



## LENT 2026

### Week 4: Praise and Worship

Read or listen to Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12

- What were the images of ugliness?
- What were the images of glory?
- What were the images of redemption?
- What were the images of revelation/fresh vision?

#### For Discussion:

1. What in this passage leads us to praise and worship?
  - a. What does the passage reveal about God's character?
  - b. What is praiseworthy about what God has done for us?
  - c. What is praiseworthy about God's ability to overcome and use suffering to restore humanity?
  - d. What is praiseworthy about God's ability to repurpose something as wrong as suffering and death to achieve his good purposes?

2. Looking at Isaiah 52:13 and 14, what strikes you about these two verses? Why do you think they are so different?
  - a. How could someone be both ‘highly exalted’ and disfigured ‘beyond human likeness’?
  - b. How does this dual reality reveal something wonderful about God’s character?
  - c. How could the cross both be immensely awful and praiseworthy? (*Think about Good Friday*)
  - d. How could Jesus’ wounds both be disfiguring and the way in which people see his glory? (*Think particularly of doubting Thomas. John 20: 24-29*)
  - e. How does God's ability and willingness to belittle himself in so great a way actually show his strength not weakness?
  - f. Why is God worthy of all praise and yet why can people so easily despise him? Especially as revealed in Jesus?
3. Read Isaiah 9:1-7. This may be familiar as this is a celebrated passage often read in Advent that predicts the birth of Christ. What praiseworthy characteristics of God stick out to you?
  - a. How does this passage relate to the suffering servant?
4. How is the darkness/gloom and the light (mentioned in Isaiah 9:1-2) related to the suffering servant passage (Isaiah 52 and 53)?
5. What does it mean to be a wonderful counsellor (9:6)? What does a good guide do for us in the hardest parts of a journey (53:4-7)?

6. What does it mean to be the prince of peace (9:6)? How does the suffering servant bring us peace/wholeness/Shalom (53:5)?
7. What does it mean for God to be Almighty (mighty in all things - 9:6)?
  - a. How does the suffering servant show us God's true might?
  - b. How does God's ability and willingness to belittle himself in so great a way actually show his strength not weakness?
8. (Comparing Isaiah 9:7 and 53:10-12) How does the child in Isaiah 9 establish and uphold his Kingdom with justice and righteousness? How does the suffering servant lead (Isaiah 53)? What does he do for his people? What does he do for God?

## **Reflective Prayer Time:**

The suffering servant, Jesus, took on every part of our weak and sinful and offered in its place something so much more. The suffering servant narrative shows us many of these realities. Here are a few:

- a. He took on our Death to prolong days
- b. He was despised to make us his children
- c. He took on our guilt to make us righteous
- d. He was made the lowest of humans (despised and rejected) to share his spoils with us who didn't deserve them
- e. Even though we continue to be weak and fail, he intercedes for us and defends us.
- f. In his complete willingness to give of himself out of love for the Father and for us (to the point of suffering and death), Jesus satisfied God's desire for us and our need for him.

Pause now to take these in. (*You can continue during the week.*)

### **Continued Reflective Prayer:**

How has God shown himself to be worthy of praise in your life?

Are there aspects of God's praiseworthiness that you struggle with? Take a moment to dwell on those.

How has Jesus restored my relationship with God and filled me with peace to praise and worship today?

### **For Further Reflection**

During the week reflect again on items listed in "a" – "f" **in Reflective Prayer Time.**