

FOLLOW-THROUGH

“The Righteous Branch”

Jeremiah 33:14-16

Small Group Discussion around the Sunday Message

December 3, 2006



Introduction

1. Read Jeremiah 33:14-16. Note Jeremiah 23:5-6 where the promise is also given.
2. Talk about promises in our culture. How good are we at keeping the promises we make?
3. The language of the Righteous Branch is the language of the family tree. Share with your group one story about someone on your personal family tree. If you're adopted work with your adopted family tree.
4. Try and put into words what it means to you to have Jesus in your family tree.

Inside the Promise

1. To be righteous is to be right with God and to do right by God. It's a matter of both being and doing.
2. Inside the promise of a Righteous Branch is the reality that we Christians have both sinful Adam and righteous Jesus in our family tree. Look closely at Romans 5:12-21 and draw a comparison between the first and second Adam (Jesus). What did each bring in to the world?
3. Sometimes even the good things we do fail to be righteous because our motivation is all messed up. We do good things for
4. Look up these passages on our utter lack of righteousness:
 - Isaiah 64:6
 - Romans 3:9-12, 23
5. Crucial to understanding this promise is the Biblical teaching of the righteousness of faith. See Romans 4:1-3, 13. God declares the whole world righteous through the perfect life and atoning work of Jesus Christ, but each person must believe that promise, claiming it in faith for it to be true for them. In other words, we believe that the perfectly righteous life of Jesus counts as our righteous life because God has promised it – and believing it brings that righteousness to us! Talk about how this emphasis on the power of faith strikes you.

Digging Deeper

1. Why do you think we talk so little about the perfect righteousness of Christ and instead focus on His death and resurrection? Why is it important to focus on all of these realities?
2. Being righteous through faith doesn't free us up from striving to be right with God and do right by God. Look at Matthew 5:20. What do you think Jesus means here? Does it have something to do with motivation?
3. Talk about the spiritual heritage (or lack of it) in your family and about the hopes you have for a family clearly drawing on the strength Jesus gives.
4. Close with prayer.