

Small Group Discussion Questions
March 14, 2021
Again and Again: Community Serve Day

CONNECT

- What is one word you would use to describe your experience of Community Serve Day?
- How did your participation in CSD feel new or different this year?
- If you were unable to participate in CSD, where did you have an opportunity to serve others on your own this week?

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE – Prayer of Lament

As we continue to practice creating our own Prayers of Lament, use Psalm 107 and your experience of CSD to inform the way you respond to the prompts.

Prepare our hearts: Pause for a moment of silence. Ask someone to read Psalm 107:1-4; 17-22 aloud, following along in your own Bible. Listen for a word or phrase that stands out to you.

Individual Reflection: Write your own Prayer of Lament, expressing the desires of your heart.

1. **I will turn to God with confident praise.** The Psalmist says: “O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever.”

Reflect: *Lord God, my confidence is in you for I have seen your goodness and love in...*

Silently Pray: Lord, help me to open my heart and be honest with you.

2. **We will open our hearts to God with complete honesty.** The Psalmist says, “Some wandered in desert wastelands...they were hungry and thirsty, and their lives ebbed away...then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble...”

Reflect: *Lord God, I cry out to you, for I see the trouble of those who...*

Silently Pray: Lord, help me empathize with those who are suffering, aligning my requests with your heart.

3. **We will ask God to intervene and repair what is broken.** The Psalmist says, “then they cried out to the Lord, and he saved them from their distress...”

Reflect: *Please Lord Jesus, intervene to bring your healing word and love to...*

Silently Pray: Lord God, I trust you in all things, and your glory is what I desire.

4. **We will lift our voices in worship.** The Psalmist says, “Let them give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for humankind. Let them sacrifice thank offerings and tell of his works with songs of joy.”

Reflect: *Lord God, I worship you for your love and wonderful deeds with songs of joy...*

Silently Pray: Lord, lead me to re-engage the world with confidence and trust in you.

Group Sharing: How is the practice of lament shaping your prayer life during Lent? What have you learned that is helping you align your heart with God's heart?

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION

Read Ephesians 2:8-10 aloud: Scripture repeatedly reminds us that as God's people, we are made for a purpose beyond ourselves. We are saved by God's grace and then called to be agents of God's kingdom and participants in creating the good he desires on earth. Christian service is grounded in the discipline of seeing people as God sees them and valuing each person as God does. Jesus is our ultimate model of serving, seeking to serve for the good of others, out of love for God. We can do that in a variety of ways by offering resources, time, influence, and expertise for the care, protection, and justice of others, as we are empowered and gifted by God.

Group Sharing: Select 2-3 of the following questions to reflect on your CSD experience:

- How was your CSD experience an expression of "doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly with your God?" (see Micah 6:8)
- In what way has your experience of God's grace helped you see yourself as "God's workmanship, created for good works"? How does this understanding motivate your desire to serve?
- What connections do you see between Lent, God's grace, and the way each of us has been "created for good works"?
- How can doing "good works" become an opportunity for others to see God's heart? When have you felt the most energy or passion in doing something that was sacrificial?
- What would you say if Jesus asked you, "what hurt do you see that needs my grace, healing, or love"? How could your answer motivate your next steps or actions?

PRAYER AND BENEDICTION

Pray for the people or places you served through Community Serve Day:

- What immediate resources do they need? What are their underlying challenges?
- What encouragement, hope, or help could you offer them?

Benediction (John 3:16-17;21)

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him...whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God."
Amen.

DAILY PRACTICE: Continue to spend time with God daily in *Solitude, Scripture, and Prayer*, including lament in your time with God. (See Lent Reading Plan, Playlist & Resources online.)