

Group Bible Study/Discussion:

1. Read Isaiah 43:18-21 & Ecclesiastes 3:1-13. What questions immediately come to mind? What do you find most challenging/encouraging? Why?
2. Why are old habits the hardest to break? What can happen to our faith, vitality of spirit and direction in life when we dwell in the past? What religious habits or memories have you had to break/forget to deepen your relationship with Jesus Christ?
3. Why would God's action in the past, during a time of great challenge & transition, help his people trust in Him more fully as they face times of challenge & transition in the present & future? How has God acted in your life historically such that you can use that experience to bolster your faith now?
4. God, through Isaiah, paints a word picture of streams of water bringing life to plants & animals in the desert. God is saying that the new thing He promises will bring restoration, rejuvenation & life to the parched, barren lives of His people. What may have caused the lives of God's people to become parched & barren? Have there been times when your life was parched, barren & lacking life? What might have been some contributing factors? How does being part of a community of Jesus-followers called "Living Water" help you live out your role of also being a restoring, rejuvenating, life-giving presence? (See also John 7:37-39 as you discuss these questions)
5. In Isaiah 43:20-21, God says He is doing all this so that "*they will someday honour me before the whole world (or 'proclaim my praise')*." What are some things that you want to praise God for today?
6. Are there parts of Ecclesiastes 3 that make you uncomfortable? Why?
7. What "time" or season of your life have you found most difficult to accept? Why?
8. In what sense has God made everything beautiful in its time?
9. What does it mean that God has "planted eternity in the human heart"? What does this say about how he created us/our nature?
10. What conclusion does the Preacher reach in 3:12-13? What does that mean to you? How does trusting God's sovereignty over all things & his redeeming grace in Christ free you for contentment & joy in all things?
11. How does this text, which could sound depressing, really point toward a greater joy in knowing & living responsive to God? With whom could you share that this week?

Living Water Fellowship

1st Sunday in Christmas – 1st January 2023

COME TO JESUS

PRE-SERVICE MEDITATION BREAKTHROUGH (REDROCKS WORSHIP) - CCL Licence 384660

WELCOME & PRAYER:

GROW IN HIS GRACE

SONG: VIDEO – ANCIENT OF DAYS (CityAlight)-CCL Licence 384660

BIBLE READING: Isaiah 43:18-21

¹⁸ "Do not remember the past events, pay no attention to things of old.

¹⁹ For I am doing a new thing. See, I have already begun! Do you not see it?

I will make a pathway through the wilderness. I will create rivers in the dry wasteland.

²⁰ The wild animals in the fields will thank me, the jackals & owls, too,
for giving them water in the desert.

Yes, I will make rivers in the dry wasteland so my chosen people can be refreshed.

²¹ I have made Israel for myself, & they will someday honour me before the whole world.

SONG: VIDEO – GOOD & GRACIOUS KING (CityAlight)- CCL Licence 384660

BIBLE READING: Ecclesiastes 3:1-13

¹ For everything there is a season, a time for every activity under heaven.

² A time to be born and a time to die. A time to plant and a time to harvest.

³ A time to kill and a time to heal. A time to tear down and a time to build up.

⁴ A time to cry and a time to laugh. A time to grieve and a time to dance.

⁵ A time to scatter stones and a time to gather stones.

A time to embrace and a time to turn away.

⁶ A time to search and a time to quit searching. A time to keep and a time to throw away.

⁷ A time to tear and a time to mend. A time to be quiet and a time to speak.

⁸ A time to love and a time to hate. A time for war and a time for peace.

⁹ What do people really get for all their hard work? ¹⁰ I have seen the burden God has placed on us all. ¹¹ Yet God has made everything beautiful for its own time. He has planted eternity in the human heart, but even so, people cannot see the whole scope of God's work from beginning to end. ¹² So I concluded there is nothing better than to be happy and enjoy ourselves as long as we can. ¹³ And people should eat and drink and enjoy the fruits of their labour, for these are gifts from God.

THE MESSAGE: *IT'S TIME: KINGDOM TIME*

OFFERING SONG: VIDEO – Rest My Soul (Tim Timmons) CCL 384660

PRAYERS:

THE COMMUNION:

Preparation:

Since we have been raised with Christ Jesus, let us set our minds on heavenly things, not on the things that are on earth. Let's pray together...

Gracious God, in our wanderings & selfish desiring we often forsake fellowship with our families, our friends, & our neighbors; we neglect our communion with you, choosing worldly pleasures over truth, justice, & righteousness. In a world of plenty, we hoard our earthly blessings while others lack. Free us from such bondage, that we may truly reveal the presence of Christ in our lives. Amen.

Christ gave to the church the bread of heaven, his flesh & blood, for our forgiveness, life & salvation. Paul records that gracious gift with these words:

For I pass on to you what I received from the Lord himself. On the night when he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took some bread and gave thanks to God for it. Then he broke it in pieces and said, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this to remember me." In the same way, he took the cup of wine after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant between God and his people—an agreement confirmed with my blood. Do this to remember me as often as you drink it." For every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes again.

Where is another God like you, who pardons the guilt of the remnant, overlooking the sins of his special people?

You will not stay angry with your people forever, because you delight in showing unfailing love.

Once again you will have compassion on us.

You trample our sins under your feet and throw them into the depths of the ocean!

(Micah 7:18-19)

The Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, & the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

Worship during Communion:

VIDEO – ALL GLORY BE TO CHRIST (Kings Kaleidoscope) - CCL Licence 384660

GO IN HIS POWER

THE BLESSING:

(Name), † child of God,

May the Father open your eyes to the signs of his presence and your heart to the power of his love. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

SONG: VIDEO – *Living Hope* (Phil Wickham) CCLI 384660

SHOW HIS LOVE