



Sunday Teaching Discussion Guide: Where is God? Week 3: May 5, 2019

Recap:

- Many in the ancient world thought that the gods did not care about humans, and some of us might agree. When we look out at the expanse of what God has created that insignificance feels heavy and we wonder why God would care for us at all. We feel separated from God because of sin.
- In ancient Judaism, people felt that they needed to sacrifice to God to remove sin. This sacrifice system was called scapegoating, placing sin on a goat and then sacrificing the animal instead of a person.
- John the Baptist called Jesus the Lamb of God, and some people say that Jesus died in our place, that his death was a substitution for us. Others look at verses and see a God who does not want sacrifice, but love, mercy, and a relationship with us.
- In the temple, there was a place called the Holy of Holies that was supposed to contain the presence of God. This area was separated from the other parts of the temple. When Jesus dies, the curtain of the temple was said to be torn in two, signifying that God was accessible to all.
- Jesus' was the final straw that said this sacrifice system isn't needed for us to know God. The good news is that sin and your sin has been taken away. Because of Christ, sin is powerless, and through Christ, the veil that separated us and gave us the illusion that we couldn't experience the presence of God has been ripped apart.

Discuss:

- READ John 1:26-29
- When you think of a lamb, what characteristics come to mind? In what ways do you see Jesus as a lamb? In what ways is Jesus unlike a lamb?
- What about Jesus would make John the Baptist say that he is unworthy to untie his sandals?
- READ Romans 6:10-11
- What comes to your mind when you hear the words "dead to sin"? What do you think this entails? Contrast that with the phrase "alive to God."
- READ Hosea 6:6
- How do you think a practice or a tradition that was once important lose its value? What do you think was going on for Hosea to recognize God's true desires?
- READ Romans 8:38-39
- Why do you think separation from God seems to be the status quo/the normal state for many people? What are some concrete ways that you can shun the idea that there is a veil separating us and God?

Pray: Invite members of your group to share prayer requests. Give a short prayer thanking God for your group discussion and asking God to be with the requests that have been shared.

Read at Home: Additional Readings about the Jesus's Sacrifice

- Romans 5:1-11
- Mark 10:35-45
- Hebrews 9:11-28