

If My People 3—The Gap
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USING THIS SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

We have provided all the Scriptures references in the sermon and some discussion questions for you to use to facilitate a discussion.

This Sermon Discussion Guide is only a tool to aid you in meeting the needs of your group. For most groups, there are too many questions to answer in one session together.

While the questions are important, remember your group's goal is not to get through the questions, but to create an atmosphere that will foster true friendships. Use the discussion questions as you see fit but emphasize the relationships.

Humility is not about thinking less of yourself but thinking about yourself less; we can learn humility, we can grow in humility, and we can posture ourselves.

***"I humbled my soul with fasting,
And I prayed with my head bowed..."***
[Psalm 35:13, AMP]

If we understood prayer more, we would pray more.

THE GAP = the place of prayer between the mess of humanity and the much-needed grace and intervention of God

Sin will take you further than you want to go and keep you longer than you want to stay.

[1 Corinthians 10:11]

These things happened to them as examples for us. They were written down to warn us who live at the end of the age.

[Ezekiel 22:1-5]

Now this message came to me from the Lord: “Son of man, are you ready to judge Jerusalem? Are you ready to judge this city of murderers? Publicly denounce her detestable sins, and give her this message from the Sovereign Lord: O city of murderers, doomed and damned—city of idols, filthy and foul— you are guilty because of the blood you have shed. You are defiled because of the idols you have made. Your day of destruction has come! You have reached the end of your years. I will make you an object of mockery throughout the world. O infamous city, filled with confusion, you will be mocked by people far and near.

- Fathers and mothers are treated with contempt
- Foreigners are forced to pay for protection (extortion)
- Orphans and widows are wronged and oppressed
- Your priests have violated my instructions and defiled my holy things
- People accuse others falsely and send them to their death
- You are filled with idol worshipers and people who do obscene things
- Men sleep with their fathers’ wives
- Your leaders are like wolves who tear apart their victims. They actually destroy people’s lives for money!
- your prophets cover up your wickedness by announcing false visions and making lying predictions.
- They say, ‘My message is from the Sovereign LORD,’ when the LORD hasn’t spoken a single word to them.
- Your people have abused the poor and helpless
- Your people are *full of wickedness*:

The justice of God is perfect. When God pours out His justice on an individual or a people, it is with perfect measure at perfect timing. Because God is just, He must judge sin.

[Ezekiel 22:30, AMP]

I searched for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand in the gap before Me for the sake of the land, that I would not destroy it, but I found no one, not even one!

God has set a law in motion that is higher than the law of sowing and reaping: intercession.

Intercession justifies divine intervention.

1. Know God's heart and trust His intentions.

[Psalm 145:8, TPT]

(Lord) You are kind and tenderhearted to those who don't deserve it and very patient with people who fail you. Your love is like a flooding river overflowing its banks with kindness.

[2 Peter 3:9-10, TPT]

*Contrary to man's perspective, the Lord is not late with his promise to return, as some measure lateness. But rather, his "delay" simply reveals his loving patience toward you, because **he does not want any to perish but all to come to repentance.** The day of the Lord will come and take everyone by surprise—as unexpected as a home invasion. The atmosphere will be set on fire and vanish with a horrific roar, and the heavenly bodies will melt away as in a tremendous blaze. The earth and every activity of man will be laid bare.*

[Exodus 32:1]

When the people saw how long it was taking Moses to come back down the mountain, they gathered around Aaron. "Come on," they said, "make us some gods who can lead us. We don't know what happened to this fellow Moses, who brought us here from the land of Egypt."

[Exodus 32:4, 6]

The people responded with enthusiasm: "These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up from Egypt!"...After this, they celebrated with feasting and drinking, and they indulged in pagan revelry.

[Exodus 32:9-14]

Then the LORD said, "I have seen how stubborn and rebellious these people are. Now leave me alone so my fierce anger can blaze against

them, and I will destroy them. Then I will make you, Moses, into a great nation.” But Moses sought the favor of the LORD his God. “O LORD!” he said. “Why are you so angry with your own people whom you brought from the land of Egypt with such great power and such a strong hand? Why let the Egyptians say, ‘Their God rescued them with the evil intention of slaughtering them in the mountains and wiping them from the face of the earth’? Turn away from your fierce anger. Change your mind about this terrible disaster you have threatened against your people! Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. You bound yourself with an oath to them, saying, ‘I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars of heaven. And I will give them all of this land that I have promised to your descendants, and they will possess it forever.’” So the LORD changed his mind about the terrible disaster he had threatened to bring on his people.

- 2. Identify your assignment and stand in the place of the intercessor.**
- 3. Cry out to God from the GAP!**

FOR MONDAY—

- 1. Read a few translations of Isaiah 58 and examine the fast that God desires of us.**
- 2. Pray for the nation and stand in the Gap! (cover leadership, cultural tensions, physical and mental health, etc.)**

TALK IT THROUGH

- 1. How can we learn and put on humility? What would that look like?**
- 2. Where are places that are easier for you to focus on others instead of yourself? How can we improve our outward focus in our day-to-day?**
- 3. If fasting humbles our soul (Psalm 35:13), how does it impact our mind, will, and emotions?**
- 4. What is your role in this equation of bringing healing and restoration?**

- 5. In your life right now, who is so deep in their situation that they will not pray for themselves? Who needs you to stand in the Gap? What name is on your assignment?**
- 6. What are some specifics about how God calls us to fast in Isaiah 58? How can you apply that in your personal context? Why is there power in biblically-aligned prayer?**
- 7. How has relationship with God revealed His heart and intentions to you? When has it led you to intercession, and what resulted?**