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TSIDKENU

Group Discussion Questions Week Five

SERMON RECAP

Why does it ache when things aren't the way they should be? In Jeremiah 23, God spoke to a people whose leaders had failed them, whose religion had grown hollow, and whose hearts still needed to be made right. Into that brokenness, God revealed Himself as Jehovah Tsidkenu, "The Lord Our Righteousness."

This week, Matt reminded us that God sees every hurt caused when things aren't right, and that every number is a person to Him. We also saw that we can't make ourselves right with God, no matter how faithfully we serve or how hard we try. But the Lord Himself promised to act. He sent a righteous King, Jesus, who carried our sin and makes us right with the Father. Our confidence before God rests on Christ, not on how well we're performing.

GET STARTED

What's something small that makes you instantly react with "that's not right!"? Why do you think we have such strong instincts about fairness and justice?

We all know what it feels like when something is deeply wrong, like a betrayal, a broken family, or someone using power to hurt the vulnerable. When you see things like that, what do you tend to feel or do? How does it shape the way you think about God?

TAKE IT IN

What encouraged or challenged you from the message this week? Why?

TALK IT OVER

Read Jeremiah 23:1–8

God sees what happens when things aren't right. Judah's leaders were meant to reflect God's heart, but some sought their own comfort while the poor were neglected and the vulnerable were hurt. In Jeremiah 22:16, God says defending the cause of the poor and needy is what it means to know Him. Why do you think God ties caring for people so closely to knowing Him? Which of the realities named in the message (poverty, violence, children without safe homes) weighed on you most, and why? How should knowing that "every number is a person" to the Lord shape the way we see and respond to people in need?

Matt said that we have to realize that some of this hurt comes from us. Why is that hard to hear? How can being around church, Scripture, and faith language make us blind to the ways we hurt others or overlook them? What might it look like for us to guard against that?

We ourselves cannot make things right. The people of Judah trusted in having the temple while neglecting justice. We were cautioned that we can love church, serve faithfully, and slowly begin "building a case for ourselves." Where do you see that tendency in your own life? Have you ever

noticed your confidence before God rise and fall based on how well you've been doing? What does that reveal about what we're really trusting?

Romans 10:3 says people "did not know the righteousness of God and sought to establish their own." Why is it so easy to slip back into trying to earn our standing with God, even when we know the gospel? After a hard week, a failure, or an old struggle, what tempts you to withdraw from God instead of coming near?

The Lord Himself will make things right. In Jeremiah 23:3, God says, "I myself will gather the remnant of my flock." What does it mean to you that God personally promises to act, rather than waiting for us to fix things? Think about a time when people you trusted let you down. How does knowing that God knows where His sheep are, and has never lost sight of them, speak into that?

Jesus is the righteous King God promised. The name Tsidkenu means "the Lord is our righteousness," and the message pointed out the word *our*. What difference does it make that righteousness is a gift we receive instead of something we achieve? Looking at how Jesus treated people in the Gospels (noticing the overlooked, welcoming the ashamed, caring for the poor, telling the truth), what does it show us about the Father's heart? According to 2 Corinthians 5:21, what happened at the cross, and what does it open up for us?

What am I trusting to make me right with God? The message asked, "What would change if I really trusted Jesus to be my righteousness?" Would you pray more freely, confess more honestly, compare yourself less, be more patient with people who are struggling, or find fresh joy in the Father's presence? Which of those would make the biggest difference for you right now, and why? If you've walked with Jesus for years, where have you quietly begun measuring His love by your performance?

LIVE IT OUT

Being made right with God isn't something we earn; it's a gift we receive by trusting Jesus. That means we can come near to the Father honestly, with our sin, our questions, and our need for mercy, because Jesus has made the way.

This week, take time to ask yourself, "*What am I trusting to make me right with God?*" If you notice you've been striving, confess it to God and thank Jesus for being your righteousness. Pick one area where you've been hiding, withdrawing, or comparing yourself to others, and bring it honestly to the Father. If appropriate, share it with someone you trust and ask them to pray with you. Also, ask God to show you one person or situation He sees that needs care, and take one step toward them as a response to the righteousness you've received.

MEMORIZE

"God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." 2 Corinthians 5:21

PRAYER

Father, thank You that You see what is broken and care for Your people. Forgive us for trying to make ourselves righteous. Thank You for Jesus, our righteous King, who carried our sin and made us right with You. Draw those who need to trust Him for the first time. Restore the joy of those who have been striving for years. Teach us to live from Your grace, to see people the way You see them, and make our hearts more like Yours. In Jesus' name, amen.

