

Sow the Future Small Group Guide

Warm-up Question: (Choose one, make up your own, or skip this part all together, depending upon the nature of your group.)

1. Have you ever tried to grow any plants in your house or in your yard? If so, how did it go?
2. Would you consider yourself to be a patient person? Explain.

Read the following passage: Jeremiah 32:1-15.

This is an unusual series of events. Jerusalem is under siege. It's only a matter of time before the Babylonians destroy the city and the temple. Jeremiah is not only stuck in this besieged city, he's in prison. He has been falsely accused of trying to join the Babylonians. So he was beaten and then imprisoned. (See Jeremiah 37. The contents of the book of Jeremiah are not arranged in chronological order.) In the middle of all of this, Jeremiah's cousin comes to him and says, "Buy my field at Anathoth in the territory of Benjamin." It's likely that Hanamel, like everyone in Judah, was suffering deeply and needed money. Hanamel came to Jeremiah because the Law of Moses instructed the Israelites to buy their relatives' property when they were in trouble. Even so, the circumstances made this an outlandish request. What's going on?

This transaction was not about the present. It was about the future. The Lord instructed Jeremiah to invest in the future as a prophetic act symbolizing the hope God had for the Israelites. Like a farmer who plants seeds with the hope of a harvest, we, too, are called to plant seeds even in difficult seasons. Three of the most important "seeds" we can sow into the future are people, the word of God, and finances.

Questions for Discussion:

1. Read Mark 1:16-18. Jesus invested his life in people. Given your temperament, skill set, and circumstances, what might it look like for you to invest your life in people? Are you taking any of these steps now? Explain.
2. Read Romans 12:6-8 and 1 Corinthians 12:7-11. Are any of these gifts functioning in your life? What are some ways you can use the gifts God has given you for the benefit of others?
3. Who are two or three people you would like to be more deliberate about investing in?
4. Have you been reading the Bible regularly over the past two months? Explain. What helps you get the most out of what you read? Are there any ways you would like to see your engagement of the Scriptures change? Explain.
5. Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-11. What does Paul say about giving finances for the benefit of others? Specifically, what things will God do in connection with our giving?

6. Are you giving regularly to your local church and the needs of other believers? Explain.
7. Generally speaking, what do you think God is calling you to “sow” in order to reap a harvest in the future? What is one step you can take now?

Pray