

Title: The Book of Isaiah—Rags to Righteous // **Scripture:** Isaiah 1:12-26; 5:7; 53:11; 64:5-6

ARRIVAL / SOCIAL TIME *15-20 minutes*

Spend the first 15 minutes or so of your time together catching up and socializing with one another. Also find time to catch up together on how the assignments from last week turned out.

SERMON REVIEW *5-10 minutes*

This week was Graduation Sunday as we celebrated our seniors and the significant milestone of graduating from high school in their development. We also continued to look at the book of Isaiah tying together a few threads that make their way through the entire book. The thread of righteousness dominated our discussion as we learned together about how to engage in culture in a healthy and effective way. Here in Isaiah we saw that righteousness is not simply about being right, but intentionally working for what is right in places that are wrong with our world. This means not simply conceding to culture or being in conflict with culture, but rather becoming a force of change that reroutes the current and creates a different kind of culture altogether. As we sent out our students, this timely message was not just for them, but for all of us, as we seek to live righteous Christian lives in our world.

THE MAIN THOUGHT *keep this in mind as you facilitate discussion*

Real righteousness is not just about being right. It's about making things right.

SEE IT – Questions *10-15 minutes*

Picture (What is the story saying?): What do you think it means to be righteous? (Not just being right, but making things right?) What word appears with righteousness 19 times in Isaiah? (Justice) How do righteousness and justice relate to each other throughout Isaiah? How does this understanding of righteousness challenge the way that you normally think about righteousness? What 3 postures did Benton mention about the way that we, as followers of Jesus, often relate to our world? (concede to culture, conflict with culture, be a force of change within culture)

Mirror (Where am I in the story?): Where are a few places in your life that you are tempted to concede to culture? Why is this tempting to you? What places in your life do you find yourself in conflict with culture? Why? What would it take for you to become a force of change within culture in these places, instead of just conceding or conflicting with culture?

Window (How does the story change how I see those around me?): What do you think it would look like in our world today if Christians decided to be a force of change within culture instead of just conceding to culture or living in conflict with it? What is one step you could take this week to become this kind of Christian?

BE IT – Practice *10-15 minutes*

Change UP // Right Worship *5 minutes*

Read Micah 6:8 as a group and reflect together on what right worship looks like. Ask your group how this verse challenges our normal understanding of worship. Explain to your group that living a righteous life is more than just being right or thinking the right things. Instead, being righteous means righting wrongs in our world. Or as Micah instructs, “acting justly, loving mercy and walking humbly with your God.”

Change IN // Right Relationships *5 minutes*

Take some time to celebrate a few of the relationships in your group. Acknowledge any graduations or significant achievements that those in your group have made. Challenge your group to use these accomplishments to not just enjoy by themselves, but rather to work together in righting things that are wrong in our world. Ask your group how these accomplishments might give them a platform for change in our world.

Change OUT // Right Standing *5 minutes*

Leo Tolstoy said, “Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself.” Invite your group to reflect on this quote from Tolstoy and then challenge your group to think about places that they might need to exchange their rags for righteousness if they are going to be a force of change in the world. Encourage each person in your group to name to name one place that they might need to change their standing in the world to bring about the change God desires them to bring in their world.

CLOSING PRAYER *5 minutes* May you see God clearly, hear His calling clearly, and may He help you fulfill that calling in faithfulness, trusting no matter how bleak things may appear, we trust the God who raises the dead.