



Life's a Beach: The River of Life

Week of Aug 28th, 2022

Connect Group Discussion Guide

Sometimes it can be easy to focus on all the negative going on in our lives. Our perspective can be, "Life's a Bleep!" But with God we can change our perspective to know and believe that Life's a Beach!

- Circle Time: Share about a time when you weren't able to do something with people for whatever reason so those people "brought" the activity to you. Or maybe you did this for someone else.
 - How did that make you feel?
- Read Revelation 22:1-2.
 - At first read through how do these verses shape your understanding of heaven?
 - Do you think this is a literal description of what we will experience? Or is it symbolic?
 - What does the imagery tell us about what our experience will be? *The River, trees, and fruit all speak to the provision of the abundance of life by living in perfect fellowship with God and Christ.*
- Read Revelation 22:3-4
 - What is the curse that we are healed from? *The curse of death*
 - How would you describe what life is like without the curse of death?
 - What is offered to humanity in these verses that never before was offered? *They can look at God's face.*
 - Why is this an important truth? *This phrase indicates fully experiencing the presence and power of God. In the OT world, wrongdoers were often sent away from the presence of a king (Esth 7:8). Here, those who were formerly separated from God through sin but now have been reconciled to God through the Lamb can stand confidently in the presence of the righteous King, face to face. (New Beacon Bible Commentary)*
- Read Revelation 22:5
 - What does the imagery of night and light mean to you in this passage?
 - What do you find significant about the fact that darkness ceases to exist in the presence of God?
- What we really gain by understanding this passage is the idea of paradise lost, regained, and improved. How does focusing on the "New Jerusalem" make you feel about your present daily experience?
- In Dave's message he said that it was good to have a hope for the future paradise we will experience, but how should we be actually using the concept of heaven? *We should be bringing heaven here now. Eternal life isn't something we will get someday. We already have it!*
- How do we bring heaven to earth? How do we bring the hope we have to the hopeless?