



Isaiah 11:1-10 Small Group Discussion Questions

- Read Isaiah 11:1-10. What do you know about the prophet Isaiah? Why do we read and study Old Testament prophecy during the Christmas season?
- In verse 1, who is Jesse? What do you know about him?
 - What does it mean that Jesse has become “a stump”?
 - What is the “shoot”? What is Isaiah trying to communicate with this image?
 - What makes this picture a hopeful one? If you were an Israelite reading or hearing this prophecy, why would this give you hope?
 - Ben then jumped down to verse 10; in verse 1, this person that Isaiah prophesies about is called the *shoot*. What is he called in verse 10?
 - What is Isaiah communicating about this person using the “root” imagery?
 - How could this person be a “root” and a “shoot” at the same time?
 - Ben taught that this person is, clearly, Jesus. What does the “root” and “shoot” imagery teach us about who Jesus is?
 - How does this imagery help us understand the Christmas story?
 - Why did Jesus have to come to earth fully human, as an infant? How does the shoot imagery help us understand that?

- Ben highlighted the fact that Jesus' function as the root and the shoot demonstrates that God is able to raise up something from nothing, to create blessing where once was only sadness and disappointment. Where have you seen God do this in your own life?
- Where are you waiting for God to do this now?
- What does verse 2 tell us about the King that Isaiah is prophesying about?
 - Who is "the Spirit of the Lord?"
 - What do the subsequent descriptions of this Spirit in this verse tell us about Him?
 - Why do you think Isaiah uses the word "rest" to describe what the Spirit does to this King?
 - How did the Holy Spirit help empower Jesus' ministry? What was Jesus' relationship to the Holy Spirit while on earth?
 - What does the Holy Spirit do for Christians, now that God has given us the Holy Spirit too?
 - Ben said that Jesus is the Spirit-led King because He is the only person to ever live in full submission to the Spirit. What does it look like for us to imitate this King and live in submission to the Spirit of God?
 - How does the Spirit of wisdom and understanding help us avoid foolishness?
 - How does the Spirit of counsel and might strengthen us in our weakness?
 - How does the Spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord equip us to conquer our sin?
 - How can we be more aware to the promptings of the Spirit in our lives? How can we be more obedient to Him?

- What do verses 3-5 tell us about Jesus, our King?
 - What does it mean for Jesus' delight to be in the fear of the Lord?
 - What is the fear of the Lord?
 - How is "the fear of the Lord" different from "being afraid of the Lord"?
 - What does verse 3 indicate is true of the way that the world judges? (How does Jesus *not* judge?)
 - What is the difference between judging with *righteousness* versus judging based on what the eye sees or the ear hears?
 - What makes it so easy for us to judge based on what we see and hear?
 - What does it feel like to be judged quickly and unfairly, based on favoritism or cheating?
 - Why is it good news for us that Jesus judges the poor with righteousness and the meek with equity, as opposed to what the eye sees and the ear hears?
 - How can we become more like Jesus in our discernment? How can we use righteousness as our standard for right and wrong rather than what we like to see and hear?
 - How should we think about the last part of verse 4? How does this relate to what has come before?
- Read verses 6-10. What feelings or thoughts do these verses stir up in you?
 - What do we learn about the reign of Jesus in these verses?
 - Why do you think Isaiah uses these contrasting and surprising images to describe Jesus' reign?

- Ben preached that these verses should give Christians hope for the future, that all things are going to be made new in Jesus. Why is hope important for Christianity?
- What does hope do for those who have hope?
- Why is hope for Jesus' future return and reign better than hope in other things?
- What might it look like—practically—for us to direct our hope more toward Christ's return? How might the Christmas season help us with this hope?
- What are you hoping for right now? How might the hope of Christ's return speak to that hope that you have?