

Sermon Discussion Guide- Week of Nov 18, 2018



Pastor Hook 8:15, Pastor Hall 9:30, 10:55

Getting Started- Life Updates, Prayer Requests & Opening Question (15-20 min)

- Anything to share about the past week? About follow-ups from last Sunday, "Why the Twelve?"
- Are there any joys or concerns that you would like to share with the group for the closing prayer time or for group members to hold in prayer during the week? (please note them below for later)

- Opener: When thinking about the home you grew up in, what are some of the things that come to mind that you are thankful for?

Review the Sermon (15 min)

Please read aloud the sermon scripture below, Jeremiah 29:4-14. Know that it is ok to skip some questions below in order to manage the time for discussions in each section.

⁴ This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says to all those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: ⁵ "Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. ⁶ Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease. ⁷ Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper." ⁸ Yes, this is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: "Do not let the prophets and diviners among you deceive you. Do not listen to the dreams you encourage them to have. ⁹ They are prophesying lies to you in my

name. I have not sent them," declares the Lord. ¹⁰ This is what the Lord says: "When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my good promise to bring you back to this place. ¹¹ For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. ¹² Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. ¹³ You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. ¹⁴ I will be found by you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have banished you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile."

- If you had to give a one-minute summary of the sermon message this week, what would you say?

- How did the commands in this letter from the Prophet in Jerusalem conflict with the words of others in Babylon claiming to be prophets (verses 8-9)?
- When this letter from the prophet Jeremiah in Jerusalem was read to the exiles in Babylon (especially verse 7), how do you believe they would have reacted on an emotional level?
- In verses 10-14, a longer term prophecy is given. How would this have brought them hope and comfort?
- What challenges would this new timeframe bring to God's people in Babylon in preserving their faith?
- What promises given by the Lord in verses 10-14 are the most encouraging to you?

Another Related Scripture (10 min)

- Would a volunteer please read Psalm 100.
- How does this Psalm remind you that there is always something to be thankful for regardless of the circumstances?
- Why is the metaphor of being God's sheep an appropriate one for God's people, Israel?
- How is praise and worship (verses 4-5) an appropriate response for Israel and cause for freedom and joy? Why a community public event and not just a private one?
- How is every corporate worship experience a "Coming Home" of sorts?

Personalizing and Applying The Message (15 min)

- As you reflect upon the sermon and the additional scripture above, what are points of encouragement or challenge for you personally?
- Are you waiting on God for something? How do these passages encourage you to wait in community?
- How might the Jeremiah passage speak to Christ Church at this time in terms of how to relate to the surrounding community?
- Psalm 100 is one of the shortest of Psalms and therefore relatively easy to memorize so that you can always carry it with you. With the intent of keeping an attitude of gratitude, would you be willing to memorize Psalm 100? Are you almost there already?

Witness & Closing Prayer (5-10 min)

- How can being away from the familiar comforts of home also present a terrific opportunity for the witnessing of our faith with others?
- How might the Lord be calling each of us to pray and seek the prosperity of others around us this week? Is there someone in particular who comes to mind?
- The group leader or another volunteer who took notes on the prayer requests shared earlier in the meeting, may now lead the group in closing prayer.