

Discuss Q's

1. How do the commands of the New Testament to be holy look different when I consider that I have died and Jesus now lives his life in me?
2. How can I become more God-conscious and less sin-conscious?
3. What does it practically mean that my inheritance is reserved in heaven for me?
4. What do I tend to do when a desire rises in me that seems beyond the norm or impossible to fulfill?
5. How often do I pray, believing that I have what I will ask for? (Father longs to give good gifts)
6. How committed was Jesus to doing the Father's will? What level of passion was He demonstrating to His followers about this?
7. How does Paul's statement "to live is Christ, to die is gain" in Philippians 1:21 reflect his understanding of the crucified life made for Eden?
8. How does Paul's statements "not one of us lives for himself" in Romans 14:7-8 reflect his understanding of the crucified life made for Eden?
9. How was Jesus' knowledge that He was sent from the Father, and that he would return to Him, instrumental in him never giving in to the noise and the circumstances around Him?
10. How do we overcome the temptation to doubt the Father's heart toward us? How can we begin acting like He longs to give good gifts to His children? (Matthew 7:11, Luke 11:13)
11. Consider this quote from Lewis. "You thought you were being made into a decent little cottage: but He is building a palace. He intends to come and live in it Himself." Jesus says in John 14:23 we (the Trinity) will come and live inside man. How do we adopt the mindset that what He is building in us is worthy of housing God's own presence? How glorious does that imply our lives are to become?
12. Jesus also made certain that His hearers knew that His commitment to laying down His life was His own choice, just as we have a choice to put on the life of Jesus in us. How does what He says in John 10:17-18 serve as our model for adopting Gal 2:20?
13. What are some moments in your life that have reminded you of the future hope of God's restoration of all things?
14. How does remembering "the end of the story" enable you to persevere in staying focused on a growing "life of Christ" in you?
15. In comparing the Parable of the Talents with the Fall in Genesis 3, a parallel between the view of the "Master" was established. What other biblical stories share this element of fear of the ruler/master/king as affecting the outcome of a situation? What does this suggest about the place of fear in immobilizing the follower of God?
16. In contrast, what does confidence in the fairness/benevolence of a leader/master/king produce in the follower of God in those situations?

17. How does knowing Jesus is living His life through me allow me to walk under His light yoke? What pressures does it relieve from me in regard to what God desires for me to be and to do?
18. How can we daily think of the contrast between knowing we have died (to sin, to our old self) yet live “alive to God?” (Romans 6:11)
19. How can we use the truths to combat the times we don’t “feel” dead to our old self/sin?
20. How can we imitate Jesus’ use of God’s Word to combat temptation to give in to sin?
21. How do we keep from “putting on” sinful ways instead of “putting on Christ,” thereby refusing to act apart from who we are as a new creation?
22. What does “God making His appeal through us” to the unsaved function like? What traits make us a good ambassador for God?
23. When 2 Corinthians 5 says that the “new has come,” what is “new” about our life after the old passes away?
24. Why did the “good news” of the kingdom become the “indifferent” news that our sins are forgiven and we get to heaven when we die? How did we lose the “rest of the story” that we serve a King in His kingdom? How has this led to more focus on waiting for our rescue to heaven and less on “on earth as it is in heaven”?
25. How can our understanding of earthly kingdoms and monarchs help us realize our authority as children of the King?
26. If we define a kingdom as a realm where the will of the King is done, then why do our prayers, as children of the King asking our Father to act for our good, lack confidence when we approach the King for something?
27. If our Father is the King, then everything under His authority must work toward enforcing the will of the King. Our declarations of His will hold the authority of the King, and everything under His authority therefore must work toward enforcing the will of the King that we declare. In what areas do we need to pray this way? In spiritual warfare? In provision and protection for our lives?
28. What convinced Paul that our body (and I argue he was incl our life) was not our own but belonged to God? When he says we are bought with a price, what are the conditions of that ransom? What does it obligate us to?
29. How can we avoid forfeiting the life God means for us? What lessons about relating to our Father should we learn from Adam and Eve’s forfeit of the blessing of the Garden?
30. How will the teaching of being Made for Eden affect how we present the truth about God’s redemptive plan for us and for His world?
31. How might it impact the way we disciple new believers? What if our first truth we teach a new follower of Jesus is that they were made for another world, and have been invited to serve a King in His kingdom?
32. How should we understand Jesus’ command that we “take up our cross and follow” Him in light of Galatians 2:20? How is “having died” the same as, or first step toward, taking

