

Playlist: Psalm 24

Small Group Discussion Guide

- 1) Makoto Fujimura believes that experiencing places and events with no easy explanations is going through 'Ground Zero Reality'. They are the places that truly cause us to wonder 'is God really good? Does he care?' What is that place for you? How have you approached this part of your life?
- 2) Frederick Buechner argues that "Jesus shares with us the darkness of what it is to be without God as well as showing forth the glory of what it is to be with God." What does this mean? How does this connect to Fujimura's observation above?
- 3) Read Psalm 46. What are the charges in Psalm 46 and what are the promises?
- 4) Now look at Revelation 21:1-5 and 22:1-5. How is this a continuation of the idea laid down in Psalm 46?

¹ The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it,
the world, and all who live in it;
² for he founded it on the seas
and established it on the waters.
³ Who may ascend the mountain of the Lord?
Who may stand in his holy place?
⁴ The one who has clean hands and a pure heart,
who does not trust in an idol
or swear by a false god.^[a]
⁵ They will receive blessing from the Lord
and vindication from God their Savior.
⁶ Such is the generation of those who seek him,
who seek your face, God of Jacob.^{[b][c]}
⁷ Lift up your heads, you gates;
be lifted up, you ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.
⁸ Who is this King of glory?
The Lord strong and mighty,
the Lord mighty in battle.
⁹ Lift up your heads, you gates;
lift them up, you ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.
¹⁰ Who is he, this King of glory?
The Lord Almighty—
he is the King of glory.

- 5) If it is true that God's intent is to make the 'bad things untrue' (or, as you just read, to 'make all things new'), how does this allow us to approach those areas of devastation in the community around us and in our own lives? There will probably **not** be easy answers here. But begin the process of trying to see this experience as Christ would see it.
- 6) Christ not only redeems us, but he invites us into significance. Psalm 1 tells us that the wicked are like chaff (they blow away and are insubstantial), but the righteous are like a flourishing tree that bears fruit. Reflect on this quote and, together in prayer, thank God for his inevitable victory and his invitation for us to join the fight:

"...I can't believe that, when we have all been changed and put on incorruptibility, we will forget our fantastic condition of mortality and impermanence, the great bright dream of procreating and perishing that meant the whole world to us. In eternity this world will be Troy, I believe, and all that has passed here will be the epic of the universe, the ballad they sing in the streets. Because I don't imagine any reality putting this one in the shade entirely, and I think poetry forbids me to try." *Gilead*, Marilynne Robinson

- Frederick Buechner