



Joel

RECALL

ASK THIS:

Think about a time when you embarked on a restoration project. What was your inspiration to begin the restoration? What kept you motivated to finish the project? Share your experience with the group.

SERMON RECAP:

Have someone in your group retell the story of Joel and the main points from the Sunday message in their own words. After a few minutes have others add details. What is your key learning from this discussion?

READ ALOUD:

The book of Joel provides a prophetic word to Israel regarding the Day of the Lord. The phrase is a general one referring to both specific instances of judgment and to the final Day of Judgment. In all cases Joel is attempting to motivate Israel to a time of repentance. Joel's message is that our God is a redeemer and seeks to restore His broken relationship with us if we genuinely ask forgiveness for our sins.

REVEAL

PRAY TOGETHER:

Take a few moments and ask God to help you discern, understand and apply the spiritual truth(s) of this week's lesson.

READ TOGETHER:

Read through these key passages from the book of Joel as a group.

Joel 1:2-4 (HCSB)

"2 Hear this, you elders; listen, all you inhabitants of the land. Has anything like this ever happened in your days or in the days of your ancestors? 3 Tell your children about it, and let your children tell their children, and their children the next generation. 4 What the devouring locust has left, the swarming locust has eaten; what the swarming locust has left, the young locust has eaten; and what the young locust has left, the destroying locust has eaten."

Joel 1:14-15 (HCSB)

"14 Announce a sacred fast; proclaim an assembly! Gather the elders and all the residents of the land at the house of the LORD your God, and cry out to the LORD. 15 Woe because of that day! For the Day of the LORD is near and will come as devastation from the Almighty."

Joel 2:12-13 (HCSB)

“12 Even now— [this is] the LORD’s declaration— turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, weeping, and mourning. 13 Tear your hearts, not just your clothes, and return to the LORD your God. For He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, rich in faithful love, and He relents from sending disaster.”

Joel 2:25-26, 32 (HCSB)

25 I will repay you for the years that the swarming locust ate, the young locust, the destroying locust, and the devouring locust— My great army that I sent against you. 26 You will have plenty to eat and be satisfied. You will praise the name of Yahweh your God, who has dealt wondrously with you. My people will never again be put to shame. 32 Then everyone who calls on the name of Yahweh will be saved, for there will be an escape for those on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, as the LORD promised, among the survivors the LORD calls.

Joel 3:20-21 (HCSB)

“20 But Judah will be inhabited forever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation. 21 I will pardon their bloodguilt, [which] I have not pardoned, for the LORD dwells in Zion.”

REFLECT

READ ALOUD:

Briefly review the key contextual points about the book of Joel to help you better understand and apply the message.

1. At the time of this story, frequent military incursions had occurred from Israel’s northern neighbors. In addition, an extended drought and a massive invasion of locusts had desolated the land. All of these events had left Israel weak.
2. The Day of the Lord is a key theme in the book of Joel. There is no mention of time frame with regard to this phrase, but more so to a general period of judgment belonging to the Lord. The Day of the Lord is often connected to earthquakes, severe weather, darkness, and other calamities (like drought and locusts).

RECOGNIZE

READ THIS:

Keeping in mind the context of the book of Joel, carefully take note of the truth(s) and/or promises God provides.

1. Not related to any specific sins, Joel uses the physical devastation of Israel as an illustration of God’s judgment of sins. In addition, he warns that on the future Day of the Lord both His enemies and the faithful will be judged in a manner far more serious than the physical disaster currently described.
2. Fortunately, Joel also points out that the Day of the Lord will bring promise and hope to those who humbly seek Him. God will reaffirm his covenant with His people by redeeming them for eternity.
3. Joel relays a promise from the Lord to redeem His people physically through the healing of their land, spiritually through the outpouring of His Holy Spirit, and nationally through His divine judgment on the unrighteous.

RESPOND

DISCUSS:

Discuss the following questions as a group in order to help apply the truths of the book of Joel to your life.

1. Describe a relationship in your life where you have done something destructive and subsequently had to seek restoration. What ultimately brought healing to the situation?
2. Share a time in your life when nothing seemed to be going your way. Did you see this as God's judgment or God's leading?
3. We all make poor decisions at times. Describe some active decisions that might lead to sin. Describe some passive decisions that might lead to sin. How do these decisions affect our relationship with God?
4. How does the second chapter of Joel describe what our repentance should look like (v 12-13)? In dealing with our current sins, where might we fall short of true repentance?
5. Read 2 Chronicles 33:10-13. Even the worst king of Judah repented and received forgiveness. What key lessons can be learned from these few verses?
6. Read Numbers 11:29 and Joel 2:28. The Old Testament prophets looked forward to a day when God would send His Spirit to all who called on His name. In Acts 2:38-40; Peter proclaimed this gift to be available to all through faith in Jesus Christ. Armed with this information what are we called to do as non-Christians? As Christians?
7. How can having a lack of trials in your life lead you to ignoring God? How might this affect your decision-making? How do you stay in tune with God's will?
8. In this life you may endure pain, suffering, and loss that can be devastating. In what ways is God able to restore us from these afflictions? What does He want from us in return?