

Discipleship

Study provided by UMC Discipleship Ministries, adapted by Kathryn Rauhauser

Gathering Time

- Reflect and respond to the following, “When is worship stale and unmoving for you? When does worship connect to your daily life as a Christian?”
- Read: Isaiah 1:1, 10-20.

Discussion

- Why might the prophet Isaiah be using the titles Sodom and Gomorrah to refer to the leaders and people of Judah? [These are not compliments and indicate the seriousness of their situation. Remember Sodom and Gomorrah were unwilling to repent and change, leading to their destruction. Their hateful treatment of foreigners among them bore witness to the sinful state of their hearts.]
- Why does God no longer take delight in the sacrifices of the people?
 - What was the purpose of a sacrifice?
 - How were their sacrifices meaningless?
- Why does God say God will no longer listen to their prayers?
- What does God, through the prophet, require the people to do?
- What will the result be if the people are “willing and obedient?”
 - What if they “refuse and rebel”?
- What does this passage indicate about worship that is acceptable to God?
- What does this passage tell us about God?
 - What does this passage tell us about worship and the daily life of believers?
- This prophecy was originally written to the people of Israel and Judah. Our circumstances are different from theirs, but what could this text mean for us today?
 - Is there an invitation for us in the text today?

Prayer and Sending Forth

- If studying with a group, share prayer requests and praise reports as well as those on the church prayer list. If studying on your own, take time to pray for those on our church prayer list and lift up your own prayer concerns to the Lord.
- Consider praying the following or a similar prayer: God of justice, your compassion and concern extend to all. As followers of Christ, the body of Christ, as people of the covenant, you summon us to a life that reflects your character. Empower us to seek justice, defend the orphan, plea for the widow, hear those who are crying out in need, and be the people who are able to respond with your compassionate love. Amen.