

Bible Studies Week 1

Building A Congregation For God

Starting the building process

Personal study:

Day 1:

Read Gen. 12: 1 - 8

The basis is an agreement.

The beginning of the nation Israel started with the calling of Abraham. God made a covenant with Abraham and this covenant is the basis of all Gods acts with Israel. Now the question is: What is the content of this covenant? (Gen. 17:1-8)

A covenant has two sides. What is Abraham's responsibility? (Gen. 15:5-6, Heb. 11:8-13)

What is the covenant God made with you? (Acts 2:39, Col. 2:11-12) What does that mean to you?

Day 2:

The calling reconfirmed.

Read Gen. 28:1-22

God reconfirmed his covenant with Jacob and made certain promises. What are they? What does the following passage means? **Gen 28:14** *your descendants will be as the dust of the Earth; they'll stretch from west to east and from north to south. All the families of the Earth will bless themselves in you and your descendants.*

What was Jacob's reaction when God appeared to him? (Verse 16-22)

How must we react to the fact that God made us his children?

Day 3;

Detours With a purpose:

Read Gen. 45:1-46:4

God often takes detours with His children for a reason, to reach His goal with us. In building His people He takes them to Egypt. How does Josef explain this in the light of what has happened to him? (Verse 4-5)

Do you think God is breaking His covenant when He is taking His people on such detours? (Gen. 46:1-4)

What is God's purpose with these detours?

What is the role of suffering, persecution and hardships in God's plan for building the congregation?

How do you see the hardships, suffering and persecution in your life?

Later on this week we'll continue with our personal bible study. You can read Ex. 3:1-15, Ex. 12:1-14 and Ex. 20:1-17 in the meantime and try and think of what God is saying to us on our subject.

God Acting

Day 4:

Read Ex. 3:1-15

1. What is the reason why God gives Moses such a difficult task?
2. How does God see Israel's relationship to Him? How do you think God feels about His congregation and His child today?
3. How does God reveal Himself to Moses? What is the meaning of that for His people, the Israelites?
4. Do you think God is slowly but surely making His covenant with Jacob come true? What do we learn from Gods actions?

Day 5:

A sign to strengthen

1. God moves a step further in forming and building His people. He gives them a sign that is going to be very important later on. What is this sign and what does it signify?
2. What is the sign for Israel (His people and His church) in connection with this sign?
3. Why does blood play such an important role in this sign?
4. Why did God give so many ceremonies to keep to his people?

Day 6:

Guidelines for building

1. In building His people God gives them a code whereby they have to live. To what is God relating when He does that? What is He pointing at?
2. What is the relationship between the Ten Commandments and God's covenant with Abraham?
3. How does the content of the Ten Commandments and the covenant relate to each other?
4. Answer the question to your self to what extent your life honors God and whether you can be considered "His People"?
5. For more on the theme of "Building" read Jer.30 and 31. There you'll see how God cares for His people in exile.

Group Bible Study For The Week

Read Eph. 1:3-14

In the study of this letter from the apostle Paul, we are going to give special attention to the building of the congregation or "family" of Jesus Christ. To Paul the most important thing is that the congregation must be different from the world. The congregation should be dynamic and must keep growing all the time. The end goal is becoming more and more "Christ Like."

In this letter Paul stresses constructive labor as part of building the congregation. For us as the 21st century church, building the congregation should be of the utmost importance. There should be an intimate and close relationship amongst the members of the congregation and every member of the congregation is co- responsible for the building of the congregation.

When we are considering these verses we have to answer the following questions:

1. Where does the building work start?
2. What is the beginning of the congregation?
3. What does Paul mean when he says we have to be "in Christ?"
4. What is the relation of being "in Christ" with building the congregation?
5. Why does God gathers a congregation?
6. Who is the "us" that Paul speaks about? Explain your answer.
7. How can this passage be summarized in short?
8. How can each of us answer God on what we have learnt today.

In the bible the congregation is of the utmost importance and the relationship of the congregation towards Jesus Christ and towards each other is very important.

In trying to answer these questions also think of what you have been studying during the week. Motivate your answers and discuss it with the group.

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