

Blueprint for a Better World



Collegiate Quarterly

Teacher's Guide

Materials

Reproducible Activity, Bibles, pens/pencils, Bible concordances, whiteboard, chalkboard or flip chart and appropriate markers.

Surveying the Source

Prov. 11:25; Isa. 58:1–8; Matt. 5:16; Rev. 18:1

Plotting the Course

The students will:

► Understand what it means to practice true religion.

► Recognize that they have a Christian duty to help those in need, whether those needs are of personal concerns, or of social injustices.

► Express their love for the downtrodden through acts of mercy.

Preparing to Lead

“I saw that it is in the providence of God that widows and orphans, the blind, the deaf, the lame and persons afflicted in a variety of ways have been placed in close Christian relationship to His church; it is to prove His people and develop their true character. Angels of God are watching to see how we treat these persons who need our sympathy, love and disinterested benevolence. This is God’s test of our character. If we have true reli-

gion of the Bible we shall feel that a debt of love, kindness, and interest is due to Christ in behalf of His brethren, and we can do no less than to show our gratitude for His immeasurable love to us while we were sinners unworthy of His grace, by having a deep interest and unselfish love for those who are our brethren and who are less fortunate than ourselves.” (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 511)

Getting Started

A. Find out from class members if anyone has ever fasted before. If so, ask if they want to share what was the reason they fasted, for how long, and what were the spiritual or physical benefits.

B. From the class, ask members to share a time they observed someone who was homeless or desperately down on their luck, and what did they do to help.

Delving Into the Word

A. In class today we will seek to understand what it means to practice true religion in our twenty-first century. Ask one or more people to read Isaiah 58:1–8. They may read from different versions. Let's see what the text means by the fast or religion that God rejects, and the fast or religion that God approves. Make two columns on the white board or on the flip chart. One column is for the fast/religion God rejects. The other column is for the fast/religion God approves. List the behaviors from the verses above under each appropriate heading. Discuss the findings.

B. Have three different members of the class read the following texts: Prov. 11:25; Matt. 5:16; Rev. 18:1. *Ask:* “Are there obligations and benefits to us for doing good? If so, what are they? Why should we choose to bless others with the financial, material, academic or educational, and spiritual assets or resources we have?”

Discussing the Ideas

1. When is fasting from food appropriate in a Christian's experience?

2. Does fasting from food/drink/videos or social media have any value or benefits?

3. When someone post a need on 'GoFundMe,' how do you determine whether you should assist or not?

4. Should you get involved in social protests such as marching to Washington D.C. to support causes such as Black Lives Matter, or #MeToo? Why or why not?

5. What if you are moved to help a homeless person by giving him/her your last dollar that you really needed, and

later on you learned that s/he owns two beautiful homes in a nice area in town.

What would you do the next time you saw a homeless person begging for money?

6. A single mom of three at your job has one child with behavioral issues in elementary school. She is often called to come and pick up her child from school, and now she is about to lose her job for the number of times she has been away from her job because of her child's issues. How can you help to show you care?

7. Jesus, Moses, and Elijah fasted for 40 days. Should we attempt to do this? Why or why not?

Closing the Activity

Have someone read Matthew 5:16. *Say:* “As Christians we are not living in the world just unto ourselves, or unto only the members of our family of faith. We have a God-given duty to love everyone, especially those who are less fortunate than ourselves. We must demonstrate that love in disinterested benevolence. By this

will all men know that we are Christians by our love. Our good works will then bring glory to our Heavenly Father.”

Distribute the Reproducible Activity for the students to work on for the remainder of class. Invite them to continue working on it throughout the weeks.

Ask a volunteer to pray to close.

Arlene Thomson, Orlando, Florida, USA

Complete this form individually. Then select one item from each area to do within the next four weeks.

Three things to fast from:

Three ways to help the
homeless:

Three ways to help in envi-
ronmental causes:

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