WOODVALE
PENTECOSTAL CHURCH

Connect Group Sermon Aligned Discussion Guide.

Series Title: Gilead's Balm
Key Scripture: Jeremiah 8:(4-)22
Recorded Sermon: www.woodvale.ca/pastservices/v/gileads-balm
Date + Speaker: October 13, 2024 Pastor Mark Scarr

Introductory question:

1. Have you ever eaten so much and been so 'full' that your stomach 'ached'? Describe the circumstances and how you found relief.

   This week's discussion guide reviews a message delivered on Thanksgiving weekend and is a call to each of us to respond to the very real need(s) in our communities and city with the love of God. To feel the ache and do something about it.

Discussion questions:

2. Have the group take turns reading through the passage. Discuss the context. If helpful consider playing the Bible Project video summarizing Jeremiah (linked below).

3. As you move through a typical week, what are some felt needs that you observe in your workplace/neighbourhood/city?
   [The Principle of Awareness - seeing what we haven't seen before]

4. Read verse 11. What types of responses are there when need/brokenness/depravity is witnessed? Are they effective? Why do we respond this way?

5. Read verse 21. Do you feel this deeply about any need? Share a little about why you were gripped by that particular need.
   [The Principle of Aching - feeling what we haven't felt before]

6. Read Isaiah 61:1, Luke 4:14-21, James 2:26, and James 1:27 What do you observe about the relationship between faith and service?

[The Principle of Action - doing what we haven't done before]

7. Read verse 22. Pastor Mark talked about another 'tree'. Discuss what Jesus death and resurrection means for humanity and how it motivates Christ followers to serve those in need.

8. Close this conversation by praying together as a group - asking God to reveal how you might collectively serve Him by identifying your group resources and strengths and meeting a felt need in the city of Ottawa fellowships highlighted for the 2024 Thanksgiving offering. Don't be afraid to wait on Him. Expect Him to answer. Report back to one another and to the CG Director.

Additional Leader Resources:

1. *It's important to apply the Word while being careful to provide context for the interpretation.*
2. *Encourage the group members to be honest. Some may be quite aware and empathetic and others not so much!*
3. *Sympathy and empathy are two different things. One is simply feeling sorry for someone's lot. The other motivates to action*
4. *Resist any tendency to entertain guilt that leads to paralysis. The enemy wants to condemn our inaction but the Holy Spirit wants to convict. One leads to death the other to life.*
5. *Encourage conversation that is less theoretical and more practical.*
6. *The balm of Gilead was formulated from perfume derived from a tree found in a region of the Holy Land inhabited by the tribes of Reuben, Gad and the 1/2 tribe of Manasseh. It had medicinal properties and the term has come to refer to a 'universal cure'.*

7. *Don't be afraid to wait on the Lord to reveal what type of involvement would be best for your group.*

 Additional resources appealing to those concentrating on emotional health and healing: Consider reading: "The Daniel Prayer" by Anne Graham Lotz; or checking out this opportunity - One Church One Day Strategic City-wide Prayer Initiative in Ottawa: onechurchoneday.ca

 Additional resources appealing to those concentrating on service, tasks, and activities: Connect Ottawa Conference: October 18, 2024 Dominion Chalmers Centre connectottawa.carrd.co

 Additional resources appealing to those groups with a more studious or intellectual bent: https:// bibleproject.com/explore/video/jeremiah/