

Reflection Questions: Jeremiah 9:23-24

For the message, "Humility as the Pathway to Knowing God" given by Pastor John Ferguson at Mercy Hill Church in Bryan/College Station, Texas, on June 3, 2018

These reflection questions are designed to help you apply the message from the Scriptures by helping you think through application to your personal life, your church life, and your city's life. You can use these by yourself for reflection, or with your family or small group for discussion. To review the message, go to MercyHillBCS.org/resources/messages.

INTRODUCTION

Pray. Take a moment to pray asking God to guide you in reflecting upon the Scripture text.

The Scripture Passage: Jeremiah 9:23-24

"Thus says the Lord: 'Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the Lord.'"

A summary of the message:

We were never designed to boast in things like wisdom, power, and riches, but it's our natural inclination to do so. We use these things to feel superior to others and to convince them and ourselves that we're something special. The problem, though, is not boasting, but in what we boast. And this passage calls us away from boasting in created things (even if they are good things), and instead it calls us to boast in understanding and knowing God. To do so requires humbling ourselves before the Lord.

Key Quotes:

- Ecclesiastes 3:19-20; 8:8, "What happens to the children of man and what happens to the beasts is the same; as one dies, so the other. They all have the same breath, and man has no advantage over the beasts, for all is vanity. All go to one place. All are from the dust, and to dust all return.... No man has the power to retain the spirit, or power over the day of death."
- Jim Carey, "I hope everybody could get rich and famous and have everything they ever dreamed of, so that they will know that it's not the answer."
- John 17:3, "This is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent."
- CS Lewis, "God cannot give us a happiness and peace apart from himself, because it is not there. There is no such thing."

Bottom Line:

Wisdom, power, and riches are good things, even gifts from God. But they are not things to boast in, because they are not ultimate things. They cannot bring lasting happiness, peace, or salvation, because only God can bring these things. They can only be found in God who desires to be known in Christ Jesus.

Let's get started...

- How are you challenged, convicted, encouraged, or surprised by this text?

QUESTIONS

1. Let's think about how this text applies to our lives as individuals.

- Of the three things that Jeremiah spoke of (wisdom, power, riches), which one do you have the tendency to boast in? Or which of these three would you like to boast in?
- In light of this passage, how would you answer the question, "What kind of me is God calling me to be?" Or in other words, how does this text clarify what God wants to do in my life?
- CS Lewis once said, "God cannot give us a happiness and peace apart from himself, because it is not there. There is no such thing." What do you think of that statement?

2. Let's think about how this text applies to us as a community of Jesus' followers.

- What would it look like for us as a church community if we are to live out this text in our city? In other words, what would it look like practically in our lives if we were to know the God who delights in steadfast love, justice, and righteousness? How would that spill over in our lives?
- What is the cost if we are not transformed by this text or ignore its message? That is, what if we were a community of faith—like that of Jeremiah's contemporaries—who gave a nod to God, but really thought that other things were more important, more worthy of boasting in, more worthy of pursuing?

3. Let's think about how this text applies to our city.

- What questions do you think people in our city would ask of this text?
- How does this text challenge the thinking of our city and serve as Good News to those outside the faith?

CONCLUSION QUESTION

What is the one thing you want to take away from this study to remember or to make a change in your life?

PRAYER

What are some ways you can turn what you are learning into prayer? List them as bullet points....

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- _____
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