

Small Group Questions for Bethlehem

1. Considering the prophetic significance of Jesus being born in Bethlehem, how does this fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy strengthen our faith in God's sovereignty and faithfulness to His Word?
2. The manger, where animals fed, became a symbol of Jesus being the Bread of Life. How does partaking of Jesus' Word and communion nourish our spiritual lives and sustain us in our faith journey?
3. Reflecting on the connection between the manger and Jesus' eventual burial in a tomb, in what ways does Jesus' birth foreshadow His sacrificial death and redemption for humanity? Why might the announcement of His birth come to priestly shepherds?
4. In what ways does Jesus' willingness to be born into our fallen world as "the Man of sorrows" and die for our sins demonstrate the depth of God's love and His ultimate purpose for humanity?
5. How does understanding that Jesus was born with the sole purpose of sacrificing Himself for our salvation impact our perspective on life and the meaning of Christmas?

Small Group Questions from Jerusalem

1. Reflecting on Jesus' faithful adherence to fulfilling the Law, why do you think it was significant for Him to visit Jerusalem multiple times every year? How is His commitment to fulfilling the Jewish Law and His mission (Matthew 5:17, Luke 4:18-19) demonstrated in the timing of His travels?
2. What lessons did you learn from Jesus declaring that He is the Light of the World in the Court of Women? How does Jesus' inclusivity and affirmation of women challenge societal norms of His time, and what lessons can we draw from His example today?
3. Reflecting on the crowd's cry of "Hosanna," which originally meant "save us," what was their expectation of Jesus? How does the understanding of Jesus as the fulfillment of David's prayer in Psalm 118:25 deepen our understanding of His role as Savior? How does this transformation of the meaning of Hosanna show what Jesus' mission was? (See John 18:36).
4. In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed fervently before His arrest, knowing the suffering that awaited Him. How does Jesus' prayer in the olive press symbolize His willingness to be "pressed/crushed" for our sins? What example did Jesus set in prayer for us during our times of trial and suffering? How does knowing God's will for us in Christ lead us to inherit our spiritual blessings?
5. Reflecting on Pontius Pilate's decision to release Barabbas instead of Jesus, how does this exchange symbolize the substitutionary nature of Jesus' death? How does Jesus' innocence contrast with Barabbas'?

guilt, and what does this reveal about the nature of salvation through Christ?

Bonus Question: The tearing of the veil in the Temple at the moment of Jesus' death symbolizes the removal of the barrier between humanity and God's presence. How does this act of tearing the veil impact our understanding of access to God? How does it affirm Jesus' role as our great High Priest and mediator before God?

Small Group Questions from Judean Wilderness

1. In what ways do you think Jesus' experience of temptation in the wilderness prepared Him for the challenges He faced during His ministry?
2. Reflecting on Jesus' response to temptation in the wilderness, how does relying on the written Word of God help us overcome temptation and navigate life's challenges?
3. How do Jesus' experiences of rejection and success in Luke 4:28-29 and Luke 4:42-44 teach us about perseverance and staying focused on God's mission despite external circumstances?
4. Jesus sought solitude in a deserted place to communicate with God the Father and discern His next steps. What are some ways you have found solitude amid a busy schedule?
5. In what ways do the various temptations faced by Jesus throughout His ministry demonstrate His humanity and empathy towards our struggles?

Small Group Questions from Bethany and Bethphage

1. In what ways does Martha's initial response to Jesus contrast with Mary's attitude of sitting at His feet, and what lessons can we learn from this comparison? Lazarus is reclining at the table with Jesus, how does this image speak to the idea of resting in God's presence and experiencing His grace?

2. How does Martha's journey from distraction and frustration to a place of worship and service reflect a broader theme of transformation in our relationship with God?

3. What does the fig tree that was cursed represent? How did Jesus know that it was not going to produce any fruit?

4. What significance do you find in the fact that the fig tree was withered from the roots, according to Mark 11:20? What connection might this have to our lives and ability to produce fruit? (See John 15:5).

5. What is the mountain being cast into the sea a metaphor for? How has this already happened and what does this mean for people who are living today?

