

# **Growth Group Questions**

*4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost, June 25, 2023*

## **Introduction**

In case you didn't see it in the bulletin, every day 13 Christians are killed for their faith and another 12 are arrested or imprisoned. Take a moment to pray for those who face real persecution, and thank God for the blessings we enjoy in our state and nation.

## **Into the Word** – Genesis 5:21-24

1. Google a chart showing the lifetimes of early patriarchs from Adam to Jacob. You will find that Adam was still alive when Noah's father was born and that Noah died when Abraham was 50! What are some benefits to us from God's gift of such long lives to these early people?
2. "Then he died" repeats often in this chapter. The 1 exception is Enoch, who "walked faithfully" with God (mentioned twice!) and was taken away by God. What does this exception reinforce about what the world around Enoch was like?
3. What do you suppose it means that Enoch "walked faithfully" with God? (See Jude 14-15 for a hint.)
4. The other reference to Enoch in Scripture is Hebrews 11:5-6. What light do those verses shed on what God did for Enoch?
5. Some liberal scholars teach that Old Testament believers had no understanding of an afterlife. How does this section of Scripture show that to be an error? Can you think of other Old Testament signs of a belief in heaven/hell?

## **Into the Word** – 2 Timothy 4:1-8

6. What charge does Paul give to young Pastor Timothy in v. 2?
7. Even when Timothy does the right thing, what does Paul tell him to expect in verses 3 & 4? Can you think of examples of this today?
8. Paul wrote this letter during his second imprisonment in Rome. What was he expecting to happen (v. 6) but what was he hopeful for (v. 8)? What do we learn from this as we face persecution?

## **Into the Word** – Matthew 10:5a, 21-33

9. What hardships did Jesus tell the Twelve they would face as they went out in his name? Why would they face these?
10. List the practices and attitudes Jesus told them (and us!) to have in the face of persecution.
11. Explain verse 28. Only God can destroy a person in hell so this is referring to Him, not to Satan. In this context what does it mean to fear God?

## **Closing Prayer**

Jesus, we pray that you would be with your children everywhere who face persecution and difficulty for their faith. Bless every believer with a heart that trusts you completely to walk with you as Enoch did, even in a world that hates you and hates us for our love toward you. Amen.