

05.20.18 - Faith Promise: Explore Global Missions

Leader Prep Section

- Prepare by reading through the questions and scripture passage so that you can select a few questions that are best suited to your group.
- Try to work through at least one question from each of the sections - Hook, Book, Look, Took in order to move from observation to application.
- When possible spend time in prayer for each member of your group.

Goal: Explore a call to missions--to join with God as he brings his Kingdom here on earth as it is in heaven. Explore the why behind social justice ministries.

Hook - Ice breaker type questions to help make the transition into the study time.

- What are some things that stood out to you from Sunday's sermon?
- Have you ever been interested in overseas missions or been on a short-term, cross-cultural mission trip? How does that affect your normal life now?
- When you think of overseas missions, what role do you imagine social justice ministry plays?

Background / Reading

In Isaiah 58, fasting represents the worship that the Jewish people wanted to give to God. In their fasts / worship they had the appearance of humility, but actually used their "service" to accomplish their own goals (v.3), and at the expense of others. Because of this, God says they can expect their voices and calls for help to be ignored (v.4). Yikes!

Read: Isaiah 58:6-12

- Does anyone have any questions about this passage? Or observations that stand out to you immediately? (Remind those who share that we'll likely return to their ideas in our discussion!)

Book - These questions are designed to get you into the text itself.

- Take a minute to list *some* of the things that fasting God's way includes (DO) and forbids (DO NOT). Then list what happens to the one who follows these instructions (THEN)....

Here's my list:

DO	DO NOT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Loose the chains of injustice• Untie burdens• Set oppressed free• Share food with hungry• Shelter poor / foreigner• Clothe naked• Spend yourselves for the hungry• Help the oppressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Turn away from helping your own family / people• Burden or oppress• Falsely accuse• Speak evil of others
THEN...	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your light will be like the dawn• Healing will happen fast• Righteousness and glory of the Lord will guide and protect you	

- God will answer when you call
- God will be with you when you need help
- Your light will rise in the darkness
- God will guide you
- He will satisfy your needs
- He will strengthen you
- You will have all you need without fail
- God's people will see restoration in their lives and their places

- Can you paraphrase or summarize the list of DOs and DO NOTs?
(Ex: Help the vulnerable with their physical needs; Help those you see around you who are struggling; Live a life of justice)
- How does that list compare to the rituals, rules, and false humility that the people of Israel were counting on to give them salvation?
- What does it mean for someone's light to be like the dawn or to rise in the darkness?
- Why is serving others related to God listening to us and helping us?

Look - These questions will take you on a deeper look at what the passage means for us today.

- How does living the Isaiah 58 life affect someone's effectiveness as a missionary?
- How is serving someone's physical needs related to sharing the gospel?
- What are the dangers of prioritizing serving physical needs over spiritual needs? How do we avoid those dangers?

Took - These questions are focused on applying the big idea from the text to our lives.

- What ways in your life are you actively bringing Jesus' kingdom by caring for the weak and vulnerable?
- 60% of unreached people groups live in countries closed to missionaries from North America. How can social justice ministries be used to reach them?
- What are some ways that you can--right now in your normal life--further the work of the gospel among the nations?

Closing

- Pray for the 42.2% of the world's population (3.1 billion) who are "unreached," meaning they do not have a Christian witness in their own language or cultural group.
- Pray for the 634 million people (representing 4,400 languages) who don't yet have any part of the bible translated into their native language.
- Pray for missionaries serving in closed countries: that they can effectively use justice ministries to introduce people to Jesus, if that's the creative visa/access method they choose.
- As of 2015, only 3.3% of overseas missionaries were serving in places and among people where there is no community of believers. Pray for God to call more missionaries to serve where there is no church. Pray that those who are called (or even just interested!) will answer and will be equipped to go.

Check out more unbelievable statistics about missions here: <http://www.thetravelingteam.org/stats>