

## Message Discussion Guide THE SCANDAL OF THE GOSPEL

*The Church at Brook Hills,*

*Dr. David Platt*

*August 1, 2010*

*Isaiah 52:13-53:12*

This guide is to help you facilitate discussion with your Small Group. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering and owning the truths of God's Word. There may be questions you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on their relationship with God. Your role is to facilitate this experience not to complete the discussion guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid teaching task list.

### **Connect . . .**

*Use one or both of the following options to introduce the discussion time to follow.*

#### **Option 1**

Invite learners to answer the following question: **How have you struggled with reconciling the holiness of God with the love of God?** Encourage learners to discuss their answers for a few minutes. Then explain that today you will discuss how God's plan for salvation maintains both perfectly.

#### **Option 2**

Read the following quote from John Stott that David read in his teaching time: "Forgiveness is for God the profoundest of problems." Encourage learners to respond to this quote. Ask the following question: **What does our reaction to this quote reveal about our view of God's attributes?** Allow for a short time of discussion. Then explain that today you will discuss why this statement is so pertinent for our salvation.

### **Review the Message . . .**

#### **The Servant of God...**

- He will \_\_\_\_\_ repulse \_\_\_\_\_, but He will \_\_\_\_\_ redeem \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A \_\_\_\_\_ human \_\_\_\_\_ servant...
    - With an \_\_\_\_\_ appalling \_\_\_\_\_ nature.
  - A \_\_\_\_\_ divine \_\_\_\_\_ sovereign...
    - Who will \_\_\_\_\_ astound \_\_\_\_\_ the nations.

#### **Discussion**

- Based on previous readings/studies in *Faithful Prophets in a Divided Kingdom* what are some of the attributes of God that caused Him to promise wrath and justice?
- Read Isaiah 52:13-53:12. Point out that the "servant" in this passage is someone who will come in the future. Explain that all of these prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus' life and death, and He was the "servant."
- Looking at 52:13-15, how do these verses describe the effects of the torture that Jesus endured?
- Despite His appearance, what do these verses indicate about His purpose and true worth? How are both His humanity and divinity apparent in this passage?

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- Who were included as witnesses and recipients of His Kingship? What does this indicate about His mission?

#### Application . . .

- How does our “image” of Jesus’ crucifixion change when we read that His appearance had become appalling to look at?
  - What tends to be our reaction to Christ when we read about or see depictions of His torture and crucifixion?
  - What should be an appropriate response to Christ when we consider passages like these?
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- The Lord will \_\_\_\_\_ reveal \_\_\_\_\_ Him, but we will \_\_\_\_\_ reject \_\_\_\_\_ Him.
    - See His \_\_\_\_\_ humiliation \_\_\_\_\_.
    - See our \_\_\_\_\_ condemnation \_\_\_\_\_.

#### Discussion

- Enlist a learner to read Isaiah 53:1-3.
- How does this passage describe Jesus’ life?
- Describe how different circumstances of Jesus’ life illustrated His humility.
- How does the passage describe His acceptance by people who He loves?
- What do the phrases “man of sorrow” and “acquainted with grief” reveal about the humanity of Jesus?

#### Application . . .

- Imagine a person fitting these descriptions of Jesus in today’s world. What kind of a person would we typically imagine? How would we react to this person in our church culture?
  - What parts of Jesus’ “less-than-majestic” life do we like to reject?
  - How does humility in our own lives compare to the humble attitude of a rejected King?
  - Do we most often view Christ as a person who existed in a perfect state of happy contentment or as a man who knew grief well? Why?
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- He will be \_\_\_\_\_ slaughtered \_\_\_\_\_ so that we can be \_\_\_\_\_ saved \_\_\_\_\_.
    - He will endure the \_\_\_\_\_ penalty \_\_\_\_\_ of sin.
    - He will take the \_\_\_\_\_ place \_\_\_\_\_ of sinners.
      - The essence of sin: \_\_\_\_\_ Man \_\_\_\_\_ substitutes himself for God.
      - The essence of salvation: \_\_\_\_\_ God \_\_\_\_\_ substitutes himself for man.

