

**Seedling Group Questions for All Saints Sunday: “Life in the Beautiful River”
(November, 3 2019)**

The sermon can be found at www.lipstosing.wordpress.com

Questions for Opening Up

Have you ever inherited anything of special value?

Have you ever started off on the wrong foot with someone and had the experience of reconciling or becoming friends? How did it happen?

Read Ephesians 1:11-23

Paul is trying to convince this infant church in Ephesus to remain faithful even though they’re surrounded by a multiplicity of idols, alternate narratives and worldviews. Which of the many images Paul uses do you think is most helpful in encouraging the recipients of his letter to remain allegiant to Christ?

What does it mean for us that Christ is our head and we are his body?

Read Luke 6:20-31

Jesus promises his disciples joy when they are hated, excluded, reviled, and defamed on account of him? In what ways do you think this may be true?

Jesus tells his disciples that we should “do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who abuse you.” Do you operate as if this is hyperbole or do you think that Jesus means this literally? Why could this be?

Putting Things Together

Who has been a role model for you and given you an example of how to live? What is it or what was it about them that presented a particularly compelling example?

Joseph suggests that we are surrounded by many worldviews and narratives other than the gospel. He mentions politics as a zero-sum game, advertising and consumer culture, and that we are responsible for creating our own identity in a world where God is not active. Can you think of any other narratives that we hear from the secular world that skew how we see ourselves?

Making It Personal

Joseph says that rather than having to cultivate or create an identity for ourselves we are given an identity in Christ. If that’s true, how does this change the way we view life? Is it a burden? Does it free us up to give our attention to other things?

Second Reading: Ephesians 1:11-23

¹¹In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, ¹²so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. ¹³In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; ¹⁴this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

¹⁵I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason ¹⁶I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. ¹⁷I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, ¹⁸so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, ¹⁹and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. ²⁰God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. ²²And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, ²³which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Gospel: Luke 6:20-31

²⁰Then [Jesus] looked up at his disciples and said:

"Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God.

²¹"Blessed are you who are hungry now,
for you will be filled.

"Blessed are you who weep now,
for you will laugh.

²²"Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. ²³Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

²⁴"But woe to you who are rich,
for you have received your consolation.

²⁵"Woe to you who are full now,
for you will be hungry.

"Woe to you who are laughing now,
for you will mourn and weep.

²⁶"Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.

²⁷"But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. ²⁹If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. ³⁰Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. ³¹Do to others as you would have them do to you."