

Keeping Vigil Small Groups: Week 3 (Meeting March 23 to 29)

Journey with Jesus: Second Week of Lent

Group Start:

- **Pray this prayer together:** “O Lord, You have journeyed to us, from heaven to earth, in the person of Jesus. Accompany us this Lent as we journey with him to Jerusalem—to the Cross, and the Empty Tomb. Bless us individually, to grow in both faith and repentance. And bless us as a small group, to grow spiritually and in our connections to one another. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.”

Questions (prep ahead individually, then discuss):

1. Report back: how did it go this week “giving alms” in the form of some small act of service?
2. The devotion for this Monday (p.14) notes that if we judge *ourselves* and see our own sin clearly, we will find it easier to fulfill Jesus’s command not to judge others (Luke 6:36). Have you ever applied that in your own life? Did it help? Do you think it could?
3. Among the sins highlighted in this week’s devotions is the sin of *envy* (p.18)—i.e., being jealous of someone else and/or what they have. Of whom are YOU most envious, and why?
4. The Friday devotion (p.18) also talked about God’s ability to bring good even out of very bad things—like our sins, and the sins of others against us. What *kinds* of “good things” have you seen God bring out of bad or sinful actions or situations in your life?

5. The Wednesday devotion (p.16) pointed out that Jewish boys begin to take on their Father's trade around age 12—the same age at which Jesus showed up in the temple, doing the business of His Heavenly Father, i.e. teaching. We know our Lord continues to teach us to this day. Is there anything in particular that he seems to be teaching YOU right now? (For example, what it means to follow one of his teachings in some specific area of your life?)

6. In this week's Wednesday Evening Prayer, we talked about the near-sacrifice of Isaac, in which Abraham "gave over" to God not only one he loved but also his hopes for the future. What are the relationships and hopes that YOU find hardest to "give over" to God? And what exactly does it mean to "give them over"?

7. As we also saw on Wednesday, the reason Abraham was able to "give Isaac over" to God was because he had a strong *faith* that God would fulfill His promises, even if it required raising the dead! On a scale of 1 (weak) to 10 (strong), where would you rank your faith in God at present, and why?

Closing Prayers

- **1) Take concise prayer requests**
- **2) Then close with this prayer, together:** "O Lord, we thank you for meeting here with us this day. You have heard the prayers we have offered; work in each as only you can. And may the things we

have discussed today bear fruit in our lives, that we might return to you with our *whole* hearts and truly love our neighbors as ourselves. In Jesus' Name, Amen."