#### Discussion

- Enlist two learners to read Psalm 5:5-6 and John 3:36. According to Scripture, how does God feel about sinners?

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- How can God's infinite holiness and justice allow Him to still save sinful people, whom He abhors because of their sin?
- Enlist a learner to read Isaiah 53:4-6.
- What did it mean for Christ to take not only the full penalty of sin but also the full wrath of the Father on Him at death?
- What is the significance of the truth that Christ actually took the place of sinners on the cross rather than simply dealing with our sins?
- How does the cross of Christ show the love, holiness, and justice of God?

#### Application . . .

- Why is our view of God's love and hatred for sin/sinners often so imbalanced?
- Why do we shy away from believing the truth about the serious nature of sin in our relationship with God?
- How does our realization that God not only loves sinners (true to His mercy and love) but also hates them (true to His holiness) make the cross so much more incredible?
- How does seeing ourselves correctly before a holy and loving God help us to respond appropriately to Christ?

- He will \_\_\_\_\_ suffer \_\_\_\_\_ in sinless \_\_\_\_\_ silence \_\_\_\_\_.
  - Notice the \_\_\_\_\_ detail \_\_\_\_\_ of this prophecy.
  - Remember the \_\_\_\_\_ effect \_\_\_\_\_ of this prophecy.

#### Discussion

- Read Isaiah 53:7-9.
- Enlist several learners to read Matthew 26:62-63, Mark 15:4-5, Luke 23:9, and Matthew 27:57-59. How are these prophecies in Isaiah fulfilled exactly in the life of Christ?
- Knowing that Isaiah made these prophecies approximately 700 years before Christ, what does their fulfillment indicate about God's sovereign plan for salvation?
- What does Jesus' silence demonstrate about His willingness to accept God's plan?

#### Application . . .

- How should our view of God be affected by the knowledge that He is sovereign over His mission and plan in the world?
- Why can we have hope that God's plan was always to provide a Redeemer?

- All will be satisfied \_\_\_\_\_ in His \_\_\_\_\_ substitution \_\_\_\_\_.
  - The Father will be satisfied...
    - He will display the full extent of His justice \_\_\_\_\_.

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- He will demonstrate the full expression of His love.
- He will satisfy Himself and save sinners at the same time.
- Before the cross is for anyone else's sake, the cross is for God's sake.
- The Son will be satisfied...
  - He will rescue the children of God in His death.
  - He will show the power of God in His resurrection.
  - He will accomplish the will of God in His exaltation.
  - The suffering servant will become the sovereign Savior.
- We will be satisfied...
  - We will be vindicated before God the Father.
  - We will be victors with God the Son.

#### Discussion

- Read Isaiah 53:10-12.
- Who orchestrated Christ's brutal crucifixion?
- Who orchestrated Christ's glorious resurrection?
- Look at all of the verbs in this passage that describe Jesus' sacrifice. How do they describe God's wrath?
- How does the cross maintain God's righteousness? How does it show evidence of His love?
- How did Jesus' obedience to God's Will bring glory to God and redeemed His relationship with humankind?
- How did Christ's ransom enable man to stand righteous before a holy God?

#### Application . . .

- Why must we see God as both infinitely loving AND infinitely holy?
- Knowing the reason for God's plan for salvation, why can we be sure that Christ is the only way to a redeeming relationship with God?
- What is our proper response to God for His saving grace?

#### The Scandal of the Gospel...

- God accepts unacceptable people.
- God honors shameful people.
- God treats rebels as royalty.
- God calls sinners his sons and daughters.
- God declares the guilty innocent.

#### Application . . .

- Who were we before God before we became Christ-followers?
- Who are we before God as Christ-followers in light of Christ's sacrifice?

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*“In Passion Week, as I was reading on the Lord’s Supper, I met with an expression to this effect – ‘That the Jews knew what they did, when they transferred their sin to the head of their offering.’ The thought came into my mind, What, may I transfer all my guilt to another? Has God provided an Offering for me, that I may lay my sins on His head? Then, God willing, I will not bear them on my own soul one moment longer. Accordingly I sought to lay my sins upon the sacred head of Jesus.”*

Charles Simeon