

SMALL GROUPS

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Spring Semester - Week 4

Remember, these questions are just tools for discussion. You don't need to 'get through them all'. Use the questions that are helpful, skip the ones that are not, and let the conversation flow naturally.

OPTIONAL ICEBREAKER(S)

- a) Which of your parents are you most like? In what ways?
- b) Growing up did you have a favourite book, song or album that you could enjoy over and over and over again?

PASSAGE AND DISCUSSION

Read Genesis 26:1-33

- a) What stands out to you upon first reading of this passage?
- b) Have you ever made a mistake multiple times before you learned the lesson that God was teaching you?
- c) What does it mean that Isaac's life mirrors Abraham's so closely? Is there meaning in this?
- d) The author of Genesis sandwiches the story of Isaac's time in Gerar between the two times that God speaks to Isaac and reaffirms the covenant made with Abraham, reminding him that the promise will continue through him. Take time to marvel at how God's storehouses of grace never run dry, even though He knows when we will sin. Share a time that you experienced God's unconditional love in spite of your sin.
- e) Read **v7-11**. Here we see Isaac repeating the same sin as his father: lying about his wife, calling her his sister, and exposing the woman he loved to great danger to save his own skin. In what ways have you seen generational sins like this one play out in your own family?
- f) Read **v12-22**. We are reminded that our lives as followers of God will not be easy; we will face opposition, encounter trials and difficulties 'til the end. How can we as God's chosen people keep our eyes on the 'big picture' of God's perspective, and persevere when we encounter difficult moments?

- g) Read **v12-16**. How has the culture's view on prosperity and materialism infiltrated the way we Christians view such wealth? What is the truth? How was God's blessing of Isaac not an endorsement of his behaviour?
- h) Read **v3-5**, and **v23-24**. God comforts Isaac twice, reminding him of the promise He made to Abraham and that He will be with Isaac in the same way. Do you struggle trusting God and taking Him at His word? How can we encourage one another to trust God more when it comes to the promises He has given us in Scripture?
- i) Read **v26-30**. Abimelech and the Philistines have actively sabotaged Isaac, but to no avail since God has blessed Isaac in his efforts, they recognize Isaac to be 'Blessed by the Lord'. They are fearful of him, yet he humbly honours them with a feast. He had all the right to turn them away, yet he humbly chooses peace. How is this act different from how the world tells us to respond to our enemies?
- j) What was it like when God personally 'appeared' in your life, and became real to you (not just someone you had heard of)?
- k) Why is your personal growth, especially concerning your relationship with God, so important to your children?
- l) Read **Deuteronomy 6:4-9**. Why is silence regarding God's faithfulness harmful in discipleship if the next generation? How does this passage in Deuteronomy exhort us not to remain silent about the faith?
- m) Read **Genesis 26:3, 24, 28, Isaiah 46:3, Phil 4:5, Deut 31:6, and John 14:16-17**. Why is the emphasis of God's presence with Isaac important to us today? How is this still relevant in the lives of believers?
- n) How does 'Abraham's blessing' get passed from one generation to the next? How does this prove God's good character?

TAKE IT HOME (OPTIONAL IDEAS FOR RESPONSE THIS WEEK)

- a) If you haven't yet, take time this week to share your testimony with your children / grandchildren / or someone coming after you.
- b) Consider establishing a regular time (at the dinner table?), where you reflect and share where you have seen God at work in your life.

OPTIONAL IDEAS FOR PRAYER TIME

- a) Pray for one another - that you will daily walk in a deepening awareness of God's loving presence in your life, and that this may spur you on to grow in your relationship with God as you seek Him and live for Him daily.

- b) Pray that God would make his presence evident to those in your group, as they go about their next week. Pray specifically about what people have coming up, and pray for God's presence and power to be seen.