

Discipleship

Study provided by UMC Discipleship Ministries, adapted by Kathryn Rauhauser

Gathering

- Reflect and respond to the following: How do you most often seek direction from God?
- Read: Genesis 12:1-4a, John 3:1-17, Psalm 121.

Discussion

- How do you think Abram felt when God called him to a new land with so few specifics?
 - How would you feel?
- How do you think he felt about the promises of being a great nation and others being blessed through him?
 - How do you think his wife and others with him might have felt?
- Over the next few chapters, Abram and his wife seem to make some missteps. How does it make you feel knowing that God does not call those who are perfect to be used by God?
- What do you already know about the Nicodemus story?
- It can be helpful to read this passage in a few different translations to get out the difficulty in translation. For example, some will read “born from above” while others might read “born again.” What might it mean to be “born from above” or “born again”?
 - How might verse 8 help us understand what it means to be “born again” or “born from above”?
- Scripturally speaking, the idea of rebirth would be closely associated with taking on a new identity (think Abram and Sarai to Abraham and Sarah, Jacob to Israel). How might Jesus be inviting us to be born again into a new identity?
 - What new name or new direction might Jesus be leading us in?
 - How might this inform the way we treat others as they step into a new identity?
- How might Psalm 121 be an encouragement to us as we follow the guidance of the Spirit?
 - What hope do you find in the scripture passages today?

Prayer and Sending Forth

- If studying with a group, share prayer requests and praise reports as well as those on the church prayer list. If studying on your own, take time to pray for those on our church prayer list and lift up your own prayer concerns to the Lord.
- Consider praying the following or a similar prayer: God of reconciliation, you call us into an eternal and grace-filled relationship with you. Because of your great love, you sent the Son and have given us the gift of the Holy Spirit, which breathes your breath of life within us. Help us to be sustained by your grace; and by the power of the Holy Spirit, may sacrificial love come flowing out of us this week. Amen.