

Seedling Group Questions for the sermon of March 8 – The Second Sunday in Lent

The sermon for March 8, “Loved, Saved, and Wet”
can be found at www.saidanotherway.org

Questions for opening up

What is your favorite experience involving water?

Which people do you typically seek out when you have a question about a spiritual matter? Why?

Read Genesis 12:1-4a

What are the three communities that God commands Abram to leave. What significance would those have? What does such a departure say about God and God’s plans for Abram?

What promises does God make to Abram? How do these compare with what Abram is leaving? Have you ever experienced something like this before (leaving behind something in order to take on something else)?

What do you make of the connection between *receiving* blessings and *being* a blessing? How has that played out in your life?

Read John 3:1-17

Nicodemus is a leader among the Jews who is nevertheless intrigued by Jesus’ new signs and teachings. We might label him a “seeker” today. What are the qualities of seekers? Does Nicodemus remind you of anyone in your life?

“Born from above” and “born again”: both are legitimate English translations of the Greek in verses 3 and 6. Is there a difference? Which translation speaks more to you and your experience of faith? Why?

Jesus compares himself to the serpent Moses lifted on the pole which saved the ancient Israelites in the wilderness. How does the sight of Jesus lifted on the cross save us?

Putting things together

Pastor Phillip describes three ways that our rebirth through faith renews our perspectives in life: Jesus helps us see ourselves differently, the world differently, and God differently. Which one of these renewed perspectives is most relevant to you and your faith right now?

How do we faithfully hold in tension the twin realities that God’s Spirit moves like the wind—unpredictable and free—and that entrance into God’s kingdom has a particular point (Holy Baptism)?

Making it personal

Which conversations through the course of your life have been most consequential to your faith and understanding of God? What did you learn?

Has John 3:16 ever meant anything special to you? How so? What about John 3:17?

Genesis 12:1-4a

¹The Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. ²I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

^{4a}So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him.

John 3:1-17

¹Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. ²He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God." ³Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." ⁴Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" ⁵Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. ⁶What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' ⁸The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." ⁹Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" ¹⁰Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

¹¹"Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. ¹²If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

¹⁷"Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him."