

SMALL GROUPS

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Winter Semester - Week 1

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

OPTIONAL ICEBREAKER(S)

- a) Share one prayer request that God answered in 2022?
- b) Share a photo from your phone that captures a significant event that occurred in 2022.

PASSAGE AND DISCUSSION

- a) Ask the group members to assist you in providing a brief summary of the Book of Mark, so far.

Read Mark 13

- b) What immediately stands out to you after reading this text? What would you say is the most difficult thing to read / or understand in this passage?
- c) **Read v1-2.** In addition to being a stunning building, the temple served as a representation of Jewish religion. The temple had a significant role in the Jewish culture and Jesus prophesied its total destruction. Reflect and discuss how this prophecy would have impacted the Jewish people at that time.
- d) Most of what Jesus prophesied in **Mark 13** has been documented as historically occurring. What can we learn about Jesus from looking at the fulfilled prophecies in this text?
- e) The prophetic word has immediate and also future implications. Find some examples in Mark 13 that were likely immediate (fulfilled in 70) and others that could be pointing to a future reality.
- f) How does reading this passage help us understand that God is in control? How might acknowledging God's supremacy alter how we view history as it unfolds?

- g) On Sunday, Cam mentioned, “*We are not living at the mercy of government leaders or political decisions.*” Would you say that you *practically* trust in God to bring about His will, even as culture shifts, and things change?
- h) Read **Acts 1:11**; **1 Thessalonians 4:16-17**; **Revelation 22:12**; **John 14 1-3**. Christ is coming back. There will be a day when Christ returns, ending all suffering. That’s a fact. How does this truth make you feel? How ought this truth change the way we live every day?
- i) Read **Mark 13:32-35**. This section makes it clear that we cannot predict the exact timing of Christ’s return. How does the Christian live in light of the fact that we know *what* will happen (Christ will return), but do not know *when*?
- j) Do you ever feel the urge to see the things around you as signs that the end is near? What types of things tempt you to think this way? Why do you think *those things* indicate that Christ must return soon?
- k) Would you say that you spend as much time pursuing the Great Commission as you do the answers to your questions about the End Times?
- l) In what ways is speculation dangerous, when it comes to thinking about the End Times? In what ways is this speculation helpful / necessary for Christians to live out their calling in the world?
- m) Scan the text and take note of the *commands* in this passage. Why is it important to notice these imperatives? With these in mind, what do you think Jesus was, ultimately, hoping the disciples would take out of this teaching?
- n) At the end of the message on Sunday, Cam said: “*Mark 13 should inspire more evangelism than debate, and make us more compassionate, not antagonistic.*” Do you agree with this statement? How so?
- o) If you *knew* that Christ was returning next week, what would change about your plans for this week? What would it take for you to answer this question by saying, ‘I wouldn’t change a thing’?

TAKE IT HOME (OPTIONAL IDEAS FOR RESPONSE THIS WEEK)

- a) This text encourages Christians to live every day as if the end is near. Take a look at your calendar, your checkbook, etc., and think about how your priorities would change if you actually lived this way.

- b) Take some time to intentionally trust in God. Write out some things in this world / your family that are causing fear and pray through them one-by-one, releasing them to the Lord.

OPTIONAL IDEAS FOR PRAYER TIME

- a) Pray for one another - that God would help you keep the MAIN / PLAIN things at the top of your priority list.
- b) Pray for those you know who do not know Christ. Pray that God would provide opportunities for you to point them to Christ.

OPPORTUNITIES TO GATHER, GROW & GO

Men's Study: began on January 15th, and meets on Sundays at 9 a.m. and Tuesdays at 7 p.m. Whether you attended Season 1 or 2 or not, we invite you to join us for the 3rd and final season of Men's Fraternity. Together we will explore and discuss this deeply practical study.

Women's Night Out: January 21st at 7 p.m. Hey ladies, it's time for another "night out." So let's gather on January 21st at 7 p.m. to talk, pray, eat, and have fun. We plan a night to talk about physical, emotional, and spiritual self-care.

Daybreak: Tuesday Jan 24th at 9am and Sunday, January 29th at 9am. This winter, the women are invited to a Bible study in the book of Ruth and travel through her journey of unbearable loss, redeeming love, and divine legacy. This study delves into the virtuous character of Ruth, her unique relationship with her mother-in-law Naomi, and her blossoming love with Boaz. If you've ever felt devastated, struggled as a stranger, longed to be loved, or wept along the way, you'll find a loyal sister in Ruth.

Membership Class: Jan 28th at 10 am. We believe that membership is an important way for new people to identify your personal commitment to Christ as well as His work through this local church and its mission.

Prayer Summit: Jan 27th Our next church-wide Prayer Summit is happening on Friday, January 27, 2023, and you are invited to join in and experience prayer together.