

# **Growth Group Questions**

*4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent, March 19, 2023*

## **Introduction**

The picture behind this week's worship theme is a very basic one. God calls sinners out of darkness into his light of grace and forgiveness. Think of other Bible passages or stories where the picture of light versus darkness is used this way.

## **Into the Word** – Isaiah 42:14-21

1. Did you know that the NIV translators help us understand when the original language is speaking in poetry as opposed to prose? Whenever you see a section formatted like you see in the bulletin, that's poetry. Hebrew poetry didn't necessarily rhyme – it was poetry of meter and meaning instead.
2. God once again explains his patience in bringing judgment. Compare this section of Isaiah with Paul's Athens sermon in Acts 17:26-31. Why does God wait? But is that time unlimited?
3. We seem to see in verses 14-17 a mingling of the first and second comings of the Servant. In what ways does Jesus bring destruction (v. 15), but also lead the blind and give them light (v. 16)?
4. Verses 18-21 are a strange inclusion in this reading. (Had I seen it earlier I might have changed the verses we used.) This is a different servant than the one in the first section. Read verses 22-25 and identify who this unfaithful servant is.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> It's Israel. They're the unfaithful one. Sorry to spoil it. But still read the verses!

## **Into the Word** – Ephesians 5:8-14

5. For us who are blessed to be lifelong Christians the “darkness” we came from is just as real but not as obvious. Share a story of someone you know who came to faith later in life and knew obvious darkness.<sup>2</sup>
6. I didn't discuss in the sermon enough the trio of fruits of life. (goodness, righteousness, truth). Discuss it for me!

## **Into the Word** – John 9:1-7, 13-17, 34-39

7. Explain Jesus' answer that this man was blind so that the “works of God might be displayed in him.” Can you think of times in your life when God allowed something “bad” to happen for a while that led to praising him in the end?
8. Jesus didn't have to make mud to heal the man's eyes. Why do you think he did it?
9. Jesus did this miracle on the Sabbath, a day on which no work was supposed to be done. Read Matthew 22:36-40 and discuss what Jesus was trying to teach the people.

## **Closing Prayer**

Jesus, bless us with eyes that are fully opened in faith. Lead us to look for your truth in all things, open our eyes to opportunities to serve you, and turn us away from everything sinful or hurtful. Amen.

<sup>2</sup> Examples for me are two members of past churches - a former Satanist and a US Marine haunted by wartime actions. They knew darkness...and loved the light they found in Jesus.