

Growth Group Questions

3rd Sunday after Epiphany – February 8, 2026

Introduction

Find a piece of paper and write down five things about yourself. Any five. Don't do anything with the list now – we'll use it later in our study. If you are in a group, share with each other your "top five" lists.

Into the Word – Exodus 19:1-8a

1. The Israelites were only three months removed from being slaves in Egypt. After they enter the desert where do they set up camp? What would happen there?
2. These people had seen God's power in terrifying and destructive ways, leading up to the death of every firstborn in Egypt. Here God describes his use of that power as "carrying them on his wings and bringing them to himself." How does that description help us better understand the judgments of God that we see, especially in the Old Testament? What was God actually doing in those times?
3. Verse five gives us the simplest definition of what we call the "Old" Covenant. What were the terms for each of the two parties making a contract with each other?
4. Read Exodus 24:3-8 to see how this covenant is confirmed with blood. Deuteronomy 9:9 tells us Moses was on the mountain for 40 days, then he came down with the law on tablets. What did he find the people doing that showed the futility of the Old Covenant.
5. Now jump to Jeremiah 31:31-35 to see God's promise of a new covenant. Then think of Jesus' words in communion, and how covenants were sealed/signed. What does Jesus mean when he calls his blood in the sacrament "my blood of the NEW covenant"?

Into the Word – 1 Peter 2:9-12

6. God told the Israelites they would be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation if they obeyed him fully. They didn't. What does Peter call believers in Jesus here?
7. Who we are is different because of what God has done for us to make us his. What do each of the phrases in verse 9 teach us about our true identity?
8. Look back at your list from the introduction. Those five things are what you consider your identity. Identity is a big topic today. People find their identities in their work, their families, their hobbies, their politics, their sports fandoms, and the list goes on and on. Explain why finding our identity in terms of Christian faith offers more comfort and more purpose than any other source of identity.

Into the Word – Matthew 5:13-20

9. Salt was both a seasoning AND a preservative in Jesus' time. How are Christians both of those things in our fallen world?
10. Verse 16 is important for our Christian living. WHY do Christians do good things? (Hint: the word "that" shows purpose)
11. In the sermon I talk about our identity in Jesus as "righteousness known" and "righteousness shown". What do I mean by those two terms?

Closing Prayer – Heavenly Father, thank you for bringing me into your family through faith. Remind me daily of my place at your table and my citizenship in your heaven. Let my identity in you lead me to a life of righteous service, that others may praise you too. Amen.