

## Fellowship Group Questions for *The God Beyond the Clutter*

Read Psalm 36:1-4

As David writes this Psalm it's as if he is looking at the picture of the world all he can see is the clutter of evil. What kind of evil clutter goes do you see in the picture of our world today?

David describes the wicked as having “no fear of God”. How is this “fear of God” different than “the fear of the Lord?” **The Hebrew word for “fear” used in Psalm 36:1 is different than the word in the phrase “the fear of the Lord” (cf. Proverbs 9:10: 14:27). The word used in Ps. 36 means “terror, dread” and the other word for fear means “respect or awe.”**

Why do you think a different word for “fear” is used here? Why not just use the word that means “respect?” **A follower of Jesus needs to have a healthy fear of the Lord—he/she needs to take God seriously. The Christian needs to have full respect and be in awe of the God who loves them and has done so much for them. The person who is not a follower of Christ and is living a life totally contrary to the person of God needs to be afraid of God because he will one day judge their sin.**

What is a common way that people try to justify their sinfulness? **They will compare themselves with someone who is worse than they are**

What is the danger of contemplating (dwelling on) the sin around you for too long? **Thinking about the sin around you can very quickly and easily discourage you. If you're not careful you can quickly find yourself with a gloom and doom sort of outlook.**

Read Psalm 36:5-9

How would you summarize the psalmist attitude in these verses? **It is an attitude of praise or worship.**

List the different characteristics of God that David praises. **Love, faithfulness, righteousness, justice, care**

How would concentrating on God and praising Him help David at this point? **Focusing on the goodness of God helped so that he wouldn't get too bummed with the wickedness he saw around him.**

Read Psalm 36:10-12

Why do you think that the psalmist chooses to refer to God's unfailing love three times (vv. 5, 7, 10) rather than one of the other characteristics? **1 John 4:8 tells us that, “God is love” His love is a *holy* love, and His holiness is expressed in love. His faithfulness, righteousness, justice and care are expressed in love.**

Review the “Psalm Things 2 Think About” and share which one(s) especially spoke to you.

- 1). Be aware of the distorted pattern of sin.
- 2). Don't allow the wickedness of the world to overshadow the wonder of God.
- 3). Don't forget that God always has the final word.

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