

MISSION 2020 = WEST COUNTY
ENJOY GRACE – JEREMIAH 29:4-14

SCRIPTURE & SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE – SEPTEMBER 20

OPEN

1. What do you find most of your energy and attention going to these days?

This week, we begin a short series reflecting on our mission to enjoy grace, embody love, and engage culture in the challenging season. Pastor Slade invited us consider God's word through the prophet Jeremiah in the context of the Babylonian exile—an experience in Israel's history where their entire way of life was disrupted and their future seemed uncertain. **READ JEREMIAH 29:4-14.**

DISCUSS

2. In verses 8-9 and the surrounding context, we see that Jeremiah was not the only prophet speaking to God's people at this time. We learn in chapter 28 of the false prophet Hananiah was telling the people that the exile would be over much sooner giving them a false hope and comfort. How have you been navigating the noise and competing voices in this season? What has helped you stay tied to God's heart and voice?
3. God's promise in Jeremiah 29:11 is often used on coffee mugs and social media posts as a source of inspiration and optimism. What did you learn about the context of this promise from Pastor Slade? What does this promise reveal about God's heart and character? In what sense is this promise for us even if it was not written to us?
4. Have you found yourself paralyzed by your circumstances or stuck in "wishful thinking"? How does this passage challenge your perspective on God's presence and purposes even in the midst of hardship?
5. Is there a particular way you've experienced God's hand in your life over the past few months? How do you sense the Spirit inviting you to engage differently with the Lord in this next season?
6. Is there a particular burden for our church or broader community that God is calling you to intercede for in prayer or your active engagement?

PRAY

As you enter into a time of prayer, have someone read out loud Lamentations 3:22-24 – *The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning, great is your faithfulness. "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him."* Praise the LORD for his steadfast love, mercy and faithfulness. Pray for one another, especially regarding the ways you are seeking to grow in this next season.