

A BETTER GIFT



CG LEADER DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

MISSION CAMPUS

DECEMBER 1 - 7, 2019

INFO AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The Candlelight Parade is just around the corner on December 6 and Northview Mission has a float in the parade again this year! We would love to have you walk alongside the float and handout invitations for our Christmas Eve Service to our community. If this is something that you are interested in please sign up on our website or email Yvonne Funk: yfunk@northview.org.
- Wear your Christmas PJs or sweater and join us for a Christmas movie night on December 8. We will be watching the movie Elf, having a gingerbread house competition and more! To RSVP and more details visit our website.
- The Women's Christmas Party is coming up on December 9 here at the Mission Campus! Buy your tickets at the Info Kiosk on Sunday!
- The Northview Kids Christmas Performance is for children in Kindergarten – Grade 5. They will join the Music Team in leading the congregation in worship during the weekend on December 22nd at both the 9am and 11am services. To register your child please visit our website.
- Sign up for Northview's Newsletter at northview.org to never miss another event.

www.northview.org

PRAYER REQUESTS

- As we kick off this holiday season, pray for our church during Christmas. Many people may travel or have out-of-town guests; pray for safety while on the roads. Also, be in prayer for those who may find the holidays particularly difficult.
- Pray for those who are complacent in their faith. That the Lord would stir them to take action, step up, and engage with their faith seriously. Would our church be a place known as people who persevere through all of life's challenges.

Observation

This section is aimed at helping people observe the details of the text: what is written, what words or ideas are repeated and emphasized, the text's structure and how this text fits into the wider context of the book of Romans.

1. Read Revelation 21:1-6.
2. How are the new heaven and the new earth described in this passage?
 - *No longer any sea (v.1)*
 - *The Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband (v.2)*
 - *God dwells with the people (v.3)*
 - *He will wipe every tear, there will be no more pain or suffering (v.4)*
 - *The old order of things has passed away (v.4)*
 - *The thirsty are given the water of life (v.6)*
3. What details of this future reality gives you the most hope? What details of this future reality do you find the most surprising?

Various answers.

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Interpretation

This section is aimed at linking the current text to other texts or to the bigger biblical narrative. If you are running out of time, feel free to skip this section.

1. The idea of humanity “dwelling with God” is a significant biblical theme. Read the passages below to trace this theme from Genesis to Revelation. In each passage, try to answer the following questions:

Who is dwelling with God? What obstacle(s) are preventing people from dwelling with God? What does God need to do to restore the broken relationship? What else must God do to restore this relationship once and for all?

- a. Genesis 3:1-8, 22-24

Adam and Eve are dwelling with God (v.8); Adam and Eve’s sin (rejecting God’s commands) forces God to expel them from the Garden of Eden as judgment for sin (vv.22-24); God needs a sacrifice to atone for their sin, but what if they sin again??

- b. Exodus 6:6-7, 32:7-10

God promises to rescue the Israelites from slavery so they could dwell with God (v.7); the people go after idols and God considers judging them for sin (vv.9-10); God needs a sacrifice to atone for their sin, and gives the Old Testament sacrificial system for this reason (Leviticus 16)... but the sacrifices of animals are never enough because people keep sinning

- c. John 1:1-14

Jesus (who is God) comes to dwell amongst people (v.14); people reject him and do not want to receive him (v.11); God needs to make people to be born again so they can receive Jesus (v.13); People need to be born again so they can battle against sin!

2. The idea of God’s people dwelling with God is the ultimate hope of the story of the Bible. Read the passages below to see what they add to the picture of the New Heavens and Earth that we see in Revelation 21:

What is the nature of the hope that is described? Why do you think the author of these passages reminds us of the Christian hope?

- a. 2 Peter 3:8-13

i. The nature of the hope: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years (v. 8); The Lord is

not slow in keeping his promise, he is patiently waiting, as he is not wanting anyone to perish (v.9); The day will come like a thief in the night (v.10); The heavens will disappear and the earth will be destroyed (vv.10,12); Everything done laid bare (v.10); Righteousness dwells (v.13).

- ii. *The reminder is so the future hope will affect the way we live in the present (v.14).*

Looking forward to this hope, we are spurred to holy living

- b. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

i. Future hope of the resurrection.

- ii. *So we have hope in and do not grieve like the world (v.13) and that we will encourage each other (v.18).*

Application

This section is aimed at helping people apply what we have read in the text to our lives. It is intended to foster more open-ended discussion as people connect the text to their everyday life, and reflect on how it changes the way they think and act.

1. What is the temporal orientation of the hope offered in these passages?
 - i.e. - is the hope primarily future or present?
 - a. What do most people hope for in life?
 - b. What is the difference between these hopes, and the biblical author’s offer of hope?
 - c. How does the promise of future and final restoration give you an enduring hope?

Various Answers

2. In light of the two groups of passages we have looked at, what encouragement should we be giving to other Christians (1 Thessalonians 4:18)?
 - a. What kinds of things should we remind other Christians about in them midst of difficult circumstances?

Various Answers

3. What can you change in your life or circumstances to help you focus on the better hope?

Various Answers