

He Chose the Nails Viewer Guide Session 1: He Chose to Be One of Us

Discussion Questions:

1. What part of the teaching had the most impact on you?

Receiving the Gifts of Easter

2. Imagine for a moment that you have decided to do a random act of kindness for a stranger by leaving a \$100 bill in a public place (such as a park, a lobby, or a store aisle). What kind of person do you most hope will and will not find your gift?
 - a. If someone in the less-than-deserving category were to find your gift, what thoughts might you be giving him or her?
 - b. What internal dynamics sometimes make it difficult for you to truly receive a gift?
3. How would you describe your understanding or experience of Lent over the years?
 - a. What, if anything, shifts in your perspective when you think of Lent less as a season of guilt or giving something up and more as a time to be intentional about preparing to receive joy and good things from God?
 - b. The Hebrew verbs translated *rend* and *return* in Joel 2:12-13 are images of repentance in action. People would *rend* or tear their garments as an expression of intense grief or in response to a catastrophe. To *return* means to make a U-turn, to go to the point of departure, to change one's mind. What do these two words – *rend* and *return* – suggest about what it means not only to seek reconciliation with God but also to do so *with all your heart*?
 - c. Drawing on any previous experiences of repentance and forgiveness (with God or others), what three words or phrases would you use to describe what it's like to *rend* your heart? What three words or phrases would you use to describe "the joy of being cleaned out"?
4. What do you think is the significance of the crown of thorns?

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5. As you anticipate learning more about the gifts of Easter in the remaining sessions of this study, in what ways does this perspective about receiving God's gifts challenge you? In what ways does it intrigue you or encourage you?