

Sermon-based Small Group Guide - Week of Sunday, April 6th

Sermon Title: The Unexpected of God

Scripture Texts: Isaiah 43:16-21 and 1 Corinthians 1:18-24

Preacher: Karen Finch

Review the Sermon

Share key points that you can remember from the sermon.

Read Isaiah 43:16-21

What is the context of this scripture?

What does God say about himself in these verses?

Reread vs. 18 – What did Karen have to say in the sermon to help your understanding of this verse?

Reread vs. 19-21 – How is this new thing different from what God did through the Exodus?

How might recalling the acts of God in your past give you courage to face the present and future?

What has God done in your past that you especially can look to as evidence of his presence with you?

When has God surprised you by doing something different from what you expected?

Read 1 Corinthians 1:18-25

Is Paul rejecting education itself in these verses, or some related prideful assumptions? Explain.

List things that our culture defines as wise or intelligent.

List the attributes of God revealed through “the message of the cross.”

How do these unexpected attributes add to the power of what God does through the cross in your life?

Application

Karen shared 2 examples of God revealed in unexpected ways through people.

1. The gift of money from her sister-in-law that led to the unexpected gift of a restored relationship.
2. A theologian who behaved in an unexpected way toward a grieving rival theologian.

Who do you know that is suffering?

(You might want to recall people you thought about, prayed for, reached out to in the Philippians series.)

Discuss practical ways you can be and/or do the unexpected.

What is a personal prayer concern? / How do you want God to rescue you or transform a situation?

Discuss how you can pray with an attitude of expecting the unexpected.

Pray together!

Sermon Outline

Key Question: How do we proclaim who God is to a suffering world?

Knowing the attributes of God prepares us for evangelism.

Two attributes that address the issue of suffering:

1. God is all powerful
2. God does rescue

(We know these from scripture and our own experiences.)

Understand how God reveals himself to us:

1. God shows his attributes, not as we expect, but in his own way and time.
2. The kind of rescue God gives may not be what we want but what we need.

The Cross – God reveals himself to us and rescues us in an unexpected way

Let God transform our suffering world through us:

1. Be the unexpected
2. Do the unexpected