

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

NSAC Missions Month - Week 4 January 31, 2021 Pastor Dave Sattler

Title: "ON THE MOVE: Stories of Migrants, Jesus & the Early Christ-followers"

Texts: Matthew 2:13-16, 19-21; Acts 8:1-8; Cf. Mark 10:45

I. Review & Introduction

- These days, per capita, Canada is one of the largest importers of human capital. By 2036, 30% of all Canadians will identify as "immigrants." And today, along with Toronto and Montreal, Vancouver is leading the way, with 47% of its residents registering as "foreign-born."
- Why might some people view immigration as a threat?
- What do you think should be the Christian response to immigration?
- Name some ways Christ-followers can rise to the occasion to carry out the mission of Jesus today in our increasingly multicultural, pluralistic, and secular nation.

II. Biblical 'Snapshots'

JESUS: Escaping to Egypt (READ Matthew 2:13-21)

1. What jumps out for you in the story?
2. What character and faith does Joseph exhibit in the story?
3. Throughout history, the egregious actions of power-threatened dictators have been the cause of many displaced peoples in our world. As a result of conflict, persecution, human rights violations, and violence, by mid-2020, there were an estimated 80 million displaced people worldwide. Among them, 26.3 million refugees, half of whom are under the age of 18. Today, Syria, Venezuela, South Sudan, Afghanistan, and Myanmar account for two-thirds of the displaced peoples around the world (UNHCR Stats). How might this story of our Saviour give us insight into the plight of refugees?
4. Baby Jesus was a refugee. How does it feel to know that God intimately identifies with the human condition and fully relates even to the darkest situations humans might find themselves in?

Early Christians: Scattered By Persecution (READ Acts 8:1-8)

5. In the Book of Acts, Dr. Luke tells tale of the tremendous cultural barriers the Christian Church has to bridge to go from being a tiny monocultural

Jewish sect to an intercultural global community. Name some of these barriers.

6. Discuss some of the sweet ironies: God uses the thing intended to “snuff” out the Church as the catalyst that causes it to grow: persecution. And, God even takes the chief “snuffer,” Saul, transforms him, gives him a new name, ‘Paul’, and uses him to spread the Christian message!
7. How does the story of Paul prove can use anyone?
8. How might God sometimes allow discomfort in our lives to prepare us for a new and different task, or, to remove us from situation, or move us elsewhere? Discuss.
9. In our time, the momentum and strength of the Christian Church has shifted to the Global South, to the Persecuted Church, meeting underground amidst hostile regimes. What do you think about the idea of Canada next being evangelized by people immigrating here, with a deep passion for Jesus? And, how might our hearts be open to mission partnerships with new Canadians who’re not afraid, to preach the word wherever they go right here in Canada?
10. Read Acts 8:8 again. Describe how joy is both an ingredient, and an outcome of the mission of Jesus taking root in individuals, families, churches, and cultures.

III. Application

- Name barriers we might face in being “culturally fluent.”
- What “tools” has God given the Christian Church to genuinely care for immigrants and enable them to feel welcome here in Canada?
- How can we break the myth that ‘God’s mission is only for pastors and missionaries’? How will we reach 80% of the world’s population today who live in countries where missionary activity is severely restricted, or, illegal? Where pastors and missionaries cannot go?
- How might God be calling you (with your unique work skills, education, and experience to channel your passion into God’s Kingdom work, overseas?