

Christian Outreach Department

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For Reduced Inequalities

The God of Israel is our God and He created everyone equally. As a Father to everyone, He even treats them equally. Because Israel was His own people He instructed them to treat everyone in their community with dignity and equality. He made sure that widows, orphans, the poor and foreigners living in Israel had food to eat and commanded the people to leave behind field corners during harvest. He also asked them to literally drop the grains or fruits on the ground so that these marginalised people could pick them up later.

"When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field, nor shall you gather the gleanings of your harvest. And you shall not glean your vineyard, nor shall you gather every grape of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger: I am the LORD your God."

Leviticus 19: 9-10.

When we do this, God is pleased, the poor are fed and we do not waste our food. Resources must be shared with the "have-nots".

Activity ideas

We can identify alcoholic-widows (wives of the alcoholics who are useless in providing for their homes because of their addictions) and families can share their food with these wives and children.

We can also as a church adopt certain homes like these and pray for them and help support the children in their education.

We can organize a clothes and books collection for these kids and then distribute it to those in need. Jesus spoke of judgement day and how He separates people for heaven based on how they took care of the lesser privileged in society..

"..For I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me." Matt 25: 35-36.

We have a great opportunity to make a difference in our communities and never to treat people unequally. We have the power to choose and make sure there are reduced inequalities in our own communities.

For Sustainable Cities and Communities

Cities are as old as the human race. The first human baby was Cain. He grew up and later built a city and named it after his own son.

"And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. And he built a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son Enoch." Gen 4:17

Israelites were asked to pray for their city.

"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: 'May they prosper who love you.'" Psa 122:6

But God also has compassion on a pagan city, Nineveh.

"And should I not pity Nineveh, that great city, in which are more than one hundred and twenty thousand persons who cannot discern between their right hand and their left—and much livestock?" Jonah 4:11

God is concerned about all cities and all communities. We have to share that vision with our God and we must adopt our own cities in our hearts and not always think of ourselves and our families.

There is a great opportunity today for the Christian community to once again express themselves as 'communities of light', those who engage, filled with His presence. Isaiah declared:

"Arise, shine; for your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; but the Lord will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you. The Gentiles shall come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising." Isaiah 60:1-3

Isaiah imaged the time when a deep darkness would enshroud the entire earth as an opportunity for the church to arise and shine. The deeper the darkness, the greater their light. God promises He will arise over us, His glory seen at such time over us. The result - communities around are impacted, they come to our light.

Will we rise to be the light? Our 'promised land' is not some distant dream over some intangible and eternal horizon. Our promised land is tangible, here and now, when we fight against giants within, that destroy light and spread darkness. The promised land begins when we image dreams of loving, just, compassionate communities and work towards these, crossing the many floods and obstructions that stand in our way.

Activity Ideas

We can begin our caring and adopting our cities by praying regularly.

We can get a map of the city and put it in our prayer closet to make our prayers more vivid. We can study its history and pray meaningfully and ask God to bless the city and close down alcohol and drug enterprises.

We can also connect with the local politicians and ask them what the church could do to help the city and community become a safer and better place.

Five Point Plan for Bible Reading

I would like to share a Five-Point Plan for Bible Reading to enrich your spiritual life.

1. **PRAY:** First be quiet, and remember that God is with you. Thank Him for His help to you since you last prayed. Confess to Him any sins you have thought, said, or done. Then pray and ask God to speak to you through the Bible.
2. **READ:** Read the passage from the Bible. Read it slowly, twice.
3. **THINK:** Think about the passage and ask God to show you what He wants to teach you from it.
4. **PRAY:** Pray about what you have learned. For example, if you have found a command of God in the passage, ask God to help you to obey it.
5. **REMEMBER:** Ask yourself what main points you want to remember during the day. Think about it several times during the day. Learn the verse. Then remember to put what you have learnt from the word of God into practice.

"Be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only" (James 1:22)

God bless us all.