

Growth Group Questions

2nd Sunday in Advent – December 7, 2025

Introduction

I know what you're thinking...we just had a Sunday focused on judgment. And you're right! Why is it fitting to think of Jesus as judge at both the end of the church year AND the beginning?

Into the Word – Isaiah 11:1-10

1. Why is it accurate to describe Jesus as “a shoot from the stump of Jesse”?
2. Isaiah 11:2 is often thought to be the meaning of Revelation’s “seven-fold spirit” language (Rev. 1:4). The “Spirit of the LORD”, and then description in three pairs. Comment on how each pair is related to each other. (wisdom/understanding, counsel/might, knowledge/fear of the LORD)
3. Give examples of how Jesus fulfilled the description given in Isaiah 11:1-5.
4. In verse 10 Jesus is described as the “Root” of Jesse. But verse 1 called him a “shoot” from Jesse’s stump! How can he be both?

Into the Word – Romans 15:4-13

5. What is the purpose of Scripture? (See verse 4.) How does that help us when we don't find all the answers we're looking for to all our questions?
6. Verse 7 could be hung at the entrance of every church building. Explain what it would mean for Christians to accept one another as Christ accepted us. (Also explain why this doesn't mean “tolerate sin.”)

7. Coming to the end of this letter, Paul rejoices once again that salvation is not for the Jews alone, but for Gentiles also. This shouldn't have been a new concept. (The references are to 2 Samuel 22:50, Psalm 18:49, Deuteronomy 32:43, Psalm 117:1, and of course, Isaiah 11:10).
8. Jehovah's Witnesses use that phrase to teach that Jesus was the first created, and therefore less than fully God. Why is that ironic considering the context here?

Into the Word – Matthew 3:1-12

9. What was likely the point of John the Baptist's strange diet and clothing?
10. How do you know John's message is aimed also at *our* hearts?
11. What do these verses say to those who believe that God will save all Jews for Abraham's sake?
12. Describing Jesus as one who baptizes “with the Holy Spirit and fire” is fun. There are at least a couple possibilities for what this phrase means. See if you can come up with one or two together.
13. What is God describing with the “ax...at the root of the trees” and “burning up the chaff”?

Closing Prayer – Jesus, you are not only our friend and loving Shepherd, but also the mighty Judge of all. Help me to see my sin and turn away from it. Help me to find my place in your holy Church and move in my heart to lead me to active service in joy. To you be the glory. Amen.