up our cross? Is it really taking up Jesus' death on the cross for us and realizing that our old self died in order to "follow Him?"

33. When Lewis says we must be plowed up and be re-sown, what does that mean? How do we replant the right seed in the right soil?

34. If God is building a palace out of me, and I was expecting only a cottage, how must I adjust my thinking of what God wants to do through me in this world?

Ch 4

35. Lewis says "God looks at you as if you were a little Christ: Christ stands beside you to turn you into one." What enables God to look at us as little Christs? By what means does Jesus turn us into representatives who are like Himself?

36. What I want to make clear is that this is not one among many jobs a Christian has to do; and it is not a sort of exercise for the top class. It is the whole of Christianity." How is putting on Christ the whole of our faith?

37. "Life in the Garden of Eden depended on obedience, and we need the benefit of Jesus' obedience to return to that life." Why is Jesus' obedience enough to secure our return to the life we were promised? How is that obedience applied to us?

38. Lewis says handing over to God our whole self is difficult, nearly impossible, but is the only option for becoming new creations, for "it is far easier than what we are all trying to do instead. For what we are trying to do is to remain what we call 'ourselves,' to keep personal happiness as our great aim in life, and yet at the same time be 'good.' We are all trying to let our mind and heart go their own way-centered on money or pleasure or ambition-and hoping, in spite of this, to behave honestly and chastely and humbly. And that is what Christ warned us we could not do" How did it become acceptable to hold onto as much of our "old self" as possible yet claim to be pursuing God's way? Why does trying to remain ourselves not work in our pursuit of God

39. "The taking on of Christ, in the form of the new self, is not a rehabilitation of the old man, a cleaning of the outside of ourselves. It is a plowing up of what I once was, and allowing God to create something new in me and of me." How do I avoid see my process of sanctification as a "rehab" of who I used to be? How can I put away the past and live as God sees me, as "newly created?"

40. Lewis says "The church exists for nothing else but to draw men into Christ, to make them little Christs. If they are not doing that, all the cathedrals, clergy, missions, sermons, even the Bible itself, are simply a waste of time. God became man for no other purpose. It is even doubtful, you know, whether the whole universe was created for any other purpose." Does the church you identify with or belong to have the idea of making "little Christs" in its mission or vision statement? How well would they say they are doing at making people more like Jesus? How can we encourage local churches to abandon programs and anything else that isn't producing more Christlike people?

41. Lewis says "Make no mistake, He says, 'if you let me, I will make you perfect. The moment you put yourself in My hands, that is what you are in for. Nothing less, or other,

than that. You have free will, and you can push Me away. But if you do not push Me away, under that I am going to see this job through.” How would my life look like when God makes me perfect? What would my pushing him away look like? Did you realize that “perfection” was what God intended for you when you accepted Christ, and that God never fails to see a job through? What is the implication for your life?

