

ICEBREAKER

What is something you have done that caused you to receive “glory” for your efforts and/or accomplishments you did not expect to be recognized for?

SCRIPTURE READING

Read together as a group: **1 Samuel 4**. Take turns reading a verse at a time.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

• **Read:** Isaiah 6:1-8

You cannot experience the glory of God and remain the same. This is what Isaiah discovered. When he came into the presence of God’s glory his only response could be, *“It’s all over! I am doomed, for I am a sinful man. I have filthy lips, and I live among a people with filthy lips.”*

What speaks to you about God’s glory in these verses? Have you ever had an encounter where you experienced God’s glory? How did you respond?

- **An Analogy of Glory:** *There is a dead, stagnant pond. You pick up a heavy rock and throw into the water. The heaviness of the rock causes ripples in the pond. The water is impacted and responds to the weight of the rock. After a few moments, the ripples cease. The pond returns back to being stagnant - a lifeless existence. The glory of the world is like this. The weight or the glory makes an impact but it is temporary...it soon dissipates to the point that you are unable to tell it was even there.*

The glory of God is like a rock so heavy that when it is dropped into the stagnant pond, all the dead water is displaced and is cast out. The weight of the rock causes the ground at the bottom of that pond to break open allowing a spring of fresh pure water to bubble forth filling the once dead pond with new life. The water keeps bubbling up causing the water to always be fresh and new. In the same way, the glory of God impacts your life in such a way that you don’t remain the same.

When you are impacted with the glory (weight) of God, you are not just different...you are new. The old is gone. It has been displaced and the new has come.

Read: 2 Corinthians 5:17

Describe a moment(s) in your life when this verse became life breathing to your faith walk with Christ - where you once were stagnant and are now alive.

• **Read:** Galatians 5:19-21 (*stagnant pond*)

Read: Galatians 5:22-25 (*life-giving spring filled pond*)

The Holy Spirit produces the fruit we read about. Talk about a situation that you (as well as others) have seen desires of your sinful nature be replaced by the fruit that only the Holy Spirit can produce in you.

- Read 1 Samuel 4:4 again — *“Let’s bring the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord from Shiloh. If we carry **it** into battle with us, **it** will save us from our enemies.”*

Do you have any religious “its” in your life you are hoping will save you from your circumstance(s)?

- *“If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross daily, and follow Me.* — Luke 9:23

The cross is synonymous with salvation and eternal life. This is the benefit of adhering to what Jesus did on the Cross. However, it also comes with demands. You must give up your own way. Jesus says in the very next statement, *“If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it.”* — Luke 9:24

Is there any way you are trying to hang on to your life when Jesus is asking you to let go of it and follow Him?

- In reference to 1 Samuel 4:19-22, H. L. Ellison states, *“The glory of God had indeed departed, but not because the ark of God had been captured; the ark had been captured because the glory had already departed.”*

As we are now in the New Covenant, read John 1:14, *“The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory.”*

The glory has come in Jesus Christ. What does this mean?

PERSONAL REFLECTION

What is Jesus saying? What am I doing in RESPONSE?

THIS WEEK’S CHALLENGE

Where is the glory for you? Are you ready to reply, “Here I am. Send me,” or “Speak, your servant is listening.” Take time this week and listen to hear from God what He is speaking to you and be ready to give a reply in obedience to His calling and purpose for your life.

PRAISE REPORTS / PRAYER REQUESTS