

WEEK 4 REFLECTION
Bangladesh – Salma’s story

Isaiah 58:6-12

6 Is not this the fast that I choose:

to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,

to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?

7 Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them,
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

8 Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up quickly;
your vindicator shall go before you,
the glory of the Lord shall be your rearguard.

9 Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;
you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

If you remove the yoke from among you,
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,

10 if you offer your food to the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,
then your light shall rise in the darkness
and your gloom be like the noonday.

11 The Lord will guide you continually,
and satisfy your needs in parched places,
and make your bones strong;

and you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water,
whose waters never fail.

12 Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
the restorer of streets to live in.

Pr. Matt's study & writing helps:

1. Read Isaiah 58:1-5 (the part right before the one printed above) to see what's going on here. This is about God being upset with the people because they do all the religious stuff right but don't take care of the poor. Essentially, God is saying He doesn't care about their festivals and worship services and what they SAY about how they believe in Him if they don't live that out by taking care of those who are in trouble. Essentially, God is saying, "you want to honor me? Don't do it in the synagogue – do it with the way you live your life! That's what **I** choose!" Pay special attention to verses 6-7 as you think about what this passage means.

What do you think about this? Have you ever seen someone who pretends to be a good Christian but doesn't live it out in everyday life by caring for others? How is it that we all make this mistake sometimes?

2. Look at the study notes at the bottom of the page in your Study Bible to see if you can learn anything else interesting about this passage.

3. Read Salma's story ("*Story4 Bangladesh.pdf*", available on the church's website). Consider WHY God asks us to care for those in need. Do we do it to prove we are good people? Do we do it to earn a place in heaven? Is there something deeper going on here?

4. For your reflection, write 2-3 paragraphs about what you think this passage means for the modern church of 2012. Be careful not to make your paragraphs too much about what we "should" do, but focus on WHY we would help those in need (see Question #3 above).

OTHER IDEAS FOR YOUR PARAGRAPHS:

1. You could name the places in our modern world where you see need.
2. You could tell about a time you helped someone and how that felt
3. You could tell about a time you saw someone in need and how that felt
4. You could tell about a time when you or someone you know was in need
5. You could talk about what you want to do when you grow up and how that might meet the needs of others
6. You could talk with your family about one thing you could do to respond to this passage. (*Hint: It isn't always about money! Is there anything else you could do live in a way that reflects the values in this passage?*)

You can contact me by e-mail, Facebook, or phone for help with this!

5. E-mail me (pr_matt@hotmail.com) or send me a Facebook message with a draft of your paragraphs one week before your assigned Wednesday. That way, I can help you edit it and get it ready to read in church.

Don't forget – you are not on your own here – I believe that you have something important to share & I am here to help you find the right words!