

OBSERVATION -- As a group, talk through and summarize the passage. Think through *Who, What, Where, When, How, Why* questions together.

INTERPRETATION -- Answer these questions together:

1. What does this passage teach us about God?

- a) Take a close look at the passage. Do you believe God is sovereign over all? Why?
- b) What events in your life can make it seem like God is not sovereign over all?
- c) What are the attributes/blessings of embracing God's sovereignty?
- d) How have you seen God's sovereignty over all creation play a massive role in your life?
- e) How should God's sovereignty over everything impact how we value God's own Kingdom?

2. What does this passage teach us about us?

a) We are either resting and trusting in God's own Kingdom or building our own Kingdom. Based on that passage, how do we seek to build our own Kingdom, and what are the effects of living in this life only to build our own Kingdom (at the workplace, ministry, family, relationships, choices, etc)?

b) Read v.3-5: To build our own Kingdom is to see our possessions (achievements, status, relationships) as an earning, rather than a gift from God. What was a situation and its effects when you viewed a possession as your earnings instead of a heritage/gift from God?

3. What does this passage teach us about grace/salvation? How does it point to Christ?

a) Rest in God's kingdom is received, not achieved—He brings us in and accepts us as His children by grace through Jesus' blood (Eph 2:8 9; Jn 1:12 13). Based on that passage, what eternal blessings do we receive when God adopts us as His children in Christ?

b) Psalm 127:1–2 warns that building apart from God is in vain, but verse 5 assures that those under His care are never put to shame. What fears, doubts, guilt, or shame tempt you to trust your own strength instead of resting in Christ's finished work that justifies and defends you?

c) How can you begin to walk out your identity as "child" and "beloved" into those areas of shame, guilt, and fear?

APPLICATION – v.4 says, *Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth:*

- Where are you living like an arrow without a warrior—relying only on yourself?
- Where are you living like an arrow in the hands of a false warrior—trusting something other than God for identity, direction, and ultimate motivation?
- Where are you living like an arrow in the hands of the true Warrior—trusting God's character and intentions?

PRAYER

- Praise God for bringing you into His Kingdom, even when undeserving.
- Confess ways you allow fear, guilt, and shame to dictate your attitude and behaviors, rather than your identity as "child" and "beloved."
- Thank Christ for his intercessory role on the cross, now, and forever, against the enemies' accusations.
- Ask God for wisdom, understanding, and strength to walk in a manner worthy of His kingdom.