

Clean Slate | Ephesians 1:3-14

January 15th, 2023

My Story Questions

These questions/activities help the group know one another and transition to deeper discussion. Choose one. OR....You might start the meeting with one person sharing highlights of their story for 5-8 minutes and rotate people each week. See the group leader resource page for ideas on sharing your story.

- 1) It is COLD outside. Tell of a time you experienced bitter cold.
- 2) Every group experience is unique. Tell of any positive group experiences you have had and explain what you liked about it.

Study Questions

These are meant for personal preparation and group discussion. Use all or pick a few to discuss.

Read Ephesians 1:3-14 (You can go around the circle and let each member read a verse. It can help people to hear themselves and be more willing to speak up later. Make it comfortable for folks to pass on their turn.)

- 1) This is the prologue to the book and highlights some major themes. The repeated phrase "In Christ" is a main theme. How has being "In Christ" impacted your week?
- 2) How does one become "In Christ" (See Ephesians 2:8-9, Acts 4:12, Romans 10:9-10) Is there one person who is willing to tell of the time you received Christ and became "In Christ"?
- 3) "To the praise of His glory" is a phrase repeated several times. Which verses have this phrase and for what are we encouraged to praise God?
- 4) What does it look like for you to be "for the praise of his glory" with words or with actions in your situation? When have you seen another who was acting or speaking in such a way that God was glorified?
- 6) The trinity is also a theme in this first section.
 - a) What are the actions of God (3-6)?
 - b) What are the actions of Jesus (7-12)?
 - c) What are the actions of the Holy Spirit (13-14)?
- 7) Which of these actions (or blessings) on your behalf is especially meaningful in your present situation?
- 8) The Holy Spirit is promised as a "guarantee". Does anyone have that word translated differently? What do you think this word means as it relates to the Holy Spirit? How does it give you hope for the future?
- 9) What is a function of the Holy Spirit according to these other verses? Acts 1:8 and 2 Corinthians 3:17-18 What does it look like for you to experience the Holy Spirit on a daily basis?
- 10) What other lessons do you learn about God or about yourself from this passage?

Responding to Jesus

Offer these questions for personal reflection before your group prayer time. Practice listening for God's voice.

- 1) Lord, "Which of the blessings in Christ would you like me to consider this week and praise you for?"
- 2) Lord, "How can I ask my group to pray for me this week as I embrace my identity in Christ?"

For Further Study

Ephesians, by Grant R. Osborne is the commentary used by our teaching team for this series. It will discuss the tension between predestination and free will. See also Systematic Theology by Wayne Grudem