

Growth Group Questions

10th Sunday after Pentecost, August 6, 2023

Introduction

What qualities about God make it so hard for us to trust that He will provide for us? What qualities of our own make it difficult?

Into the Word – 1 Kings 17:1-6

1. This is the first time the Bible mentions Elijah the Prophet. Elijah's ministry was one of extremes, facing the worst of kings but having some of the greatest comforts from God. As a group, share some of the accounts you remember from Elijah's life.
2. God sent a drought and famine to Israel as judgment for the great and public sins of King Ahab and the people. Does God still send natural disasters as "wakeup calls" today? Think of reasons both for and against the unknowable answer.
3. Usually God provides for us through natural means. Here he causes the ravens to act outside of their nature to provide for Elijah. Think of examples of this miraculous providing, both in Scripture and perhaps in your life or people you know.

Into the Word – Ephesians 1:3-10

4. Election and predestination are deep topics, and sometimes confusing to those who don't read carefully. What comfort do believers find in verses four and five? Note that God doesn't say anything about unbelievers at all.
5. What did one seminary prof mean when he said, "Election is a teaching of comfort for the saved, not speaking to the fate of the lost at all"?

6. This text provides a great view into God's grace (undeserved love) for sinners. Look through the reading and find every time that God makes it clear that salvation is a free gift from him, accomplished by him.
7. Define two important terms used here: redemption and forgiveness. How are they different and how are they alike?

Into the Word – Matthew 14:13-21

8. Jesus was looking for a private place to pray and to teach his disciples. Instead he found a demanding crowd. Why did Jesus preach to the people and heal their sick?
9. Jesus told the disciples to give the crowd something to eat. What was he doing and how did they respond?
10. What direction has Jesus give to us to test/train our faith?
11. How fully did Jesus take care of the needs of the people that day? What do we learn from this for ourselves?
12. This is the only miracle recorded in all four Gospels. Why do you think the Spirit chose to include this episode in all four?
- 13.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, open our eyes to the great blessings you give to us everyday as you provide everything that we need in this life and the next. Turn our eyes to you in grateful response and drive us to trust in you for all things. In Jesus' name, Amen.