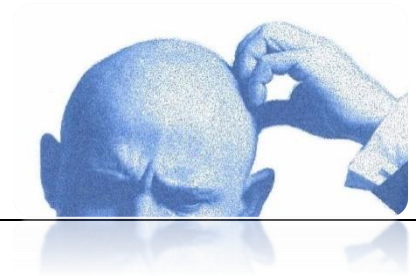


Small Group Questions



The following questions are intended to start conversations.

Use only the ones your group finds helpful. Explore others as they come up.

Our preaching series this fall will explore the book of Jeremiah (Exiles). A set of questions will be provided each week to help you think about these stories BEFORE you listen to the sermon. It is our hope that this will encourage your own study and prepare you for the upcoming series.

- What comes to mind when you think of idols? How would you define idolatry?
- Timothy Keller defined an idol as “anything you seek to give you what only God can give. Anything that is so central and essential to your life, that should you lose it, your life would feel hardly worth living.” In other words, a counterfeit god. Using this as a starting point, what are some of the current idols in western society?
- If your group is willing, take some time to listen to the text before discussing it. Use the following guidelines. This exercise should take about 10 minutes.

Begin with a moment of silence. God is present. Listen

READ. Read Jeremiah 5:1-13. Take your time. As you move through the text, notice what words or images draw your attention. Pause to reflect on this.

READ AGAIN. As you read this passage a second time, feel the emotions of the text. How does Jeremiah feel? How does God feel? Sit quietly with these emotions.

RESPOND. Take a moment to reflect on the state of our world. How do you think God feels? Sad? Angry? How do you feel? Bring these emotions to God.

REST. Take a moment to sit quietly with God.

- If needed, read **Jeremiah 5:1-13**. What stood out for you?
- Jeremiah claims that people had “forsaken God and sworn by gods that are not gods.” (v. 7). What evidence in the text supports this claim?
- Forsaking the Lord is compared with adultery, prostitution, and people behaving like “lustful stallions” (vs. 7-8)? What do you make of this analogy? Why does Jeremiah use such a stark image?
- Why do Israelites ignore Jeremiah’s warnings? What does this tell us about our resistance to uncomfortable truths?

OVER



- Read **Jeremiah 5:14-19**. What is God's response to idolatry?
- How do you understand a foreign nation bringing God's judgement on Israel? Does God still operate this way—that is, does God still use one nation to judge another?
- Despite warnings of destruction, God also says that “even in those days, I will not destroy you completely.” (v. 18) What does this reveal about God's character toward his people, even in judgment?
- Why is God so grieved by idolatry?
- What is the connection between (who we) worship and justice?