



Small group study materials, December 2020/January 2021

Chapter & verse – Peter Cruchley (page 18)

Read Isaiah 61:10-62:3, followed by Peter Cruchley’s article.

1. Isaiah tells us that God will ‘will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations’. What do you understand by righteousness: is it the same as being right? Is praise always righteous?
2. ‘One day you will have a voice that speaks for many,’ writes the footballer Marcus Rashford to his ten-year-old self, quoted in the article’s opening paragraph. Who does Isaiah’s voice speak for? How do you imagine Isaiah’s voice, and message, was received then, compared to now?
3. How did you feel after reading the excerpt about Rashford’s childhood in this article’s second paragraph? Why do you agree, or disagree, that the UK’s system ‘was not built for families like [his] to succeed’?
4. In the article’s fourth paragraph, Peter argues that ‘Rashford speaks this truth because he ... has lived first-hand the inequalities of a white-privileging economic, social and political system.’ Can activism be as effective without first-hand experience? What issues or parts of society are you concerned about because of your own life experiences?
5. Peter goes on to say that those who seek to silence Rashford’s campaign only confirm it’s truth, because they seek ‘to limit privilege, not extend justice’. In what ways can Christians bring justice to the world today?
6. Peter describes the UK government’s decisions over free school meals in the article’s fifth paragraph. What was your reaction to these decisions? What would it take for governments to act with the God-given righteousness that Isaiah references?
7. The article’s concluding paragraph states that Isaiah’s prophecies ‘unmask oppression and yet reveal the way God is working to bring transformation’. What examples have you come across of how God is bringing transformation to communities where you are, and beyond?

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For further reflection: ‘One night the Lord said to Paul in a vision: “Do not be afraid, but speak and do not be silent; for I am with you, and no one will lay a hand on you to harm you.”’ Acts 18:9-10

Prayer: Father God, we know that you pursue justice, whether we are the ones calling for justice or the ones standing in its way. Help us to share more of your love of justice and to work for its fulfilment in our world. Amen.

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