Small Group Questions from Jericho

1. Reflect on the significance of Bartimaeus' name, "son of Timaeus," and its potential meaning as "son of the unclean." How does this illuminate the social and spiritual dynamics of the time and the hope a blind Gentile would have living in the first-century region of Judea?
2. Consider the parallel between Bartimaeus and Zacchaeus. Both are marginalized figures in society one is a blind beggar the other a despised wealthy tax collector, yet they both received the salvation of the Lord. What does this tell us about Jesus' mission and who He came to save?
3. Explore the transformation of Zacchaeus after encountering Jesus (Luke 19:8). How does his response reflect genuine repentance (changing one's mind) and open the door to receive the Lord's salvation?
4. Discuss the significance of Jericho (in the Old Testament) as the setting for these encounters with Bartimaeus and Zacchaeus. How does the historical context of Jericho add depth to the narrative?
5. Whose salvation story is more surprising to you Bartimaeus or Zacchaeus? Which individual's story relates closer to your salvation story and why is that?

Small Group Questions from Ephraim

1. Reflecting on the statement that “no one would take [Jesus’ life] from Him” (John 10:18), what does this concept of voluntary sacrifice teach us about the sacrifice Jesus made for us? How does this deepen your understanding of God’s love for you?

2. Considering the plot to kill Jesus initiated by the religious leaders, why do you think they felt threatened by Jesus’ miracles and teachings? How does their response contrast with the response of those who witnessed Jesus’ miracles and believed in Him? What did the religious leaders stand to lose compared to what did the people stand to gain?

Small Group Questions from Nazareth

1. How does Jesus' reception in Nazareth, His hometown, compare and contrast with His reception in other places where He ministered? Think of places like Capernaum (Matthew 8) and also Bethsaida (Luke 10:13).
2. What significance do you find in the fact that Jesus brought His disciples with Him to Nazareth?
3. In what different ways did Jesus minister in varied settings, such as cities (Matthew 21:12-13), villages (Mark 10:13-16), and countryside areas and lakes (Matthew 13:1-9)?
4. Even though the people of Nazareth marveled at Jesus' words why do you think they still stumbled over His humble origins?
5. What can we learn from Hebrews 12:2 about the importance of fixing our eyes on Jesus as the source and perfecter of our faith, especially in moments of doubt or distraction?

Small Group Questions from Cana

1. How does Jesus' response to Mary's request to intervene in the wine shortage challenge traditional notions of who is deserving of God's grace and receiving His blessings? (See Luke 11:27-28 and Mark 3:32-34).

2. When Jesus addressed Mary as "gynē" how does this point to His death? How is this related to the turning of water into wine?

3. Reflecting on the symbolism of the six stone water jars used for ceremonial washing, how does Jesus' transformation of water into wine signify a transition from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant?

4. Considering the vast quantity of wine produced by Jesus at the wedding, what message do you think this abundance communicates about Jesus' nature and His ability to provide for our needs?

5. In what ways does Jesus' command to fill the jars to the brim reflect His desire for us to receive from Him abundantly? The master of the banquet's praise for the quality of the wine produced by Jesus contrasts with the typical sequence of serving wine at weddings. How does this praise emphasize Jesus' role as the ultimate provider and fulfiller of needs?

Small Group Questions from Capernaum

1. Reflect on the significance of Capernaum being referred to as the “village of comfort” and how Jesus demonstrated comfort through His miracles there. How does this concept resonate with your own experiences of finding comfort in Christ and how might you be comforted to know the miracle you seek is available through Jesus?
2. Explore the various miracles performed by Jesus in Capernaum, such as healing Peter's mother-in-law, the paralytic, and the woman with the issue of blood. What common themes or messages do you notice in these miracles?
3. Discuss the different perspectives provided by Matthew, Mark, and Luke regarding the healing of Peter's mother-in-law. How do these variations enrich our understanding of the event?
4. Consider the immediate response of Peter and his companions when faced with a problem (Peter's mother-in-law's fever). How can we cultivate a similar instinct to turn to Jesus first when encountering difficulties in our lives?
5. Reflect on the idea that healed people become ministers or servants of the Gospel, as demonstrated by Peter's mother-in-law immediately serving Jesus and His disciples after her healing. How does your testimony provide an opportunity to minister unto someone else?

