



SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Part 3: [Re]deemer

Icebreaker: One of the core themes of Scripture is the idea of being in exile. Adam and Eve were exiled from The Garden. The Israelites endured Babylonian exile. The disciples also used exile imagery in their writing (“aliens, strangers, foreigners, etc.” Hebrews 11:3; 1 Peter 2:11). Spend the next 5 minutes replaying (or perhaps watching for the first time) the following video about “exile” as it will set you up nicely for the remainder of today’s discussion: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/exile/>

1) Read and discuss the following excerpt from *Mere Christianity* by C.S. Lewis:

“The Christian says, ‘Creatures are not born with desires unless satisfaction for those desires exists.’ A baby feels hunger: well, there is such a thing as food. A duckling wants to swim: well, there is such a thing as water. Men feel sexual desire: well, there is such a thing as sex. If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world.”

*The following 3 questions come directly from the BibleProject’s “Questions for Personal Reflection or Group Discussion” based on the “Exile” video above.

*2) Compare the first exile in Genesis 3:9-24 with the next in Genesis 4:6-16, when Cain was exiled east toward Babylon. Take note of repeated ideas and words. Why do you think the land suffered in each situation? Why were the humans driven from their homeland?

*3) Babylon is a the place where people chase power to make a name for themselves (Genesis 11:4). But Abram is invited to leave Babylon when God tells him to move to a land he would show him. Read Genesis 12:1-3. What does God promise to do for and through Abram?

*4) Jesus is the way back home for all humanity. Jesus invites us back into God’s presence and the Eden ideal. Read John 14:1-6 and 14:16-23. Based on this passage, how does Jesus make a way for us to be at home in God while we live on Earth? How does Jesus make a way for God to be at home within us?

5) Jeremiah 29:11 is often “cherry-picked.” Understanding the proper context of this verse, however, can enrich both your appreciation and application of its truth. With that in mind, read all of Jeremiah 29:4-14 and discuss how this changes your perspective of what God communicates here.

6) What if God’s plan for renewal in your life looks very different from what you first expect, anticipate and even imagine? Would that be ok with you? Really?

7) Finally, where in your life must you embrace (rather than escape) God’s plan for your renewal?

Group Challenge: Has this small group ever thought about going on a retreat together? What would it take to plan one within the next six months? If you’ve already been on a group retreat, consider planning another one and invite another small group or two to come along.

