



ELIMMISSIONS

SMALL GROUP LEADERS NOTES: Mission and the Story of God – week 6

This week we focus on that which is to come, the King and his Kingdom in all its majestic fullness. We get a glimpse of what it will be like in the here and now but also the beauty of the fullness of the new heaven and new earth that is yet to come. Our hope is in Jesus, the king who will one day make all things new. This week we focus on evaluating your missional approach, does it give people hope of the life that is to come or is it weighted to making life better here and now? How does the life that is to come shape the missionary message?

RECAP: Last week we explore act 5 of the Story of God: The Church – what can you remember? How has it impacted you over the last week?

THIS WEEK: Read Act 6 – Restoration (SHARE OUT THE READING OF THIS STORY):

The story isn't over. One of Jesus' followers, a man named John, was imprisoned on a small island. He sat in his prison cell and prayed to God. He wondered if and when God would rescue His people.

God spoke to him through a dream, a revelation. In a sequence of stories with rich imagery, God made John aware of the reality that God was still sovereignly accomplishing His mission on the earth through the Church. Even though God's people were suffering, and it seemed like the enemy was winning, all was not lost. God revealed to John He was actively accomplishing His purposes and that they would ultimately culminate in a full and final victory.

One day Jesus will return, not just as the sacrificial lamb that was slain, but as the conquering Lion. John paints this descriptive picture for us with rich imagery: Jesus will return on a great white warhorse like a mighty general returning from battle. He has a great sword of righteousness coming out of His mouth. His name is displayed as the "King of Kings and Lord of Lords." He is wearing a crown of many jewels, and He is wearing a brilliant white robe. The hem of His robe has been drenched in blood.

Jesus will return, sending Satan and the powers of darkness into a lake of fire where they will remain forever.

Jesus will judge every person. Those who decided to choose death, who rebelled against God's rule and never repented, will be cast away, forever missing out on God's renewed creation that is to come. Those who were a part of the redeemed community, who had been redeemed by the blood of Jesus, will spend forever with Him in what is to come.

John saw it! He saw a picture of creation restored! He saw everything bad come undone:

- All the effects of the curse, reversed.
- All the twisting of God's original intention, untwisted.
- All the tears wiped away.
- Death, no more.

- No mourning, no crying, no pain.
- All the false idols, false gods, false saviours—given up to worship forever the true Saviour.
- He saw a picture of eternity. There were no clouds, no harps, no vague otherworldliness.
- There was a King.
- There was a renewed creation.
- There were people from every tribe, tongue, and nation bowing down and living their lives in worship to King Jesus.

Not only did he see it, but he heard it. He heard a mighty voice declare from the throne, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be His people. God Himself will be with them as their God. Behold, I am making all things new!”

Seeing and hearing all these things, John was again convinced God is still on His mission. He knew Jesus was using His Church to accomplish His purposes in His world. Nothing could thwart that. John wrote down what he had seen and heard so the rest of the Church could have the same hope, security, and urgency he now had. He ended his writing with these final words: “Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!”

RETELL THE STORY: In a few minutes retell what you have just read as a group. You may find yourself going off in different directions, come back to the Story of God you have just read, and as you do, think through who God is, what has God done, who are we and how do we get to live in light of this today? Make sure to give enough time for the response to what you have discussed.

Observe: WHO IS GOD?

Reflect: WHAT HAS GOD DONE?

Discuss: WHO ARE WE?

Act: HOW DO WE GET TO LIVE?

Questions to guide discussion:

1. How does the hope of that which is to come help to deal with the disappointments, hurt and pain of life’s experiences?
2. How would you explain the hope that is to come others?
3. Why do you think a vision of that which is to come is so crucial to avoiding mission-drift?
4. What are your next steps to engage in the Mission of God and his story?

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