

# STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

## LIFE GROUPS STUDY GUIDE



### Overview:

The book of Isaiah is traditionally considered one of the most significant books of the Old Testament, due to its varied style in poetic language, Messianic themes and consistent message. Scholars are divided on whether Isaiah is the product of one author, or multiple authors. The latter view would mean that the prophet Isaiah composed the first thirty-nine chapters, while the last sections were composed by disciples of Isaiah, carrying on his message. Regardless of this question of authorship, the book is a vision of what life under God's universal reign should look like, and will look like when the Messiah comes, suffers, rises and ultimately brings about the arrival of the New Heavens and New Earth. The prophet Isaiah speaks as God's voice-box, reminding Judah to return to their calling: showing everyone, everywhere, what life under God's reign looks like.

This is significant for us in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, because we have an even greater vision into the unfolding of God's reign than Isaiah ever did. We have seen and believed Christ as the One through whom God's reign is most clearly realised in the world. Our calling is the same as Judah's and Isaiah's: to alert everyone, everywhere to the universal reign of God through Christ.

## WEEK 4: COME, BUY AND EAT

### WARMING UP...

1. Isaiah 55 details God's great invitation to all people. Have you ever been given a *gracious* invitation that you felt appreciative of?

### GOING DEEPER...

READ ISAIAH 55:1-7 (this is the last part of "second-Isaiah", which began in Isaiah 40)

2. Isaiah, speaking to the Jewish exiles in Babylon, pictures God as a street-vendor, announcing his product in the midst of the city. What do you notice about the nature of God's gifts in verses 1-3?
3. In Isaiah 54:2, God says it is time to "enlarge the tent", meaning that his offer in verses 1-7 are going to include not only His people, but the nations. What does this mean for God's overarching redemptive plan for the world?
4. How do God's gracious, free and compassionate gifts compare to the offers of our culture (i.e. prosperity and success can be achieved through endless work)?
5. The areas of Latin America and Africa are seeing the greatest boom in Christianity right now. These are generally areas of great poverty. Considering this, who is more inclined to accept God's free gifts: those who are self-sufficient, or those who know their need? Why?

### READ ISAIAH 55:8-11

6. Throughout this chapter, we are asked to say YES to God's feast and YES to God's plans. These verses outline how different our plans/thoughts/ways are to God's plans. Do your life-plans line up more with our culture's desires for your life or God's desire and plan for your life?
7. Based on verses 10-11, do you think the God who offers water, milk, wine and bread in order to quench your spiritually hunger and thirst, can be trusted?

## BRINGING IT HOME...

8. As God's people, we are very inclined to forget the incredible feast that has been granted to us by God, without cost. How can we continue to remember God's mercy and go to him before all other things?
9. How can we not simply receive God's invitation, but be the ones who invite others to the kind of gifts in verses 1-3?