

**2023 Aim Check-in**

- Becoming disciples who make disciples, who make disciples.
  - Creating a community of faith that meaningfully engages our community of residence.
1. In the time since you last met as a H2H group, have you made any movement towards the aims we've set for 2023?
  2. How might we as a H2H group help support or encourage you towards these aims?

**Discussion Questions Set #1**

"I remember the devotion of your youth, how as a bride you loved me and followed me through the wilderness, through a land not sown. Israel was holy to the LORD ... What fault did your ancestors find in me, that they strayed so far from me? They followed worthless idols and became worthless themselves. They did not ask, 'Where is the LORD, who brought us up out of Egypt and led us through the barren wilderness? ... I brought you into a fertile land to eat its fruit and rich produce. But you came and defiled my land and made my inheritance detestable. The priests did not ask, 'Where is the LORD?' Those who deal with the law did not know me; the leaders rebelled against me ... my people have exchanged their glorious God for worthless idols ... Have you not brought this on yourselves by forsaking the Lord your God when he led you in the way? ... Long ago you broke off your yoke and tore off your bonds; you said, 'I will not serve you!' ... Although you wash yourself with soap and use an abundance of cleansing powder, the stain of your guilt is still before me," declares the Sovereign LORD ... They have turned their backs to me and not their faces; yet when they are in trouble, they say, 'Come and save us!' Where then are the gods you made for yourselves? Let them come if they can save you when you are in trouble! For you, Judah, have as many gods as you have towns ... In vain I punished your people; they did not respond to correction ... my people have forgotten me, days without number." (Jeremiah 2:2,3,5,6,7,8,11,17,20,22,27-28, 30, 32)

1. Reading the above passage of Scripture, consider and discuss the heart of God when it comes to our inability or unwillingness to be led by Him. With caution, how do you think our sin affects God? What emotions does this seem to elicit from God?
2. How does this passage help us understand the reasons behind the Babylonian exile?
3. Consider this passage in light of our experience today. Might God be able to say similar things about us (or the church more generally) today?

**Discussion Questions Set #2**

"My yoke is easy and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:30)

In sermon, the idea of being yoked to God/yoked to Babylon was discussed at length. The yoke was a symbol of servitude – of going along in submission to another - in the Bible. The symbolic language referring to Israel breaking their yoke is meant to communicate that they refused to be yoked to God; as the weaker "ox" they refused to be "pulled along" or be led by God.

1. Discuss how the idea of being yoked to God might help us understand better what it means to be led by Him.
2. We know that this idea of being yoked was difficult for the people of Israel. How palatable might this idea be in the church today? In your life? What areas of struggle or difficulty might this concept bring up for people? For you?
3. Discuss Matthew 11:30 and our being yoked to Jesus in light of our material from the Old Testament. What might it mean to be yoked to Jesus? How might His yoke be easy (i.e. what is this saying about our connection to Christ)?

**SEE OVER**

**Discussion Questions Set #3**

"I will discipline you but only in due measure; I will not let you go entirely unpunished." (Jeremiah 30:11)

"The Lord disciplines the one he loves [and] disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness" (Hebrews 12:6-10).

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you," declares the LORD." (Jeremiah 29:4-7, 11-14)

1. How is it helpful to recognize that the Babylonian exile involved both discipline and punishment for the people of Israel?
2. What might God's discipline look like in our lives today?
3. Why is it significant that God's plan for His people stretches beyond punishment and discipline? What do the examples found in the books of Daniel and Esther teach us about the importance of seeking God wholeheartedly, even when all else has been stripped away? What might this suggest about our individual following of Jesus?