

Small Group Study Guide

Near to God when alone at the end of the world |
Revelation 1:9-11a
From Sunday June 7, 2020

Appetizer:

Question: Have you ever had a near death experience? Tell the group about it.

Question: Have you ever felt like it's the end of the world? What makes you think that?

A couple questions from the passage:

We first meet John, the author of Revelation, on the island of Patmos. This island was known as a place where people who had disrupted the government were sent in exile.

Have someone read Revelation 1:9-11a (You don't have to read the names of the 7 churches) These few verses are full of a lot of meaning, and are probably a good summary of the whole book of Revelation:

Main Course:

Sometimes when we feel that our world is crashing down around us, it is simply the systems that we trust are either found to be imperfect or broken. This is similar to what the disciples experienced when they were hoping that the return of the Messiah would usher in a new age for their beloved temple, rather than its destruction.

Question: Similar to the Disciple's trust in the system of the temple, the Christians of Jesus' day would have had some trust in the Roman Empire, with its emphasis on peace and security. And yet that system proved to be harmful towards them.

What systems within our world are proving to be imperfect and broken at this time? How are people responding to these imperfections? How have YOU responded to these broken systems?

In Sunday's sermon, Jeff suggested that we often ask whether it's the end of the world or not because we FEEL that it's at the end of the world. For some people, in fact, who have lost loved ones due to

Covid-19 or violence in the streets have indeed experienced the end of their world.

And yet, feeling like it is at the end of the world may be a good thing. Why? Because it places our hope not in the things that we have built or the systems of this world, but in the kingdom of God.

At the end of the day, we do not walk alone, but walk in community with our brothers and sisters in Christ. The passage suggests three ways in which we do this:

1. We walk together in the sufferings. Question:

Where are people suffering and how can we as a group help them in their suffering?

2. We walk together in the kingdom. Question:

in light of everything that is happening in the world, where is God's kingdom shining and how do we as a group join others in the mission of God?

3. We walk together in patient endurance.

Question: Every day activities continue even when there are world-shattering events taking place around us. How do we as a group join others in their everyday activities?

Dessert:

A lot of what is taking place in the world distracts us from the mission of God: Loving Him, and loving our neighbours, making disciples of Jesus Christ.

Go around the group and ask what one thing they will commit to doing when it comes to the three ways people walk beside each other in crisis (suffering, kingdom work, patient endurance activities).

Have someone lead in prayer, asking that, just as the Spirit of God was with John, that He would empower us to accomplish what He has laid on our heart for this week.