first question a rhetorical question? Why did God ask the question?
- Genesis 3:15 has been understood as the first announcement of the coming of a Savior who would destroy the curse of sin and death. Try to explain how this is the first mention of the gospel message?
- Discuss how we see God's grace in Genesis 3:21. What did He cover? How does Jesus do this for us?
 - Describe Adam and Eve's faith and compare it to your own. How is it the same?
- How does this passage help us to better understand ourselves and our world?
 - How does this passage help us to better understand God's holiness and love for His creation?
 - Did you learn anything new?

Prayer

Jesus invites us to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread." Pray for one another's struggles and a clear awareness of God's faithful provision.

Experiment of the week

(A suggestion for engagement in following the way of Jesus this week)

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Experiment of the Week:

Each night this week spend a few moments reflecting on your day by thinking through the following questions.

- When was I aware of God's presence or love today
- When did I feel alone or want to hide?
- When did I feel or hear the invitation of Jesus to come and rest?

Share with the group how this experiment may have made you more aware of God on a daily basis. Continue your Bible Reading Plan.