

Creed Discussion Questions 04.29.18

Leader Prep Section

Take time before your small group meeting to prepare by reading through the questions and scripture passage so that you can select 4-5 questions that are best suited to your group.

Try to work through at least one question from each of the sections - Hook, Book, Look, Took in order to move from observation to application.

When possible spend time in prayer for each member of your group.

Hook - Ice breaker type questions to help make the transition into the study time.

1. Share a story of time when you were eagerly waiting for something exciting to happen.
2. What do you find most challenging about waiting for something to happen that has been delayed?

Background

On his last trip to Jerusalem Jesus and his disciples made their way to the Temple and after leaving the Temple complex and heading to the Mount of Olives the disciples approached him with some questions. One of the topics that Jesus taught on was the return of the Son of Man and his ascension to heaven. He cautioned them to keep watch that no one knew the timing of the return, but let them know it would be clear when it happened. He used analogies of lightning and trumpets sounding to make his point that his return would not be easily missed - if you were keeping watch.

The origins of the Apostle's Creed can be traced back to the middle of the second century A.D. where a formula very similar to the Creed itself was used in Rome. Other second century Christian writers as far away as Gaul and North Africa when seeking to summarize the "Rule of Faith" use similar language. Its earliest use seems to be in the form of questions asked of people at baptism. The first mention of the title "Apostle's Creed" tied to this formulation of faith is in the year 390 A.D. Throughout church history the Apostle's Creed has been affirmed by Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox Christians.

The Apostle's Creed was written to create a clear statement (or rule) of faith that could be used to guide teaching and the further development of theology. It also served as a bulwark against false teachings that were common in the early church.

Read Matthew 24:30-31, 36-42 and the Apostle's Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again;

**he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Questions

Book - These questions are designed to get you into the text itself.

1. What did Jesus say would be the response of the people when they see the Son of Man coming?
2. What story from Genesis does Jesus reference and why did he point to it?
3. What do you think it takes to be considered part of elect that will be gathered from the four winds?
4. Who did Jesus give this teaching about his future coming to? Why did he tell them this, how did he want their lives to be different because of it?
5. Each of the three lines in this section are in written using a different tense. Why do you think that was?
6. What is the significance of what Jesus did in the past, the present, and the future?

Look - These questions will take you on a deeper look at what the passage means for us today.

1. If no one knows when Jesus will return what do you think we need to do to keep watch and not miss his return?
2. How would you explain the coming of the Son of Man as Jesus represents it here to someone who is exploring what Jesus teaches?
3. How are the flood from Genesis and the return of Jesus similar? What does it take to not miss it?
4. How do you maintain eager anticipation of the return of Jesus?
5. Talk about Jesus' return and judgement is powerful stuff. It is important but can be misused. How have you seen people live out this belief in unhelpful ways? How have you seen people live out of this belief in helpful ways?

Took - These questions are focused on applying the big idea from the text to our lives.

6. Where in your life do you long for things to be made right? Or where in the world do you long for things to be made right? What is Jesus saying to you about that this week?
7. Where are you personally most challenged to live with Jesus as king of your whole life? What does it come naturally?
8. If you were going to paint the image of the judgement that will take place when Jesus returns what colors would your palette include?

Closing

Close your time together by taking time to spend some time praying together to build the eager anticipation of the time when Jesus will return so we all keep watch for him. Also, pray for those

who do not know Jesus yet that they would be captured by his love and begin to look for his return with joy rather than fear of the judgement that will come with it.

Reminder: We are part of the united body of Christ that has worshipped the same unchanging God for millennia. Our history is rich with evidence of God's involvement with and love for each of us.