Small Group Questions from the Sea of Galilee

1. Reflecting on the story of Jesus walking on water and Peter's attempt to do the same, what insights do you gain about the importance of fixing our eyes on Jesus amidst life's challenges?
2. How does the imagery of Peter walking on water and his subsequent fear relate to our own experiences of faith and doubt amid life's storms?
3. Consider the role of fear in hindering our ability to experience God's miraculous power in our lives. How can we overcome fear and maintain our focus on Jesus during difficulties?
4. Reflect on the concept that receiving miracles from God is not dependent on the severity of our circumstances but on our faith in His promises. How does this perspective shift our approach to prayer and the confidence we have in God's intervention?
5. Reflect on the story from Mark 4:35-41 where Jesus calms the storm. How does this narrative reinforce the message of finding peace and security in Jesus amidst life's turbulent circumstances? Discuss the significance of Jesus and Peter walking back into the boat together after Peter's moment of doubt. What does this reveal about the continuous presence and support in our lives, even in times of wavering faith?

Small Group Questions from Nain and Mount Tabor

1. Considering the method used to perform the miracles, what insights do you gain about the nature of Jesus' authority compared to that of Elisha?
2. Explore the significance of Peter's response on Mount Tabor, where he suggests building shelters for Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. What was Peter unknowingly doing and why was God the Father's announcement so important for them to hear?
3. Reflecting on God's response on Mount Tabor, how does this instruction apply to believers today? How do some pastors/teachers make the same mistake that Peter made on the Mount of Transfiguration and how can a believer tell when this is being done?
4. Consider the significance of the disciples' names—Peter, James, and John—in light of the message they heard on the mountain. How might their names tell of what Jesus did for us (Matthew 5:17)?
5. Reflect on the passive voice usage in Jesus' command to "arise and do not be afraid" after emphasizing listening to His voice. What does this suggest about the role of grace in overcoming fear and standing on equal ground with God?

Small Group Questions from Gennesaret

1. Reflecting on the passage from Mark 6:56, what does it reveal about Jesus' approach to healing and restoration during His ministry on earth?
2. How does the concept of "sozo," meaning healing, deliverance, and wholeness, deepen our understanding of Jesus' mission to the sick and oppressed?
3. Considering 1 Corinthians 10:16, what significance does the holy Communion hold for Christians in terms of receiving healing and restoration? In what ways does participating in the holy Communion reflect our faith in God's provision for our healing and well-being?
4. How does the understanding of Jesus' primary ministry focusing on healing the sick reshape our perspective on illness and God's will for our health?
5. Reflecting on Luke 4:18-19, how does Jesus' declaration of proclaiming freedom for the oppressed and setting the captives free inform our understanding of God's desire for our health and well-being?

Small Group Questions from Bethsaida

1. Reflecting on the crowd's request for a sign despite witnessing Jesus' previous miracles, do you think they still doubted Him? What might have been their underlying motives?
2. In what ways might someone overlook or misunderstand the signs and miracles that God performs in their lives, similar to how the crowd missed the significance of Jesus' miracles?
3. Discuss the contrast between how Jesus and his disciples viewed the situation with the five loaves and two fish. How does this perspective shift impact our faith and approach to challenges?
4. Jesus emphasized that it was not Moses who provided the bread from Heaven, but God the Father. What implications does it have for our spiritual nourishment and salvation?
5. Discuss the ultimate purpose of miracles as highlighted in this passage. How might the purpose of miracles give us an answer as to why some miracles seem to be delayed? See the story of Lazarus in John 11.

Small Group Lessons from Bethany beyond the Jordan

1. In the encounter where Jesus blesses the children, what does this teach us about the nature of faith (including how we were brought to Jesus) and our need for His grace?
2. Read Matthew 20:1-16. How does the parable of the workers in the vineyard challenge our understanding of fairness and entitlement in relation to God's grace and generosity?
3. Reflecting on the significance of baptism, how does the imagery of being buried with Christ and raised to new life impact your understanding of your identity in Him?
4. Considering the term "highly favored" or "accepted" (charitoo) used in Ephesians 1:6, how does this language deepen your appreciation for God's love and approval towards you?
5. Salvation is described as being solely possible with God and through His grace (Matthew 19:26). How does this understanding of salvation impact our approach to evangelism and sharing the Gospel with others?

