

Word One Bible Study

Comfort My People - Advent 2 Old Testament

by Greg Arnett

Text: Isaiah 40:1-11 for the Second Sunday in Advent

OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

1. Reflect on the wonderful gifts God has given us, especially His comfort.
2. Be encouraged to be ambassadors of God's Good News to those around them.
3. See how these verses tie together with Christ's life.

MATERIALS NEEDED

A comforter (blanket) for each discussion group

Bibles

Paper and pencils

GROUP GUIDELINES

Discussion will be best in groups of approximately six people. If your group is larger than this, divide into smaller groups. Choose as a leader the person who lives furthest from church. The leader's purpose is to keep the group moving through the Bible study, encourage the participation of all members, and function as a timekeeper so that each individual is given the opportunity to share. Participants should always have the freedom to pass.

BUILDING COMMUNITY

While wrapped in the comforter have each person take a turn and share what makes them very comfortable (e.g. a certain place in their house, a type of food, being with certain people). When everyone has finished, place the comforter on the floor and have the group sit in a circle on the comforter. (If the comforter is not big enough, or the group is not comfortable on the floor, place it in the middle of the group and have the group sit around the comforter.)

GETTING INTO SCRIPTURE

The first thirty-nine chapters of the book of Isaiah are predominantly messages of warning and rebuke, doom oracles pronounced against various nations, including the chosen people of Israel. That all changes with chapter 40!

1. What is the best earthly news you have ever heard? Read 40:1-11.
2. What do you hear God saying through Isaiah in verses 1-11?
3. Is it good news? Why or why not?

In verses 3-5 Isaiah talks about "road construction." Often we refer to these verses during Advent when we are preparing our hearts to receive the gift of God's Son at Christmas.

1. What other applications could be made from these verses?
2. How is this work done? Or by whom?

Verses 6-8 shift their focus to the frailty of life.

1. How does this fit in the category of "comfort for God's people?"
2. What does it mean for you in your life?

Finally verses 9-11 speak of the messengers of this good news.

1. How do you see God getting this message out in the verses?
2. Where else in scripture do you see God getting His message out?
3. How do you see yourself involved with getting this message out?

REINFORCING WHAT HAS BEEN LEARNED

Isaiah chapter 40, and many other passages from Isaiah, are filled with Messianic undertones:

1. Where do you see these messages about the Messiah in these verses?
2. How were they fulfilled by Christ's life?
3. Understanding these verses through the lift of Christ, how do they now bring comfort for God's people?

CLOSING

Close with a prayer thanking God for His comfort, His Son, and the privilege of sharing that message of comfort.

Originally published in Discovery Bible Studies 12, 1999.

Updated for youthESource in December 2014

youthESource is published on the Web by the LCMS Office of National Mission—Youth Ministry. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1333 South Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295; 1-800-248-1930; www.youthesource.com. Editor: Sherrah Holobaugh Behrens. VOL. 11 NO. 12. December 2014.