

Small Group Questions

Week of Sunday, December 17th, 2023

Launch

Do you think fathers have it easier or harder today than in previous generations?

Observe

1. Read Isaiah 9:6-7 - Discuss the term “Everlasting Father” – what is easy and what is difficult in connecting this description of the Messiah to Jesus in the New Testament?
2. Read Genesis 17:4-7 – What kind of father will Abraham become? What are the attributes of this kind of father? How are ideas of time wrapped into this description of the kind of father Abraham would be? How would this help you understand the term “Everlasting Father” as a description for Jesus?

Process

1. Read Deuteronomy 17:15-20 & Ezekiel 34:7-10 compare and contrast the expectations of godly leaders and key areas of failure. What did God expect from His kings and leaders?
2. Read Zechariah 10:3 and Jeremiah 23:1-2 – Why would God deal so harshly with failed leadership? How do these verses point to a need for a true shepherd?
3. How are we to understand death based on Romans 5:12? What was it Jesus understood to be true about mankind and our condition in John 2:24-25? Why would it matter that we understand our origins and our true condition?
4. Insanity is described as “doing the same thing over and over expecting different results” – how does Galatians 6:8 affirm this idea? Where have you been sowing in the “flesh” of “corruption” expecting some kind of new life to emerge?

Respond

1. Pastor/Theologian Charles Spurgeon said “Generation makes us the sons of Adam; regeneration acknowledges us as the sons of Christ. In our first birth we come under the fatherhood of the fallen one; in our second birth we enter into the fatherhood of the innocent and perfect One.” Jesus is the implementor of a new hope! Read 2 Timothy 1:9-10, how is despair, decay and corruption replaced? What areas of life do you need to be reminded of your new life & identity in Christ as the “everlasting Father”?
2. CS Lewis states that the desire to be included into key relationships and what he called “inner circles” is universally desired. He said that desire is outweighed only by the fear of “being left out” of those circles. What have you compromised in order to gain access to a circle of acceptance? How would Ephesians 3:17-19 be such a critical reminder to the Christ follower of where their identity is secured?
3. The Messiah in Isaiah 9:6-7 pictured as an Everlasting Father is ultimately an invitation to be swept up with God in the loving security of the perfect inner circle. The Father initiated our salvation, the Son completed it on the cross and the Holy Spirit applies the atoning work of Jesus to our lives. Read John 10:25 – How can you see this picture of Triunity as a point of security in your life this week?