

April 24, 2011

Willow Park South Small Group Questions

“Easter”

Genesis 25:29-34

- Please read Genesis 25:29-34 together at the beginning of your small group meeting.

In these verses we see Esau’s indifferent toward his firstborn status as he sells his birthright for some stew. Esau did not grasp the significance of all that God had promised to fulfill through the unique line descended from Abraham, of which he was the natural heir. Instead of accepting God’s best for him, Esau traded his birthright for the temporal comfort of the stew.

Can you think of a situation where you had made a bad trade?
At the time, what was so compelling about the deal?

Why do you think Esau so eagerly traded his birthright for the stew?

As we have been adopted as children of God, Ephesians 1:5-6 states that the ultimate purpose for our salvation (our birthright) is the praise of God’s glorious name.

- **Ephesians 1:5-6** (ESV) *“In love [5] he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, [6] to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.”*

How are we similar to Esau in the way we trade our birthright (the praise of God’s name) for the praise of temporary, created things?

Why do we naturally prefer to praise the creation rather than the Creator?

Is it wrong to enjoy God’s creation? When does enjoying God’s creation become a sin?

Read *Psalms 49:16-17* and discuss why praising God’s creation above God himself is ultimately meaningless for us.

- **Psalms 49:16-17** (ESV)
[16] *Be not afraid when a man becomes rich,
when the glory of his house increases.*
[17] *For when he dies he will carry nothing away;
his glory will not go down after him.*

On the cross, Christ made the ultimate trade for us. *“For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God”* (2 Corinthians 5:21, ESV). Just as Jesus Christ justified us through His death, He also gave us a new life through His resurrection.

How do our desires change over time when we receive new life?
Are your motives set on the glory of the Creator or the glory of the creation?

What does a life that seeks to give God glory look like?

- **Hebrews 1:1-3** (ESV) *“Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, [2] but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. [3] He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high”*
- The life of Jesus Christ is the perfect example of seeking to give God glory above anything else.

Why is a life that gives God glory ultimately fulfilling?

Prayer and Reflection

Is there anything in your life that takes priority over God’s commandments?

What in your life brings you more joy than giving God glory?

Psalms 96:4-9 (ESV)

- [4] For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised;
he is to be feared above all gods.
- [5] For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols,
but the LORD made the heavens.
- [6] Splendor and majesty are before him;
strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.
- [7] Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples,
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength!
- [8] Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;
bring an offering, and come into his courts!
- [9] Worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness;
tremble before him, all the earth!