**Isaiah 1:17, Psalm 10**

Introduction

I. In Jesus ‘ministry on earth, the people who most did not recognize him for who he was were often those who were most well-known for being devoted to God

II. It raises the question: are Jesus and I really interested in the same things? Could others know what Jesus is passionate about by looking at what I’m passionate about?

The Passages

I. God’s passion for the world

A. John 3:16: “For God so loved the world . . .”

B. We are often simply passionate about ourselves, or our family, or the people we like, or the people who are like us

C. Gary’s experience in Ruanda: coming to realize that God had intended for every one of these people to exist and gave up his son for each one of them. He saw a big difference between God’s heart and his own heart.

D. One of the hardest ideas for the world to grasp is the idea that God is good (in light of all the pain and evil)

1. God’s plan for convincing the world that he is good is us!

2. Matthew 5:14-16: you are the light of the world

II. God’s passion for justice

A. What is injustice?

1. Injustice is the abuse of power to take from somebody the good that God intended them to have.

2. See Ecclesiastes 4:1

B. What does God think about injustice?

1. See Psalm 10 (especially v. 17-18)

2. See Psalm 35:10

C. God’s plan for dealing with injustice is us!

1. Micah 6:8: do justice, love mercy, walk humbly

2. Matthew 23:23: the weightier matters of the law: justice, mercy, faith

III. The need feels so overwhelming and hopeless: what can we do?

A. Consider the feeding of the 5000

1. The disciples ask Jesus to send the people away

2. Jesus says, “you feed them”

3. They consider the magnitude of the need and their resources and conclude it’s impossible

4. Jesus says, “what do you have”

5. They bring their meager resources to him: 5 loaves, 2 fish

6. Jesus says, “give it to me” and works an absolute miracle with what they bring

B. Jesus didn’t need their resources; he could have done the miracle without them. But he chose to involve them in his miraculous work.

Conclusion

I. Maybe the call for some of us today is simply to rediscover God’s passion for justice for all

II. Maybe the call for others is to ask ourselves: what does it mean for us to enter into God’s heart for the world and for justice?

III. We must ask ourselves: in this world where there are so many needs, why has God given us so much?

**Discussion Questions**

1. On Sunday, we were challenged to consider what Jesus is passionate about and to compare that with what we’re passionate about ourselves. Consider the question posed on Sunday for yourself: would other people come to know what God is passionate about by looking at what I’m passionate about?

2. Read Psalm 10. What strikes you or stands out in that Psalm? How does Sunday’s message give you a deeper understanding of or appreciation for that Psalm?

3. On Sunday we discussed 1) God’s passion for the world and 2) God’s passion for justice. Gary posed a question in regard to these passions: What is God’s plan for making it believable to the world that he is good? And the answer was: we are. Read Matthew 5:14-16 and discuss how the idea of us being God’s answer struck you? How do you respond to that idea?

4. Consider the feeding of the 5000 mentioned on Sunday. Jesus took the insignificant resources of the disciples (five loaves and two fish) and multiplied it into an abundant feast of ministry to the crowds. As you consider your own life, how might God be calling you to recognize a significant need in the world and simply offer what you have in faith, trusting God to use that in his power to meet the need?

5. Spend some time praying together about these issues. For example, you might want to pray a prayer of confession for hearts that have not cared much about the world and justice, or you might want to pray a prayer of thanksgiving for who God is and what he cares about in the world, or you might want to pray a prayer of transformation, asking God to give you a heart that cares about the same things he cares about.