Small Group Questions from Tyre and Sidon

1. What was the purpose of Jesus' initial response to the Canaanite woman (Matthew 15:23-24)?
2. Jesus commends the Canaanite woman for her great faith. What specific actions or attitudes of hers do you think demonstrated this faith, and how can we cultivate similar faith in our own lives?
3. How does Jesus' ultimate response to the Canaanite woman demonstrate his compassion and willingness to extend salvation to all, regardless of ethnicity or background? What does this teach us about the character of God and our approach to others?
4. Reflect on the disciples' reaction to the Canaanite woman's plea and Jesus' response to them. How can we avoid adopting a mindset of exclusivity or superiority in our interactions with others, especially those who are different from us?
5. The Canaanite woman's encounter with Jesus ultimately led to the healing of her daughter. What lessons can we learn from her actions?

Small Group Questions from Caesarea Philippi

1. Reflecting on Jesus' question to His disciples, "Who do you say that I am?" how would you personally answer this question today? Peter's confession of Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of the living God, was a pivotal moment in the disciples' understanding of Jesus' identity. How does this confession impact your own understanding of who Jesus is?
2. How does Jesus' assurance that the gates of Hades will not prevail against His church offer comfort and hope to believers?
3. The concept of death and its power being nullified through Jesus' death and Resurrection is central to the Christian faith. How does this truth impact the way you view death and the afterlife and the promise Jesus made in Caesarea Philippi?
4. Discuss the idea that as members of the church, we are called to live fearlessly, unshackled by the grip of the grave. What does this look like practically in our lives, especially in the face of adversity or uncertainty?
5. Reflecting on the portrayal of the church in the final chapters of Revelation, how does the image of believers conquering through the blood of the Lamb and their testimony inspire us in our faith journey today?

Small Group Questions from the Decapolis

1. Discuss the significance of Jesus' compassion for the demon-possessed man despite his torment and social isolation. How does this demonstrate Jesus' care for those who are marginalized and suffering?
2. The transformation of the demon-possessed man from a tormented outcast to a calm and coherent individual highlights the transformative power of encountering Jesus. How have you personally experienced or witnessed the transformative power of Jesus in someone's life?
3. The posture of sitting at Jesus' feet symbolizes a desire to learn and follow His teachings. How can we cultivate a posture of humility and receptivity to Jesus' teachings in our own lives? Compare the demon-possessed man's posture of sitting at Jesus' feet to Mary's posture in Luke 10:38-39. What similarities do you see and what can we learn from their examples about seeking intimacy with Jesus?
4. Reflecting on the idea of resting at Jesus' feet and receiving from Him, how can we practically apply this concept in our daily lives? What steps can we take to prioritize intimacy with Jesus and receiving His blessings?
5. The people of the region of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave them because they were overcome with fear. Why might fear hinder a person's ability to receive from Jesus and what will overcome our fear (see 1 John 4:18)?

Small Group Questions from Sychar

1. In the conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman, cultural and social barriers were broken down. How did Jesus break through the wall that would prevent this woman from receiving the grace of Jesus?
2. In their conversation, Jesus offered the Samaritan woman "living water" that would quench her spiritual thirst forever. What are some modern-day sources of spiritual thirst, and how does Jesus' offer of living water address these needs in life?
3. Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman challenged traditional views of worship, emphasizing the importance of worshipping God in spirit and truth (John 4:24) rather than focusing on external rituals or locations. How do you think worshipping in spirit and truth differs from merely going through the motions of religious rituals or practices?
4. The Samaritan woman's encounter with Jesus led to a radical transformation in her life, from a woman burdened by shame to a bold evangelist proclaiming the Good News. How does her story challenge worldly perceptions about who is worthy of God's love and grace?

5. The Samaritan woman's response to her encounter with Jesus was to share the Good News with others, despite her past and societal status. Reflect on the transformation your life has received because of God's grace. Share how your testimony is similar to that of the woman at the well. In what ways was it different?