

LIFE GROUP APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Advent

These questions are for the **December 12, 2021**, sermon, "The Promised Gift, Part 3." Please read the sermon passage (Isaiah 40:1-11) together out loud.

Sermon Outline

IN HIS PREPARATIONS FOR CHRIST'S COMING, NOTE . . .

1. The comfort that God has provided. (1-2)
 - a. God emphasizes "comfort" in this passage.
 - i. There is great comfort in knowing that God is involved.
 - ii. There is great comfort in his tone ("speak tenderly").
 - iii. Even in the midst of current trouble, we possess promises from God . . .
 1. That the wars will all end.
 2. Our sins will all be forgiven.
 3. God's grace and goodness is extended to us.
 - b. Our comfort comes from God: what he has promised, and what he is doing.
2. The voices that God has employed. (3-8)
 - a. Voice 1: A prophet (John the Baptist) will "prepare the way of the LORD." (3-5)
 - i. This prophecy points specifically and certainly to John the Baptist (Mark 1:1-4)
 - ii. "Prepare the way of the LORD" means that John the Baptist . . .
 1. Repaired and smoothed out the pathway to come to Jesus.
 2. This especially applies to those coming from far away (like gentiles).
 - b. Voice 2: The Word of God will speak truth about God and endure forever. (6-8)
 - i. God's Word is authoritative and true: it will stand forever and ever.
 - ii. God's Word is reliable to lead all who receive it to know and love Him.
3. The strength that God has exhibited. (9-11)
 - a. The Jews carry the good news of God's grace to the nations.
 - b. The mark of maturity: overwhelmed when behold God's glory. Behold your God!

Life Group Discussion Questions

1. Based on #1, above: Isaiah prophesied about Jesus' coming 700+ years prior to Jesus' coming. The people that received these words endured centuries (literally their whole lives) of waiting for God to keep these promises. Was there any joy and happiness for them? In what ways can you relate to them? What if your whole life is characterized by waiting? Is good still good?
2. Based on #1, above: The word "comfort" is "with strength." So, "While I am surrounded by enemies, I continue with strength from God." And again, "While I wait for future fulfillment of promises, I operate with certainty that one day God's promises will prove him true and benefit me." How does the possession of promises from God impact your emotions while you wait?
3. Based on #2, above: How do the presence of God's clear voices (prophecies and His Word) inform your faith? Are you in the Word sufficiently?
4. Based on #3, above: We know we are maturing and growing in our faith when we spend time in the Lord's presence. Not seeking answers to prayer or paying some religious obligation, but learning to "behold" him, enjoy him and treasure him. Discuss this together.