

GROWTH GROUP BRIEFING NOTES

Date:
26th March 2017

Title:
Discipleship and Creation

Passage:
Psalm 147

Speaker:
Simeon Dry

Welcome to this week's GG Briefing Notes! Thanks for leading this discussion in your group. Do pray that God uses it to help everyone in your group become more like Jesus.

We have suggested below some things to aim for in your discussion. Please don't just read this sheet out to the group! Decide before you start how you'll work towards each aim. Which of our questions will you use (you may not need all of them) – or can you think of better ones? What kind of answers will you be hoping to get from each question?

As you ask questions, keep the aim in mind, and only give hints if you have to. Don't forget to make sure everyone in the group is involved.

1

Aim

To remind ourselves of the message of Psalm 147.

Some Possible Questions

Ask someone to read Psalm 147.

Divide into twos and threes and assign each group one of the following sections: Psalm 147 v1-6, Psalm 147 v7-11, Psalm 147 v12-20. Ask them to discuss and report back on (1) what it says about God's interaction with the natural world and (2) about God's interaction with His people and (3) why they think the psalmist has put those two things together.

What aspects of the gospel does this psalm reflect?

Hints

You might want to keep this section brief as it is recapping the sermon, and there's plenty to do in sections two and three....

v2-6: Probably about the Jews' return from exile.

v8-9, v15-18: Not saying that the natural processes God invented don't work and need His continual intervention! Better to think in terms of two compatible and complementary ways of talking about the world:

(1) God created amazing natural processes (e.g. rain); (2) God isn't distant but actively sustains and engages with His creation and the processes He invented.

v19-20: As the rest of the psalm is about *what God does*, these lines might be about the decrees God has made about what should happen to His people (e.g. those in v2-3, v6, v13-14), rather than rules His people should keep.

2

Aim

To reflect on our own response to the natural world.

Some Possible Questions

What places/events/experiences in the natural world make the biggest impression on you? Find a picture/video online to show us what you mean!

How could that place/event/experience show you something about the God who invented it?

How could it help you understand the gospel (i.e. how God relates to us)?

Respond in praise, either in a time of prayer, or by individually writing a psalm inspired by Psalm 147 and the things you've been discussing in this section. Make sure it includes Jesus!

3

Aim

To cultivate a culture of discipleship in everyday life.

Some Possible Questions

[If you don't have time to discuss this section, wrap up by encouraging people to allow everyday experiences of the natural world to remind us of God, and not to be shy about pointing these things out to each other, like the psalmist did.]

How often does the natural world prompt you to think about God?

How could you notice God's self-revelation through His creation more often?

How easy do you find it to bring God and the gospel into conversations with other Christians about everyday life?

How can we create a church culture where talking about God *outside* of meetings is normal?