

Powerful prayers

Week 1: March 1-7

10min

Welcome / Introduce Guests

Celebrate Relational Connections from the Last Week / Open in Prayer / Recall the Guidelines

2min

Share the Vision: Making disciples is not just what we do, it is who we are. Each of us has been anointed by God to be a disciple-maker. Making disciples is not something we can do in our own power or strength. We must operate under the anointing of the Holy Spirit and with God's help to be effective disciple-makers.

5min

Hook Question: Can you share about a time when you saw God answer your prayer? What happened?

2min

Retell Last Week's Story: 1 Samuel 3:1-20 (Samuel becomes a prophet of God)

2min

Ask someone from your team to read or tell the following background for the story:

Our group is going to tackle a strange story today. It is a story of a dream that was given to one of Israel's prophets named Zechariah. Like most dreams people have, this dream is weird. But this dream is from God. Let's get some background to help us make sense of what we are about to hear from God's Word.

For many years, God's covenant people, the Israelites, rejected God and disobeyed His covenant. God gave them many prophets to warn them of their sin and to give them opportunities to repent. Ultimately, Israel rejected every prophet of God; so, God allowed the Babylonians to come in and capture the Israelite people. They were taken from their homes and their capital city, Jerusalem, was destroyed. The temple of God was also destroyed and plundered. It. Was. Devastating.

While Israel was in exile in Babylon, God continued to speak through His prophets. These prophets foretold of a future restoration of God's Kingdom. They talked about a Messianic King, or a "Glorious One" who would come and live with God's people in God's Kingdom. Not only would this Messianic King dwell with them, but He would also unite many nations together who would come and live in harmony with God.

This dream is one of a series of nine dreams in the book of Zechariah. All of them are about God's future Kingdom, future Messiah, and future plans. Here are a couple things to keep in mind as you hear this story. First, this is a DREAM. It is wacky and crazy – just like many of our dreams are today. But this dream is prophetic and carries significance for the future. Second, the man with a measuring stick at the beginning is going to measure Jerusalem. It is a picture of God's plans to restore His Kingdom. Third, the idea of Jerusalem being a city without walls is a symbol of how much God plans to bless His future Kingdom by growing it and making it prosper. Fourth, the call for God's people to flee Babylon is a call to leave captivity and bondage and exchange it for prosperity with God's "Glorious One." Fifth, the "Glorious One" or the Messianic King spoken of in this passage is a prophecy about Jesus. Finally, the last verse reminds us that all this would happen not by the strength of men, but by the power of God.

Okay! That is a lot of background for a crazy, wacky dream. Remember, this is a story about two futures at once. The first future is the future of the Israelites as they return from Babylon to the Promised Land after exile. The second future is the future of God's Kingdom that has arrived and is arriving through Jesus. With this background in mind, it is time for our story to begin! Good luck, storyteller!

12min

Tell the story from Zechariah 2:1-13: Remember to change up the storyteller often.

Rebuild the story: Group members retell the story based on what they remember.

Read the story from Zechariah 2:1-13: Ask the group to read these verses.

Discussion Questions: learn to talk about God's Word with others...

- Head Questions:**
Quicker tempo.
- What does this dream have to say about Israel's return from exile in Babylon?
 - What does this dream teach us about Jesus and about His Kingdom?
 - How do you think this dream should motivate us as followers of Jesus today?
 - What does this story teach us about people?
 - What does this story teach us about God?
- Heart & Hand Questions:**
Slow down & wait!
- What is your big takeaway from this story and discussion? How do you need to change?
 - Who could retell the story for us right here one last time?
 - If anyone else wants to learn more about the book of Zechariah, search YouTube for "Bible Project Zechariah" and click on the video called "Overview: Zechariah" (8 minutes and 11 seconds long).

Thank your storyteller for sharing the Word. Ask for a volunteer storyteller for next week. Close in prayer.



Week 5: Jesus the Great Administrator

As we start this new sermon series, we will continue to look at the importance of biblical administration in Jesus's Church.

1 Corinthians 12:27-28 (ESV)

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, *administering*, and various kinds of tongues.

Jesus had ALL the spiritual gifts. He is the perfect picture of what the fullness of each of those gifts looks like. For those of us who are administrators, we should aspire to administrate after the pattern and likeness of Jesus. Through the Holy Spirit, God has gifted other administrators in our church who are excellent at administration. We can look at their example, too; but we must always remember to use Jesus as our standard.

One of the qualities that made Jesus such an incredible administrator is that He was **CONFIDENT** in His calling to lead...

John 4:25-26 - The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things." Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he."

Matthew 28:18 - And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."

These verses above, along with others, demonstrate the confidence of Jesus in who He was and in His calling to lead and exercise authority. Before we can practice excellence in administration, we must be willing to fully own our God-given roles as leaders.

Common leadership roles can include husbands, wives, parents, employers, etc. Many of us carry one or more of these common roles. As believers, ALL of us share one leadership role in common: we are called to be disciple-makers. For many of you, this includes your responsibility to lead a group. Before you can really grow in your effectiveness as an administrator in these roles, you must learn to fully embrace what God has given you to lead.

Have you fully embraced your God-given calling to be a disciple-maker? Are you "all in" concerning your role as a small group leader? What do you need to change?