

“Prescription for a Pandemic”

Isaiah 58:1-12

Introduction

The natural pandemic that we face today is a symbol of a spiritual, societal and personal pandemic. Pain, abuse, neglect, rejection and frustration plague us on so many different levels. The answer to our plight always begins with the Word of God. For believers, there is a prescription for a healing work in our lives for the routine problems we face and for those that are a result of the pandemic. The answer lies in a righteous, personal pursuit of God, which consequently promotes a posture of service to others, resulting in spiritual blessings from God.

Regarding this prescription, you must first be committed to the pursuit of righteousness (v. 4). Often, people want God to intervene without changing their ways. They are what we call ‘religious,’ going to church, speaking in “Christianese” and engaging in spiritual activities. These are people that think their empty spiritual disciplines are enough. The truth is that religion can camouflage true righteousness. Isaiah 58 teaches us that there is a pursuit of God that is evidenced by spiritual disciplines like fasting. As a result of practicing these disciplines, believers become positioned to be impacted by God’s power. However, many people don’t want to be confronted by their rejection of God. This is evidenced by the choices they make every day.

Second, the prescription for healing in your life manifests in service to others. You must be willing to minister to someone else who is worse off than you. You cannot treat other people however you choose, or even ignore them, and expect God to heal your wounds. If you want a prescription for your own healing, you must be willing to serve the needs of someone else who is unable to do anything in return. Learn to help and give without expecting anything in return. Giving is generally associated with money, however, serving others in Scripture also means giving of your time and your talents. The way you show Jesus you love Him is by caring for your neighbor. Learn to live life looking for others whom you can serve.

When committed to God’s prescription for healing, you will see your radical return to God - on His terms, which will result in a radical return from God in your life. God can mend our broken culture, our broken homes, and our broken lives when we fully return to God and seek Him with a humble heart. God can meet you in your confusion and turn darkness to light. He can bring healing, recovery, answers to your prayers, guidance, strength and deep satisfaction. The prescription for healing in our hearts and in our culture starts with individuals who are focused on prioritizing God and serving others. When enough individuals do this, the corporate impact results in a change in our land.

Getting Started

1. How has COVID-19 impacted you? Have you been ill, lost a family member or friend, struggled with your income or experienced conflict with those you live with? Share your experience with your group.
2. What one point resonated with you most from this week’s sermon?

Let’s Get Personal

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate your pursuit and prioritization of God recently? What behaviors or habits – good or bad – have influenced your rating?
2. Take a moment to read through Isaiah 58:1-12. What actions and behaviors are mentioned in this passage that indicate behaviors, habits and heart posture indicative of someone who is committed to God? As you discuss your observations with your group, share what you find from this passage that you can apply to your life right now.

3. Service is a part of God's prescription for healing. How have you been able to serve others during this time? How have others served you in ways that have been helpful? Share those experiences with your group as it might give other members ideas for serving others!

Take the Next Step

1. Have you ever experienced God's radical results in your life because of your radical return to His prescription for healing? What specific changes did you make in your life that you can now see resulted in major changes for your spiritual, emotional, physical or relational life?
2. After hearing today's sermon, would you describe yourself as religious or relational? Are you engaging with God relationally based on His terms, or have you engaged with God based on a list of rules that are culturally and religiously accepted? What changes are you motivated to make because of hearing today's sermon?
3. Want to go deeper? Take a look at the following passages: Luke 6:38; 2 Corinthians 1:1-23; Galatians 6:2-12.

Renew Your Mind

*"Then your light will break out like the dawn,
And your recovery will speedily spring forth . . ."*
Isaiah 58:8

