Reason For Hope

Week 1 - Reason Together Discussion Guide

Summary

This sermon begins a series on having a 'reason for hope' based on 1 Peter 3:15, which calls believers to be prepared to give a defense for their faith with gentleness and respect. Pastor Jon emphasizes that Christians don't need to have all the answers to share their faith effectively - it's better to be honest about what we don't know and seek answers together. The message focuses on the importance of thinking well and reasoning logically as Christians, introducing the concept of logical fallacies that hinder clear thinking. He argues that pursuing good reason matters because God is logical and orderly, He is the source of all wisdom, the Gospel represents God's central wisdom, God's judgment is inevitable and righteous, and spiritual warfare involves promoting truth and reason rather than physical conflict.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come before You today with grateful hearts, knowing that You are the source of all wisdom and understanding. As we gather to study Your Word and discuss the truths You've revealed to us, we ask that You would open our hearts and minds to what You want us to learn today. Help us to think clearly and reason well, just as You have called us to do. Remove any barriers that might prevent us from receiving what You have for us in this time together. Give us humble hearts that are ready to grow and be challenged. We pray this in Jesus' name, Amen.

Ice Breaker

What's one question you've always wondered about but never really looked up the answer to?

Key Verses

- 1 Peter 3:15
- Isaiah 1:18
- Philippians 4:4-6
- Romans 1:16-17
- Romans 1:18-22

- 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

Questions

- Jon mentioned that it's unrealistic to expect Christians to have all the answers. How does this perspective change the way you might approach conversations about faith with others?
- Looking at the logical fallacies mentioned (ad hominem, straw man, appeal to authority, false dichotomy, slippery slope), which one do you see most often in everyday conversations or media?
- In Isaiah 1:18, God invites His people to 'come now, let us reason together.' What does this tell us about God's character and how He wants to relate to us?
- The sermon states that 'God is not a God of confusion, but a God of peace.' How can we reflect this aspect of God's character in our own thinking and communication?
- How does understanding that our brains are 'fearfully and wonderfully made' by God change the way we should approach learning and thinking?
- The pastor described spiritual warfare as 'the promotion of truth, reason and freedom' rather than physical conflict. How does this change your understanding of what it means to engage in spiritual battle?
- Romans 1:18-22 describes how people 'suppress the truth' and become 'futile in their thinking.' What are some ways we can guard against this in our own lives?
- The sermon emphasized that the Gospel is 'the power of God for salvation.' How can developing better reasoning skills help us communicate this truth more effectively to others?

Life Application

This week, practice identifying logical fallacies in conversations, news, or advertisements you encounter. Keep the handout nearby and try to spot at least one logical fallacy each day. When you notice one, take a moment to think about what the actual facts or arguments are versus what emotional appeals or faulty reasoning might be at play. This will help train your mind to think more clearly and reason more effectively.

Key Takeaways

- Christians don't need to have all the answers - it's better to be honest about what we don't know and seek truth together
- God is logical, reasonable, and orderly, and He calls us to think well and reason with discipline
- Learning to identify and avoid logical fallacies helps us think more clearly and communicate truth more effectively
- The Gospel represents the central wisdom of God and is the most reasonable response to humanity's need for salvation
- Spiritual warfare involves promoting truth, reason, and freedom rather than engaging in physical or emotional battles

Ending Prayer

Lord God, thank You for this time of fellowship and learning together. We're grateful that You've given us minds capable of reason and understanding, and that You invite us to think well about the truths You've revealed. Help us to be people who pursue wisdom and understanding, not for our own pride, but so that we can better represent You to a world that desperately needs to know the hope we have in Christ. As we go from this place, give us opportunities to share that hope with gentleness and respect, and help us to continue growing in our ability to think clearly and reason well. May our lives bring glory to You in all we think, say, and do. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.