

Checking In

1. Take a few minutes to check in with everyone and open with prayer.
2. Church Life- Sept 29th Outreach Seminar, Oct 13th All Church Service Project

Learning

Knowing God

Key Doctrines

- God's Sovereignty - God governs all human plans (Jer 10:23; Prov 16:9, 33; 19:21; 20:24).
- Christian Life – All believers are called to live out our heavenly citizenship by being conformed to the image of Christ (2Cor 3:18; Rom 8:29)
- Christ – Christ was both 100% God & 100% man (Phil 2:7; Jn 1:14; Col 2:9).

Key Observations

- Was there anything that stood out to you about this week's sermon, what challenged you?
- *Read:* Jeremiah 29:1-6; Matthew 25:35-40; Proverbs 19:17; 1John 3:17-18; Psalm 82:4
What was the cause of Israel's exile into Babylon? What is significance about the fact that it was the Lord who "sent" them into exile? Whom might those be who feel like exiles in our community?
The Lord saved the Israelites from captivity in Egypt and brought them to the promised land. Before they entered the land, God gave them His commandments. This was accompanied by a

solemn warning. If they obeyed the commandments, the Lord would richly bless them.

But if they would be disobedient, God's curse would fall on them. God sent the Israelites into captivity because they disobeyed the Lord and served other Gods. Through this discipline, the Jewish nation learned to only worship God. Likewise, God may at times punish us for our sins, but it is always a call to repent and return to Him

- *Read:* 1 Peter 2:11-12; Phil 3:20; Hebrews 11:13-16
What do these verses say about who we are? Israel forgot who they were and thus ended up in exile, how do we sometimes forget who we are?
We are strangers to this earth, just passing through and thus called to live as aliens.
- *Read:* Jeremiah 29:10-14
What do these verses say about God's promise to the Israelites? What do these verses teach us about God's character? How can these verses be misused today?
This is a very popular passage for many Christians. It tells us that God has plans to prosper us, have no harm come to us, and that he will give us a good future. This passage goes right along with the American Dream. God wants you to prosper with lots of material items (a big house, a cool car, and everything else your heart can desire) and have no bad things happen to us – as long as you follow the Lord with all your heart. However, this is a misinterpretation and misuse of this passage. This promise, in its context, was meant as a specific promise to the Israelites not a universal promise to all believer at all times.
The Lord's words through Jeremiah were meant to assure them that though they would suffer hardship, He would not leave not forget them.
- *Read:* Hebrews 13:5-6; Psalm 23; John 14:15-21; Matthew 28:18-20

What do these verses say about God's promises to us? How should these verses serve as an encouragement to us?

God is faithful to His Word. His promises are trustworthy. He always does what He says and He always keeps the promises He has made in His Word. Not only will He not deny Himself, He cannot deny Himself. We live on the basis of God's promises; we pray on the basis of God's promises; and we serve on the basis of God's promises. His faithfulness and promises bring us blessing but, most of all, they bring glory and praise to God Himself.

- *Read:* Jeremiah 29:4-8; John 17:14-16; Matthew 5:3-16
What does God command The Israelites to do in Babylon? When Jeremiah says, "Seek the peace (*shalom*) of the city," what would that look like for them?
This word *shalom*, translated *peace*, is an incredibly rich Hebrew word. It does not mean just what the English word *peace* means. When we think of the English word *peace*, we usually think of a cessation of hostility. Or maybe a kind of inner calm. That's not what the Hebrew word *shalom* means. The Hebrew word *shalom* means total flourishing in every dimension: socially, economically, physically, and spiritually. God is calling them to bring His peace without losing their own distinctiveness. What God is saying is Use your difference to serve the city.
- *Read:* Jeremiah 28:1-17; 29:8
What lie is the prophets preaching to them and how is it contrary to what the Lord is commanding them to do in Babylon?
In Chapter 28, Hananiah, one of the prophets falsely promised that God would swiftly deliver them. So his encouragement to them was that they not "move in", not settle in and make it their home, not bless the Babylonians.
- *Read:* Phil 2:5-8

What does this passage teach us about Christ's humanity? How are we to have the same mind as Christ?

Listening

Responding to God

In light of this week's sermon in our series, "City on a Hill," how might God be inviting you to move forward in obedience to Him?

- Are there specific ways that the Lord is calling you to bring "peace to your community?"
- Are there any parallels from the Israelites lives in captivity which might apply to your life in your community?

Loving

Obeying God

- What is happening in my own life right now that I need to share and for which I need prayer?
- This week I am committed to praying for _____ about:

Checking Out

- What was most meaningful about this group session for you (*Give each person 1-2 sentences to share*)?