

C3 LEADERS QUESTIONS

F2020-WEEK 9

10/26/20

Getting Started with a Warm-Up: (*For leaders: Please be ready to share if no one else does.*)

- Please share with your group an experience when God answered your prayers despite your doubts. What made you doubt Him?
- What drives you to pray more, your faith, or your fear?
- Of the different titles/names for God that we have looked at in the Psalms which one(s) appeals to you more and would be one(s) that you may use in addressing God? What does this reveal about your relationship with Him?

Getting Down to Business:

The following questions are following this format: Scripture, Observation, Application, and Prayer (SOAP).

- 1) **Scripture/Observation:** Review the story from Mark 4:35-41. A) Read Proverbs 3:5-6. As “good Jewish boys” the disciples would have been familiar with Proverbs 3:5-6, once they could answer their question, “Who is this man?” (See Mark 4:40-41) could these verses (Proverbs 3:5-6) help to minimize their fears? How? B) Look up the following passages and write down the characteristic of God that you discover there: Psalm 65:5 and Psalm 102:27. How do knowing these characteristics about God strengthen our trust in Him?

[For leaders: “5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. 6 Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take” Proverbs 3:5-6, NLT.

NIV Application Commentary

Proverbs 3:5–6

“Trust in the Lord” and “fear the Lord” bring their welcome benefits of security and health. Just as in 3:1, 3 where the teaching is to be written on the heart, so here one is to “trust in the Lord with all your heart” (3:5). The parallel with “lean not on your own understanding” indicates that “trust” is trust in the goodness of God’s ways, communicated in covenantal teaching like that of Deuteronomy, but also here in wisdom teaching. Therefore, those who choose the way of wisdom

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as their own (3:6) trust that God knows how things ought to go and are willing to stake their lives on it.

Thus, 3:5 should not be used to support the notion that this confidence is a sort of blind trust that suspends critical judgment. Rather, the student of wisdom learns to have confidence that living for God is the most reasonable thing to do, and this will be proved as Yahweh makes straight the path (3:6). The Hebrew word for “straight” denotes travel made safe by clearing and leveling the road. Making a straight path is also a form of guidance, as, for example, when one creates a path for water (cf. niv text note). In short, 3:5–6 speak more about guidance in ethical behavior than particular choices such as career or mate. Leaning on one’s own understanding is more than failing to pray about decisions. It is more like being wise in one’s own eyes (3:7), that is, believing that one can determine what is right and wrong without guidance from God and his gift of wisdom.

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs+3%3A5-6&version=NLT>

“40 Then he asked them, “Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?” 41 The disciples were absolutely terrified. “Who is this man?” they asked each other. “Even the wind and waves obey him!” Mark 4:35-41, NLT.

Below is an excerpt from the Theology of Work Bible Commentary that you can access by following the link after the excerpt.

DISCIPLESHIP IN PROCESS (MARK 4:35-41; 6:45-52; 8:14-21)

The Gospel of Mark, more than the other Gospels, highlights the ignorance, weakness, and selfishness of the disciples. This comes despite the many good things Mark has to say about them, including their response to Jesus’ initial call (Mark 1:16-20) and to his commissioning of them (Mark 6:7-13).*

Certain incidents and narrative devices develop this portrait. One is the repetition of boat scenes (Mark 4:35-41; 6:45-52; 8:14-21), which parallel one another in emphasizing the disciples’ inability to truly comprehend Jesus’ power and authority. The last boat scene is closely followed by the unusual two-stage

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healing of a blind man (Mark 8:22-26), which may function as a kind of narrative metaphor for the only partial vision of the disciples regarding Jesus.* Then follows Peter's confession of Christ (Mark 8:27-33), with his dramatic moment of insight followed immediately by Satanic blindness on the apostle's part. The disciples' limited grasp of Jesus' identity is matched by their limited grasp of his message. They continue to desire power and status (Mark 9:33-37; 10:13-16; and 10:35-45). Jesus challenges them several times for their failure to recognize that following him requires a fundamental attitude of self-sacrifice. Most obviously, of course, the disciples desert Jesus at the time of his arrest and trial (Mark 14:50-51). The juxtaposition of Peter's threefold denial (Mark 14:66-72) with the death of Jesus throws the cowardice and courage of the two men, respectively, into sharper relief.

Yet Peter and the others will go on to lead the church effectively. The angel who speaks to the women following the resurrection (Mark 16:6-7) gives them a message to the disciples (and Peter is singled out!), promising a further encounter with the resurrected Jesus. The disciples will be very different following this encounter, a fact that Mark does not explore but that is well developed in Acts, so that the resurrection is the key event in effecting such change.

What relevance does this have to work? Simply and obviously, that as disciples of Jesus with our own work to do, we are imperfect and in process. There will be a good deal that we will be required to repent of, attitudes that will be wrong and will need to change. Significantly, we must recognize that, like the disciples, we may well be wrong in much of what we believe and think, even about gospel matters. On a daily level, then, we must prayerfully reflect on how we are embodying the reign of God and prepared to show repentance over our deficiencies in this regard. We may feel tempted to portray ourselves as righteous, wise, and skilled in our workplaces, as a witness to Jesus' righteousness, wisdom, and excellence. But it would be a more honest and more powerful witness to portray ourselves as we really are—fallible and somewhat self-centred works-in-process, evidence of Jesus' mercy more than demonstrators of his character. Our witness is then to invite our co-workers to grow along with us in the ways of God, rather than to become like us. Of course, we need to exercise ourselves rigorously to growth in Christ. God's mercy is not an excuse to be complacent in our sin.

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<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+4%3A40-41&version=NLT>
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“You faithfully answer our prayers with awesome deeds, O God our savior. You are the hope of everyone on earth, even those who sail on distant seas”. (Psalm 65:5, NLT)

“But you are always the same; you will live forever”. (Psalm 102:27, NLT)

- 2) **Application:** Choose one of the Psalms from the sermon or another that you have discovered that emphasizes a name or characteristic of God. Please use this as your memory verse and incorporate it into your prayer time during the week.
- 3) **Prayer:** Please guide your group in prayer to God that He will teach us through this series how to know Him more intimately and deeply so that He will diminish our fears.