

**Week 8**

Isaiah 58:1-9a "Justice Is More Than Skipping a Meal"

we live outside of worship or outside of Christian circles. It is fully possible to hold worship services in the center of unjust societies and never let the one challenge the other.

God invites us to submit ourselves—in true humility and in true repentance—to the Word of God. There is only one measuring stick against which to size ourselves up. It's not politics-as-usual, the viewpoints of the right or the left, or any commentator or talking head on cable news networks. The Word of God alone is our guide. If we hope to have (as Isaiah 58 ultimately promises) the glory of God surround and guard our lives, we must let the grace of God nurture the humility we need to acknowledge how often we do things wrongly. We must strive toward the days when the things we do, say, sing, and affirm in worship on Sundays (or in chapel), will translate into how we live the rest of the time.

Jesus says in Matthew 5 that he did not come to abolish the Law but to fulfill it, and to call all of his disciples to an even more radical devotion to living in ways that truly glorify God. It is not misguided works-righteousness that makes us want to do this. We are compelled by the sheer gratitude we feel for the grace of God we receive through Christ Jesus our Lord. He is the living and embodied fulfillment of all God's designs for this creation.

**Let's talk about it:**

What do you identify as hypocrisy in your own life?

What does fasting mean to you?

What do you fast from?

Does fasting make sense to you? Confused by it?

What religious rituals and actions does our community practice that do not translate into how you live outside of worship? That is, does worship in the chapel affect life in the dorm?

In this text, what did Israel do to show their religious zeal? What does Isaiah say that calls their sincerity into question?

Read James 1:27. How does this provide a similar picture to Isaiah 58:6-14?

Jesus speaks of people who call him "Lord" and do many works in his name, yet whose disobedience demonstrates their lack of relationship with him (Matthew 7:21-23). What does it look like for you to seek God daily? How does fighting and oppression keep you from seeking God daily?

Sometimes we all just mindlessly go along with larger socio-economic trends and practices in society, failing to even try to connect the dots to our faith and to what God asks of us. When do you notice this in your life? It's easier to just go with the trends rather than do the hard work of change. What needs to change in your life? At Calvin? In your dorm or apartment? At your Church?

