



4 weeks of Small Group Studies about the heart of God for those beyond us

Sermon-based Small Group Studies are designed to be explored with your Small Group after hearing the Sunday sermon.

To access the sermon again, please head to the church website
www.devonportcoc.com.au or YouTube channel.

Email: reception@devonportcoc.com.au



Find more information about our Beyond Us partners here:

Destiny Rescue

<https://www.destinyrescue.org.au/>

Compassion

<https://www.compassion.com.au/>

Open Doors

<https://www.opendoors.org.au/>

Devonport Chaplaincy

<https://devonportchaplaincy.org.au/>

Empart

<https://empart.org.au/>

Justice

Beyond Us focus: Destiny Rescue

Introduction

God wants justice to be part of our beautiful and broken world. While we may not be able to solve every injustice around the world, God's desire for justice to, "roll like a river" (Amos 5:24) should stir our hearts and prompt us to action.

Icebreaker Questions

1. What is a minor injustice (such as a driver cutting in on you or someone jumping the queue) that really gets you stirred up?
2. Share something you learnt, know or were challenged about during the Destiny Rescue talk.

From the Scriptures

1. Read Micah 6:8. What is your definition or understanding of justice? What does acting justly look like in your everyday life?
2. Look up these verses from the Psalms - 33:4-5, 36:5-6, 89:14. Which other character traits of God are linked to his justice?

3. Read Amos 5:10-15 and 21-24. Why is God so strongly opposed to the perpetrators of injustice in these passages? What are the implications for us from these verses?

Life Application Questions

1. Look up James 2:1-9 and Luke 16:19-25. These verses suggest that ignoring the needs of the poor is an injustice and an offence to the heart of God. What can we learn from these passages about a Godly attitude toward people from all levels of society?
2. In what ways do you ignore, avoid, walk past or dismiss the needs of the poor in your everyday life or further afield in the world?
3. What voices of poverty or outcries of injustice are you hearing at the moment? If God is laying this burden on your heart, what will you do about it?
4. How can your life more closely reflect God's love of justice this week?

Prayer

Pray for the work of Destiny Rescue and any other personal, local or international injustices that are on your heart.

Mercy

Beyond Us focus: Compassion

Introduction

Following Jesus involves more than simply believing in him; It is allowing his heart to shape ours. God's mercy and compassion are woven throughout the story of the Bible, but how do those traits move us to prayer, obedience and action?

Icebreaker Questions

1. Share about a time when you were prompted to respond with mercy or kindness. What was the outcome?
2. What did you empathise with or what were you challenged by, during the talk about the work of Compassion?

From the Scriptures

1. Read Psalm 51:1-4. Using these verses as a reference, how would you describe or define mercy?
2. Read Exodus 3:7-10, when God called Moses to leadership.

What do you notice about God's heart for his people? What does this teach us about where our calling from God begins?

3. Read Luke 10:25-37. According to the passage, why did the Samaritan help the man who was hurt?

Why do you think the priest and the Levite didn't help? To what degree do you identify with them?

Life Application Questions

1. Look at the forms of help given by the Samaritan man. Which form of help is hardest for you to provide and why?
2. Jesus encourages us not to simply observe from the sidelines, but to step into his mission. Is there a person, place or ministry where you sense God may be prompting you to share his mercy or compassion? How will you turn the thought into action?
3. Read Titus 3:3-7. Our salvation was not provided because we deserved it, but because God is merciful. How can this passage reshape our heart, ensuring we don't become like the priest or the Levite from the Luke passage?
4. Read the Titus verses silently and meditate on one of the words or phrases that describe God. Share which word stood out to you and why.

Prayer

Pray for God to help us understand the depths of his mercy. Pray also for the work of Compassion, and for our church's future involvement with it.

Obedience

Beyond Us focus: Open Doors

Introduction

Part of Jesus' mission was to declare the good news that God's Kingdom had come near. To what degree is sharing the love of Jesus with those beyond us, a call to obedience? Is this an optional extra that only a few are responsible for or are we all called to obey Jesus' command in Matthew 28:18-20 to "Go"?

Icebreaker Questions

1. What is the most exciting news that you have shared, and how did it feel being able to share it?
2. What is something that stood out to you about the work of Open Doors?

From the Scriptures

1. Read Matthew 28:16-20. Why is it important that verse 19 hinges on what verse 18 says?
2. How can we interpret Matthew 28:18-20 in our current context? Does Jesus' instruction apply to every believer?

3. Read Jonah 1:1-3. What might be some possible motivations for Jonah choosing to deliberately disobey God and run away?

Can you relate to any of the emotions Jonah may have been feeling?

4. Now read Jonah 3:1-10. What do you notice about God's character in this passage? Why do you think God persisted in sending Jonah?

Life Application Questions

1. Read Jonah 3:10 - 4:4. God's purpose was still carried out at Ninevah, but in Jonah's heart he remained reluctant to obey. What did Jonah miss out on because of his unwillingness to surrender to God's plan?
2. Look back at Matthew 28:18-20. Do you have a sense of reluctance at Jesus' command? If so, what is your reluctance based on? What might you miss out on if you ignore or resist God's call?
3. Is your heart drawn more to God's work in your neighbourhood or in the nations? What might your personal "Go" be, in your local community and beyond?

Prayer

Pray for hearts to be surrendered in obedience to God, and for the faith to believe that he goes before us and is already at work. Pray for each person's action step (their "Go") this week.

Faithfulness

Beyond Us focus: Devonport Chaplaincy and Empart

Introduction

The mission of God has always been carried forward by ordinary people empowered by an extraordinary gospel. In this study we explore the difference between our role - faithfulness to God's call – and the work of God's Spirit: fruitfulness.

Icebreaker Questions

1. What is something you have been faithfully doing for a long time, and what is the result of your faithfulness, so far?
2. Have you ever been involved in a local, national or international mission? How was it a growth opportunity for you?

From the Scriptures

1. Read Matthew 25:14-30. What does it mean to be faithful with the resources, time, opportunities and gifts that God has entrusted to us? Which of these do you struggle to be faithful with?
2. Why do you think Jesus connects faithfulness to joy in Matthew 25:21? How has being faithful brought joy for you in the past?

3. Read Luke 8:4-15. How does knowing that the seed is to be scattered regardless of the condition of the soil, challenge our approach to sharing the Word?

Life Application Questions

1. In these two parables, how are fruitfulness and faithfulness connected? What is God's role and what is our responsibility?
2. How can we maintain hope and keep praying for those who seem unresponsive or hardened? What does it mean to be a faithful worker rather than a successful one?
3. Who is someone you are praying for to come to know Jesus? Share with your group what you think the condition of the soil of their heart might be. How do you intend to sow into their life this week?
4. What is one act of obedience or faithfulness that could grow your faith and deepen your joy?

Prayer

Thank God for his faithfulness to us. Pray for each other, for persistence in God's work and for the joy of spiritual fruit in those we are praying for to know Jesus.

