

Life Changing Community Group Discussion Questions

week of 10/12/25

Sermon Summary

Pastor Mark's sermon this week centered on Jeremiah 29:4-7, where God instructed the exiled Israelites to build houses, plant gardens, marry, and seek the prosperity of Babylon - their enemy's land. He used an interactive exercise with information cards to help congregants reflect on aspects of their lives they might want to change. The central message was that perhaps we are exactly where God wants us to be, even when our circumstances aren't ideal. Rather than constantly seeking to change our situation, we should live faithfully where we are, trusting that God has placed us there for a purpose. The sermon challenged the congregation to live with such confidence in God's promises that they could thrive even in an 'alien world' that doesn't match their preferences.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, as we gather in this small group, we ask that You open our hearts and minds to what You want to teach us today. Help us to set aside our preconceived notions and be receptive to Your Spirit's leading. Lord, we know that You have placed each of us exactly where we are for a reason, even when our circumstances aren't what we would choose. Give us the wisdom to see Your hand in our lives and the courage to live faithfully wherever You have placed us. Prepare our hearts to receive Your word and to encourage one another as we discuss what it means to bloom where we are planted. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Ice Breaker

If you could instantly change your address to anywhere in the world, where would you choose to live and why?

Key Verses

Jeremiah 29:4-7

Jeremiah 29:11

Matthew 5:44

Romans 12:14

Romans 12:17

Romans 12:21

Philippians 4:11-13

Questions

- Pastor Mark had everyone fill out cards with personal information they might want to change. What aspects of your life do you sometimes wish were different, and how does this affect your contentment?

- How do you think the Israelites felt when God told them to seek the prosperity of Babylon, the very nation that had destroyed their homeland and taken them captive?
- What does it mean practically to 'build houses and settle down' in circumstances we didn't choose and don't particularly like?
- The sermon suggested that maybe we are exactly where God wants us to be. How does this perspective challenge or comfort you in your current life situation?
- How can we distinguish between circumstances we should accept and work to change versus those we should simply endure faithfully?
- What does it look like to 'seek the peace and prosperity' of people or places that oppose our values or make life difficult for us?
- Paul wrote about learning to be content in any circumstance. What practical steps can we take to develop this kind of contentment?
- How might viewing our current situation as God's placement for us change the way we approach our daily responsibilities and relationships?

Life Application

This week, identify one aspect of your current circumstances that you've been wishing was different. Instead of focusing on changing it, ask God to show you how He wants you to 'build houses and plant gardens' right where you are. Look for specific ways you can contribute positively to your workplace, neighborhood, or community, even if it's not your ideal situation. Practice gratitude daily for where God has placed you and seek to be a blessing to others in that space.

Key Takeaways

- God may have placed us exactly where we are, even when our circumstances aren't what we would choose.
- We are called to seek the prosperity and peace of even those who oppose us or make life difficult.
- True contentment comes from trusting God's placement and purposes rather than constantly seeking to change our circumstances.

- Living faithfully where we are demonstrates confidence in God's promises for our future.
- We can thrive in an 'alien world' by living as though we were already in the promised land.

Ending Prayer

Lord God, thank You for this time of discussion and reflection. Help us to truly believe that You have placed each of us exactly where we are for Your purposes. Give us the strength to build houses, plant gardens, and seek the prosperity of the places and people You've put in our lives, even when it's difficult. Help us to live with such confidence in Your promises that we can be content and fruitful wherever we find ourselves. May we be lights in our communities, workplaces, and families, showing others what it looks like to trust You completely. Transform our hearts from complaint to gratitude, from resistance to acceptance, and from self-focus to service. We commit to living faithfully where You have planted us this week. In Jesus' name, Amen.