



Small Group Study Guide for September 27, 2020

Our Savior Lutheran Church and School

Theme: This sermon invites the hearers to reflect on how God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, is the Creator of everything and everyone, and how the Creator of all things has become our Father in Jesus Christ. As a result of this relationship to God the Father by faith in Jesus Christ, we are now to embody the Father's love to everyone we meet in the world.

Getting Started: (sharing with each other).

1. There are a lot of things going on in our world and country currently: pandemic, wildfires, hurricanes, an election, protests, riots, etc. For a moment, share how one—or some—of them have effected you, your family, or those whom you know.
2. This sermon highlights God as the Creator. Here is a section from the Small Catechism, please read The First Article and response together. Following that discuss 1) Your favorite part of creation and why. 2) Has there ever been a time you were just blown away by something in creation? 3) How God—the Creator of everything—continues to care and provide for you.

“I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.’ *What does this mean?* I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and all my senses, and still takes care of them. He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, spouse and children, land, animals, and all I have. He richly and daily provides for me with all that I need to support this body and life. He defends me against all danger and guards and protects me from all evil. All this He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me. For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true.

In the Word: Acts 17:26; Gal 4:4-7; 1 John 3:11-18 (a closer look at the texts).

3. Read Acts 17:26. St. Paul is in Athens, talking to Greeks at the Areopagus (a hill Greeks would gather on to talk, have councils, and lecture) about the “unknown god.” St. Paul uses this as an opportunity to speak about the Gospel and about God—the only God. What does Acts 17:26 state about humanity?

4. Read Galatians 4:4-7. In a strictly biological sense, we are all either sons or daughter of God; however, what does St. Paul emphasize in this text? Why do you think this is important and what do you think is meant by this reality?
5. 1 John is a healthy reminder that the choices we make matter; the sides that we take do too. For in the cosmic, everlasting scheme of things, the sides are two, and only two. One is the side of our God and of those who side with him; and the other is not. How does John emphasize this in 3:11-18? How are we strengthened and sustained on God's side?

Putting it Together

6. This sermon discussed sins of commission (actively breaking God's law against God or our neighbor) and omission (passively breaking God's law by failing to do what we should have) in relation to the Fifth Commandment. Discuss how we struggle with these sins as we seek to keep the Fifth Commandment.
7. Everywhere we look, we see the devastating effects of sin that plague our world. Violence, anger, abuse, oppression, enmity, strife, and hate are everywhere. It seems that no matter where we turn or look, someone is despised and rejected. How should Christians respond to both the sin that we witness in the world and the sin that resides inside of us?
8. Through God's redeeming work, His choosing you, His coming into the world to redeem you, His forgiving you, His making you His child, His sending the Holy Spirit into your heart, you have been brought into a relationship with God, the Creator of everyone. How does the fact that God having become our Father, affect our relationship with all the people God has created?
9. In the midst of a world, nation, and society that is hurting, how might you walk beside those who are suffering and care for them? What are some ways in the congregation or community that you can help your neighbor? If you are already doing this, please share!

Prayer: Give thanks and rejoice that God—the Creator of everything—has become your Father through Jesus Christ our Lord. Pray for strength and guidance to see our brothers and sisters through our heavenly Father's eyes. Pray that the Holy Spirit would continue to teach us to love our neighbors as ourselves, and remember that our neighbors are everyone we meet in our daily vocations.

Check out our Wednesday Bible Study on Revelation in person or on Live Stream at www.oursaviorlansing.org/livestream at 11 a.m. each Wednesday!