

Sermon Discussion Guide- Week of November 7, 2021

The Feast on the Mountain,

Pastor Temple- 8:30 & 10:30 Traditional, Pastor Conway- 10:30 Contemporary

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

- Anything to share about personal events or faith experiences since you last met?
- Are there 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)

- **Opening Discussion Question-** What is your favorite song about heaven and why?

Review the Sermon (15 min)

Please read aloud the scriptures from this week's sermon message and then discuss the questions which follow as time allows. There are more questions than you will have time for, so it is ok to be selective.

Isaiah 25:6-9

On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine— the best of meats and the finest of wines. ⁷ On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; ⁸ he will swallow up death forever.

The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove his people's disgrace from all the earth. The LORD has spoken. ⁹ In that day they will say, "Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us. This is the LORD, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation."

1. If you had to give a one-minute summary of the sermon message this week, what would you say?
2. Pastor Temple said, "Mount Zion is not just a place, it is a placeholder as well. It is a metaphor for heaven itself." What aspects of heaven are revealed in this scripture about the Mountain of the Lord (vs 6-8)?
3. What aspects of the world today sometimes feels like a death shroud that drapes across the nations (vs 7-8)?
4. How does the hope afforded us in the Christian tradition cut through this shroud or veil?
5. What Christians or "saints" across the ages have most helped you have this kind of hope?
6. The wiping away of tears in verse 8 is also repeated in Revelation. How does this verse bring comfort to those who are grieving the loss of a loved one who has crossed over the veil?
7. Pastor Conway shared that in a mysterious way, the past and present and future come together in the words of Isaiah as well as in the experience of sharing in the sacrament of communion. How do you feel the experience of communion connects you with more than just the people in the room?

Other Related Readings (10 min)

1. Would a volunteer please read aloud Hebrews 12:22-24.
2. Mount Zion, historically has referred to parts of or all of Jerusalem. If a metaphor of heaven is to be offered God's people, why do you think the metaphor offered is that of a heavenly Jerusalem (vs 22)?
3. In the Exodus story, Israel was identified as God's first born (Ex. 4:22-23). Here in Hebrews, how do you interpret the phrase "church of the first born, whose names are written in heaven"?
4. According to verses 23-24, what is the grounds of God's people being perfected in righteousness?

Personalizing and Applying The Message (10 min)

1. As you reflect upon the sermon and the scripture readings above, what are points of encouragement or challenge for you personally?
2. How has the group discussion reshaped or reframed your views of death?
3. How has the conversations about heaven affected how you would then like to live here on earth this week?
4. What might it look like for you to "trust in the Lord" this week (vs 9)?

Witness and Closing (10 minutes)

- Acknowledging what the Lord has done (vs 9) is a fitting response for the hope we have in all that he does for us (vs 6-8). In recent weeks, what are some things you can lift up in gratitude for what the Lord has done in your life?
- A volunteer may conclude by leading the group in prayer about the joys and concerns shared earlier in the meeting