42. Lewis says on our way to perfection, God is pleased with any progress. “He, as a good Father, is “delighted with the first feeble, stumbling effort you make tomorrow to do the simplest duty.” How can we draw strength to progress further in the “new creation” life by knowing God is pleased with our attempts? How can we balance knowing that pleasure with His determination that we not settle for “baby steps?”
43. Lewis states “To shrink back from that plan is not humility: it is laziness and cowardice. To commit to it is not conceit or megalomania, it is obedience.” Trusting in God’s plan will make us seem strange to some. But following Him is the only way to the life He promises. How must we avoid the lazy or cowardly path of shrinking back from what He created our life to be? What mindset must we adopt to avoid ungodly pride, or belief that it’s about us, as we live from the inheritance we know is ours?
44. “God became man to turn creatures into sons: not simply to produce better men of the old kind but to produce a new kind of man” “God became man to turn creatures into sons: not simply to produce better men of the old kind but to produce a new kind of man” God had seen that the inclinations of men’s hearts was only evil continually (Genesis 6:5) Why would only making a new man suffice for man’s entry into a restored Eden?

Ch 8

A progression is shown between being stewards and sons.

45. “We must return to seeing ourselves as stewards.” How is a steward different than an owner? What does the role imply about the object being stewarded?
46. “When we see ourselves as stewards of God’s truth (mysteries), we know we serve Jesus by serving as examples to God’s people.” How can we steward truth? How is it different than stewarding a resource or person?
47. “When we see ourselves as stewards, we understand real freedom.” How is a steward free? Is it in knowing they only have to please the owner/master, and aren’t responsible for every outcome?
48. “When we understand real freedom, we are free to walk in sonship.” How does a son experience freedom differently than a servant?
49. “When we walk in sonship, we know our heart has been made new.” When you know you belong to a gracious Father, your heart can function in the way required of a new creation. Why is that so?
50. “When we know our heart has been made new, we can relate to God in worship.”

Ch 10

51. Frederick Buechner says “People are prepared for everything except for the fact that beyond the darkness of their blindness there is a great light...they are prepared for a God who strikes hard bargains but not for a God who gives as much for an hour’s work as for a day’s...They are prepared for the potluck supper at First Presbyterian but not for the marriage supper of the Lamb...” Why are we unprepared for the lavish grace Jesus & Paul describes as true of our Father? Why do we focus on potluck suppers and not the marriage supper at the end of time? Have we failed to present God in a way that makes us long for that day?
52. The decision facing each person on earth is whose will they choose to follow. The first Adam chose in the Garden of Eden “not your will but mine.” The second Adam, Jesus, chose in Gethsemane “not my will but yours.” What other ways did Jesus show Himself to be the perfect Adam, the fulfillment of God’s intention for mankind?
53. 2 Timothy 2:3-4, 8-12 “Suffer hardship with *me*, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier...It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we will also live with Him; If we endure, we will also reign with Him...” Paul uses the image of a soldier to challenge Timothy to suffer for Jesus. But then he assures him that those who die with Him (die to self, take up the cross of Jesus) will live with Him. How does this promise, that by dying we live with Him and will reign with Him, help us endure suffering?
54. Macdonald says “All the growth of the Christian is the more and more life he is receiving.” How can we evaluate the result of receiving the life of God within ourselves? How will our growth look when we are receiving well?

Ch 11

55. Ezekiel 47:12 says “By the river on its bank, on one side and on the other, will grow all *kinds of* trees for food. Their leaves will not wither and their fruit will not fail. They will bear every month because their water flows from the sanctuary, and their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing.” This is fulfilled in Revelation 22:2 “...the tree of life, bearing twelve *kinds of* fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.” How creative God is, to have trees that bear always and their leaves won’t wither! And to speak of them prophetically in Ezekiel. Do we have instances on earth now of leaves being used to cure or heal?
56. “The history of man after the Fall began with angels bearing flaming swords barring the way to the Tree of Life. In the New Heaven and New Earth, the Cherubim guarding the Tree of Life are no longer given that task. Perhaps those same angels, instead of guarding the forbidden tree, instead of prohibiting, may be present, inviting us to taste of what Jesus has restored to us.” What is the significance of the restoration of our right to take from the tree of life? How do you picture the angels operating in the new heaven & earth?