



Growth Group Discussion Questions

5. The Glorious God who restores everything through His Servant

Read Isaiah 42:1-9

1. Week after week we have seen that God's people Israel were staring at certain disaster. The great superpower of Babylon was threatening. They were terrified – and with good reason. They richly deserved what was coming to them. God is just and therefore He had promised punishment. In terror they turned to idols to help them. ***Read Isaiah 41:21-24 and 29 and discuss what God thinks of trusting in anything other than Him. Can you think of modern idols that we turn to in times of fear?***
2. ***Looking closely at verse 1, how can we be sure that through the prophet Isaiah, God is speaking about Jesus? Hint: see Mark 1:9-11***
3. God delights in His Servant. In Him He is well pleased. ***Look over verse 2-4 and answer the following questions and discuss whether He really is delightful:***
 - ***what is the Servant's work?***
 - ***in what way does He do His work?***
 - ***will He see it through to the end?***
 - ***who will benefit from His work?***
4. In verse 1-3 God speaks about the Servant and in verse 5-9 God speaks to the Servant. ***What are some of the things God says about Himself to the Servant? What should our response be (Hint: see Isaiah 42:10-13)***
5. ***Why do you think God the Holy Spirit lets us 'eavesdrop' what God says to His Servant? Hint: see John 17:6-8***
6. ***Looking at Isaiah 42:1-9 as a whole, where can we go to get comfort from God? Share some practical ways that have helped you to do this.***

Leaders Notes

1. The key word God uses of idols is 'empty' (42:29). Insubstantial. Like a balloon – pretty, colourful but totally empty. Other than the obvious idol of money, one of the key idols Australians turn to is family and community – as if these things will save us in times of trouble! Yes, there are many helps in the world but only One Saviour. God does indeed give help through various means but until our souls look beyond these things and trust in Him alone everything else will always prove empty. All 'helps' are good things but the moment they become the focus of our trust instead of God, they turn into idols.
2. Seriously, who else in history comes close to being a contender? In Mark 1:9-11 God again bears witness to His Son and emphatically points Him out as the one in whom He delights. And, the Spirit comes upon Jesus too. It's all there really.
3. The problem is that we don't delight in the Servant because our hearts are blind. Everyone thinks they know how it 'oughta be' – everyone thinks God should have gone about things this way or that way. But, when enabled by the Spirit our hearts are opened, we see what God sees and we delight in blissful worship knowing 'He has done all things well.'
 - what is the Servant's work? – justice = restore everything to perfect order and harmony; fix everything (the Hebrew word 'misphat' means tons more than just legal justice)
 - in what way does He do His work? – yes, with great power, but gently and kindly and tenderly
 - will He see it through to the end? – yes, even though He will be tempted to be faint or be discouraged He will finish what He has begun (all this implies its going to be tough)
 - who will benefit from His work? – the coastlands – which is another way of saying the far reaches of earth; all of humanity.
4. God says that He is Creator of natural life and spiritual life (verse 5); He is the One who gave His Servant (verse 6) to be a Deliverer of His people (verse 7). God is incomparable and He alone is worthy of glory and praise (verse 8) and He is the Lord of history (verse 9). Our only response (other than to stop our ridiculous rebellion against Him), is to adore; to praise; to worship and to delight in Him and His Servant.
5. So that we would believe in Jesus. The Holy Spirit expired (breathed out) God's Word about His Son through the prophets (including Isaiah) – even the Words the Father gave the Son – so that when the Son (who is the Word in flesh) comes to earth those who belong to Him would know Him and believe Him.
6. We must go to the gospel of Jesus Christ. The more we study Jesus, the more we "Behold the Servant" the more comforted we will be. Practical ways – up to the Growth Group but I take it that all of the ways will be about different ways of reading the Bible. The Bible is the Spirit's revelation of the Son – we will never find comfort if we try and 'behold' the Servant outside of the Word.